

CASE STUDY

Zoobean and the Hawaii Department of Education: Access for Every Child

The Hawaii Department of Education (DOE) is unique for many reasons—not the least of which is that it spans over eight separate islands. As one agency serving 257 public schools and 175,000 students separated across geographic, ethnic, and socioeconomic lines, the Hawaii DOE had their work cut out for them when it came time to design a statewide reading challenge.

With literal oceans between their students, the agency decided the only way to bring their mission to life was to leverage technology. They partnered with Zoobean to build their [#808Reads challenge](#), using the Beanstack app to allow students across the state to connect on any computer, tablet, or mobile device.

And they didn't stop there. The Hawaii DOE wanted to be sure any student could participate in #808Reads, even if they don't have access to a school manager or librarian. To do that, they had to use Beanstack in a whole new way.

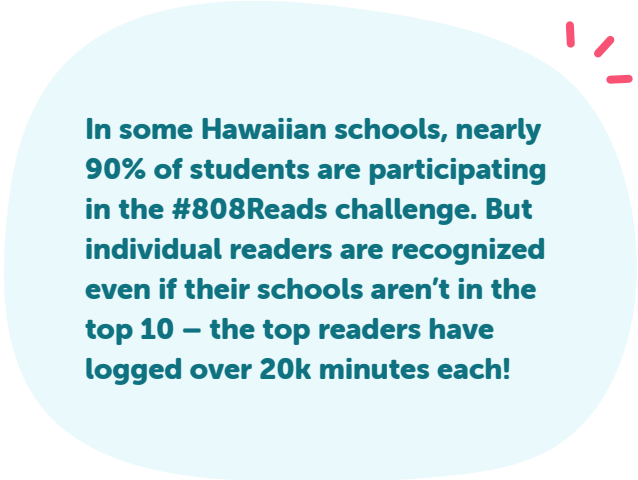


Universal Access – With or Without an Adult

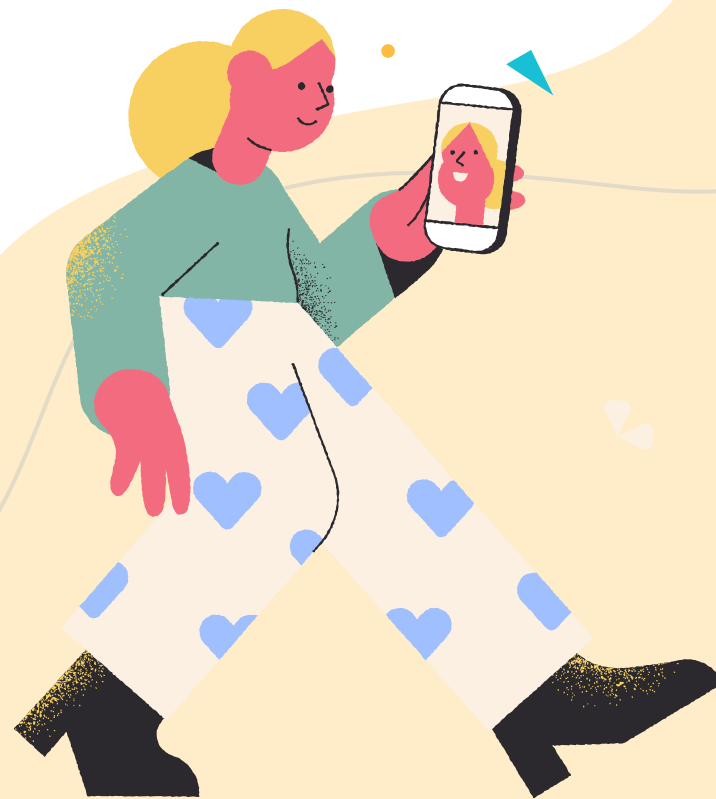
A major component of the [Hawaii DOE's mission](#) is “to advocate and nurture the love of reading and the habits of lifelong learning.” As such, they chose to implement a statewide reading challenge because they knew the [many benefits of promoting independent reading](#) for students of all ages. But they also wanted a reading challenge that every single student could access—whether they had a teacher or librarian promoting the challenge at their school or not.

To ensure every student can participate in #808Reads, the Hawaii DOE decided to take a different approach, and create a statewide challenge with a simple, universal log-in. Instead of receiving log-in information from a librarian or administrator, the #808Reads challenge allows students to download the app on their own, search for their school, and then log in using their student ID number. Once they log in, students have access to all the #808Reads badges and virtual prizes—even if their school doesn't have its own Beanstack challenge.

Taking this approach creates equity, allowing students without the sponsorship of a participating school manager to reap the benefits of the Beanstack app. And this model is working—since September 2020 and within the constraints of remote learning, the number of Hawaii DOE Beanstack users has increased by 133% as of February 2021. By simplifying the sign-in process, students across the eight islands are inspired to connect in a new way—a connection that the Hawaii DOE fosters with their Hawaiian-culture themed challenge.



In some Hawaiian schools, nearly 90% of students are participating in the #808Reads challenge. But individual readers are recognized even if their schools aren't in the top 10 – the top readers have logged over 20k minutes each!



Celebrating Hawaiian Culture

The #808Reads challenge is not only unique because of its accessibility. It is also a model of how departments of education can embrace the diverse history and culture of their state to connect with students.

"We've designed [#808Reads] to be a field trip" says Selena Mobbs, the Hawaii DOE's #808Reads Challenge Coordinator. The [reading challenge is a virtual voyage](#) which begins "in Kou at the Aloha Tower and travels around O'ahu during the first quarter and depart[s] from Hakipu'u for Nāwiliwili Harbor. During the second quarter, we will explore significant sites on Kaua'i and Ni'ihau, and continue through all the islands until we reach our final destination, Mauna Kea, in May."

Students earn badges for every 60 minutes of reading, and prizes include links to culturally relevant and exciting adventures, such as a virtual helicopter ride through a volcanic park, and links to performances by famous Hawaiian dancers and musicians. In this way, the challenge educates students on Hawaiian life and culture while encouraging them to celebrate the many natural and artistic offerings of their state. In a state where [there is no majority race](#) and nearly 25% of people identify as multiracial, celebrating the cultural diversity of Hawaii is a way of affirming students' identities and starting important conversations about race, class, gender, and much more.

The Hawaii DOE is on track to reach their goal of 8 million reading minutes in the #808Reads challenge by the end of the 2020-2021 school year. In January 2021 alone, Hawaii students logged over 1 million minutes!



• Fostering Connection Across Islands

For the Hawaii DOE, Beanstack was the perfect choice for their statewide reading challenge: an agile solution that makes it easy for them to provide access to every single student, regardless of their school's library budget. Hawaii's students continue to blow their #808Reads goals out of the water, hitting their first 1-million-minute month in January 2021, and logging over 800,000 minutes in February—all while learning about the history and culture of their state.

Beanstack by Zoobean is the leading reading challenge mobile app for schools across the country. To learn more about how Zoobean can support literacy initiatives in your school, district, or state, go to: beanstack.com/-schools.





About Beanstack

Beanstack helps educators build a culture of reading in their schools and districts through the power of reading challenges. Many common reading programs focus too heavily on assessments, which can discourage students and make reading less enjoyable. With Beanstack's reading challenges, educators can encourage independent, choice reading time—the number one way to build strong readers.

Beanstack is the flagship product of Zoobean, Inc., created to help people read more and read together. Beanstack is licensed by over 10,000 public libraries, school districts, and corporations around the world. Zoobean's investors include Kapor Capital, Mark Cuban, RevUp Capital, the AT&T Aspire Accelerator, and Amazon's Alexa Fund. Its founders were previously Washington, DC's Teacher of the Year and Google's first Head of K-12 Education Outreach. Learn more at beanstack.com.