



2021-2022 School Year Results



Program Overview

Ignite! Reading's mission is to ensure that every student learns to read on time. **Today, only 35% of fourth graders (18% of low-income fourth graders) read at grade level** – primarily because most schools struggle to teach students the foundational reading skills the Science of Reading shows are crucial in order to be an independent reader by the start of second grade.

Ignite! Reading solves this problem for schools through a 1:1 virtual tutoring program focused on teaching students foundational reading skills. Students receive 15 minutes per day of 1:1 instruction from tutors trained by Ignite in the Science of Reading using a scripted, evidence-based curriculum developed by reading researchers at the University of Delaware and the University of Virginia¹. Ignite's virtual format allows every tutor to be continually developed and monitored by Ignite's team of literacy coaches, ensuring that our reading fundamentals curriculum is delivered with high-fidelity.

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¹ The Ignite! Reading program includes all of the characteristics of a high-impact tutoring program identified by researchers at Brown University: high-dosage, a stated focus on cultivating student-tutor relationships, use of formative assessments to monitor student learning, alignment with school curriculum, and formalized tutor training and support.

2021-2022 In-School Pilots

Following a successful initial pilot of the Ignite! Reading program during the summer of 2021, Ignite embedded its innovative virtual reading fundamentals tutoring program during the school day.

October 2021

Ignite's first in-school pilot began in October with **70 students** at KIPP: Bridge Academy in West Oakland, California.

January 2022

In January 2022 the program **expanded to serve 330 students in five additional schools** across three states.

April 2022

The program then expanded again in April, **servicing more than 600 students in 13 elementary schools** across six states.

As part of the April expansion, Ignite also launched a partnership with the teacher preparation program at Eastern Oregon University to provide their students with practical experience teaching literacy using the Science of Reading.



Ignite's 2021-22 school partnerships were **focused on Title I schools in both district and charter environments** spanning urban and rural contexts.

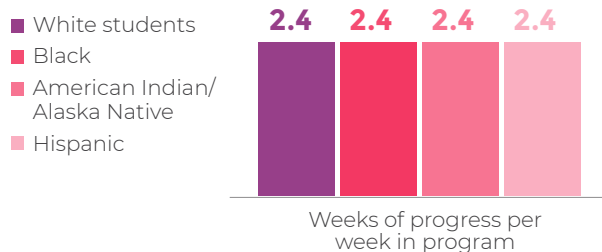
Students included kindergarten through fifth graders, with

- **76%** in first through third grade.
- **77%** enrolled in the free or reduced price lunch program.
- **65%** from historically underrepresented communities.²
- **35%** multilingual learners.
- **12%** receiving special education services.

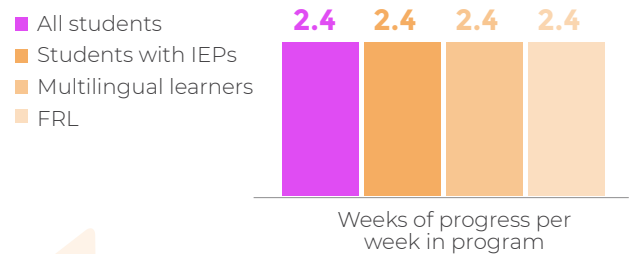
The Results

Ignite students are given baseline assessments prior to beginning instruction and progress monitored using curriculum-embedded assessments at the end of each instructional unit. In a traditional classroom setting, each instructional unit represents 9 weeks of reading progress. During the 2021-22 school year, 551 students in the Ignite! Reading program completed one or more instructional units with the following results³:

- 1 Overall, students made 2.4 weeks of reading progress for every week they were in the program.** Each week in the Ignite! Reading program represents 75 minutes of intensive 1:1 reading instruction.
- 2 All schools made at least 2.1 weeks of progress for every week their students were in the program with a range of 2.1 to 3 weeks of progress per week in the program.**
- 3 68% of students made at least 2 weeks of reading progress for every week they were in the program and 92% of students made at least 1 week of progress for every week they were in the program.**
- 4 There was no racial achievement gap in the Ignite! Reading program.** Students of color made the same reading progress as white students.

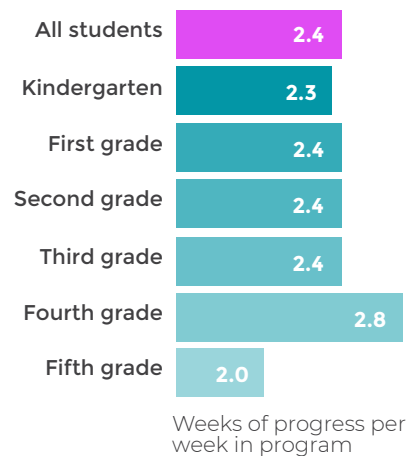


- 5 Multilingual learners, students with IEPs and students receiving free or reduced price lunch made the same progress as their peers.**



“Some of the kids that I had concerns with at the start of Ignite have blossomed so many levels that the data showed I didn’t need to go further into a [special education] referral process.” 2ND GRADE TEACHER, QUINSIGAMOND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, MA

- 6 First through third grade students all made the same progress as students overall while fourth graders outperformed and fifth graders lagged, but still averaged over 2 weeks of progress for every week in the program.**



“The growth we are seeing is amazing.” PRINCIPAL, RED BLUFF, CA

³ The remaining students did not complete enough tutoring sessions to be progress monitored.

These results are not just showing up in the data. **District leaders, school leaders and teachers are seeing the gains their students are making.**

"It's effective. We can say that the kids already made huge gains, just from the small amount of time we've been using it."

SUPERINTENDENT, WORCESTER, MA

"The teachers bought in because they were part of reviewing the data and selecting the kiddos. They've been very, very grateful because they're seeing the difference in their classrooms." ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL, SAM BOARDMAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, OR

"The kids are only gone from their room for 20 minutes. What other intervention can you allocate that little time to and actually see this amount of growth. Teachers are seeing the success and now they are asking, "Well how many more can we send?" PRINCIPAL, AC HOUGHTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, OR

"Some of the kids I have made huge gains on Benchmark. One of my brightest stars went up 9 levels and that's kindergarten to the beginning of second grade level." 2ND GRADE TEACHER, QUINSIGAMOND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, MA



Social Emotional Learning Impact

In addition to accelerating student reading growth, **the Ignite! Reading program has demonstrated a significant positive impact on students' social emotional learning.** Teachers, school leaders and students all note the impact that receiving 1:1 instruction in their zone of proximal development by a nurturing adult is having on students' confidence, engagement, persistence, love of reading, and readiness to learn when they return to the classroom.

“Ignite gives students the lessons they need, but what it really gives them is the confidence they need to be readers.” 1ST GRADE TEACHER, RED BLUFF, CA

“The biggest thing that teachers have noticed is that those kids are right on top now. They’re absolutely participating. They’re absolutely understanding what they’re being asked to do. Not just being part of the group doing the lesson. They’re right there leading.” ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL, SAM BOARDMAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, OR

“When I started I was nervous, scared, and not confident. Now I feel better and I feel I can do more.” STUDENT, KIPP BRIDGE ACADEMY, CA

“It’s huge, the impact on their confidence. They’re getting to read and you see the data, but it’s having a bigger impact on other parts of their lives.” PRINCIPAL, HEFFNER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, OR

Program Implementation

Integrating new programs or interventions into a classroom is often fraught with challenges. Many promising innovations fail to have impact because it is too difficult to fit them into already packed class schedules or effectively train teachers to implement the programs with fidelity.

The Ignite! Reading program is designed to minimize the burden placed on teachers so that it can be easily implemented during the school day and begin having an impact immediately.

All schools need to do is make sure that their students are at their computers for 15 minutes per day.

“This program was really appealing to our teachers because they didn’t have to do anything other than give up 15 minutes of class time.” ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT, RED BLUFF, CA

“We wouldn’t want to add something for teachers to do. Computer programs still require regular teacher involvement. The self-reliance of the program is important. It operates itself.” PRINCIPAL, CIRCLE CITY PREP, IN

“I can’t just hire 15 teachers to be like, boom, let’s make this happen. This way each of these students is with a different tutor who knows what they’re doing with a curriculum that’s strong and science-based and who has the time and the resources to teach these lessons.” PRINCIPAL, KIPP BRIDGE ACADEMY, CA

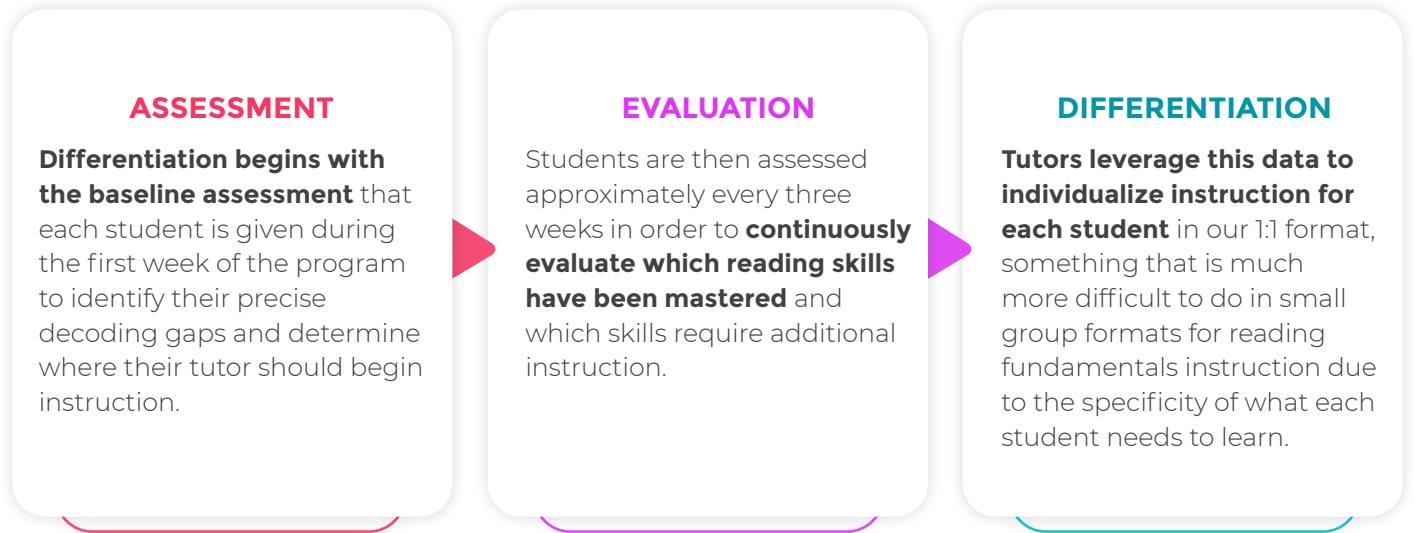
“The other thing that makes this good is that it’s consistent. A lot of times with pullout a teacher goes to a meeting...but this happens no matter what, every day, at the same time.” ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL, WORCESTER, MA

The combination of program effectiveness, ease of implementation and Ignite’s ability to regularly share data with schools on student progress **earned Ignite! Reading a Net Promoter Score of 64 from educators and school leaders** in the schools we worked with during the 2021-2022 school year pilots⁴.

⁴ A Net Promoter Score measures how customers feel about a brand, program or product. Any score above 50 is considered “Excellent” while a score above 80 is considered “World Class”

The Power of Differentiated Instruction

A critical element of the Ignite! Reading program is its ability to differentiate instruction from the outset for each student.



School leaders and teachers agree that this has a huge impact on learning and significant social emotional benefits for students.

“The fact our kids would get this individualized 1:1 support and instruction we can’t otherwise provide in a normal public school setting. That’s where I’ve been most impressed - student engagement, staff excitement, and the data isn’t too shabby.” ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT, MORROW COUNTY, OR

“Ignite tailors to that specific student. Whatever that student is struggling in, they meet them there. When they come back to the classroom we’re able to see HUGE progress.” 1ST GRADE PARAPROFESSIONAL, KIPP BRIDGE ACADEMY, CA

Ignite Tutors

The Ignite! Reading program is unique in that it does not rely on trained educators to deliver its curriculum. **All Ignite tutors receive 15 hours of upfront instruction in the Science of Reading and Ignite's curriculum and then take part in a nine-week practicum during which they are teaching students and receiving an hour a day of professional development.** When combined with Ignite's virtual format, this approach to tutor recruitment and training allows Ignite to dramatically expand its pool of potential tutors while still ensuring that the Ignite curriculum is delivered with high-fidelity.

69% of Ignite's tutors during the 2021-22 school year had no instructional background prior to participating in the Ignite! Reading program. These included college and graduate students, parents, community members and retired individuals. It also included teachers in training at Eastern Oregon University's College of Education, which partnered with Ignite to provide their students with practical experience in teaching foundational reading skills using a Science of Reading-based curriculum.

"Without the Ignite experience, everything I taught my students would have disappeared into the ether. This is such a key element of their training. My students aren't talking like students anymore; they're talking like passionate educators and for that to happen in their junior year, it gives me chills."

PROFESSOR, EASTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY

Ignite tutors with no previous instructional experience kept pace with those trained as educators, delivering 2.5 weeks of reading progress per week in the program vs. 2.2 weeks of reading progress per week in the program for trained educators.

Ignite's tutors also found the work extremely fulfilling. The organization's tutor Net Promoter Score was 60, indicative of high tutor satisfaction and a likelihood they would recommend working at Ignite to others. Tutors valued the impact they were having on students, the professional development they received, Ignite's culture and the collegiality of the tutor corps.

"The best part of tutoring at Ignite! Reading has been the student data and growth. I am absolutely blown away by what my students were able to accomplish in such a short amount of time." IGNITE TUTOR

"When I look back at applying to Ignite, I was simply looking for a meaningful but also very part-time side job. And now this year I am literally planning on making Ignite my full-time or nearly full-time work!" IGNITE TUTOR

Looking Ahead | 2022-2023 School Year

The 2022-2023 school year will represent Ignite! Reading's final pilot phase before the organization begins to scale. **Ignite will start the year with 1,100 students in 20 schools across six states receiving instruction from over 200 tutors.** This will provide Ignite with a statistically significant sample to assess the impact of its program on student reading progress across a full school year using both its curriculum-embedded assessments and DIBELS, a nationally normed reading assessment. Ignite hopes to also use this data to develop a learning guarantee for the Ignite! Reading First Grade Promise, which should deliver the greatest ROI for schools by maximizing the number of students that leave first grade reading on grade level.

"We targeted 2nd through 4th grade this year because of Covid, but we are targeting first graders next year because it is so hard to close gaps for older students." ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT, RED BLUFF, CA

Ignite! will also use the 2022-2023 school year to operationalize for scale.

The organization is implementing a tutoring logistics platform to simplify scheduling, attendance tracking and session administration. In addition, Ignite is developing its own platform for tracking which lessons students have completed and administering its curriculum-embedded assessments. This will allow Ignite's literacy coaches to further individualize instruction and will enhance Ignite's ability to share data on each student with teachers and school leaders.

"I haven't seen anything as simple or effective in a while. It's such an innovative, promising approach to closing the achievement gap. I'm really excited about it." ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT, WORCESTER, MA



About Ignite! Reading

Ignite! Reading's mission is to ensure that every student is an independent reader by the start of second grade. The program was founded by Jessica Reid Sliwerski, CEO of Open Up Resources and Evan Marwell, CEO of EducationSuperHighway. Ignite!'s program is based on the foundational reading skills curriculum How to Plan Differentiated Reading Instruction by Sharon Walpole and Michael C. McKenna.

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