

Funding Alignment: Charter Schools Program

Title V, B (Charter Schools Program) helps increase the charter school model by providing assistance for planning, program design, and implementation; evaluating the effects of charter schools; expanding the number of high-quality charter schools; and encouraging financing for charter school facilities.

Rowland Reading Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving reading instruction in the primary grades. The Foundation publishes the Superkids® Reading Program, a core reading program designed just for kindergarten through second grade that teaches all aspects of reading seamlessly integrated with the language arts. Happily Ever After is the Foundation's literature-based reading readiness program. The table below shows the Charter Schools Program requirements and alignment with Rowland Reading Foundation programs.

Charter Schools Program Requirements	What the Superkids and Happily Ever After Programs Do
Attainment of Challenging State Standards	
<p>SEC. 5203. APPLICATIONS. "...Each application ...[shall contain]... a description of the educational program..., including ...how the <u>program will enable all students to meet challenging State student academic achievement standards.</u>"</p> <p>FEDERAL REGISTER, VOL. 75, NO. 99. <u>"Describe the educational program</u> to be implemented in the proposed new or expanded charter schools, <u>including how the program will enable all students (including educationally disadvantaged students) to meet challenging State student academic achievement standards...."</u></p>	<p>The Superkids Reading Program and Happily Ever After help students meet rigorous requirements and align to Common Core State Standards and state-specific standards, and the International Reading Association (IRA), the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and the Head Start recommendations for teaching students to read. The instructional focus of each level is described below. Correlation charts for each state or national requirements show the alignment of each program to these standards.</p> <p>The Superkids Reading Program (Kindergarten–Grade 2) The Superkids Reading Program is designed just for kindergarten through second grade and teaches all aspects of reading, seamlessly integrated with the language arts. Built on scientific research and proven pedagogy, it combines rigorous instruction with highly motivating materials. The Superkids Reading Program provides explicit and systematic instruction in reading, spelling, handwriting, expressive writing, and simple grammar and mechanics. The six levels are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 1: Meet the Superkids (usually taught first semester of kindergarten) This level begins children’s formal phonics instruction by teaching 13 letters of the alphabet—five short vowels and eight consonants. Students learn one sound for each of the letters and how to blend the letter-sounds to read words and eventually sentences. They also learn how to write the capital and lowercase form of each letter and to encode (spell) words with the letters and sounds they’ve been taught. Comprehension instruction begins with lessons about read-aloud stories and then continues, starting in the middle of the level, with lessons about short decodable stories children read themselves. Lessons for each story build background and vocabulary before reading and help guide children’s comprehension as they read. Expressive writing is taught through shared writing activities and independent writing in which children dictate what they want to write or use temporary spelling. By the end of this level, students understand how written language relates to spoken language.



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What the Superkids and Happily Ever After Programs Do

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- **Level 2: Superkids’ Club** (usually taught second semester of kindergarten) This level continues children’s phonics instruction by teaching the remaining 13 letters of the alphabet, one sound for each, and how to write the capital and lowercase forms. With each new letter they learn, children are able to decode and encode (spell) more and more words. They read longer decodable stories as the level progresses, and lessons continue to develop their comprehension and vocabulary through reading. Expressive writing is taught the same way as in the previous level, but as children increase their knowledge of letters and sounds, they are able to write more words themselves.
- **Level 3: Adventures of the Superkids** (usually taught first semester of first grade) This level steps up students’ phonics instruction by teaching more complex letter-sound relationships, such as digraphs and long-vowel sounds. Instead of focusing just on individual letter-sounds, children learn to use word families and whole-word patterns to help them decode and encode. They also learn how to read and spell six new Memory Words—high-frequency or sight words—in every unit. The decodable stories children read in this level are longer and more complex than those in kindergarten. Lessons for each story help guide children’s understanding and explicitly teach comprehension skills and strategies. Lessons also teach and have children practice using fluency skills, such as reading with expression and natural phrasing. Explicit and systematic instruction in expressive writing teaches children how to write a wide variety of products and introduces them to the writing process.
- **Level 4: More Adventures of the Superkids** (usually taught in second semester of first grade) This level teaches more difficult phonetic elements, including r-controlled vowels and vowel combinations, such as *au*, *oi*, *oy*, and *oo*. Children learn strategies for decoding and encoding (spelling) words with variant vowel sounds. Then also continue learning to read and spell new Memory Words (sight words). By the end of this level, students are able to read and spell all 220 sight words on the Dolch Basic Word List. Comprehension and fluency skills are explicitly taught and children practice applying the skills to progressively longer and more challenging decodable stories. Instruction in expressive writing teaches children how to write additional products and use the writing process to plan, draft, revise, and publish.
- **Level 5: The Superkids Hit Second Grade** (usually taught in first semester of second grade) This level reviews, at a much faster pace, all the phonics and spelling skills taught in the first-grade levels of the program. The goal is for children to master these essential skills so that they are confident, automatic decoders and spellers. At the same time, this level greatly expands students’ world of reading. Children are taught how to apply comprehension skills to a wide variety of authentic fiction—including folktales, historical fiction, and realistic chapter books—and to nonfiction science and social studies articles in SUPER Magazine. Children’s vocabulary and fluency are also developed through their instruction with these materials, plus a Decodable Reader. Expressive writing skills are



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Quality Curriculum & Instructional Practices	
<p>SEC. 5203. APPLICATIONS. "...Each application ...[shall contain]... a description of the educational program..., including ...the curriculum and instructional practices to be used...."</p> <p>SEC. 5204. ADMINISTRATION. "...The Secretary shall award grants to eligible applicants ...after taking into consideration such factors as... the quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices...."</p> <p>SEC. 5204. ADMINISTRATION. "...An eligible applicant receiving a grant... may use the grant or subgrant funds only for ...initial implementation of the</p>	<p>Grounded in proven pedagogical approaches to reading, the Superkids Reading Program and Happily Ever After support best practices in teaching phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension strategies. It integrates reading instruction with other language arts skills including handwriting, expressive writing, spelling, and grammar using a motivating, enriching student materials and activities. Key strategies employed by the programs include:</p> <p>The Superkids Reading Program (Kindergarten - Grade 2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation is key to children’s success. The Superkids Reading Program features a cast of delightful characters that keep children engaged and motivated as they go about the serious work of learning to read and write. Each Superkid has a distinctive personality, special talents and interests, and problems and predicaments that young readers can relate to. With songs and stories, the Superkids carry children from lesson to lesson, capturing and sustaining interest in rigorous, disciplined, yet fun lessons.



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<p>charter school, which may include... <u>acquiring necessary equipment and educational materials and supplies</u> [and]... <u>acquiring or developing curriculum materials...."</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit phonics instruction gives children a reliable way to unlock the written word. The systematic, explicit phonics instruction at the heart of the program is thoughtfully and thoroughly designed so that children learn to decode words with continuous practice until they reach automaticity and fluency. As children decode, they are learn to encode, or write, letters for the sounds they have learned. Thus, the relationship between written and spoken language is made explicit as children write what they speak and read what they write. • Phonetically controlled vocabulary enables children to really read, not guess. In the kindergarten and first-grade levels, children’s reading consists almost exclusively of sound and symbols that have been explicitly taught. Reading phonetically controlled vocabulary encourages children to build the habit of decoding, rather than making guesses, until they can read automatically. In second grade, decodable stories are offered alongside SUPER Magazine and authentic literature, to further reinforce fluency. • The program seamlessly integrates all of the language arts. Reading skills are developed in concert with other language skills so that children understand the integration of written and spoken language. Children advance with balanced skills that can be applied to accessing, processing, and reproducing language as they “hear it, see it, say it, and write it.” In this way, all the skills are taught in multiple modalities—visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. <p>Happily Ever After (Pre-kindergarten)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation is key to children’s success. Happily Ever After includes beautifully illustrated stories; lively discussions; and variety of hands-on activities, group games, and art projects—all of which delight children. Throughout the program, clear instruction builds success step-by-step, giving children confidence as they develop the skills they need to learn to read. • Early reading skills are most effectively taught when integrated with the other language arts. Happily Ever After keeps children engaged by fully integrating reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Children listen to stories and discuss them. Children see educators write and they write themselves by dictating their ideas. Children begin to understand that written words stand for spoken thoughts and that communication is the goal of all the language arts. • Explicit instruction supports children at every step. Happily Ever After assumes nothing. Instead, it carefully breaks down and explains tasks. For example, children aren’t just asked to draw a line. First, they learn what a dot and a line are, put a crayon on the dot, and trace the line. Then, they draw a line, learn the meaning <i>under</i>, and apply that to <i>underline</i>. This explicit, systematic approach makes children successful and gives the strongest possible foundation for learning to read. • A multimodal approach develops the learning styles of all children. Strengthening the ability to learn in all modalities prepares children for reading (which involves mainly the visual modality),



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Improvement of Educational Results	
<p>SEC. 5203. APPLICATIONS. "...Each application ...[shall contain]... a description of ...the <u>methods by which the charter school will determine its progress toward achieving those objectives....</u>"</p> <p>SEC. 5204. ADMINISTRATION. "...The Secretary shall award grants ...after taking into consideration such factors as ...the <u>likelihood that the charter school grant program will meet those objectives and improve educational results for students....</u>"</p> <p>SEC. 5204. ADMINISTRATION. "...The Secretary shall award grants to eligible applicants ...after taking into consideration such factors as... the likelihood that the charter school will meet those objectives <u>and improve educational results for students....</u>"</p>	<p>Rowland Reading Foundation and independent third parties (such as university professors and academic research centers) have conducted scientific research to evaluate the effectiveness of its programs in nearly every region of the United States and with every major student group. Key findings include:</p> <p>National Pre-Post Study In the 2006–07 and 2007–08 school years, the Superkids Reading Program was tested in a national trial (83 schools in 22 states) involving 3,200 kindergarten students in 193 classrooms. The data collected showed that Superkids students made dramatic improvements from fall to spring on the Stanford Early School Achievement Test, moving on average from the 54th to the 79th percentile.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students of all ethnicities made dramatic progress – by spring, all students scored at or above the 70th percentile. • Students of all abilities made dramatic gains – on the fall test, 35% of students scored in the lowest quartile; by spring, only 11% of students scored in this quartile. • African-American students started the year at about the national average but finished the year well above the national average at the 73rd percentile. • Hispanic students started the year below the national average but finished the year well above the national average at the 70th percentile. • Low-income children scored on average at the 29th percentile in the fall; in the spring, they scored at the 66th percentile, well above the national norm with a gain of 37 percentile points. • English language learners scored on average far below the national norm at the 26th percentile in the fall; by spring, this group made striking gains, finishing the year above the national norm at the 63rd percentile, a gain of 37 percentile points. • The gender gap was reduced by nearly half. This gender gap in reading is typically observed in the earliest years of school and it grows over time. Educators increasingly believe that it is critical for boys to get a strong start in reading in the primary grades.



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<p>Continued from earlier page</p>	<p>Two-Year Impact During the 2006–2007 and 2007–2008 school years, the Superkids Reading Program was tested in a national trial involving more than 400 students in 36 classrooms in 18 schools. Students used both the kindergarten and first-grade levels, over two years. The students started kindergarten at the 54th percentile in reading compared to children nationally ended first grade at the 75th percentile. If these children had merely progressed as much as children do normally, they would have ended first grade at about the 54th percentile, so the 21-point gain is a truly remarkable result.</p> <p>Treatment/Control Studies The Center for Research on Educational Policy (CREP) conducted a quasi-experiment during the 2005–2006 school year in two schools. The sample consisted of 152 children in 8 kindergarten classrooms that used Superkids and 120 similar students in 7 classrooms that used other reading programs (control group). At the end of the school year, researchers administered the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test. According to CREP, “The results were extremely positive favoring the Superkids students.” The median percentile rank for the Superkids students was 90, while the median percentile rank of the comparison group was 68. Effect sizes ranged from 0.27 to 0.46.</p> <p>Large-Scale, National Quasi-Experiments During 2006–2007 and 2007–2008 school years, the Superkids Reading Program was tested in two large-scale, national quasi-experiments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In one kindergarten study (conducted by Dr. Geoffrey Borman at the University of Wisconsin), 23 Superkids classrooms were compared to 20 traditional basal reading classrooms in the same schools across six states. The 390 Superkids students were very similar to the 360 control group students in demographics, teachers’ experience, and baseline achievement. Students were tested at the beginning and end of the school year with the Stanford Early School Achievement Test. Results showed that Superkids students’ performance was superior to the control group's in all reading domains tested. Effect sizes ranged from 0.11 to 0.25. (See: Borman, G. D. & Dowling, N. (2009). Student and Teacher Outcomes of The Superkids Quasi-Experimental Study. <i>Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk (JESPAR)</i>, 14(3), 207-225.) • The second study (conducted by Dr. Jerome D’Agostino, associate professor at The Ohio State University) also compared Superkids classrooms to control classrooms, but the classrooms were in different schools (21 Superkids classrooms in 11 schools and 22 well-matched classrooms in 11 demographically similar schools across seven states). The 382 Superkids students and 368 control students were tested with the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. Superkids students outperformed control students in four measures of reading skills. Effect sizes ranged from .23 to .41. Dr. D’Agostino said, “The effect sizes mean that the <i>average classroom</i> using Superkids performed from 9 to 16 percentiles higher than the average control classroom after one year....”



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Support for Educationally Disadvantaged Students	
<p>SEC. 5204. ADMINISTRATION. "...The Secretary shall award grants... after taking into consideration such factors as ...the contribution that the charter schools ...will make to <u>assisting educationally disadvantaged and other students in meeting State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards</u>;</p> <p>FEDERAL REGISTER, VOL. 75, NO. 99. "... The Secretary is particularly interested in applicants that demonstrate through participant, achievement, and outcome data for students with disabilities and English learners ~ (1)</p>	<p>Differentiated instruction describes the classroom practice of tailoring teaching methods and materials based on students' documented needs. Research has shown that classrooms that differentiate instruction produce higher reading growth, for both students who need more explicit teacher-managed instruction and those who can work more independently. For example, the Superkids Reading Program is comprehensive and provides research-based core instruction and specific opportunities to meet the needs of all learners by adhering to three principles of differentiated instruction:</p> <p>Principle 1: Identify the children's needs through formal and informal assessment. The program offers formative and summative assessments so teachers can answer: <i>What does the child need? What should I teach?</i> Formal assessments in the Assessment Books include Placement Tests (or Beginning-of-the Year Test), Progress Tests and End-of-Level Tests. Teachers can informally assess</p>



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<p><u>Prior success in improving educational achievement and outcomes for students with disabilities and English learners; and (2) That the model they propose to replicate or expand serves students with disabilities and English learners at rates comparable to the rates of students with disabilities and English learners in LEAs in which their schools operate."</u></p>	<p>students using Daily Routines, daily skill work in Student Books and Word Work Books, optional blackline master activities, expressive writing assignments, discussion of comprehension questions during guided reading, and other classroom discussions.</p> <p>Principle 2: Deliver core instruction using research-based materials. The Superkids Reading Program meets the criteria for effective, research-based core reading instruction delivered to all students during a 60- to 90-minute reading block for K-1st grade and a 120-minute reading block in 2nd grade. Core, grade-level instruction is delivered systematically to the whole class to ensure that all students have the necessary sequence of skill instruction over the K-2 development span in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, reading comprehension, spelling, handwriting, writing, grammar, and mechanics. Similarly, Happily Ever After is used during core instruction for prekindergarten students.</p> <p>Principle 3: Differentiate instruction based on student needs. With the Superkids Reading Program, for example, teachers are able to address students' individual needs <i>every day</i> in small groups or one-on-one. Lessons are structured so that teachers can give struggling students more guidance on their core skill work while allowing other students to work more independently. Ten-Minute Tuck-Ins in the lessons provide additional teacher-led activities for reteaching, reinforcing, or extending skills taught in a lesson. Teachers use the activities to give targeted instruction to small groups or individuals. Guided reading instruction is done in small, homogenous groups so that teachers are able to customize the instruction to meet the specific needs of children in each group. Superkids Libraries for kindergarten and first grade provide over 100 decodable fiction and nonfiction books at three levels—easy, on-level and challenging—for additional guided reading or independent practice that matches students' reading abilities. CDs with recorded readings of core texts and Library Books are available to support struggling readers and help all students develop listening comprehension and fluency skills. Independent Activities enable students to practice core skills on their own using blackline masters and other materials. Some activities make cross-curricular connections to science, social studies, art, and other disciplines. A <i>How to Teach</i> book for each grade explains best practices for teaching the program, including how to differentiate instruction. The <i>Superkids Skill-Building Book</i> offers additional activities and tips to help teachers provide targeted instruction to meet students' needs. The Rowland Reading Foundation also offers a range of professional development opportunities for teachers to acquire best practices in differentiated instruction via on-site workshops and coaching days.</p>



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<p>SEC. 5204. ADMINISTRATION. "...The Secretary shall award grants ...after taking into consideration such factors as... the quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of those objectives...."</p> <p>SEC. 5204. ADMINISTRATION. "...The Secretary shall award grants to eligible applicants ...after taking into consideration such factors as... the quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of those objectives...."</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Assessment of Achievement</p> <p>The Superkids Reading Program and Happily Ever After programs include summative and formative assessments to help educators evaluate performance and progress and plan instruction. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial Formal Assessment – Happily Ever After and the Superkids Reading Program provide tests, one per grade, to formally assess children’s skills at the beginning of each school year. • Ongoing Informal Assessment – Every day in the Superkids Reading Program (and Happily Ever After) begins with Daily Routines that provide a quick, informal assessment of recently taught skills. Teachers have many opportunities to assess children’s individual strengths and weaknesses by observing them during lessons and reviewing completed work. Teachers can record their informal observations on the Student Record Forms in the Assessment Books. • Periodic Formal Assessment – Educators can formally assess children’s mastery of skills using the Progress Tests provided in the Assessment Book for each level of the program. These tests have separate parts to assess children’s mastery of skills taught in the level. Teachers can use these results to identify skills to reteach and students who may need additional support. The Assessment Books for second grade also include formal fluency tests. • End-of-Level Assessment – When students complete a level of the Superkids Reading Program, teachers can use the End-of-Level Test to formally assess students’ achievement in the major skill areas taught. • Standardized Tests – Teachers can supplement the various program assessments with common standardized tests such as Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test (GMRT), Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), Stanford Early School Achievement Test (SESAT), STAR Reading, or the Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI) for student placement.
<p>SEC. 5204. ADMINISTRATION. "... An eligible applicant... may use the grant or subgrant funds only for ...post-award planning and design ...which may include ...professional development of teachers and other staff who will work in the charter school...."</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Professional Development Services</p> <p>The Superkids Reading Program and Happily Ever After include initial in-service training and ongoing professional learning and coaching opportunities. For any district/school partnership, the Rowland Reading Foundation customizes services to meet teacher and administrator needs, on requested days and times. A cadre of literacy coaches, in-service training professionals, and program experts are located throughout the country to provide implementation support. A recommended training plan involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1: Initial in-service foundation and implementation training, two to three (2-3) coaching visits per classroom, administrator orientation training, parent orientation event, professional development seminars, and a third-grade awareness meeting. • Years 2–3: In-service training for experienced teachers, train-the-trainer workshops to build



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Ways to Involve Parents	
<p>SEC. 5203. APPLICATIONS. "...Each application ...[shall contain]... a description of how parents ... will be involved in the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school..."</p> <p>FEDERAL REGISTER, VOL. 75, NO. 99. "Describe how parents and other members of the community will be involved..."</p>	<p>The Superkids Reading Program and Happily Ever After encourage educators to develop strong connections with families. Teachers frequently report children’s progress, suggest activities that adults can do at home, and actively involve parents in student learning. Ideas promoted in the programs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a Parent Orientation at the beginning of the school year to give families an overview of how Happily Ever After or the Superkids Reading Program will help develop their child as a reader. Throughout the school year, host family reading nights in the classroom so children can share with their families what they’ve been reading and writing. • Use the Take-Home Letters (provided in English and Spanish) to let families know what their child has been learning in the program and suggest activities to do at home to reinforce the skills taught. • Share students’ work with their families. Send home completed Student Books or Word Workbook pages, Daily Dictation and Handwriting work, blackline masters, expressive writing assignments, Book Talk Journals (for grade 2 only), spelling tests, Progress and End-of-Level Tests. Retain some materials for at-school conferences, particularly work that shows how a student is struggling, making progress, or excelling. • Encourage At-Home Activities, such as:



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Reading aloud to a child. Send read-aloud book suggestions home to help families choose books that connect to concepts and topics students are currently reading or learning about at school.- Independent reading. Allow children to take home Superkids Library Books or other books so they can experience the pleasure of reading on their own or aloud to their family.- Talking about books and ideas. Give families engaging questions and topics to discuss related to what children have been reading or studying.

