

How a Texas Elementary School Increased Standardized Test Scores by Over 60%

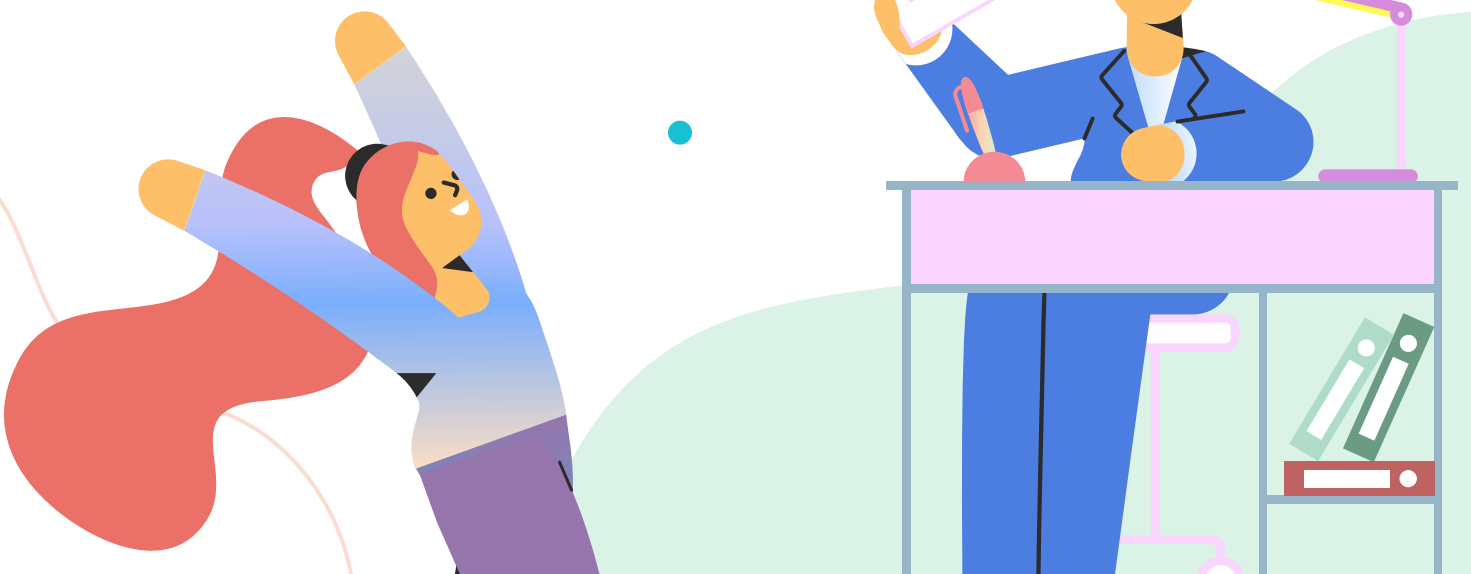
School leaders at Joy James Elementary School within Castleberry Independent School District in Fort Worth, Texas, knew that building independent reading habits was crucial for their students' success in all academic areas. The student body, made up of 90% economically disadvantaged students and 42% emergent bilingual students or English-language learners, had fallen behind during the pandemic. So they partnered with Beanstack to challenge each of their students to read and log 2,000 minutes during the 2021–2022 school year.

By the end of the year, Joy James students' test results exceeded the school's wildest expectations. Student reading scores increased by an average of 62%, and student math scores increased by 47%. Their results outpaced statewide growth by 20 points in reading and 5 points in math. School leaders point to Beanstack as one of the key factors driving their success.

“ It's amazing what this tool helped us accomplish with student goal setting and tracking. Reading motivation skyrocketed for all students last year. Beanstack helped us cultivate excitement and the love of learning through the use of rich literature throughout our campus.

Leigh Ann Turner

Principal at Joy James Elementary School



APPROACH



Emphasize Independent Reading

Using “Leader in Me” principles to nurture student success, leaders set a schoolwide goal for each student to read 2,000 minutes over the course of the school year.



Motivate With Achievable Benchmarks

School leaders set checkpoints at 500, 1000, and 1,500 minutes, and rewarded reaching these milestones with prizes and parties.



Simplify and Gamify

Castleberry ISD used Beanstack to make logging and tracking reading easy and fun with reading challenges and gamification features like badges, streaks, and friends.



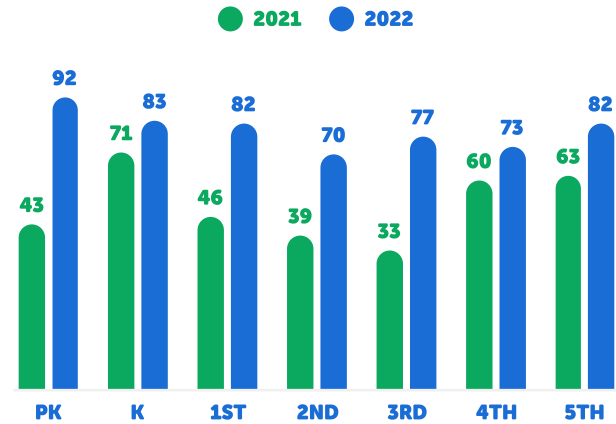
Get District Wide Involvement

Castleberry ISD’s superintendent sponsored a districtwide reading challenge, and the district’s lead librarian provided key support for Beanstack’s implementation and rollout.

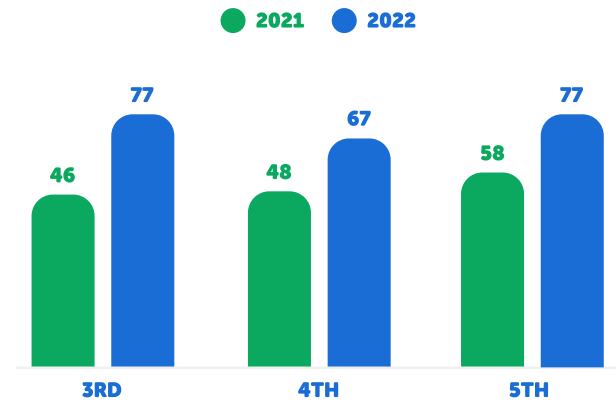
RESULTS

The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) program measures student achievement based on curriculum standards in reading, math, and other key subjects. Joy James’ student scores improved so much that the school rating jumped from a C to an A.

STARR READING SCORES



STARR MATH SCORES



CONCLUSION

Along with improved standardized test scores, Joy James’ use of Beanstack also instilled rich reading habits with widespread benefits. Students formed new social connections, deepened their understanding of others, and were even observed picking to read and log in Beanstack over playing computer games during free choice time. With a strong reading culture established at Joy James, students are discovering a true love of reading.