

# Success with HOSTS

highlights from our case studies

## WORKING WITH STUDENTS IN POVERTY

*Flint, Michigan Beats the Odds With HOSTS Program (February 2005)*

With 75% of the student population in Flint, Michigan living below the poverty level, the fight to help students succeed is an uphill battle. Standing on the front line is a determined team of district officials and educators who aren't willing to let them fail. According to Patti Davis, the principal of Cumming Elementary School located in one of the more acute areas of Flint, "At-risk takes on a whole new meaning in Flint. Some of our students hadn't even spoken a word much less used a crayon before entering the school system." In the first year the district saw dramatic gains. **For students in the HOSTS program the average growth across the district was 1.27 years with an increase in average reading levels that, for some students, exceeded 2 years.**

## SERVING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

*Leipsic, Ohio Serves Students With Disabilities and Title I Through Intervention Program (December 2004)*

Nestled in the bean and cornfields of Northwestern Ohio, Leipsic Elementary School has forged new ground for educators. In just one school year, they would overcome an "academic watch" label, reinvigorate the community, and break the educational barriers that faced students with disabilities. Within one month the HOSTS program was deployed, immediately increasing Leipsic's capacity to serve struggling students from 20 to 70 students per year. Not only were they able to serve over three times the number of students, but **the students being served were making an average of two years possible gain in a single school year.** Each year, on average, 70 community members, 15 Bluffton University students and 60 Leipsic High School students volunteer their time to the HOSTS program. In fact, many of the students who had previously been mentored in the HOSTS program are now returning to the school as mentors.

## UNITING COMMUNITIES AND SCHOOLS

*Tennessee School District Unites With Community for Student Achievement (October 2004)*

The Dyersburg City Schools System, in Tennessee, faced tough challenges during the 2001-2002 school year. This was the year that the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act placed new academic performance accountability pressures on school officials. "HOSTS provided our school system with an opportunity to expand our relationship with the community in an academically structured program that truly makes a difference in children's lives," said Lloyd Ramer, superintendent of the Dyersburg City Schools System. School officials soon discovered, with just a little effort, finding mentors would be easier than they first thought. The HOSTS program provided an opportunity for Dyersburg citizens to make a meaningful contribution. As Judy Hickman, Director of Federal Programs for the Dyersburg City Schools System recalls, "once mentors began seeing their students progress they told a friend, and they told a friend, and so on." "HOSTS has literally transformed my students," said Mike French, Teacher at Dyersburg Intermediate School. **"I have children who entered the HOSTS program 2-3 years below grade level who have progressed to become some of my best readers.** It is certainly an answer to a prayer for some students who have never been given a chance to succeed."

## SUCCEEDING WITH ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

*Runn Elementary Conquers Low-Performance (June 2004)*

1994 was a dismal year for Runn Elementary School in Donna, Texas. Only two students in the fourth grade passed all areas of the state test, making the school the lowest ranking in the state. From all appearances, the future of Runn Elementary School was bleak. With the relentless determination of school principal Ofelia Gaona, the staff, the students, the community and the implementation of a learning solution from HOSTS Learning that taught children in both their native language (Spanish) and English, Runn Elementary School defied all odds and became a nationally acclaimed educational success story. In just ten years, Runn Elementary School's state proficiency test scores have flipped. In 1994 there were only two students who passed in all areas. **This year, 91 percent of the students passed the overall exams.**