

# My Reading Academy®



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## My Reading Academy: 3–5 Months of Reading Growth Advantage, Along with Increases in Confidence and Love of Reading

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### KEY FINDINGS

- **Students in kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grades who made substantial progress in *My Reading Academy* performed statistically significantly higher on the end-of-year NWEA MAP** in comparison to their peers who did not use the program, making about 3.4–4.6 months of additional learning in reading.
- **First grade students who mastered at least 10 learning units in *My Reading Academy* had statistically significantly higher scores on NWEA MAP** relative to their peers who had mastered fewer learning units.
- **Kindergarteners and 2nd grade students who mastered at least 55 learning units in *My Reading Academy* had statistically significantly higher scores on NWEA MAP** in comparison to their peers who had mastered fewer learning units.
- All 106 educators who completed to the end-of-year survey indicated that *My Reading Academy* is a resource they would like to continue using; nearly **nine out of every ten teachers indicated that at least 70% of their students were demonstrating skills they learned in *My Reading Academy* outside of the program.**

### Background

This report highlights Harlingen Consolidated Independent School District's 2022–2023 implementation of ***My Reading Academy with kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grade students across its 17 elementary schools.*** The district began using *My Reading Academy* with 10 classrooms of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students in spring 2021, and given the substantial gains students made in their reading skills during a short period of time in a school year disrupted by the pandemic, the program implementation was expanded to additional grade levels in the district in subsequent school years. **Students' *My Reading Academy* usage has been associated with significant improvements on CIRCLE Progress Monitoring Assessment System (pre-K) and on iStation (kindergarten).** This study builds on the existing evidence by demonstrating the effectiveness of the program as measured by NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP).

**This report compares the performance of different progress groups in each grade** (low, medium, high) as well as between the students in each grade who used *My Reading Academy* (treatment) and their peers who did not (comparison). In comparing the performance of treatment and comparison groups, propensity score weights were calculated for each student to ensure that the two groups were as comparable as possible.<sup>1</sup>

### Results

Students varied in the degree to which they used *My Reading Academy* and therefore the amount of progress they made within the program. **TABLE 1** shows the median total hours, median total weeks, and median weekly minutes for those who made low, medium, or high progress in *My Reading Academy*, along with the average number of learning units each group of students mastered in the program.

<sup>1</sup> The propensity scores were calculated using a binary logistic regression with group as the dependent variable and the NWEA MAP baseline score as the covariate. These scores/probabilities were saved as a new variable. Weights were calculated by dividing 1 by the probability. All analyses including non-users of *My Reading Academy* included these weights.

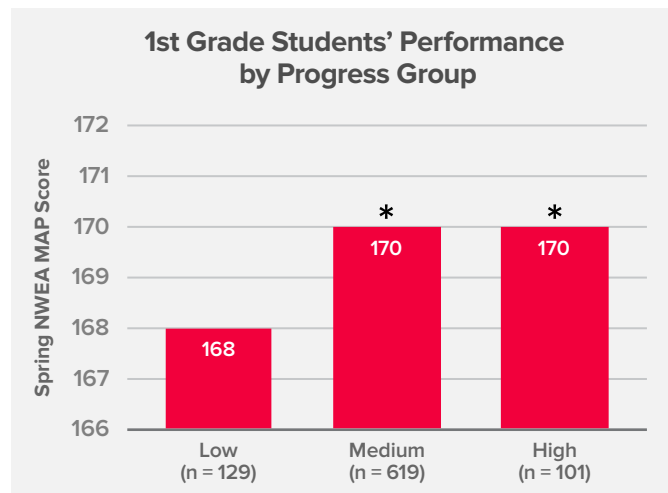
**TABLE 1. Student usage/progress groups by grade level on *My Reading Academy***

	Average Learning Units Mastered (SD)	Median Total Weeks	Median Total Hours	Median Weekly Minutes
<b>Kindergarten (n = 751)</b>				
<b>Low</b>	6 (3)	9	3.1	18.6
<b>Medium</b>	27 (12)	21	9.6	28.9
<b>High</b>	71 (15)	29	24.7	55.0
<b>First Grade (n = 849)</b>				
<b>Low</b>	5 (3)	8	2.5	17.6
<b>Medium</b>	27 (12)	18	8.4	29.7
<b>High</b>	77 (23)	23	20.2	52.4
<b>Second Grade (n = 667)</b>				
<b>Low</b>	4 (3)	5	1.7	19.9
<b>Medium</b>	26 (13)	15	7.4	29.8
<b>High</b>	85 (29)	23	20.3	62.1

Subsequent results focus on students who had matched fall 2022 and spring 2023 (pre and post) assessment scores.

## FINDING 1.

First grade students who mastered at least 10 learning units in *My Reading Academy* had statistically significantly higher scores on NWEA MAP relative to their peers who had mastered fewer learning units.

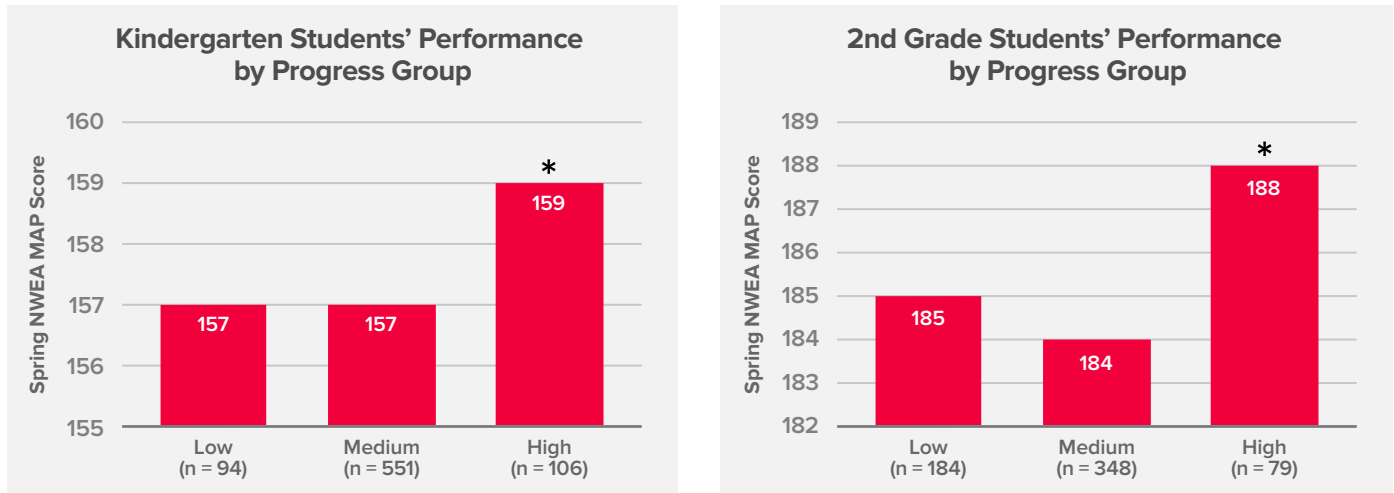


**NOTE:** \* indicates statistically significant difference between low progress vs. medium and high progress groups

First grade students who completed at least 10 learning units in *My Reading Academy* (medium and high progress groups) had significantly higher on spring 2023 NWEA MAP scores compared to those who completed fewer than 10 learning units in the program (medium progress  $p < .01$ , effect size = 0.16; high progress  $p < .01$ , effect size = 0.18).

## FINDING 2.

Kindergarteners and 2nd grade students who mastered at least 55 learning units in *My Reading Academy* had statistically significantly higher scores on NWEA MAP in comparison to their peers who had mastered fewer learning units.



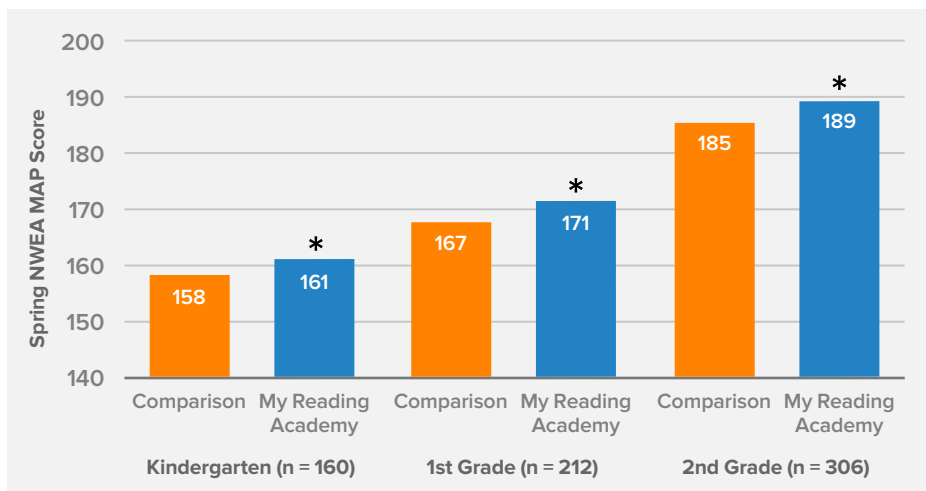
**NOTE:** \* indicates statistically significant difference between low and medium progress vs. high progress groups

Kindergarteners who completed at least 55 learning units in *My Reading Academy* scored statistically significantly higher on the spring 2023 NWEA MAP compared to those who completed fewer than 10 learning units ( $p < .05$ , effect size = 0.22) as well as those who completed between 10 and 54 learning units ( $p < .05$ , effect size = 0.17).

Similarly, second grade students who completed at least 55 learning units in *My Reading Academy* performed statistically significantly higher on the spring 2023 NWEA MAP compared to their peers who completed fewer than 10 learning units ( $p < .05$ , effect size = 0.18) as well as those who completed between 10 and 54 learning units ( $p < .001$ , effect size = 0.28).

## FINDING 3.

Students in kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grades who made substantial progress in *My Reading Academy* performed statistically significantly higher on the end-of-year NWEA MAP in comparison to their peers who did not use the program.



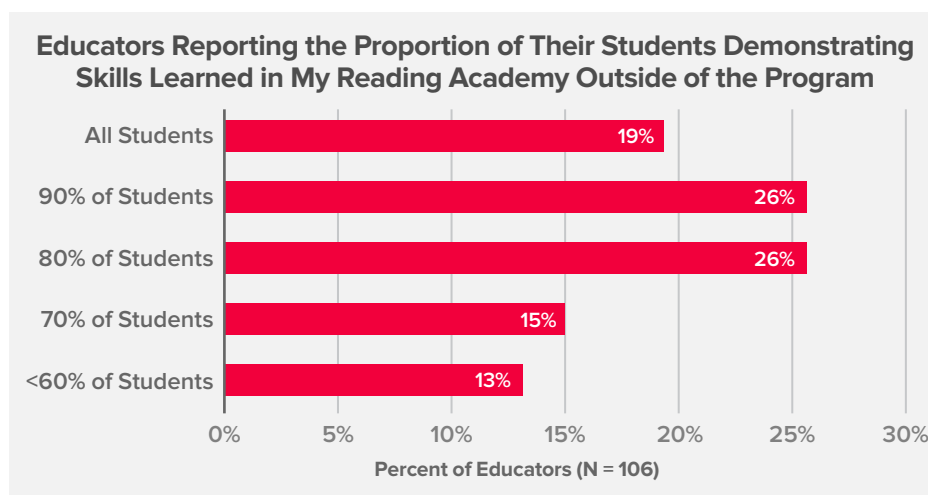
**NOTE:** \* indicates statistically significant difference between comparison vs. *My Reading Academy*

Students who made substantial progress in *My Reading Academy* were kindergarteners and 1st grade students who completed at least 55 learning units in the program and 2nd grade students who completed at least 55 learning units and had less than 200 active minutes in activities targeting Alphabet knowledge skills. Regression analyses were conducted to determine whether there were significant differences between the spring NWEA MAP scores of students who used *My Reading Academy* and their peers who did not. Findings indicated that students in kindergarten ( $p < .05$ , effect size = 0.26), 1st ( $p < .001$ , effect size = 0.32), and 2nd ( $p < .001$ , effect size = 0.24) grades who made substantial progress in the program scored statistically significantly higher on the spring 2023 NWEA MAP assessment in comparison to their peers who did not use the program. This is equivalent to approximately 3.7 months of additional learning for kindergarteners, 4.6 months of additional learning for 1st graders, and 3.4 months of additional learning for 2nd graders who used *My Reading Academy* in comparison to their peers who did not use the program.<sup>1</sup>

## FINDING 4.

**All 106 educators who completed to the end-of-year survey indicated that *My Reading Academy* is a resource they would like to continue using; nearly nine out of every ten teachers indicated that at least seventy percent of their students were demonstrating skills they learned in *My Reading Academy* outside of the program.**

A total of 106 educators who used *My Reading Academy* in school year 2022–2023 completed the end-of-year survey, in which all of them indicated that the program is a resource that they would like to continue using (87% definitely, 13% somewhat). Moreover, the majority of teachers reported observing their students demonstrate skills they learned in *My Reading Academy* outside of the program.



During interviews, educators further elaborated on *My Reading Academy*'s positive impact:

*“At the beginning of the year, he was not even able to decode words at all, and he just struggled. So from the get go, I knew he was a child I was going to retain. But at the end, four weeks until the end of the school year, we looked at the data, and he showed the highest growth. I met with the principal and with his parents, and we decided to move him on to third grade. I think getting him onto My Reading Academy gave him that confidence to see that he can achieve.”* 2nd grade teacher

<sup>1</sup> These estimates are based on research by Bloom and his colleagues who analyzed typical student growth rates across grade levels and subjects. See Bloom, H. S., Hill, C. J., Black, A. R., & Lipsey, M. W. (2008). Performance trajectories and performance gaps as achievement effect-size benchmarks for educational interventions. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*, 1(4), 289–328. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19345740802400072>

*“I work closely with children who may be on the spectrum, but My Math and My Reading Academy have not been an issue. They’re very engaging, they’re very developmentally appropriate. My children from low socioeconomic, backgrounds, ELs, ADHD, when it’s time for My Math or My Reading Academy, it has always been a treat, more of a reward than something academic. They don’t see it as a work. They see it as a reward. And with those coming in with a lot of skills already learned, there’s no boredom there. I like the way that it continues to challenge them without me having to do anything. It picks up on their successes and builds on them.”* **PreK teacher**

*“My Reading Academy helps the students not develop a bad relationship with reading. It taught them skills in a very fun kid-friendly way. These students are getting exposure through the alphabet, through letter sounds, through sight words, through fluency, through reading on the app. It makes it easier for them and they’re learning at their own pace. My Reading Academy was very effective in terms of just getting them more confident with reading, more excited, and I saw no frustration with students because they were just genuinely excited to learn.”* **1st grade teacher**

*“Every time they were progressing and seeing that they were increasing in their levels, that got them excited. That was shown in their increased confidence level...it showed in their checks for understanding in their NWEA MAP assessment, in their eagerness to participate and read fluently, in their being risk takers when I was giving them a problem to solve. They weren’t shy about taking a risk and trying to figure it out. They would voice their thoughts and they wanted to participate.”* **2nd grade teacher**

This study strengthens the evidence of *My Reading Academy*’s effectiveness, building on previous research investigating the impact of the program on CIRCLE and iStation assessments. Students who made substantial progress showed statistically significant improvements across K–2 grades, and beyond the academic gains, teachers reported increased student confidence and enjoyment in learning to read, with all surveyed teachers expressing desire to continue using the program. These results validate *My Reading Academy* as an effective solution that delivers both academic achievement and student engagement in early literacy instruction.



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