



Family
Engagement
Solutions

Powered by National PTA

PROGRAM GUIDE

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At National PTA, the nation's largest and oldest child advocacy association, we believe that every strategy to accelerate learning should include families, especially given the unprecedented learning loss caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite research showing that family engagement is just as essential as other school improvement strategies—from rigorous instruction to effective leaders—it has not been leveraged for the potential it has to impact all students.ⁱ However, exemplary programs prove that real outcomes, such as dramatically improved attendance and academic achievement, are possible when schools are intentional about using limited budgets on strategies to engage families.

Family Engagement Solutions is a free online tool for educators, district and school leaders and families to find evidence-based family engagement programs.

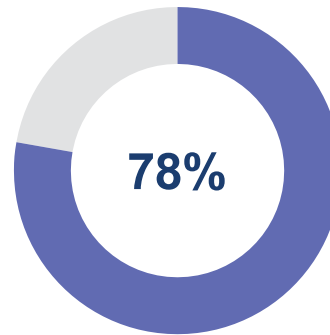
Family Engagement Solutions is powered by National PTA's Center for Family Engagement, in partnership with Johns Hopkins University's Evidence for ESSA. The programs meet federal standards demonstrating that they are at least promising/Tier 3 in their impact. Programs featured in Family Engagement Solutions have been vetted and curated by:

- Family engagement experts who track innovations and best practices to uncover programs that are successfully being used by schools in a variety of contexts.
- Parent and community leaders who identify whether the program has a sufficient focus on family engagement and, if so, assess how the program aligns to the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships.
- Education researchers who conduct a thorough review of every evaluation that has been conducted for the program and determine the strength of its evidence in relationship to federal requirements in the Every Student Succeeds Act.

Only **2** out of **10**



parents/families report that their school creates specific strategies to engage with parents/families who have not regularly connected with the school.ⁱⁱ



of principals say they want ideas about more impactful ways to spend their school's family engagement funding.ⁱⁱⁱ

Explore Family Engagement Solutions to find programs that will contribute to learning and improvement goals. Use the vendor guide and individual program reviews to discover what it takes to implement these programs, where they are being used across the country and which student populations benefit from them.

Sample impacts from featured programs:

- **44%** reduction in chronic absenteeism
- **1.55** times more likely to score proficient in reading comprehension
- **7.8** additional months of math growth
- **50%** less likely to develop mental health problems

FAMILIES AND SCHOOLS TOGETHER (FAST) PROGRAM PROFILE

AT A GLANCE

Program Name: Families and Schools Together (FAST)

Phone: 608-663-2382

E-mail: answers@familiesandschools.org

Website: <https://familiesandschools.org>

Grades: PreK-12

Program Designed For: Whole school

Supported Student Groups: English language learners, special education, students of color

Support Areas: Attendance, reading, SEL

Cost: Quotes generated for schools and districts after contacting them

Features: Cooperative learning, family engagement, professional development

Staffing Requirements: A FAST team of local parents, youth (for middle and high schools), educators and mental health and other community professionals facilitate the program and provide coaching and support to the participating families.

PD/Training: A certified FAST trainer will work one-on-one with your site to provide training on the program model so your FAST team is ready to implement the program with families.

Technology: None

EVIDENCE FOR ESSA RATING

Tier 1: Strong

Family Engagement

PROGRAM MODEL

FAST is the hallmark program of Families and Schools Together (FAST). Initially developed by Dr. Lynn McDonald through a delinquency prevention and family therapy lens, then tested in Wisconsin and California schools, this two-generation model has been implemented in multiple states and 22 countries. The FAST program aims to strengthen family relationships, student feelings of school connectedness and community connections to help reduce stress.

The program consists of weekly sessions over 8-10 weeks, typically held after school for a group of 10-12 students and families. During these sessions, families eat a meal and play games together, parents discuss and bond over shared experiences, kids and youth make friends with their peers and parents engage in one-on-one special play/conversation time with their children free from distraction.

The FAST program has been adapted and tested for early childhood, elementary, middle and high school settings. Approximately 60% of its program components are adaptable to local community context.

FAST 
Families & Schools TOGETHER®

"Thank you for this experience. I enjoyed this so much and I'm sure it's safe to say my family will forever be changed because of it. I look forward to staying connected with the families I encountered in this program and watch our bonds strengthen and grow."

– Parent Graduate of Program in Charles City, Va.

MEASURED OUTCOMES

- Academic performance
- Attendance
- Family engagement
- Social-emotional learning

OF STUDIES: 2

RESULTS

The impact of FAST was evaluated in a cluster-randomized trial involving 52 elementary schools in San Antonio, Texas and Phoenix, Ariz. The study examined 3,084 first-grade students over two years, with 26 schools implementing FAST and 26 serving as control. FAST schools demonstrated significant gains in social capital (effect size $=+0.21$). There were no significant results on measures of students' internalizing or externalizing behavior. The significant results on the measure of social capital qualify this for an ESSA Tier 1 (strong evidence) rating.

A second study of FAST conducted a cluster-randomized trial involving 60 elementary schools in Philadelphia. While FAST was implemented with high fidelity, overall program participation was lower than expected. The study found no significant effects on student academic or behavioral outcomes.

SAMPLE PARTNERS

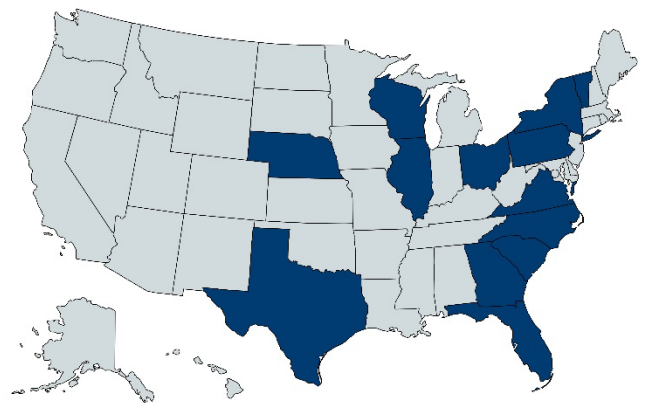
Family & Children First
Council in Cleveland, Ohio

Family Service Association
of San Antonio

One City Schools in
Madison, Wisconsin

Wheeler County School
District

PROGRAM REACH



**Aligns to the following two
National Standards for Family-School Partnerships:**



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT LAB'S FASTalk

PROGRAM PROFILE

AT A GLANCE

Program Name: Family Engagement Lab's Families and Schools Talk (FASTalk)

Phone: 415-683-0781

E-mail: Contact through [website form](#)

Website:

<https://FamilyEngagementLab.org/fastalk>

Grades: PreK-8

Program Designed For: Whole school

Supported Student Groups: English language learners

Support Areas: Reading, math, SEL

Cost: Contact for pricing

Features: Metacognitive strategies, technology, textbook/curriculum, tutoring

Staffing Requirement: No additional staffing required.

PD/Training: Optional PD and training available for administrators and educators.

Technology: Families only need a text message-enabled phone.

EVIDENCE FOR ESSA RATING

Tier 3: Promising

Family Engagement, Reading

PROGRAM MODEL

Families and Schools Talk (FASTalk), developed and supported by the Family Engagement Lab, is a mobile-based communication tool and instructional support that connects classroom instruction with at-home learning. This program supports teachers and others to provide a regular cadence of learning-focused information and activities delivered to families in their home language via text message. FASTalk messages with learning activities are translated into over 100 different languages.

FASTalk is currently aligned with 10 widely used instructional materials such as EL Education, ELA Guidebooks, Teaching Strategies GOLD, CKLA, Illustrative Mathematics and more. It is also aligned to multiple skills-based, standards-aligned content. FASTalk includes access to both a communication platform and a robust library of professionally written messages that support grade-level skills and reinforce learning outside of the classroom.



"FASTalk has been a game changer for our schools. This valuable resource has been one of the tools we have been able to utilize to build our communication efforts with our families. FASTalk has helped equip our parents to best support their students at home!"

– Priscilla Dilley, Sr. Officer Leadership Academy Network, Fort Worth ISD

MEASURED OUTCOMES

- Academic performance
- Family engagement

OF STUDIES: 2

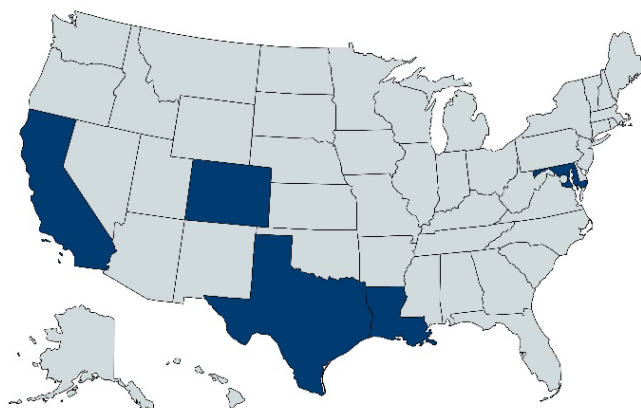
RESULTS

A retrospective evaluation of FASTalk was conducted in two schools in Baton Rouge, La., during the 2018-2019 school year. Students of parents who had signed up to receive three text messages per week for eight weeks to support literacy development at home were matched with students not enrolled in the program. Data was collected from 231 students (69 FASTalk, 162 control), 99% were Black and 93% qualified for free and reduced-price lunch. After accounting for pretest differences, FASTalk students demonstrated significantly higher growth than their non-FASTalk peers on the spring iSTEAP literacy assessment (effect size = +0.39). These results qualify FASTalk for an ESSA promising rating.

SAMPLE PARTNERS

Baltimore City Public Schools	East Forth Worth Montessori
Los Angeles Unified School District	Leadership Academy Network / Fort Worth ISD
Morris Jeff Community School	Oakland Unified School District

PROGRAM REACH



**Aligns to the following two
National Standards for Family-School Partnerships:**



FUTURE FORWARD LITERACY

PROGRAM PROFILE

AT A GLANCE

Program Name: Future Forward Literacy

Phone: 608-466-4966

E-mail: hello@FutureForwardLiteracy.org

Website: <https://FutureForwardLiteracy.org>

Grades: K-3

Program Designed For: Whole school, whole class, struggling students

Supported Student Groups: Students of color, economically disadvantaged students

Support Areas: Attendance, reading

Cost: Average \$2,600 per student per year (variable depending on implementation structure), includes all supplies, family engagement coordinator, tutors, training, professional development and fidelity support

Features: Cooperative learning, professional development, textbook/curriculum, tutoring

Staffing Requirements: Depends on the number of children served per school. Working with an average of 30 highest-need struggling readers per elementary school requires one program manager, one family engagement coordinator and 6.5 FTE tutors.

PD/Training: None required

Technology: Computers and internet required for virtual implementation. No student technology required for in-person implementation.

EVIDENCE FOR ESSA RATING

Tier 1: Strong

Attendance, Reading, Whole Class, Struggling Readers

PROGRAM MODEL

Future Forward (FF) is an early literacy intervention that provides a support system for kindergarten through third grade students struggling with reading. The intervention integrates one-on-one tutoring and family engagement. Individual tutoring sessions vary based on the skills and interests of the students. FF sites provide students with a minimum of three 30-minute tutoring sessions per week and family communication at least two times per month.

FF leverages a school-community-family partnership strategy to address the literacy needs of both students and families. Within FF program sites, each building has an assigned site manager, who is typically a certified teacher, and a family engagement coordinator (FEC). The site manager manages the tutoring activities, which includes the hiring of, generally paraprofessional, tutors to conduct one-on-one tutoring, and coordinates with the school and teachers to schedule sessions around core instruction classes. The FEC is responsible for family outreach and communication, which involves monthly family events and ongoing contacts to help facilitate literacy development outside of school.



"We are excited to partner with Future Forward to provide tutoring and family engagement services in the Monmouth-Roseville school district over the next several years. Our administrative team has done extensive research in preparation for this partnership, and we did not take this decision lightly. We are entrusting our students to the Future Forward framework and model because it is an evidence-based approach that has been proven to improve student achievement in reading."

-Administrator, Monmouth-Roseville CUSD

MEASURED OUTCOMES

- Academic performance
- Attendance
- Family engagement

OF STUDIES: 5

RESULTS

In comparison to a control group, students in Future Forward Literacy scored significantly higher than controls on MAP and PALS reading tests, with a mean effect size of +0.29. Effect sizes were much larger for students in the lower half on pretest scores (effect size = +0.51) than for students in the upper half (effect size = +0.18). Effects were also larger for students in kindergarten and first grade than for those in second grade.

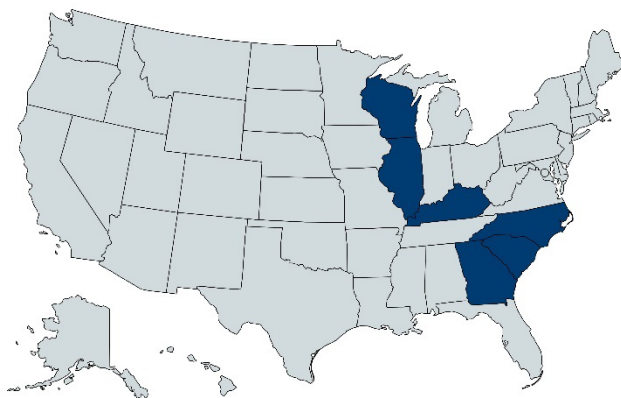
A two-year randomized evaluation of Future Forward (formerly SPARK) Literacy in the Milwaukee Public Schools tested the impact across three domains: reading achievement, literacy and school attendance. Students in grades K-3 who were assigned to SPARK had significantly fewer absences (average daily attendance) than controls (effect size = +0.19).

A one-year randomized study of FF during the 2019-2020 school year also found significant impacts on student attendance (effect size = +0.13), even though pandemic-related school closures interrupted the full year implementation of the program.

SAMPLE PARTNERS

Augusta ISD	Cherokee County School District
Gwinnett County Public Schools	Monmouth-Roseville CUSD
Montgomery County Schools	Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools

PROGRAM REACH



Aligns to the following two National Standards for Family-School Partnerships:



AT A GLANCE

Program Name: ParentCorps

Phone: 858-336-7611

E-mail: parentcorps@nyulangone.org

Website: <https://weareparentcorps.org>

Grades: PreK and K

Program Designed For: Whole school

Supported Student Groups: Students of color, economically disadvantaged students, English language learners

Support Areas: Reading, SEL

Cost: ParentCorps offers a range of services. Costs vary based on the implementation needs of the partner school system or Head Start. Systems are encouraged to contact ParentCorps for a customized quote.

Features: Professional development, textbook/curriculum

Staffing Requirements: ParentCorp provides close support for existing staff and educators; staffing depends on the services planned.

PD/Training: ParentCorps' partnership model begins with PD (e.g., for school/program leaders, teachers, aides, mental health professionals and/or parent engagement staff). For Friends School and parenting program facilitators, 1-3 days of training and ongoing coaching are provided.

Technology: Facilitators can use the ParentCorps Portal to connect with coaches and access materials and resources, including e-learning modules on fostering nurturing classrooms, engaging families and enhancing cultural and racial awareness.

EVIDENCE FOR ESSA RATING

Tier 1: Strong

Family Engagement, SEL

PROGRAM MODEL

Developed by New York University Langone Health's Center for Early Childhood Health and Development, ParentCorps works with schools and parents/caregivers to help preK children develop foundational skills. ParentCorps is available in multiple languages and its program model is deeply rooted in racial equity, including an emphasis on honoring families' expertise and cultures. Three programmatic components include:

- **Professional development** to help staff build strong, culturally responsive relationships with families and promote socio-emotional well-being in their classrooms.
- A group-based, 14-week **parenting program** to support families in nurturing early childhood development. The parenting program focuses on affirming families' experiences, building family-family connections and equipping families with more knowledge of evidence-based parenting practices.
- **Friends School** is a classroom-based program that emphasizes the development of children's social-emotional skills.



“My favorite experience was witnessing how the parents bonded and supported each other during and after the sessions. They provided encouraging words, resources and ideas that worked for them in difficult situations. To me, this meant that they felt safe to be vulnerable and they seemed to find comfort in the fact that they were not parenting alone and had someone to listen to and share their experiences with.”

– Mary Woods-Miles, Family Engagement Specialist, Starfish Family Services, Detroit

MEASURED OUTCOMES

- Academic performance
- Social-emotional learning

OF STUDIES: 1

RESULTS

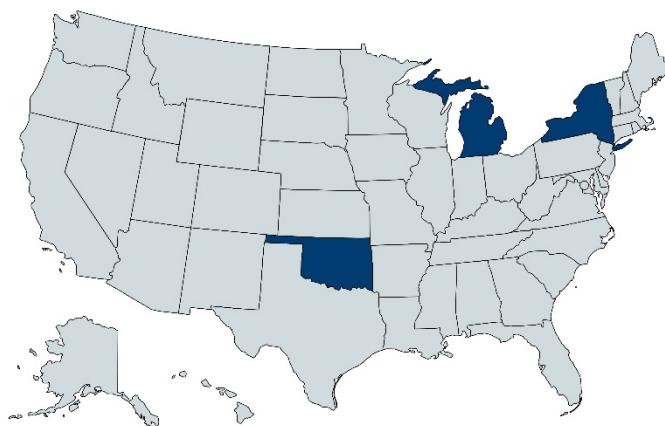
The impact of ParentCorps was explored in a cluster randomized controlled trial in 10 public elementary schools with 26 preK classes in two high-poverty school districts in New York City. Participants were 1,050 Black and Latino, low-income children participating over four years. Intervention included after-school group sessions for families of preK students and professional development for preK and kindergarten teachers. At the end of kindergarten, students in ParentCorps schools performed better on the Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement (KTEA)—a standardized measure covering reading, writing and math—than students in control schools (effect size = +0.18), with the reading results yielding the greatest impact (effect size = +0.25).

In addition, on the New York Teacher Rating Scale for Disruptive and Antisocial Behavior, students in ParentCorps schools were rated as having less issues (effect size = +0.25). These results qualify ParentCorps for an ESSA strong rating in the reading and SEL academic and problem behavior categories.

SAMPLE PARTNERS

NYC Public Schools & Union Settlement	Starfish Family Services
Thrive by Five Detroit	Tulsa Public Schools

PROGRAM REACH



**Aligns to the following two
National Standards for Family-School Partnerships:**



PARENT TEACHER HOME VISITS

PROGRAM PROFILE

AT A GLANCE

Program Name: Parent Teacher Home Visits

Phone: 916-448-5290

E-mail: info@pthvp.org

Website: <https://pthvp.org>

Grades: PreK-12

Program Designed For: Whole school

Supported Student Groups: Special education, students of color, English language learners, economically disadvantaged students

Support Areas: Attendance, reading, math

Cost: \$6,000 for the “Introduction to Home Visits Training” contract plus one hour of compensation per participating educator for each home visit completed.

Features: Professional development, whole-school reform

Staffing Requirements: No additional staffing required.

PD/Training: To participate in Parent Teacher Home Visits, educators must complete the three-hour “Introduction to Home Visits Training.” Other training options are available upon request along with implementation support for school and district home visit leaders.

Technology: None

EVIDENCE FOR ESSA RATING

Tier 3: Promising

Attendance, Family Engagement, Math, SEL

PROGRAM MODEL

The Parent Teacher Home Visits (PTHV) model was co-created by parents and educators using the community organizing principles of shared leadership. Participating teachers conduct 30-40 minute home visits in which educators listen, ask questions and make observations that they can take back to their classrooms to improve instruction for the learner. As a two-visit model, PTHV encourages the first relationship-building visit to occur in the summer or early fall, followed by ongoing communication throughout the year and an optional second visit that focuses on academics or any other relevant issue to the student or family. The PTHV model has five non-negotiables:

- Visits are voluntary and arranged in advance.
- Teachers are trained and compensated for visits.
- Visits focus on hopes and dreams.
- Educators visit a cross-section of students (not a targeted intervention).
- Educators go in pairs and reflect.



“Our promise is to know every student by name, strength and need so they graduate prepared for the future they choose. What better way to get to know a child or young person by name, strength and need than by going into their home, meeting their family and learning where they come from, who they are, what their culture is and what their dreams are?”

– Susan Enfield, Former superintendent of Washoe County School District

MEASURED OUTCOMES

- Academic performance
- Attendance
- Family Engagement

OF STUDIES: 2

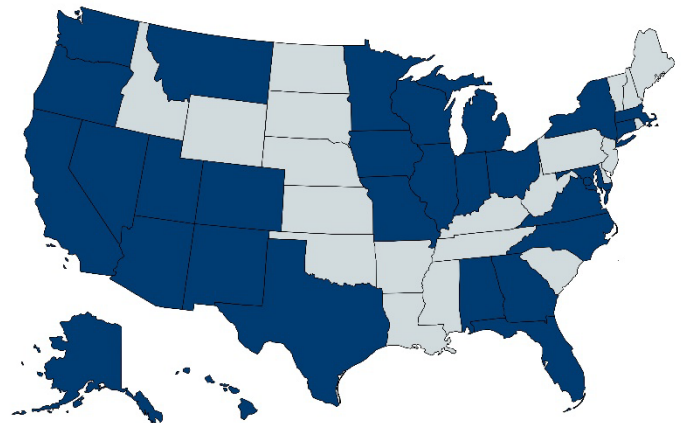
RESULTS

A 2021 study by the Regional Education Laboratory of the Mid-Atlantic at Mathematica used a quasi-experimental study design using matched comparison group propensity scores to investigate the impacts of the PTHV model structured relationship-building teacher home visits conducted in grades 1-5 as part of a family engagement program in the District of Columbia Public Schools. During the school year following a home visit, using the PTHV model, the study found, on average, that a PTHV model home visit improved student attendance slightly ($ES = +0.02$). The attendance rate averaged 95.28% for visited students and 94.93% for non-visited comparison students. The study also found slight improvements in math scores on standardized tests, although no difference in ELA scores. The study also found that a PTHV model home visit before the start of the school year reduced the likelihood of a student having a disciplinary incident in that school year. The study also found 9.27% of visited students had a disciplinary incident compared with 12.22% of non-visited comparison students (effect size = $+0.10$), qualifying the program for a promising rating in the problem behaviors category.

SAMPLE PARTNERS

Attendance Works	Denver Public Schools
Detroit Public Schools	District of Columbia Public Schools
Elk Grove Unified School District	Washoe County School District

PROGRAM REACH



**Aligns to the following two
National Standards for Family-School Partnerships:**



SPRINGBOARD COLLABORATIVE

PROGRAM PROFILE

AT A GLANCE

Program Name: Springboard Collaborative

Phone: 214-901-1988

E-mail: info@springboardcollaborative.org

Website: <https://springboardcollaborative.org>

Grades: PreK-5

Program Designed For: Whole school, struggling students

Supported Student Groups: Students of color, economically disadvantaged students

Support Areas: Reading

Cost: Varies; contact for a quote

Features: Professional development, tutoring

Staffing Requirements: No additional staffing required.

PD/Training: Springboard Collaborative's programming leverages PD. Springboard Collaborative's Playbook coaches district teachers for 5-10 weeks. The program's level of support services from Springboard Collaborative can be tailored to participating districts or schools.

Technology: At-home reading practice is tracked via the Springboard Collaborative Connect app.

EVIDENCE FOR ESSA RATING

Tier 3: Promising

Family Engagement

PROGRAM MODEL

Springboard Collaborative coaches educators and parents to help kids learn to read by fourth grade through its Family-Educator Learning Accelerator (FELA) methodology, which is included in its after-school and summer programs. In the beginning, educators and families build a relationship, measure the student's baseline and set a learning goal. Over 5-10 weeks, the family-educator team shares skills and supports each other. Children work toward their goals by practicing with their teachers, families and independently. The cycle concludes by measuring and celebrating progress.

Springboard Collaborative can be implemented as a robust summer reading program, a high-impact tutoring program or an after-school foundational reading supplement. It includes:

- Small group literacy instruction using lessons that align to the science of reading.
- Workshops that support families to become confident reading coaches.
- Professional development for teachers to engage families as partners in teaching and learning.

"By the end of the program, over 31,000 books were read at home and 90% of parents attended the weekly parent workshops. To say this program was remarkable is an understatement."

– Serena Klosa, Deputy Chief for ISP, Chicago Public Schools

MEASURED OUTCOMES

- Academic performance
- Family engagement

OF STUDIES: 1

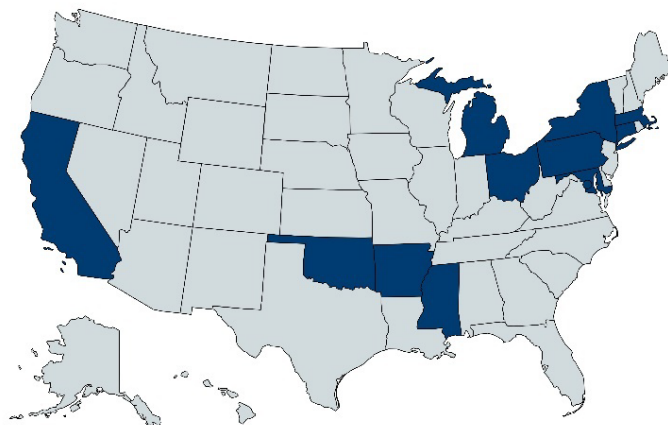
RESULTS

The impact of the Springboard Summer Reading Program was evaluated in a retrospective quasi-experimental study involving 628 rising kindergarten through fourth-grade students from one New York school district. These districts were selected based on their high fidelity to the Springboard program model. The study compared students who participated in Springboard Summer with non-participating students within the same district. The evaluation used district-administered reading assessments to measure reading growth. Across all grades, when comparing participants to matched non-participants, Springboard Summer showed significant impacts from the end of the school year to the beginning of the following school year (effect size = +0.33). The largest gains were observed among students who started below grade level. These statistically significant impacts qualify the Springboard Summer Reading Program for an ESSA Tier 3 "Promising Evidence" rating.

SAMPLE PARTNERS

Baltimore City Public Schools	Chicago Public Schools
Massachusetts DESE	New York Public Schools
Oakland Unified School District	San Francisco Unified School District

PROGRAM REACH



**Aligns to the following two
National Standards for Family-School Partnerships:**



TALKINGPOINTS

PROGRAM PROFILE

AT A GLANCE

Program Name: TalkingPoints

Phone: 619-452-0341

E-mail: partnerships@talkingpts.org

Website: <https://talkingpts.org>

Grades: PreK-12

Program Designed For: Whole school

Supported Student Groups: Special education, students of color, English language learners

Support Areas: Attendance, math

Cost: Free for individual teacher and parent accounts; quotes generated for schools and districts

Features: Professional development, technology

Staffing Requirements: No additional staffing required.

PD/Training: No mandatory PD or training required. Individual teacher accounts offer in-app coaching and guidance; school and district accounts provide in-app coaching and optional PD opportunities.

Technology: Teachers, administrators and school and district staff can sign in online or use a mobile app. Families need only a simple cellphone with basic text messaging to get started and can also sign in online or use the free mobile app.

EVIDENCE FOR ESSA RATING

Tier 3: Promising

Family Engagement

PROGRAM MODEL

TalkingPoints is an education technology nonprofit that drives student outcomes through effective family-school partnerships. The TalkingPoints Universal Family Engagement platform removes barriers so all families can engage. It provides educators with embedded, research-based guidance, actionable data-informed insights and universally designed auto-translated two-way communication in families' preferred languages.



“When I used TalkingPoints, the student felt successful, the parent felt respected to be included and I made an ally. It was a win, win, win.”

– Elizabeth Cashman, Middle School Teacher, Osseo Area Schools

MEASURED OUTCOMES

- Academic performance
- Family engagement
- Social-emotional learning

OF STUDIES: 1

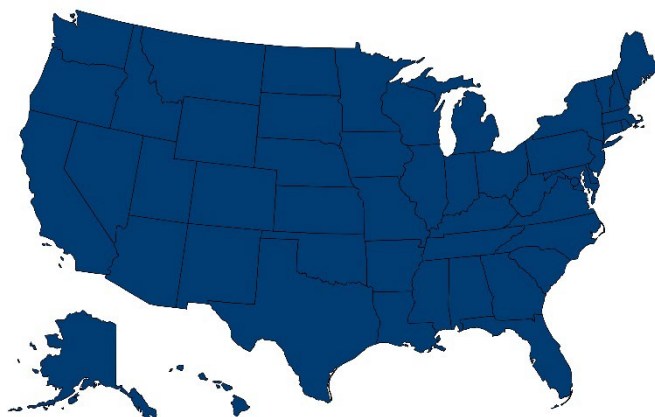
RESULTS

The impact of TalkingPoints was evaluated using a difference-in-differences study design in a large urban school district. We report on the findings from the Smarter Balanced Assessment System. Results for students in grades 3-8 showed significant improvements in math scores, with an 8.7-point increase (effect size $=+0.08$). Gains in English language arts (ELA) scores were positive but not statistically significant (effect size $=+0.04$). This retrospective quasi-experiment qualifies TalkingPoints for the ESSA Tier 3 (promising evidence) rating.

SAMPLE PARTNERS

Aldine Independent School District	Babson College
Harvard Graduate School of Education	Orange County Public Schools (Fla.)
Seattle Public Schools	Tulsa Public Schools

PROGRAM REACH



Aligns to the following two
National Standards for Family-School Partnerships:

WELCOME
ALL FAMILIES
STANDARD 1

COMMUNICATE
EFFECTIVELY
STANDARD 2