

# SOI<sup>®</sup> CERTIFIED LEARNING

ANNUAL REPORT  
2017 -2018 SCHOOL YEAR

## INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION AND SOI CERTIFIED LEARNING

Individual Instruction — personified by the image of a tutor working one-on-one with a student — is the gold standard in education. Tutoring is superior instruction because it allows students to work at their own pace while the tutor is constantly monitoring progress and is available whenever a student needs help or guidance.

This type of teaching is especially important in the formative years (kindergarten to grade three) when children first encounter the world of formal education, and are most susceptible to learning difficulties. Early failures, if unobserved or otherwise unaddressed, become fissures in the students' foundations for learning. They are very difficult to repair and almost always compromise further educational development.

Unfortunately, individual instruction is not the norm in public schooling because the authorities do not believe that one teacher — or even a teacher and an aide — can be personal tutor(s) to a classroom of 20-plus pupils. As a consequence, the most effective instructional system has been eschewed as practically impossible.

SOI Certified Learning, contrary to this conventional wisdom, can provide individual instruction on a classroom scale, well within the limits of current fiscal expenditure.



# DEFINING FEATURES

## CONTINUOUS PROGRESS

Students learn at their own pace on every lesson assigned; students do not move through the curriculum en masse. Those students who need less time to master a lesson are free to proceed without having to wait for the group, and, more importantly, those students, who need more than the allotted time, are given that opportunity without penalty — there is no stigma or labeling for being slower than average. Continuous progress creates the time for individual attention when it is needed.

## IMMEDIATE INTERVENTION

The second feature of individual instruction is providing help when it is needed. Curricular units are sequential by definition and so any lesson not mastered can affect the potential for learning future assignments. Consequently, the most effective and efficient time for learning help is immediately when learning falters.

While the importance of immediacy for intervention may seem obvious, it is sacrificed in school environs where there are inflexible time limits for learning each lesson. Under those circumstances, there is no time for immediate intervention, so the slow learner is constantly in jeopardy of not building a solid learning foundation.

## LEVELS OF INTERVENTION

There are three levels of intervention.

1. Immediate teacher collaboration: When informed of a student's learning difficulty, the teacher confers with the student to define the problem and to help find a resolution.
2. Online consultation: The system provides a Consultant who has years of experience with the Certified Learning curriculum; she is available online whenever the teacher needs assistance in any given case.
3. On-site learning center: For those students who need learning help beyond the resources of the classroom, there is an on-site learning center to address those problems. (It is worth noting that Continuous Progress supports these remedial detours without any loss of curriculum content; the returning students pick up exactly where they left off.)

## CURRICULUM STRUCTURE

The curriculum structure must support continuous progress. This means that the curriculum must be segmented into lesson modules of a practical duration that can be administered independently. Our curriculum is segmented into modules of one- or two-week duration. The designed duration is an expectation as to when most students will master the lesson, but it is only that — an expectation that provides a marker to judge each student's progress. If students exceed that expectation to any great degree, it is a sign of a potential learning problems and prompts a need for an intervention.

## **LESSON PROGRESS AND MASTERY**

When students complete a lesson, they are administered a brief test to insure that they have mastered the unit. If the test shows mastery, the student is assigned to the next unit in the curriculum. If the test shows less than mastery, the student is required to repeat the unit until mastery is achieved. In other words, all progress is built on success. There is no progress without success and, significantly, students understand that they are building — lesson-by-lesson — a solid learning foundation.

## **LEARNING INDEPENDENCE**

Learning independence is a goal of every classroom — the more students are independent and self-reliant, the more time there is for in-depth teaching. Learning independence is encouraged in a continuous progress model because each student is self-aware of building his or her own learning repertoire and aware how much easier learning becomes as they progress by a program of success.

## **CURRICULUM PRESENTATION**

The curriculum content is presented in three different learning-mode streams:

1. Physical mode: Teaching perceptual skills, school-behavior norms, kinesthetic learning — taught in a small group led by the teacher.
2. Workbook mode: Teaching learning abilities, small motor skills, basic curriculum content — taught in a small group led by the aide (primarily to help with instructions, and administering mastery tests).
3. Computer mode: Teaching learning concepts and basic content curriculum — taught independently with the computer supplying auditory instructions.

The students rotate through the three learning centers each day. All learning is accomplished individually; within each mode, the students are progressing independently.

## **LESSON ASSIGNMENT AND MONITORING**

Students work on three assigned lessons per day. They work on each lesson for approximately 20-30 minutes and then rotate to another assigned lesson. They are tracked on all lessons daily to detect excessive time or other indications of learning difficulties. All problems detected are conveyed to the teacher for intervention.

# RESULTS FOR 2017-2018

The students enrolled in Certified Learning in 2017-2018 were representative of the general school population — students on free lunch, and students who have special needs, among others — drawn from populations representing the full range of economic circumstances.

**STUDENTS: 244**

**CLASSROOMS: 15**

**DISTRICTS: 4**

## LEARNING MASTERY ACHIEVED

Certified Learning demands learning mastery, so our primary measure of success is how often the students achieved mastery. Our record for the current year is 98%.

**NUMBER OF LESSONS ASSIGNED: 13,124**

**NUMBER OF LESSONS MASTERED: 12,898**

**SUCCESS RATE OF INSTRUCTION: 98%**



## METRIC OF ACHIEVEMENT

This metric of success — the number of lessons mastered — stands in contrast to the conventional metric that measures how much of the total “curriculum-exposure” is assimilated by the students.

The achievement metric of lesson mastery is more aligned with the goal of public education — to provide an adequate education for every student. By mastery criteria, a student who progresses through the entire curriculum will, by definition, have acquired the academic skills for social participation — being literate, having a working knowledge of basic math, and understanding the fundamentals of semantic logic.

We acknowledge that not all students will have mastered all 73 (one year’s curriculum) lessons in one year’s time; but it is our contention that thoroughly learning a portion of the curriculum is superior to “learning” the whole curriculum in greater or lesser degrees of inadequacy. Students who complete the third grade on our terms will be prepared for the rigors of more advanced learning; if it takes them an extra half-year or so, it will have been well worth their time.

## ACHIEVEMENT RECORD: 2017-2018

For the participating districts using Certified Learning as their basic curriculum — five days per week — the record of achievement was exemplary:

**25% ACHIEVED 1.5 TO 2 YEARS MASTERY**

**58% ACHIEVED 1 TO 1.4 YEARS MASTERY**

**17% ACHIEVED .7 TO .9 YEARS MASTERY**

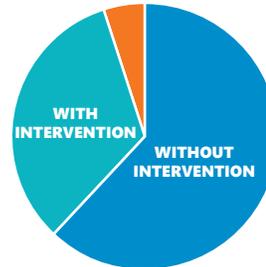
In other words, 83% achieved mastery for 1 year or more; and those who did achieve a full year, achieved mastery of three-quarters or more of the year.

### INSTRUCTIONAL EFFICIENCY

The efficiency of the program is supported by continuous progress. Students, working independently (without any teacher or aide assistance), mastered their lessons 62% of the time. This means that the teacher and aide can devote this time to the 38% who need some help.

**LESSONS MASTERED INDEPENDENTLY: 62%**

**LESSONS REQUIRING INTERVENTION: 38%**



With this unencumbered time at their disposal, the instructional personnel were very effective helping the students — their interventions were successful 95% of the time. Out of the 4,987 learning difficulties that were encountered, they worked with the students to resolve all but 226 of them.

This degree of success far exceeds the traditional form of intervention. In-classroom interventions are more efficient than referral to extra-classroom resources, because:

- They are timely — provided immediately when the learning difficulty occurs.
- They are not allowed to proliferate — they are addressed one at a time rather than going unattended until the accumulated mass is beyond the classroom resources.
- The teacher — with the aid of the online Consultant — is privy to the student’s learning history, which may contribute to the appropriate resolution.

### IMPROVING INSTRUCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Certified Learning has a year-to-year improvement program.

### IMPROVING TEACHING MODULES

We know from our monitoring records that some lessons invoke more learning difficulties than others; these need to be reviewed as to their position in the curriculum, their internal length, or, simply, to their instructional inadequacy. This review is undertaken at the conclusion of each year.

### IMPROVING INTERVENTION DATA

We also know that we can improve intervention efficiency by providing better tracking data to the teachers. We currently inform them when an intervention is needed, but we do not provide them with focused information as to the progress of the intervention itself (they now are required to track the progress by extracting it from the overall classroom data). We need to do the extraction for them and compile a history of the intervention from start to resolution.

# SUMMARY

Certified Learning is a system that provides individual instruction to all students at a classroom level. It provides a learning foundation for all students K-2. In full-time implementation, it has a record of 98% lesson mastery for all students. In that context, 83% of the students achieved one to two years growth. The 17% who did not achieved a full year's growth achieved at least three-quarters of a year.

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