ignite reading | Johns Hopkins University | Center for Research and Reform in Education

Research Confirms First Grade Intervention Has *Lasting Impact* on Early Literacy

Johns Hopkins University 2024-25 study finds foundational reading skills tutoring in first grade associated with **durable outcomes into second grade.**

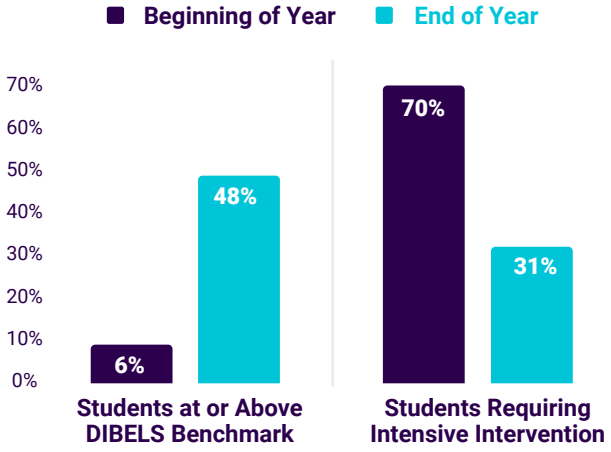
If kids aren't reading at grade level by the end of 1st grade, just

1 in 8 catch up the next school year.



When kids finish 1st grade reading at grade level, 17 in 20 will finish the next school year **still reading at grade level.**

First Graders Reading On Benchmark Increased Dramatically With Foundational Reading Skills Tutoring[1]

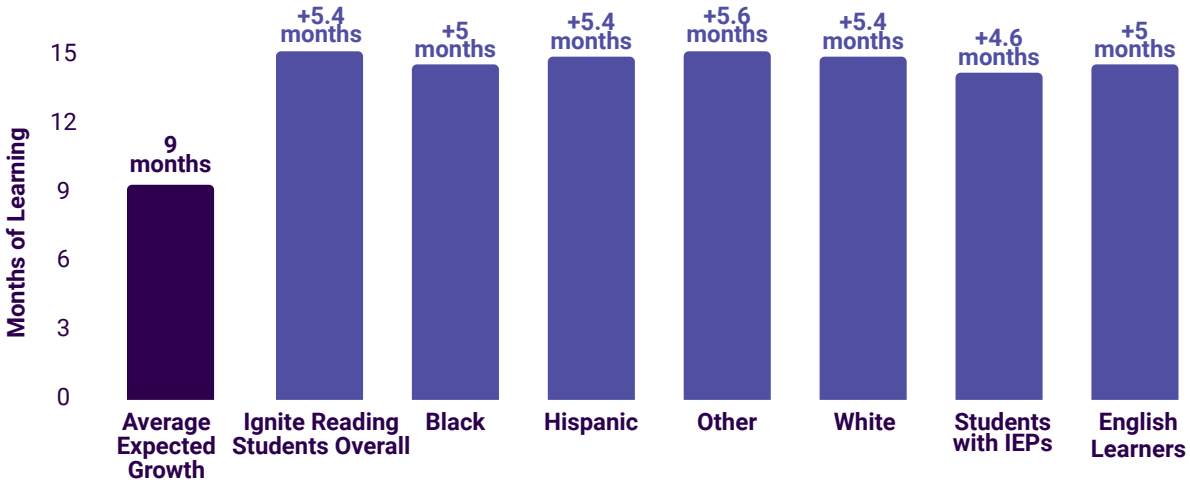


1. Students needing strategic support decreased 3%, from 24% to 21%.

Additional Key Findings

- **Effect Size: +0.23 SD** Two-group quasi-experimental analyses result; comparable to in-person tutoring
- Tutored students starting far below grade level were substantially more likely than comparison peers to **reach or approach proficiency by the end of the year.**

No Equity Gaps: Students Across Demographic Groups Gain More Than Five Additional Months of Learning on Average



Program Model

Modality
Virtual tutoring

Tutor to Student Ratio
1:1 instruction

Intervention Delivery
Tutors with 100 hours of Science of Reading professional learning & practicum

Dosage
5 days/week x 15 minutes
85% attendance

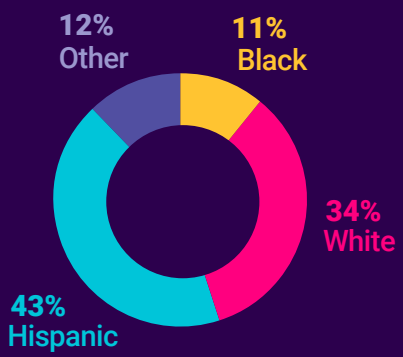
Student Sample

Massachusetts

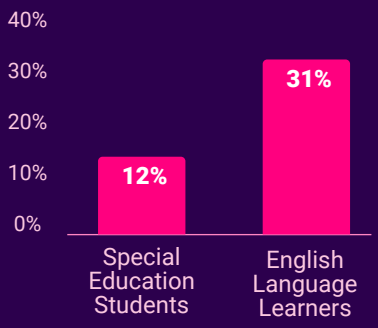
13
Districts

1,596
Total Students Tutored

Demographics



Student Groups



1st Grade Study Design

Students performing below grade level

BOY
Beginning of the Year DIBELS test

Ignite Reading virtual tutoring

EOY
End of the Year DIBELS test

One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design
Compare to expected growth

Two-Group Quasi-Experimental Design

Match tutored students to similar non-tutored students in the same school districts

Compare growth of tutored students with growth of non-tutored students

2nd Grade Study Design

Students who completed tutoring in 1st grade

No continued Ignite Reading intervention

EOY
End of the Year DIBELS assessment

Compare outcomes: Reached benchmark vs. didn't reach benchmark

For more information, visit
www.ignite-reading.com

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Source: Neitzel, A.J. (2025). Evaluation of of Ignite Reading virtual literacy tutoring in Massachusetts: Year 2 quantitative findings, School Year 2024–25. Center for Research and Reform in Education, The Johns Hopkins University.