

1

Making Differentiation Successful for Students and Teachers

For the past nine years, as principal and differentiation coach, we have guided an elementary school to understand and implement principles of differentiation as a core schoolwide change initiative. Making differentiation the heart of professional practice has been our goal as we strive to help every student succeed. Our work has been rewarding, insightful, heartwarming, hopeful, and amazing. It has also been challenging, arduous, exacting, and, at times, difficult. As we look back, we can see how far we have come. The roles and relationships of teachers and students have changed, new learning communities have evolved, and there have been paradigm shifts in thinking about curriculum, assessment, and instruction. We are eager to share details about the rewards of our journey and insights we have gained along the way. Rather than teach the fundamentals of differentiation, we hope to broaden and deepen existing knowledge and understanding about differentiation by sharing conversations with teachers who have been part of this journey. As professionals who have embraced differentiation and applied its core principles in their classrooms every day, their willingness to share their thinking about how they plan for diverse learning needs is a priceless contribution. We have organized the story of our journey thus far around their words in hopes of providing new perspectives, fresh ideas for application, novel interpretations, and encouragement for others striving to gain expertise in differentiation. Our intent is not to offer recipes, formulas, or templates. We hope the lessons we have learned, and continue to learn, may serve to nourish and

sustain the kind of change required when a whole school makes the decision to teach responsively.

SECOND-ORDER CHANGE

Effective schoolwide differentiation requires second-order change (Fullan, 2001). Second-order change is always a dramatic departure from the status quo. It asks teachers to adjust their lenses regarding how they teach and to leave their comfort zones in terms of how they access and use curriculum and assessment. It forces them to become novices again and to take risks. Second-order change through schoolwide differentiation, messy though it may be in the learning process, is the only way to assure all students access to high-quality learning. While we recognize that every teacher wants to meet the learning needs of all students, a schoolwide differentiation initiative forces a major paradigm shift in thinking by asking all teachers to examine deeply how they design curriculum and deliver instruction. As they assess their pedagogy, the question becomes “How can I meet the widely varying needs of students in today’s classroom as effectively as possible?”

The search for the answer to this question led one school’s faculty into a study of differentiation that had a beginning point, but that we now know has no ending point. The more we discover about the students we teach, the more information we gain about how to help each one achieve autonomy and independence. This forms a feedback loop that leads to the search for new ways to build bridges between students and content, students and students, and students and teachers in order to support, inspire, guide, and motivate everyone. We see this search as a richly rewarding and never-ending challenge.

A SNAPSHOT OF CONWAY SCHOOL AND ITS CULTURE

Narvaez and Brimijoin began their work in 2000 at Conway School, a public elementary school in the Ladue school district in St. Louis, Missouri. Conway’s student population numbers 390 students, and the total district population is approximately 3,400 students. The Conway student population is ethnically, socioeconomically, and academically diverse. The ethnic composition includes approximately 73 percent Caucasian, 10 percent African American, with the remainder comprised of Asian, Hispanic, and East Indian students. Approximately 5 percent of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch, and almost 17 percent receive special-education services. Conway’s support staff includes a counselor, a nurse, a music teacher, a librarian, an art teacher, two physical education teachers, two Learning Lab (reading) teachers, and an instructional technology coordinator.

The Ladue school district is recognized as a premier district in Missouri. Approximately 92 percent of its high school graduates attend college. Conway has a rigorous academic program with high standards. Ladue is one of the few incentive pay districts in the country. Teacher salaries are based upon performance and contributions. The incentive pay system has been in effect for over 50 years, and Ladue attracts highly dedicated professionals. Conway has a wonderful mixture of novice and master teachers, which creates an atmosphere of enthusiasm, expertise, and innovation.

CONWAY STARTS ON THE PATH TO DIFFERENTIATION

What were the factors that propelled Conway on its journey toward differentiation? When Lane Narvaez became principal in July of 1995, she spent the majority of her first year listening to parents, students, and teachers, and observing in classrooms. The first thing she noticed was the inconsistency in approaches to reading. Scaffolding for phonics and reading was not uniform at all grade levels and teachers recognized this as a weakness. A committee was formed comprised of teachers from every grade level, along with specialists, to select a reading program for the school. New teachers needed a guide as a foundation for articulated and consistent reading strategies across grade levels. The new reading textbook served as a foundation and was arranged according to themes; the teachers, working on grade-level teams, built upon this. Providing common grade-level planning times during the day helped foster the team concept. To improve communication with parents as to teaching and learning in the classroom, a newsletter was written by each teacher and sent home on Fridays.

In 1996, the Ladue district had formed curriculum committees in each discipline to align curriculum objectives with the new Missouri standards. During curriculum meetings, board meetings, and administrative discussions, there was an emphasis on meeting the needs of students at all ability levels. The Ladue district has a gifted program in the elementary grades and students receive 150 minutes a week of pullout instruction. In addition, Learning Lab staff members teach students identified with reading weaknesses for 30 minutes each day. As Conway reviewed its efforts to meet the varied needs of its students, these questions emerged: Are these minutes enough to meet the different learning needs of our students? What happens during the vast majority of the time when these students are in the regular classroom? How well are we meeting the learning styles, readiness levels, and interests of all the students in a classroom?

Learning circles were formed across the faculty, and as they met, differentiation was frequently mentioned as staff attempted to answer the tough questions that had been raised. Each time differentiation was mentioned, however, the definition was a little different, but from these discussions three distinct sets of goals emerged to form the foundation for a schoolwide focus on differentiation.

Student-based goals included the following:

- To meet the needs of gifted students beyond the limited pullout services provided by the district.
- To meet the needs of students requiring extra support.
- To ensure that every student could demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the curriculum standards for Missouri.

Teacher-based goals included the following:

- To establish consistency in defining differentiation and understanding its purpose.
- To learn to balance learning-style differentiation with differentiation by readiness and interest. Whenever interest-based differentiation was mentioned, teachers had real concerns that there was not enough time to explore this option because of curricular demands. They needed a road map for experimentation.

- To provide images of effective differentiation in practice. In some cases, teachers had no image at all. For example, new teachers were not trained in differentiation in their teacher preparation programs.
- To build a rationale for implementing preassessment at the beginning of the lesson. Students frequently completed two or three activities before reaching material on their instructional level. The lesson might be differentiated, but lacked a clear, sharp connection between preassessment and learning goals.
- To design curriculum and instruction so that learning goals would be aligned with assessment, and learning experiences would be consistent with the goals as well as being purposeful, powerful, and relevant.
- To validate music, physical education, art, and library instruction by including them in the comprehensive study of differentiated instruction.

District-based goals included the following:

- To address the district strategic plan for personalized learning programs to meet all student needs.
- To introduce innovative strategies to meet state and district standards for learning.

In search of a specific design for professional development, Lane reflected on the key elements that made Conway successful as a school. The high degree of collegiality among her staff was a factor she wanted to build upon. She wanted the whole team to learn and share ideas as they went through the process. She wanted a common dialogue. The goal was to have everyone learning and growing as a school unit.

Lane decided that she herself needed additional professional development on differentiation and enrolled in a three-day workshop conducted by Carol Tomlinson, Professor of Educational Leadership, Foundations, and Policy at the Curry School of Education, University of Virginia, and a noted authority on differentiation. Dr. Tomlinson presented both a global introduction and opportunities for smaller, subject-specific, breakout sessions with some of her colleagues. Kay Brimijoin, at that time a doctoral student of Dr. Tomlinson's, conducted a focus session on professional development models for differentiation. After her three days of study, Lane believed that differentiation was the direction that Conway should take and that Kay could facilitate the journey. Kay brought a range of expertise to the initiative. She was grounded in theory and research that supported differentiation and was a practitioner with 25 years of experience who could relate to teachers at the classroom level. She also had administrative experience coordinating the gifted program for a Virginia school district. With a vision taking shape in her mind, Lane knew that her role was to bring the information back to her staff and inspire them to take the journey with her.

A STAFF DEVELOPMENT MODEL FOR DIFFERENTIATION EMERGES

Conway was already considered a high-performing school. The majority of the staff consisted of master teachers who were very successful. All had been trained for a minimum of five days in learning-style theory (Silver, Strong, & Perini, 2000) and were already proficient in creating lessons that addressed the different learning styles of their students. The introduction of differentiation by readiness and interest

was the new piece for the staff. Lane would be asking them to take a risk, shed their expert mantles, and become learners again. Change is uncomfortable in any circumstance, and it is important to motivate a staff to believe that change is necessary. Conway's faculty needed reasons to step out of their comfort zones and move from the expert to novice level. Jim Collins's advice in *Good to Great* provided some motivation (2001). Collins states, "Good is the enemy of great. We don't have great schools principally because we have good schools. . . . To go from good to great requires transcending the curse of competence" (pp. 1, 13). The ensuing dialogue raised the question "Are we as good at reaching all learners as we can be?" Lane and her teachers discussed what characteristics made a good school a great school, and by the end of their discussion the entire group was on board for the change process.

To begin a study of differentiation successfully, Conway's teachers needed to develop a common vocabulary, a common vision, and an interdependent support system as they progressed. They began their exploration of differentiation by reading Tomlinson's book, *How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed Ability Classrooms* (1998). At their summer retreat that year, Kay expanded their understanding of the philosophy of differentiation and the journey officially began.

Three essential conditions guided Lane's initial design of staff development in differentiation. The first was that professional learning would be ongoing and consistent. Change theory and research indicated that it would take a minimum of three years to bring about alterations in practice that would demonstrate that teachers had internalized the key principles of differentiation (Fullan, 2001). In fact, research also showed it would take at least that long, or longer, for all teachers to use new differentiation behaviors flexibly and appropriately when they were on their own (Joyce & Showers, 2002). The message was "We are in it for the long haul."

The second essential condition was that expert coaching and feedback would follow all general instruction, demonstrations, and modeling of theory, knowledge, and skills related to differentiation. Peer collaboration and observation were important parts of the professional learning plan, but an "expert" would observe and coach everyone in a differentiated lesson. The coach could help teachers analyze and reflect on their lessons and Kay would be that coach. Research on how people learn showed that putting an expert in place for debriefing and feedback would more likely result in innovative practice (Berliner, 1988; Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000).

The third essential condition was that 100 percent of the faculty would be involved in this initiative. No one would participate intermittently or be present only for workshops. For this model, all regular classroom teachers and special-area teachers would be involved in every aspect of the professional development model. This rationale stemmed from research showing that, when all teachers on a faculty are involved in good staff development followed by peer coaching, 90 percent or better transfer their training into changed practice (Joyce & Showers, 2002). The goal was to get as close to a 100 percent rate of transfer as possible. It is important to note that, as Joyce and Showers explain, "good" staff development content means that "it can help students increase their capability to learn" (p. 47, 2002). This was the primary goal—that in-depth study and coaching in differentiation would build innovations in practice that would result in higher student achievement for all students at Conway in each and every classroom. Rather than organizing formal, peer coaching teams at the outset of this initiative, Conway began with the expert coaching element, followed by shared reflections among staff at faculty meetings. The wisdom gained from expert modeling and the spotlighting of successes led to the natural development of peer coaching teams over time.

In discussing the imperatives of this initiative and the roles of each individual, it is important to mention the role of the principal. The principal's participation in all professional development was essential. First, it signaled to teachers that she was vested in the change initiative. Second, it demonstrated that the principal was also willing to shift to the novice level along with the staff. She discarded the role of instructional leader and became an instructional learner. The rich dialogue between the principal and staff could not have occurred without the principal becoming a participant in the learning experience along with the staff. The expert coach is an essential element, but it is the principal who works with the staff on lesson development and student learning for the majority of the school year. At the present time, educational funding resources in all districts are finite, and funding for expert coaching may not go on indefinitely. Without principal involvement in all aspects of the professional development initiative, the transfer of roles from the coach to the principal would not have been possible. It was also through the principal-as-learner role that trust in the principal as evaluator in the differentiation initiative evolved.

LESSONS AS A STAFF DEVELOPMENT MODEL GROWS

Through our years of study, we have been reminded again and again that a professional development model that truly works is never static (Schlechty, 1997). The professionals who are "being developed" must breathe life into the model, assess progress at incremental points along the way, and transform it accordingly as they grow and change. Throughout the years, as the Conway model has taken shape, we have observed differences in the depth of teacher understanding of differentiation. These differences demanded that professional development be differentiated, creating a kind of Russian doll experience—teaching about differentiation while differentiating.

We realized at the outset that one of the most difficult obstacles to overcome when beginning staff development in differentiation is a general belief among teachers that they are already differentiating instruction. When asked, teachers often explain that they have grouped students by readiness and are therefore differentiating. In reality, these "readiness groups" are often inflexible, placing many students in a holding position that is unresponsive to formative assessment data. When asked how preassessment was used to determine readiness, many teachers answered that they knew their students' levels because they worked with them on a daily basis. However, they did not have accurate data on the skill being taught. It was like taking target practice blindfolded—sometimes they were on the mark and other times they didn't even hit the target. Our staff development journey to truly understanding both the philosophy and practice of differentiation has resembled peeling away the layers of an onion to get at the core of how and why teachers respond to learners' needs. Defining and describing the major shifts in teacher learning as we assessed progress along the way may help others as they focus on differentiation as a core change initiative.

The Teacher as Facilitator

As expertise in differentiation grows, teachers shift from delivering all instruction to being facilitators in the classroom. It is difficult for many teachers to "give up control" of the classroom learning and turn it over to the students.

Teachers learn that by effectively matching student needs to teacher-designed tasks, they are freer to monitor the class and be more responsive to students as they work. With students actively engaged, the teacher then gains time to work with small groups in mini-lessons or in a “clinic” format when there are questions or concepts that are unclear.

Changing the Learning Community

As teachers embrace the rationale of differentiation and adopt it as a fundamental philosophy of teaching and learning, they realize their students need to understand the rationale for differentiation as well. Fairness, a standard all students expect, had traditionally been seen as “everyone getting the same assignment.” As teachers began to have explicit conversations with students about how each member of the class learned in a unique way and that the teacher’s job was to design learning tasks to fit each student, a shift occurred in the definition of fairness. Students began to see that fairness is, in fact, everyone “getting an assignment that is right for them.” This shift transforms the learning community into a place where everyone has value, can make a contribution, and is seen as worthy and productive. Students also learn that while they may struggle in one subject area, they have strengths in others.

Student Feedback

The role of student feedback in response to lessons is a major shift. Before the new initiative began, teachers had not asked students for their reflections on a lesson. By having teachers ask for input, students feel more vested in their learning, and teachers receive valuable information as to what needs to be changed or which students need help meeting the learning goals. The students become mirrors for the teacher. Their feedback tells teachers *how* and *what* to adjust in future instruction.

Anchor Activities

Another major shift is in recognizing the importance of having anchor activities in place for proactive management in a differentiated classroom. When they first began differentiating in earnest, teachers had difficulty managing varied and simultaneous groups or assignments. For example, it is obvious that first graders cannot sit through descriptions of several tasks before beginning with their own assignments. Another management problem involves the unpredictability of when individuals would complete tasks. If the teacher waits for all students to finish, those who finish early have nothing to do. Anchor activities are the answer in both cases. As teachers begin to implement them consistently and train students in how to use them, management issues can decrease markedly and even disappear. Teachers also learn that anchor activities do not always need to occur at the end of the lesson. They realize that using them at the outset can “buy” time, allowing the teacher to explain activities to each specific group while the rest of the class focuses on the anchor activity. Consistent use of anchor activities also builds independence in students, allowing the teacher the flexibility of working with individuals more frequently during the student-centered segment of instruction.

Peer Observations and Collaboration

One of the positive outcomes of schoolwide differentiation is that everyone in the school is involved in the learning process. This involvement leads to a shift in how teachers discuss their practice and how they share strategies and successful lessons with their colleagues. Peer observations help to broaden the scope of these discussions but do not necessarily emerge naturally. Although Conway teachers were often offered an opportunity to observe each other's classes, they were reluctant to "cross the line" and go into a colleague's room to observe a lesson and share feedback. In the second year, there was a requirement that every staff member observe at least one differentiated lesson presented by a colleague. The observation could be at any grade level or in a specialty area. This step was key in "breaking the ice" and produced added benefits. Teachers now realize the advantage of having another set of eyes observing a lesson and how the students respond to differentiation. The peer observer becomes another helper for the teacher, and the dialogue after the lesson opens the door for deeper collaboration within or across grade levels. From here, teachers learn to plan lessons together and to share their lessons. When one grade level learned of a successful lesson that incorporated a new strategy, they went to the teacher who had taught it to discuss the lesson. Teachers also realize that, by sharing, they can multiply the number of differentiated lessons ready to teach at their grade level, boosting each other's confidence, and working "smart." This really helps with the time issue, which is a concern when creating new lessons.

Rigor

Somewhere during the second year of our study of differentiation, teachers began analyzing the rigor required for students at varying readiness levels. They began to realize that if they effectively differentiate by readiness they should be expecting the same complex thinking skills of all groups. They noticed that many skill activities for the struggling learners were at the literal level of comprehension and rewrote the activities to more adequately stretch all groups equally. In addition, they began to see that they could give certain students more sophisticated tasks but modify by providing specific tools or aids that would give them the support they needed. For example, one teacher knew that a student had the ability to work with a math concept being taught at the analysis and application level. However, he had not mastered multiplication, a requisite skill for this particular task. She provided the student with multiplication tables, which allowed him to use his critical thinking skills to problem solve effectively and successfully meet the challenge of the task. Experiences like this move teachers to place more emphasis on flexible grouping and scaffolding.

Preassessment

The shift regarding preassessment was huge and took about three years to evolve. Since there were formal or standardized assessment results for all students, teachers generally perceived preassessment as an extra and unnecessary step. As they began designing differentiated lessons, however, teachers saw some mismatches in task assignments. They had begun to realize that, to measure accurately how deeply students understand a specific skill or topic, they have to preassess. In fact, they now see that it is critically important to take into account

all skills that are needed to demonstrate understanding about the topic. For example, a student at a specific readiness level related to a reading concept might need extra scaffolding if she were being asked to incorporate writing into the assignment. Teachers have also learned to develop preassessments that give a clear indication of a “ceiling” for the more advanced students.

Curriculum Alignment

At the very beginning of our journey, we addressed an issue of fundamental importance: making certain that what students should know, understand, and be able to do (KUD) is clearly targeted and aligned in the first stage of curriculum design. In spite of this emphasis at the outset, it wasn't until years three and four that teachers began to give sufficient attention to this curriculum design concept. From the beginning, defining the knowledge required was easy for teachers. However, discovering and articulating the understandings that linked the knowledge pieces together was much more difficult. During the third and fourth years, teachers gained skills in identifying the conceptual threads that tie facts together, and they began to target and write understandings with more confidence. Teachers have realized that understandings are critical in showing students the purpose of their learning and helping them connect acquired skills to new and unique applications. Students then begin to make connections between topics within a discipline, between disciplines, and beyond school to their daily lives. This clarification of the conceptual underpinnings of instruction answers the ongoing student question “When am I ever going to use this?” By clarifying the knowledge, understandings, and skills before designing the learning activities, teachers are able to ensure that all parts of the lesson are correlated with the core learning goals to be taught. This “backward design” calls for a new analysis of old instructional tasks, and in many cases teachers begin to “let go” of favorite activities because they realize they are off the mark and not directly related to targeted goals (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). This frequently results in a shift of lessons from “activity based” to “thinking and skills” based. For Conway teachers, a deeper analysis of the skills part of the lesson emerged in years five and six. Previously, teachers had problems separating activities from skills and precisely identifying the skills all students were to demonstrate. By carefully analyzing the skills and performance expected for each task, teachers are able to test how each skill is being measured regardless of the specific task. In a sense, teachers perform “surgery” on their lessons to verify they are focused on the key learning goals every step of the way. As they gain competence and confidence with this process, they discover that an investment in curriculum alignment and a focus on the overarching ideas pay off in dividends of extra time, since students are clearer about where they are headed and what is expected. This extra time gives teachers opportunities to delve deeper into concepts essential to mastery at their grade level. In fact, the KUD—requisite knowledge, understanding, and skills—is now routinely discussed with students at the beginning of each lesson.

Major shifts in thinking and practice have occurred at Conway regarding the role of teacher and student, the structure of the learning community, design and delivery of curriculum and instruction, the link between assessment and effective differentiation, and the importance of feedback and collaboration in building expertise. These are macro rather than micro shifts and characterize second-order change. Now we will examine the profound effect this change in thinking and practice makes on improving student performance.

A QUANTITATIVE VIEW OF CONWAY'S PROGRESS

At Conway, as with all schools, accountability and progress are assessed with standardized measures. Test results from 1998–2003 were analyzed to determine how scores shifted with the introduction of differentiation. Three years of test scores prior to differentiation (predifferentiation) were analyzed with three years of test scores after differentiation had begun as a school initiative (differentiation). The TerraNova, a nationally normed test administered to all fifth graders, was used for the analysis. Using SAS (Statistical Analysis Software), the general linear model (GLM) was used to implement analysis of variance (ANOVA) and a regression. The GLM was used because other factors came into play during the six years. The Voluntary Transfer Program had ended in the district, which produced smaller enrollment and smaller class size. Controlling for these variables, results show that differentiated instruction is associated with a significant improvement in test scores. That is, student test scores climbed during the years differentiation was in place (Tomlinson, Brimijoin, & Narvaez, 2008).

Of equal importance, all student groups moved upward. Table 1.1 illustrates results of fifth-grade TerraNova scores. The scores are reported as NCE (Normal Curve Equivalent) scores. NCE scores have a range from 0 to 99 with a mean score of 50. However, Conway students generally score above the mean, and an NCE of 65 was used for the comparison. For all three tests (reading, language, and mathematics), scores were higher during the years of differentiation.

Table 1.1 Conway Elementary Predifferentiation and Postdifferentiation Student Scores for Grade 5

Scoring Category	Predifferentiation			Postdifferentiation		
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Percent of students with reading scores \leq 65	34%	41%	38%	19%	18%	24%
Percent of students with language scores \leq 65	40%	56%	52%	31%	39%	34%
Percent of students with math scores \leq 65	43%	58%	52%	31%	35%	34%
Percent of students with reading scores $>$ 65	66%	59%	62%	81%	82%	76%
Percent of students with language scores $>$ 65	60%	44%	48%	69%	61%	65%
Percent of students with math scores $>$ 65	57%	42%	48%	69%	65%	66%

Note: Scores based on TerraNova Normal Curve Equivalent of 65. The school uses 65 as a point of comparison because of the large number of students who score above 50, which is the typical point of comparison in schools.

Source: From Carol Ann Tomlinson, Kay Brimijoin, and Lane Narvaez, *The Differentiated School: Making Revolutionary Changes in Teaching and Learning* (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2008), pp. 16–19. © 2008 by ASCD. Reprinted with permission. Learn more about ASCD at www.ascd.org.

The MAP (Missouri Assessment Program) is the state-administered criterion-referenced test. It includes multiple-choice, constructed response, and performance items. During this time period, the MAP scores had five steps: Advanced (5), Proficient (4), Nearing Proficient (3), Progressing (2), and Step 1. Students who scored at Step 4 or 5 were above grade level and met state standards. These scores also showed a positive shift in all levels during the first three years of the differentiation initiative as compared to the prior years (see Tables 1.2 and 1.3). For example, in fourth-grade math, the percentage of students

Table 1.2 Percent of Students With Advanced and Proficient Achievement on the Missouri Assessment Program

Scoring Category	Grade and Subject	Predifferentiation			Postdifferentiation		
		1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Levels 4 and 5 Conway	Fourth-grade math	56%	64%	71%	83%	77%	79%
Levels 4 and 5 State	Fourth-grade math	32%	35%	37%	37%	38%	38%
Levels 4 and 5 Conway	Third-grade science	71%	63%	80%	71%	73%	84%
Levels 4 and 5 State	Third-grade science	39%	35%	45%	45%	48%	48%

Source: From Carol Ann Tomlinson, Kay Brimijoin, and Lane Narvaez, *The Differentiated School: Making Revolutionary Changes in Teaching and Learning* (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2008), pp. 16–19. © 2008 by ASCD. Reprinted with permission. Learn more about ASCD at www.ascd.org.

Table 1.3 Percent of Students With Advanced Achievement on the Missouri Assessment Program

Scoring Category	Grade and Subject	Predifferentiation			Postdifferentiation		
		1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Level 5 Conway	Fourth-grade math	17%	16%	15%	24%	34%	24%
Level 5 State	Fourth-grade math	5%	6%	8%	8%	8%	7%
Level 5 Conway	Third-grade science	15%	7%	23%	27%	27%	41%
Level 5 State	Third-grade science	6%	4%	10%	10%	9%	10%

Source: From Carol Ann Tomlinson, Kay Brimijoin, and Lane Narvaez, *The Differentiated School: Making Revolutionary Changes in Teaching and Learning* (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2008), pp. 16–19. © 2008 by ASCD. Reprinted with permission. Learn more about ASCD at www.ascd.org.

meeting state standards during the first three years was 56 percent, 64 percent, and 71 percent. During differentiation, the scores rose to 83 percent, 77 percent, and 79 percent. It should be noted that state scores remained stagnant and lower (32 percent, 35 percent, 37 percent, 37 percent, 38 percent, 38 percent) during that same six-year period. Table 1.3 illustrates the same trend for scores of advanced students. Conway scores rose while state scores remained static.

Scores have continued to rise in the years following our analysis. In January 2000, the DESE (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education) prepared a report on the top ten schools based on the percent of schools scoring at the Advanced and Proficient levels. Four MAP tests were given at the elementary level. Conway scored in the top ten schools on one test. In March 2009, the same report was published. Seven tests were given at the elementary level. Conway scored in the top ten schools on six of the seven tests. Only one other school in Missouri matched Conway's top ten finishes. Conway was also recognized as a Gold Star School of Excellence by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in both 2003 and 2007. In 2007, it was recognized as a No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School by the US Department of Education for its high test scores, professional development initiatives, and strong parent involvement. Parents and teachers are proud of the accomplishments of the students in their journey toward excellence. We believe the effects of second-order change are clear—Conway's teaching and learning community has been strengthened by its focus on differentiating to reach every student.