



A Solution to Accelerate
Literacy Learning



Executive Summary

In a time of worldwide uncertainty, Springboard Collaborative's (Springboard) model has proven to accelerate student learning and achieve literacy outcomes. This comprehensive report illustrates the impact and effectiveness of Springboard programming in summer 2021 for pre-kindergarten through fifth-grade students after five weeks of engagement. Springboard's model takes an innovative and holistic approach that yields positive outcomes for students, their families, and school communities. With two customizable programming solutions, Springboard fortifies child literacy practices at home and in the classroom to create a sustainable learning ecosystem. Our findings demonstrate that **80% of Springboard students made significant gains in literacy outcomes**. Notably, not only did the majority of students improve their reading scores, but **11% of students moved from reading below grade level to at or above grade level after Springboard programming**. This report analyzes Springboard's model by triangulating data from evaluation surveys, focus group discussions, and student progress assessments from Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)¹ Progress Monitoring subsets and Raz-Kids Flight Check assessments, illustrating significant results in a time of uncertainty.



¹ With DIBELS Progress Monitoring subsets, there are different subsets depending on grade level. Each subset measures a different foundational reading skill. Students complete the Springboard Oral Reading Fluency screener to determine the appropriate subsets and reading passages.

Educational Challenge

The US education system has always been inequitable, particularly for students of color and students from low-income households. Many young students lack access to the educational resources and support systems necessary for academic growth and achievement. Research shows that students who fall behind in reading by the end of third grade are four times more likely to drop out or not complete high school on time.² These developmentally transformative years are especially important for literacy and academic success because children in kindergarten through third grade are *learning to read*. By the time they reach fourth grade, they are *reading to learn*. In turn, students who are not on pace to master the foundational skills taught in kindergarten through third grade require additional support and resources.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated these inequities. Schools and educators had little opportunity to prepare for supporting students and their families at a distance. Not surprisingly, research has shown that students are now behind in grade-level reading proficiency by four months, even more so for students from historically marginalized communities.³ These populations are precisely who Springboard serves, with the majority of their students identifying as Latino (41%) and Black (29%) and mainly attending urban, Title I schools.

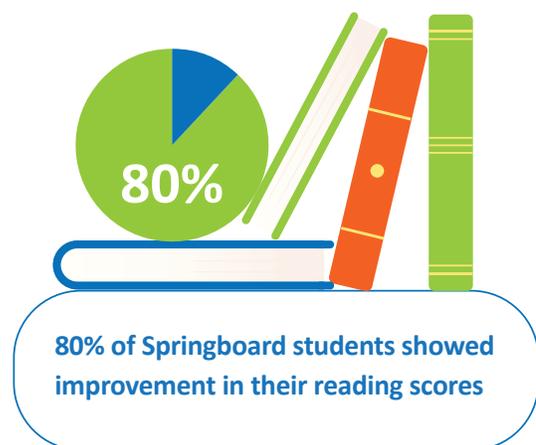
While COVID-19 amplified the challenges to equitable learning for students, families, and educators, **80% of students who participated in Springboard’s literacy programming showed improvement in their reading assessment scores.**

Notably, not only did the majority of students improve their reading scores, but **11% of students moved from reading below grade level to at or above grade level after Springboard programming.** It is evident that Springboard is moving the needle to prepare students for future academic success.

“There was a lot of learning loss, and Springboard allowed us to prevent further loss and offset the summer learning slide. I loved how we were able to get the parents involved in their children’s learning.”

— Springboard teacher, Philadelphia, PA

Therefore, Springboard was an obvious choice for school districts that understood a systematic approach would be vital in providing meaningful support for teachers and engaging families in their student’s academic journey.



² Hernandez, D. J. (2011). Double jeopardy: How third-grade reading skills and poverty influence high school graduation. Annie E. Casey Foundation. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED518818>

³ Dorn, E., Hancock, B., Sarakatsannis, J., & Viruleg, E. (2021). Covid-19 and education: An emerging K-shaped recovery. McKinsey & Company, December, 14. <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/education/our-insights/covid-19-and-education-an-emerging-k-shaped-recovery>

The Springboard Model

Springboard is a one-of-a-kind solution to support young students learning to read and provide instructional support to their educational communities. Springboard's programs include small-group student literacy instruction, workshops that support families in teaching reading at home, and professional development for educators. With two highly customizable programs, families and educators team up to support students in reading on grade level by fourth grade.

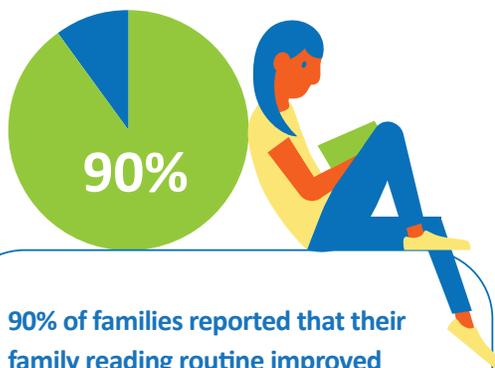
- Springboard Flagship:**
 A 5- to 10-week intensive literacy program with comprehensive management support
- Springboard Learning Accelerator (SLA):**
 A 5- to 10-week modular literacy program with targeted management support

The Springboard model is unique because it develops bespoke partnerships with schools or districts that receive Title I funds, including Baltimore, Los Angeles, New York City, Oakland, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Washington D.C. Early learners who participated in Springboard programs—consisting of customizable

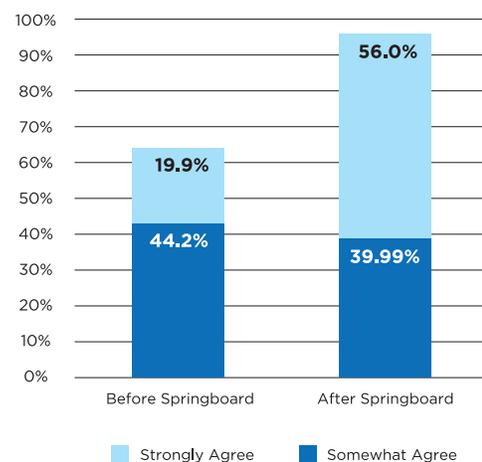
“We saw a huge improvement in our child’s interest in reading and reading level.”

— Springboard parent

after-school and summer offerings, including the Flagship and SLA programs—**increased their reading outside of the classroom by one day per week, with 90% of families reporting that their family reading routine improved.** Notably, 81% of students stated that they now read for fun.



Parent Perceptions of Learning Strategies to Support Their Child



An essential component of Springboard’s model is that it supports families to become effective, at-home literacy coaches for their students. This inclusive design fortifies child literacy practices at home to create both a significant acceleration in learning during programming and a sustainable methodology for ongoing learning led by family-educator teams. Springboard family workshops bring families and teachers together to support students’ learning from the classroom to the home. As a result, families build skills in reading best practices for their child while teachers expand their skills in interacting with and supporting families. Springboard bridges the gap between home and school and creates wraparound support for students learning to read.

Additionally, **Springboard guides educators through training and coaching before, during, and after programming** to ensure they have the skills and

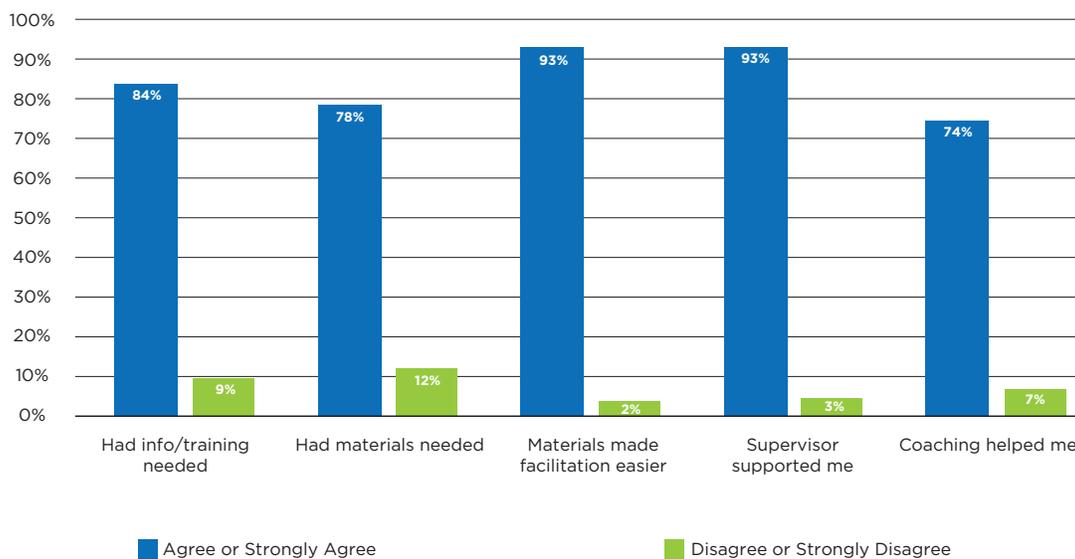
resources necessary to support student learning and family engagement effectively. According to data from a 2021 Springboard teacher survey, Springboard educators reported overwhelmingly positive feedback.

“The program offered many strategies that set both parent and the children up to becoming excellent readers.”

— Springboard parent, New York City, NY

The majority of Springboard teachers are experienced educators who were able to grow in their craft with 78% believing that the Springboard curriculum improved their teaching and 91% reporting that they would recommend Springboard to other teachers.

Teacher Perception of Springboard’s Professional Development



Evidence-Based Strategy

Central to Springboard's programs is an evidence-based strategy that accelerates early learners' academic success and potential. In the 2018-2019 school year, an external evaluation of 673 kindergarten through fourth-grade students from five school districts found that Springboard students improved their reading assessment scores across all grade levels. In particular, students who started the program below grade level experienced the most significant gains. **Springboard students also performed better than their peers who did not participate in Springboard programming.** Building upon this data-informed foundation, the next section of this report will focus on the progress students in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade made in their literacy learning through Springboard programming during summer 2021.

“Family workshops are fun because my mom gets to read with me and spend time with me.”

— Springboard student, Los Angeles, CA



Methodology

This report, **Springboard Collaborative: A Solution to Accelerate Literacy Learning**, is based on data from 2,738 students in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade who participated in Springboard programming in June through August 2021. The analysis was developed from two literacy assessments, DIBELS Progress Monitoring subtests (n=1,140) and Raz-Kids Flight Check assessments (n=1,598), to measure the effectiveness of Springboard programming in 2021.⁴ All Springboard partners, regardless of their chosen assessment, gave a pre-test

before or during the first week of programming and the post-test during the last week of programming.

Using regression analysis, reading growth was determined across Springboard's programs. Additionally, this report triangulates data from the student assessments, evaluation surveys, and focus group discussions to demonstrate the multidimensionality of the data-informed and outcome-driven programmatic design.

⁴ The primary difference between assessments is that DIBELS is a series of short tests that assess a child's acquisition of literacy skills, such as phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, accuracy, fluency, and comprehension, while Raz-Kids Flight Check is a feature within the Reading A to Z platform that provides running record assessments to students. Running records allow educators to gain insight into a child's reading as it is happening.



Summer 2021 Results

According to quantitative statistical modeling and analysis, assessment results were consistent with previous research and evaluation conducted on Springboard programming. Holistically, a key finding is that **pre-kindergarten through fifth grade experienced significant improvement by nearly 3.2 months of reading growth following Springboard summer programming.** On average, across all programs, students who participated in less than five weeks reported a reading growth of 2.08 months. Students who participated in five or more weeks of programming showed even greater success, with almost a three-month reading growth.

- **Flagship students:**

- accelerated their reading by 3.1 months after participating in the program (Raz-Kids Flight Check)

- **SLA students:**

- accelerated their reading by 2.3 months after participating in the program (Raz-Kids Flight Check)

The analysis also shows that students **across Springboard’s program models, accelerated their literacy proficiency by an average of 18 words per minute.**

- **Flagship students:**

- read 22 more words correctly per minute after participating in the program (DIBELS assessment)

- **SLA students:**

- read 14 more words correctly per minute after participating in the program (DIBELS assessment)

Students who performed below grade level made the greatest gains. The data analyzed from the Raz-Kids Flight Check assessment demonstrates that over 60% of students enrolled in Flagship who began programming below grade level reading proficiency either moved up within their proficiency level (47%) or moved up proficiency levels (14%).⁵ Springboard SLA students also saw positive improvements, with over 54% moving up proficiency levels (11.4%) or accelerating to perform at their grade level (43.1%). By comparison, on the DIBELS assessment, nearly 94% of students in Flagship programming and 79% of students in SLA programming either moved up within their proficiency level or moved up one or two proficiency levels.

“Suddenly, my son is trying to read words on a fifth and sixth grade level. I am positive that he would not have had the confidence to even attempt to do so before this wonderful program.”

— Springboard parent, Washington D.C.

Students who participated in Springboard programming and were already performing on or above grade level also saw significant improvement. In particular, 84% of students in Flagship programming and 63% of students in SLA programming either moved up within their proficiency level or moved up proficiency levels on the Raz-Kids Flight Check assessment. Further 86% of students who started Flagship programming below grade level either improved within their proficiency band or moved up proficiency bands, based on students who completed the DIBELS assessment.

⁵ With the Raz-Kids Flight Check assessment, it measures the accuracy rate and comprehension score to determine whether the text read is at the independent, instructional, or frustrational level. Springboard asks for its partners to test for an independent reading level to both measure scholars’ reading growth and to inform instruction.

Conclusion

Students' learning accelerated after only five weeks of Springboard programming. Despite the pandemic, Springboard students showed significant gains in outcomes. This critical finding demonstrates that unfinished learning can be mitigated—if not recovered—through Springboard's programs.

Springboard's model plays a vital role in addressing unfinished learning caused by the pandemic and learning disparities between racial and socio-economic groups. We will undoubtedly feel the impact of COVID-19 in our educational, social, and economic systems for years to come, and we need innovative, collaborative, and holistic models to recover and rebuild. As evidenced in this report, Springboard provides the skills, training, and development that can accelerate children, families, and educators forward from societal strains and move toward a future of academic success for a lifetime of meaningful opportunities.



Springboard Collaborative

Two Penn Center
1500 John F. Kennedy Boulevard, Suite 1160
Philadelphia, PA 19102

springboardcollaborative.org

