

# SHO-BAN NEWS

## SRA *Imagine It!* Program Details

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Blackfoot School District's elementary schools hit hard the core basics of reading and writing this year by implementing a unified district wide reading/language arts program called SRA *Imagine It!*

This year the school district purchased new 2008 *Imagine It!* textbooks, putting all K-5 students on the same page.

The new pilot program is the newest edition of the program formally known as SRA *Open Court*, which has been used by Blackfoot's elementary schools for the last decade.

The main difference is that many of the textbooks used have varied from elementary to elementary based on the publishing year some students studying in 2002 textbooks while others were studying in 1998 textbooks.

The new textbooks allow all schools to be using the same textbooks. Now if a student were to transition from one elementary in the district to another that

student will not miss any of the reading as the program allows correlation between schools.

In addition to district monies, Idaho State Superintendent Tom Luna implemented funds to help the district purchase this pilot program. K-5 teachers received training during teacher in-services on Sept. 5 and 6 for three-hour long sessions each day. The training included how to use the program as well as what district expectations to complete the program included.

Blackfoot Superintendent Dr. Scott L. Crane also mandated during the training that the program be used for 90-minute reading blocks in each elementary classroom. Teachers are not only using this mandated time, but often extending it to fit the needs of their own students.

### THE PROGRAM

A research-based instruction, *Imagine It!*, uses a three-prong approach in phonics instruction, reading modules and language writing skills.

One of the main emphases is a 90-minute teacher-directed reading block in each classroom each day the extent of the material flows from fluency, grammar, writing, comprehension, workbook, story and theme connections.

The curriculum serves as a basis for spelling, grammar and writing as well without having to add additional programs to perform those curriculum functions. Students learn to blend, read, spell and communicate throughout the 90-minute reading block.

Each lesson plan uses the concept/question board to help students understand and explore what they are learning. In essence, students see material multiple times through pre-teaching concepts, teaching and re-teaching lessons as well as through workstation activities and games.

The variety of lesson ideas helps students to learn in a variety of ways.

According to first grade Wapello Elementary teacher Joy Mickelson, the program is aggressive with each of the concepts and provides ways

for teachers to better assess their students' needs.

"What truly increases a student's skill is repeated exposure to the concept," Mickelson said. "This program repeats while they are learning the concept as well as reinforces later on in the curriculum."

In addition, students learn the correct vocabulary while learning, Mickelson said.

"Parents are amazed that their first grader will be able to show the difference between a declarative

sentence and a pronoun and explain it in those words," Mickelson said.

After each test, a teacher can see which students are struggling and revisit the material again. The assessment plan given in the program should help teacher's narrow the gap to meet the Adequate Yearly Progress scores. In addition, it is one of the few programs available to schools that meet all reading requirements for the "No Child Left Behind" Act.

"We don't have to guess what will help our students," Mickelson said.

"The lesson provides research driven additional helps to students who do not understand specific concepts. If a parent were to ask me how to help their child, I could easily provide this up front." In addition to all of these functions, if parents need material to help their child learn, materials can be found on the Internet at [www.SRA4kids.com](http://www.SRA4kids.com) or [www.SRAonline.com](http://www.SRAonline.com) to match any unit their student is working on.

Administrators and teachers are increasingly excited about this program and have already seen results of this effective teaching style.

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**1-800-201-7103**

Resources and ordering information at [SRAonline.com](http://SRAonline.com)