Abstract

This study collected research on students from an elementary school, in a rural city, in the southeastern part of the United States, in individual fourth and fifth grade classes and a fourth/fifth split class, to determine whether split classes were beneficial to students. The researcher collected data from two school years; 2016-2017 and 2017-2018. The study specifically looks at the students MAP scores in reading and math. The scores were separated between individual grade classrooms and split classrooms. Percentages were calculated based on the total number of students in the classes divided by the number of students per scoring level. The results indicated that a higher percentage of students in the split class performed proficient or distinguished in reading than the individual grade classrooms. In math, students in the split class also performed a higher percentage of distinguished than the individual grade classrooms.

Procedure

- Data was gathered in a fourth grade classroom, fifth grade classroom, and a split fourth and fifth grade classroom from the school years 2016-2017 and 2017-2018.
- Students MAP scores in reading and math were collected from the end of the year testing.
- Students’ scores are placed in different categories; Novice being the lowest, Apprentice, Proficient, and Distinguished being the highest.
- A graph was made to visually see the impact split classes have on test scores.

Results

Figure 1 shows the results of reading MAP scores among individual fourth and fifth grade classrooms and a fourth/fifth grade split classroom from the years 2016-2017 and 2017-2018. With distinguished being the highest scoring level a student can get on a MAP test, and novice being the lowest, the split class had a higher percentage in their distinguished scores than the individual class. In 2016-2017, 12% of the individual grade classrooms scored distinguished, while 21% of the split class scored distinguished. When looking at the scores for the 2017-2018 school year, the percent of the distinguished scores for the split class were almost seven times the percentage of the individual grade classroom scores.

Figure 2 shows the results of math MAP scores among the individual classes and the split classes over the same years. In 2016-2017, the split class scored more than three times the percentage that the individual grade classes did in proficient. While their scores were close in distinguished, the individual class had 7% of their students while the split class had 9%. The students in the split class had 18% of their class scoring distinguished while 6% of the individual grade classrooms scored distinguished. Overall, the students in the fourth/fifth split class had a higher percentage of students in proficient and distinguished than the fourth and fifth grade individual grade classrooms for their MAP reading and math scores.

Research