



# SUPPLEMENTAL CURRICULAR RESOURCES PURCHASED WITHIN OAK PARK DISTRICT 97: EDUCATOR IMPLEMENTATION AND FEEDBACK

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# SPECIAL THANKS

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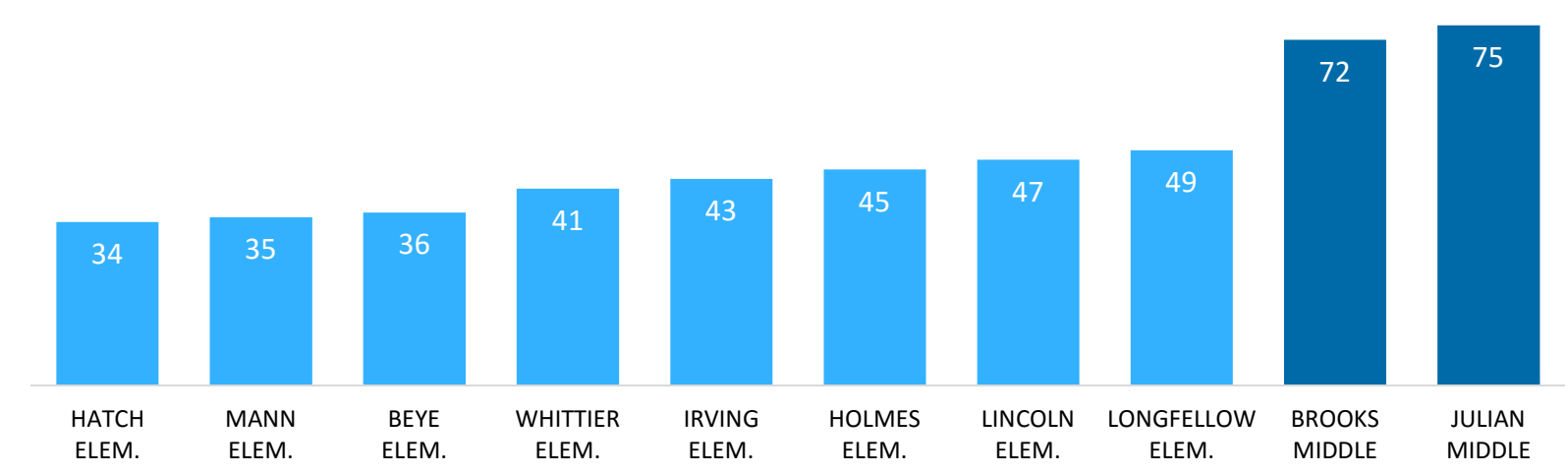
# ABOUT THIS RESEARCH

- Information about resource implementation guidelines was drawn from the resources' websites and personal communication with the resources' developers.
- Findings in this report were drawn from an online survey of District 97 educators.
- The online survey link was distributed by principals before or during staff meetings, and all surveys were completed between February 22<sup>nd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016.
- The survey asked implementation and feedback questions about 15 supplemental curricular resources currently purchased at varying levels within the district. For 14 resources, we asked for implementation information going back to September 2014. For one resource, which was purchased for the 2014-15 school year but not the 2015-16 school year, we asked for implementation information for the 2014-15 school year.
- Some survey questions were closed-ended while others were open-ended. Open-ended responses were described in this report as themes when possible.
  - When reporting quotations from open-ended responses, we gave preference to those that represented common themes and had more detail relative to other responses.
  - For quotations regarding what evidence educators can provide that each resource is effective for student learning, we gave preference to those responses that best described student learning outcomes rather than other constructs such as student engagement, ease of use, and time spent on task. For some resources, a representative sample of quotations was used, rather than the full set of responses detailing student learning outcomes.
- In total, 424 educators participated. At the time of the survey, there were 502 teachers within the district, for an approximate response rate of 84%.

## Survey participants reported filling a wide variety of roles within the district.

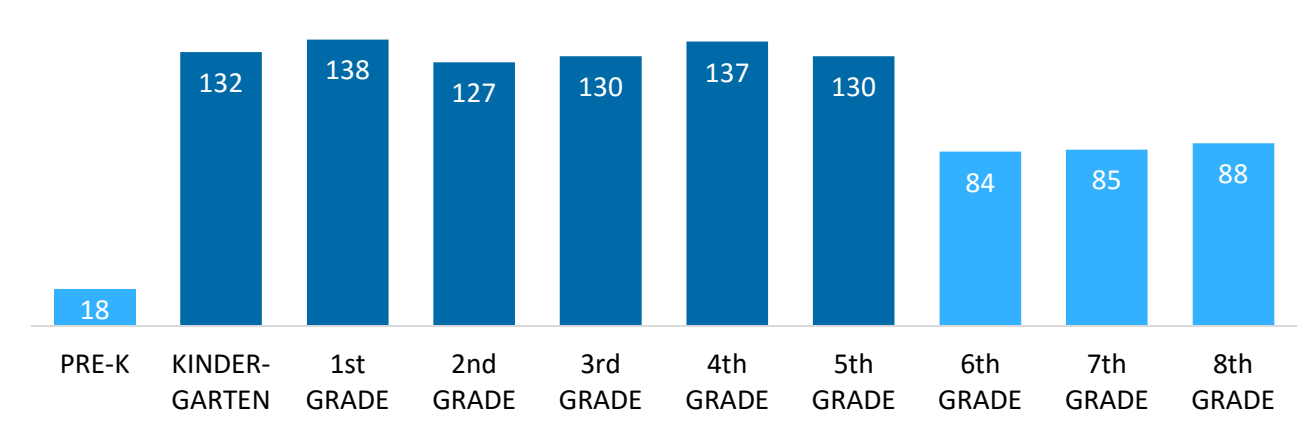
- 168 elementary classroom teachers
- 74 special areas teachers (PE, Health, Art, General Music, Instrumental Music, World Language, Design, Speech/Drama/Debate)
- 30 related services providers (Speech pathologist, social worker, psychologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, nurse)
- 24 elementary special education teachers
- 21 middle school special education teachers
- 17 middle school math teachers
- 16 middle school science teachers
- 15 middle school humanities teachers
- 14 Middle school language arts teacher
- 9 Data and instructional technology coaches
- 9 teacher librarians
- 8 GTD teachers
- 6 language arts specialists
- 3 ESL teachers
- 3 early childhood teachers
- 2 student support specialists
- 2 IB coordinators
- 1 Title I tutor
- 7 in “other” roles

All 10 district schools were represented by survey participants, with the middle schools having the highest numbers of participants per school.



n=424. Participants could select more than one school.

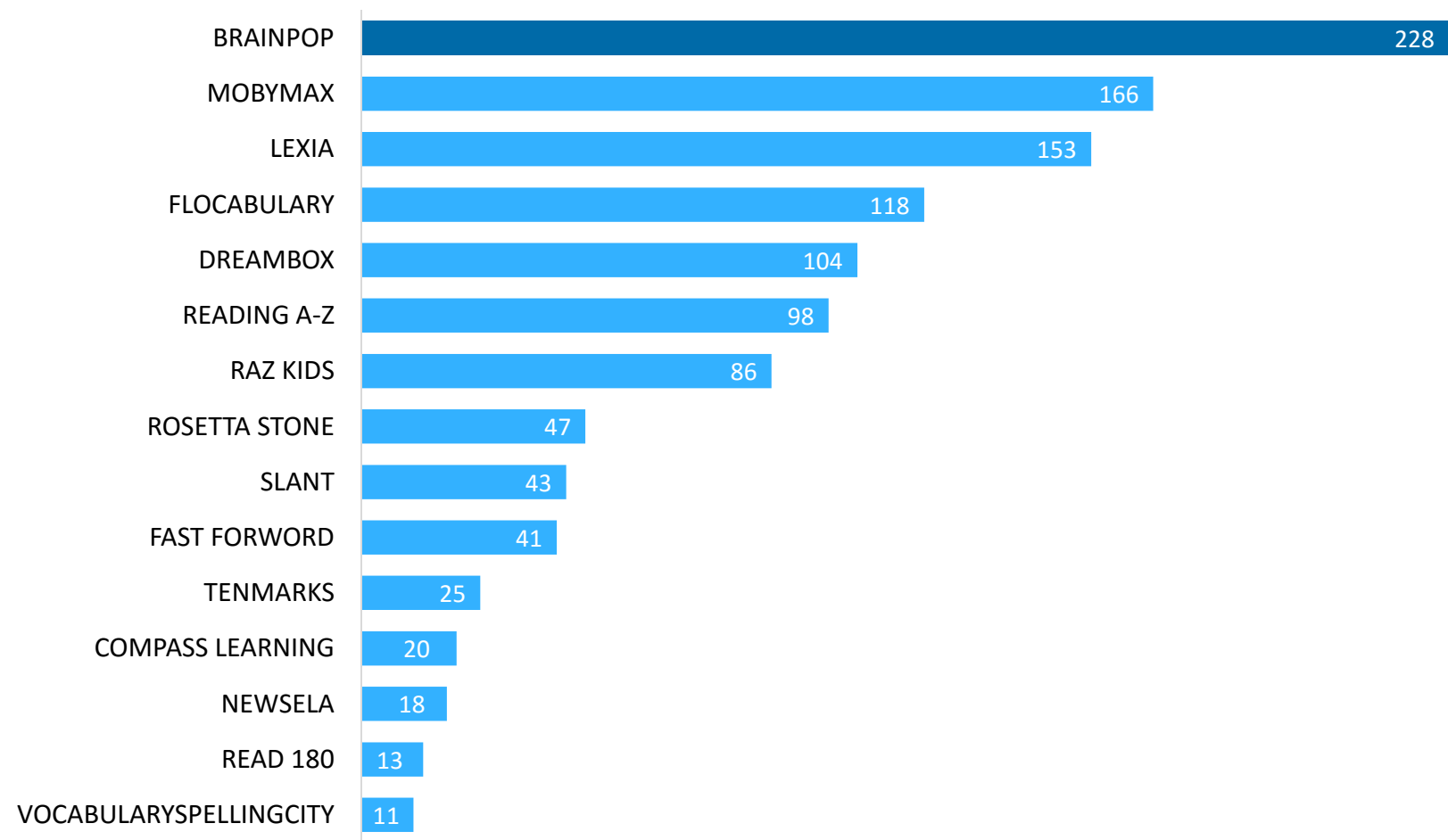
All grades from pre-K to 8<sup>th</sup> grade were represented by survey participants, with participants most often teaching or working with K-5 grade students.



n=424. Participants could select more than one grade.

# SUMMARY DATA ACROSS ALL RESOURCES

Over half of participants (228 of 424) reported using BrainPop, making it the most commonly used resource. VocabularySpellingCity and Read 180 were the resources used by the fewest number of participants.



n=424

## Survey data suggested variations across the district's elementary and middle schools in use of the 15 resources.

This heat map displays a cross-tabulation of the school(s) in which survey participants work with students and their reports of which resource(s) they have used with students since September 2014. For example:

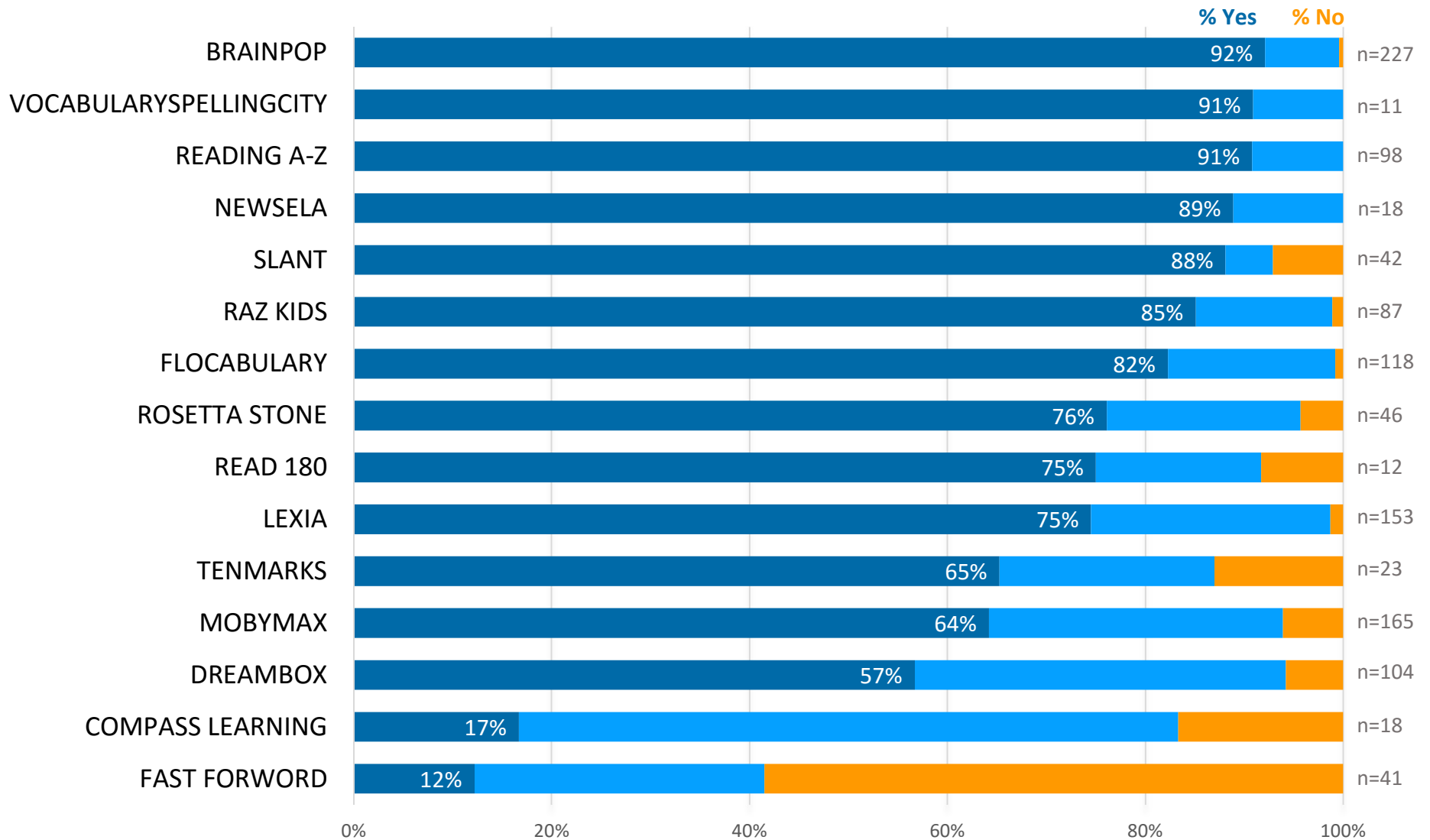
- 23 educators who work at Irving and 23 at Holmes reported using DreamBox, compared to only 3 at Lincoln and 3 at Mann.
- Use of Lexia appears to be highest at Longfellow (32 survey participants) and lowest at Julian (8 survey participants).

	BEYE	HATCH	HOLMES	IRVING	LINCOLN	LONG-FELLOW	MANN	WHITTIER	BROOKS	JULIAN
BRAINPOP	10	25	32	31	36	35	23	26	5	15
MOBYMAX	12	14	24	18	26	17	12	16	17	10
LEXIA	13	12	22	25	10	32	13	13	10	8
FLOCABULARY	9	10	15	12	13	10	9	8	17	23
DREAMBOX	16	4	23	23	3	16	3	16	2	0
READING A-Z	8	12	17	21	4	21	6	13	2	3
RAZ KIDS	7	7	13	22	2	21	12	7	4	2
ROSETTA STONE	5	4	9	4	6	6	4	8	5	6
SLANT	3	2	1	2	7	6	7	9	5	2
FAST FORWARD	0	3	10	2	8	7	5	3	2	3
TENMARKS	4	6	1	1	5	4	2	1	1	0
COMPASS LEARNING	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	11
NEWSELA	1	1	1	3	0	6	0	3	1	5
READ 180	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	5
VOCABULARYSPELLINGCITY	1	5	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	1



Perceptions of effectiveness for student learning varied widely across resources, with over 90% of survey participants who used BrainPop, VocabularySpellingCity and Reading A-Z reporting them to be effective.

Fast ForWord and Compass Learning were least likely to be perceived as effective for student learning.



Response options were "Yes," "I'm not sure" and "No."

# BRAINPOP (BRAINPOP, BRAINPOP JR., BRAINPOP ESL AND BRAINPOP ESPANOL)

228 out of 424 survey participants reported using BrainPop.

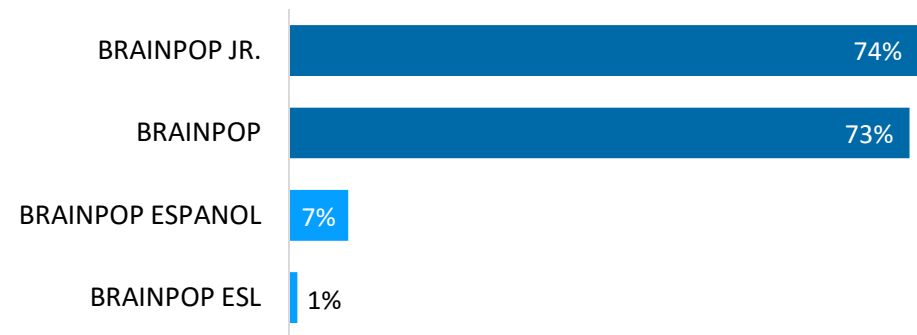
- 155 (of 168) elementary classroom teachers
- 15 (of 24) elementary special education teachers
- 12 (of 74) special areas teachers (PE, Health, Art, General Music, Instrumental Music, World Language, Design, Speech/Drama/Debate)
- 6 (of 9) data and instructional technology coaches
- 6 (of 16) middle school science teachers
- 6 (of 9) teacher librarians
- 6 (of 8) GTD teachers
- 5 (of 30) related services providers (Speech pathologist, social worker, psychologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, nurse)
- 4 (of 15) middle school humanities teachers
- 3 (of 17) middle school math teachers
- 3 (of 6) language arts specialists
- 2 (of 3) ESL teachers
- 2 (of 21) middle school special education teachers
- 1 (of 14) middle school language arts teacher
- 1 (of 1) Title I tutor
- 1 (of 3) early childhood teacher
- 1 (of 2) IB coordinator
- 2 of 7 in “other” roles

## WHAT IS BRAINPOP?

“In classrooms, on mobile devices, and at home, BrainPOP engages students through animated movies, learning games, interactive quizzes, primary source activities, concept mapping, and more. Our award-winning resources include BrainPOP Jr. (K-3), BrainPOP, BrainPOP Español, and, for English language learners, BrainPOP ESL. They cover topics within Science, Math, Social Studies, English Language Arts, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Music, Health, Reading, and Writing. Our content is carefully mapped to the Common Core, aligned to academic standards, and searchable with our online Standards Tool.”

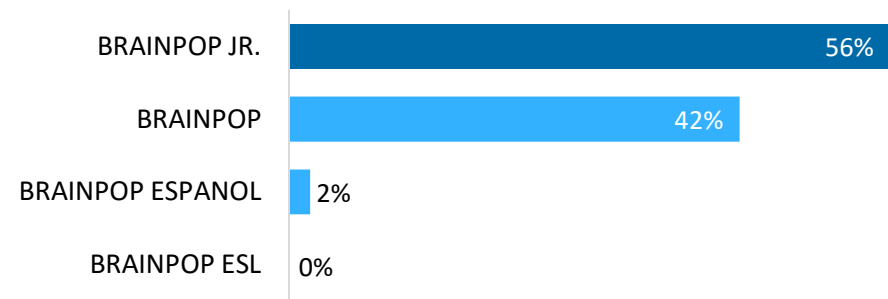
Source:  
[educators.brainpop.com/about](http://educators.brainpop.com/about)

Of the four BrainPop versions, BrainPop Jr. was used by the highest percentage of participants, followed by the original BrainPop.



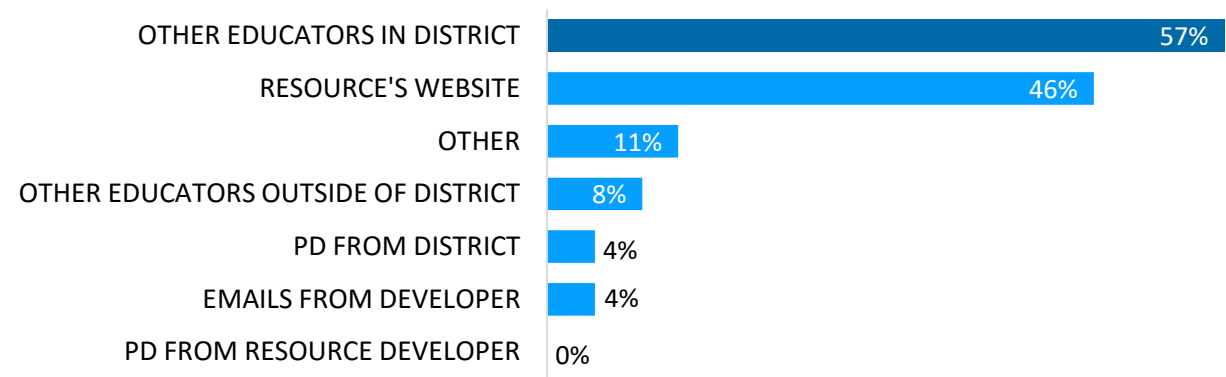
n=230. Participants could select more than one response.

Over half of those using at least one BrainPop version reported using BrainPop Jr. most frequently.



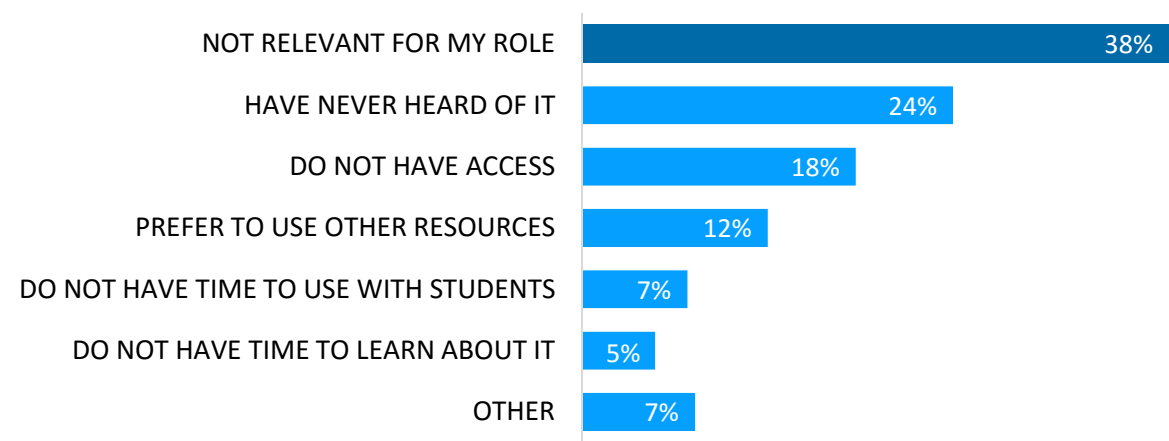
n=230

Those using BrainPop tended to report receiving information about it from other educators in the district, followed by BrainPop’s website.



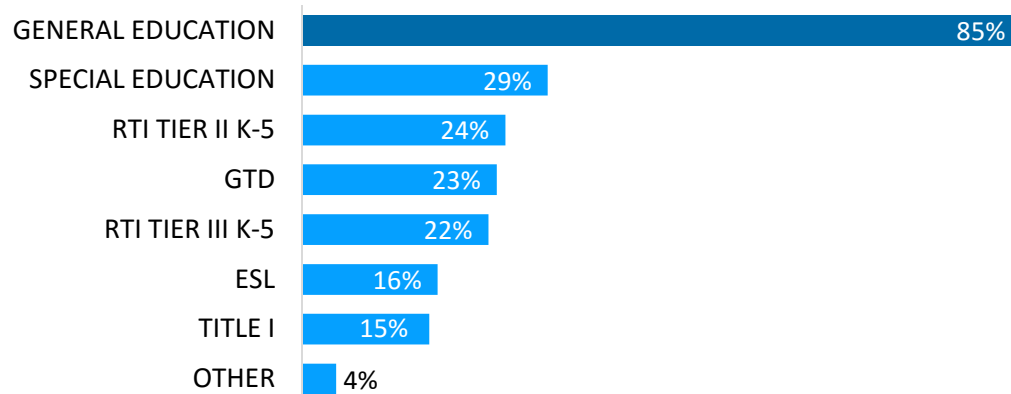
n=220. Participants could select more than one response. “Other” responses commonly referenced respondents learning how to use the resource on their own.

The most common reason for not using BrainPop was that it was not relevant to the participant’s role in the district.



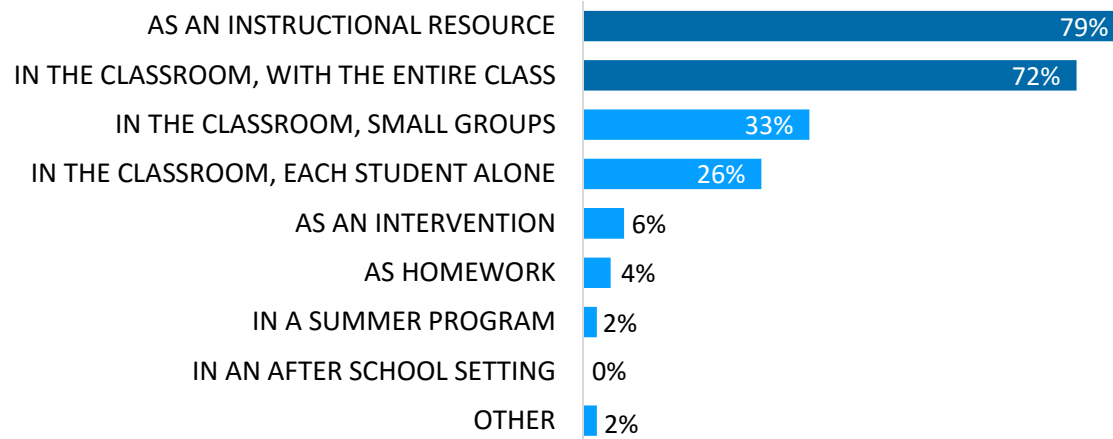
n=191. Participants could select more than one response.

## Participants most commonly reported using BrainPop with general education students ...



n=228. Participants could select more than one response.

## ... as an instructional resource in the classroom, with the entire class participating.<sup>1</sup>

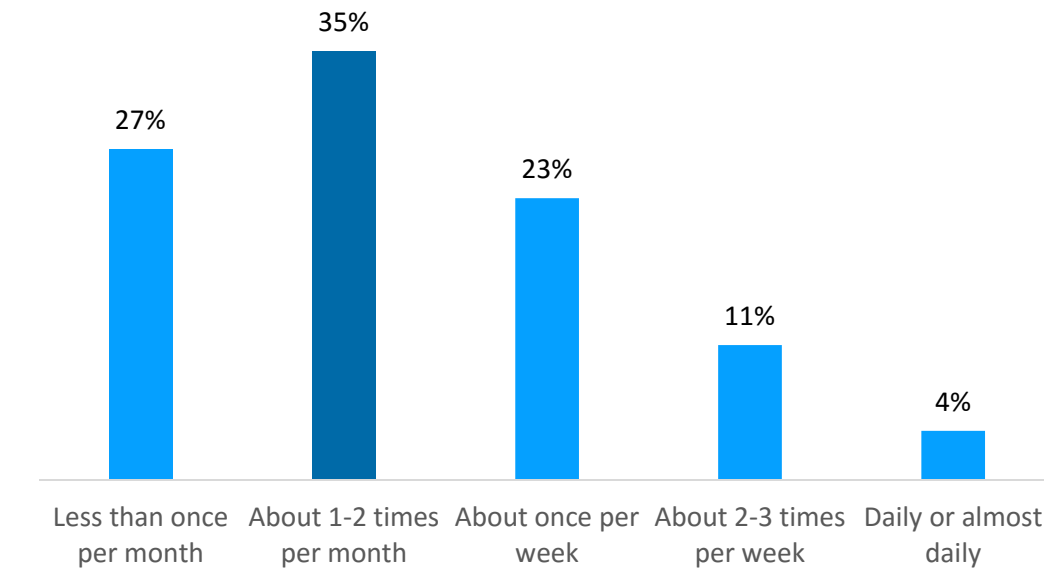


n=228. Participants could select more than one response.

<sup>1</sup> Feedback and implementation information for BrainPop did not differ substantially across the four versions used by district educators. For this reason, the results for all four versions are presented together.

District educators most commonly reported that students are typically engaging with BrainPop about 1 to 2 times per month.

More than one-quarter reported using it less than once per month.



n=227

## HOW DISTRICT EDUCATORS ARE USING BRAINPOP

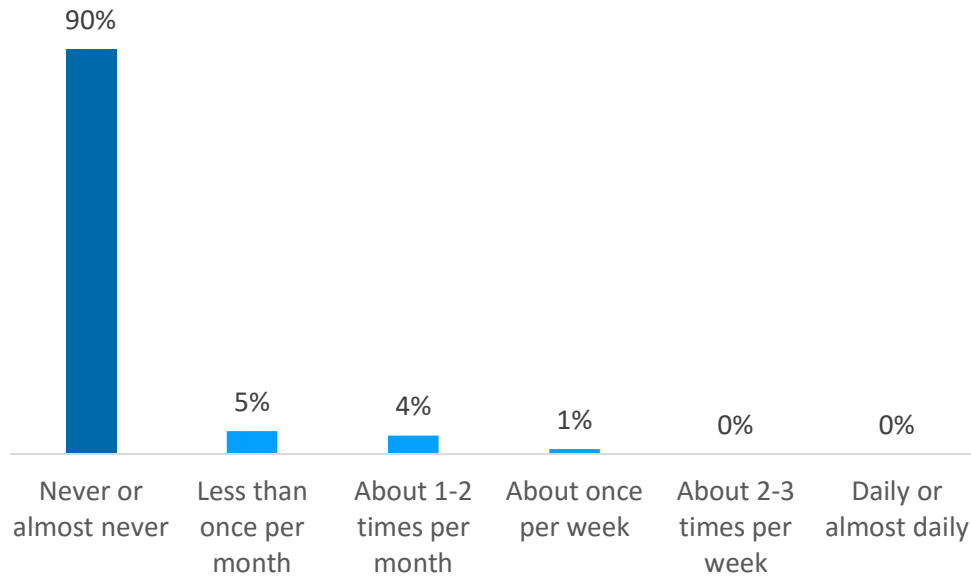
Open-ended responses from one survey item (on what do you like most about BrainPop), suggest that teachers are using BrainPop to:

- a) introduce a new topic, reinforce skills and/or review; and
- b) as a research resource.

According to the resource developer, BrainPop does not offer implementation guidelines for BrainPop or BrainPop Jr., the two most commonly used versions in the district.

*“BrainPOP does not offer implementation guidelines for BrainPOP or BrainPOP Jr. These products are designed to be supplementary tools and we leave it up to the discretion of the teacher to discern how to best implement BP/BPJr into their classroom use.”* – personal communication, February 2016

Although quizzing students and monitoring results is a feature advertised as part of “My BrainPop,” 9 out of 10 of those using BrainPop reported that they “never or almost never” monitor student progress data with this resource.

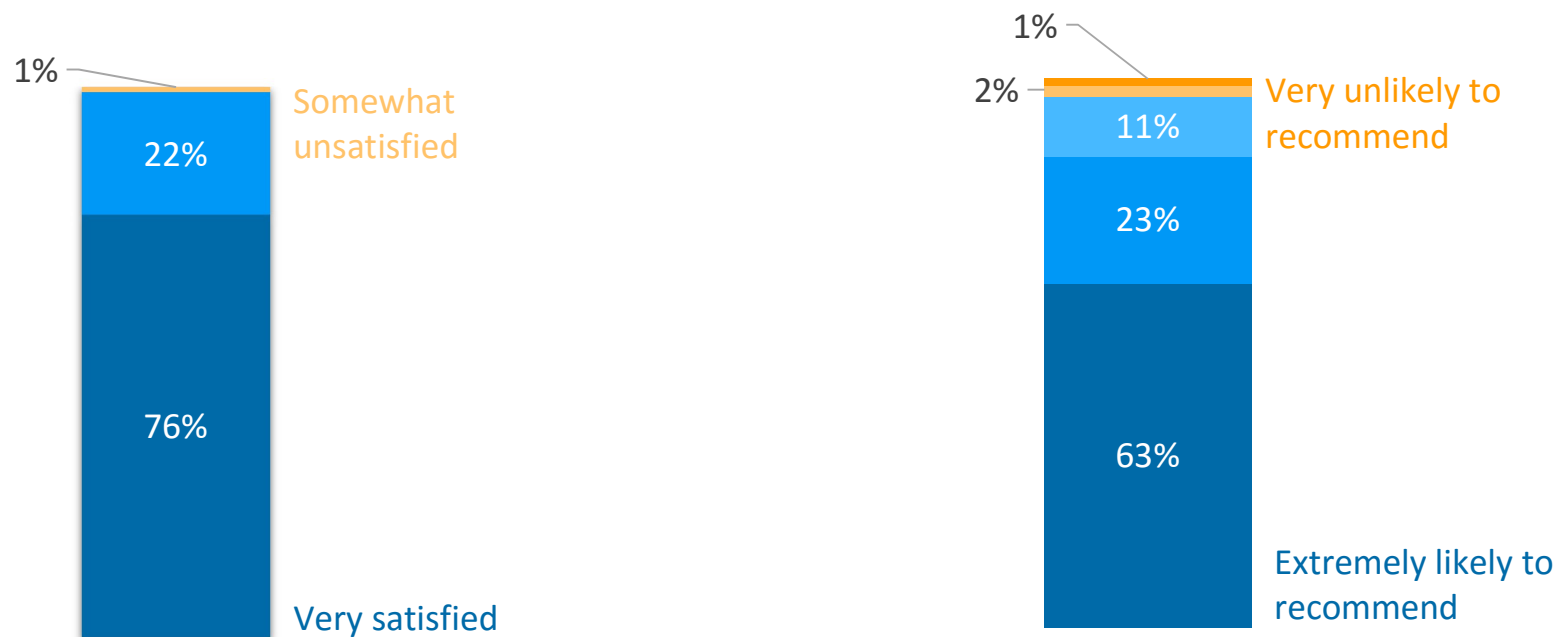


n=224

Open-ended responses from participants on monitoring of student data suggest that:

- Many are using a version that does not track individual student data (most likely a free, non-subscription version).
- Many are using BrainPop only to show videos, without using other features to which they may or may not have access.
- Many are “unaware” of BrainPop offering a feature involving student assessment.
- Few are using BrainPop’s quizzes to assess student understanding.

Survey respondents on the whole were both highly satisfied with BrainPop and would recommend it to a friend or colleague.

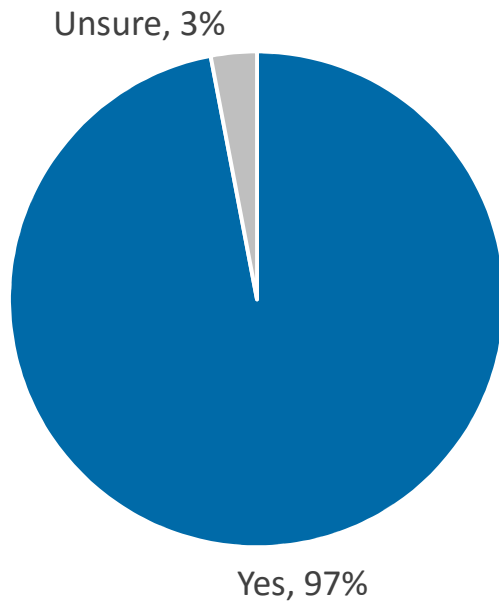


n=228. Response options were Very Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Unsatisfied and Very Unsatisfied

n=227. Response options were Extremely Likely to Recommend, Very Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Unlikely to Recommend, Very Unlikely to Recommend, Extremely Unlikely to Recommend

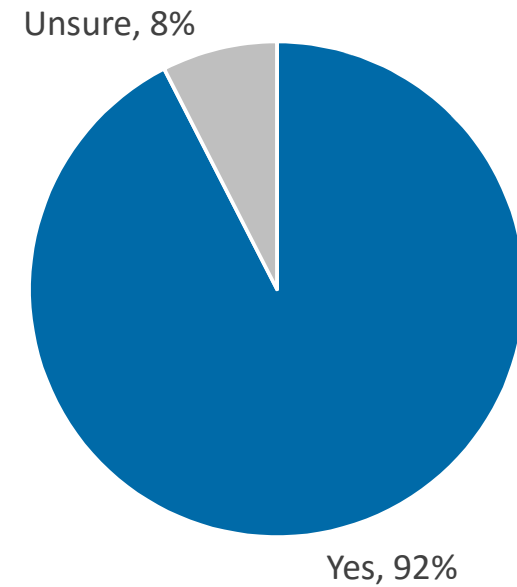


Almost all of those using BrainPop reported that, in their experience, **most students enjoy using this resource**, while a small number were unsure.



n=226. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

Almost all respondents using BrainPop reported beliefs that **BrainPop is effective for student learning**, while fewer than 10% were unsure.



n=227. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

Respondents who believe BrainPop is effective for student learning offered the following evidence:

*“I like how it gives them some basic information that acts as a jumping off point to further research topics. I have the graded quizzes that gives me an idea of their understanding of a topic. They can then rewatch the videos if they haven't scored better than 70%. Most of my students benefit from rewatching.”* – Fourth grade teacher

*“I use the free BrainPop videos with students to teach digital citizenship. Students still comment on things they remember from the videos.”* – Elementary school librarian

*“It is a wonderful resource for social studies. Students can recall numerous historical facts based on this resource.”* – Fourth grade teacher

*“We always have a learning chat after watching a video and I see all the new facts students learn.”* – Kindergarten teacher

*“They do well on the worksheets and comment on the movies. They also push themselves to re-watch videos which helps them improve their comprehension.”* – Fourth and fifth grade special education teacher

In open-ended responses about what participants like **MOST** about BrainPop, the following themes were highly prevalent.

- The BrainPop videos and associated materials are “engaging,” “fun,” and “entertaining,” and students enjoy using them.
- The BrainPop videos are “short,” “concise,” “informative,” “accurate,” “educational” and “easy to understand.”
- The BrainPop videos cover a variety of relevant, age-appropriate topics across subject areas.
- This resource is “kid-friendly” and students can easily and independently engage with some components themselves.

Examples include:

*“I love BrainPOP! The videos are short, to the point, and are in kid friendly language. There are also a variety of topics that I use in all subjects. Kids love it too!” –3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher*

*“I like how it excites the students! They love watching the short videos, discussing the content, making word webs, diagrams, etc. I like how it gives them some basic information that acts as a jumping off point to further research topics.” – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher*

*“Quick, focused, on-topic, engaging. Perfect for a quick engagement at the beginning of a lesson. Quizzes and other activities are available for formative assessment or supplemental lesson material.” – 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher*

*“I absolutely love BrainPop, and so do the students. It has information on pretty much any topic students are learning about. The videos are short and very engaging, and I use a BrainPop video almost daily to introduce a concept in reading, math, science, or social studies. I have also used it for multiple mini research projects - students use it as a resource to take notes on various topics.” – 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher*

When we asked participants what they like **LEAST** about BrainPop, the following themes were common in their responses.

- “Nothing.”
- They want more. Participants wish BrainPop had more videos and covered more subject areas.
- They want paid subscriptions district-wide. Some are using a free version, while some are “stealing” log-in information from another teacher or school. A few commented that they do not have access to it anymore.

# BRAINPOP SUMMARY

- BrainPop is a highly valued and widely used resource within District 97.
- BrainPop is primarily being used as an instructional resource as part of whole-class instruction.
- BrainPop's key feature seems to be that its videos are fun and engaging for students. Watching and re-watching videos may be helping students learn.
- Despite its popularity, BrainPop currently has low frequency of use relative to other resources used within the district, with educators most commonly saying they use it 1 to 2 times per month.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BRAINPOP

- A small study on student learning outcomes may be possible if teachers can implement BrainPop's quizzes in a more systematic manner.
- Ask educators and/or district staff with a paid subscription log-in to explore the differences between the free and paid versions of BrainPop. This information may be helpful for deciding whether the added features of the paid subscription are worth the price. It seems that many district educators are happily using the free version of BrainPop.
- Consider expanding district access to the paid subscription, and educate teachers on the features available to them.
  - For example, a few teachers appear to be using BrainPop's assessment data in a formative manner to drive instruction; this could be a reasonable "next step" for teachers who are not currently using the assessment features.
  - 24% of those not using BrainPop indicated that they "have never heard of it." If district access is expanded, some of these teachers may be interested in using it with their students.

# MOBYMAX

166 out of 424 survey participants reported using MobyMax.

- 106 (of 168) elementary classroom teachers
- 18 (of 24) elementary special education teachers
- 14 (of 21) middle school special education teachers
- 11 (of 17) middle school math teachers
- 6 (of 9) data and instructional technology coaches
- 3 (of 8) GTD teachers
- 2 (of 30) related services providers (Speech pathologist, social worker, psychologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, nurse)
- 2 (of 2) student support specialists
- 1 (of 15) middle school humanities teacher
- 1 (of 9) teacher librarian
- 1 (of 6) language arts specialist
- 1 (of 1) Title I tutor
- 1 (of 3) early childhood teacher
- 1 (of 7) in “other” role

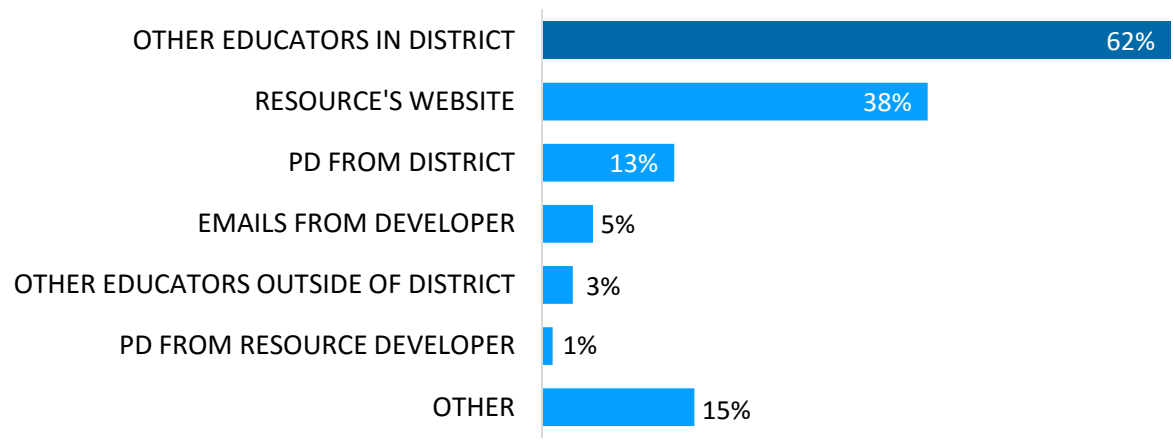
## WHAT IS MOBYMAX?

“More than half the K-8 schools in the U.S. use MobyMax. Why? It’s simple, and it works. Moby finds and fixes missing skills, helping Moby students increase one full grade level in just 40 hours. With MobyMax, students learn twice as fast. What makes MobyMax truly unique? MobyMax is the only completely integrated curriculum to cover 10 ELA subjects, three Math subjects, Science, and Test Prep.”

Source:

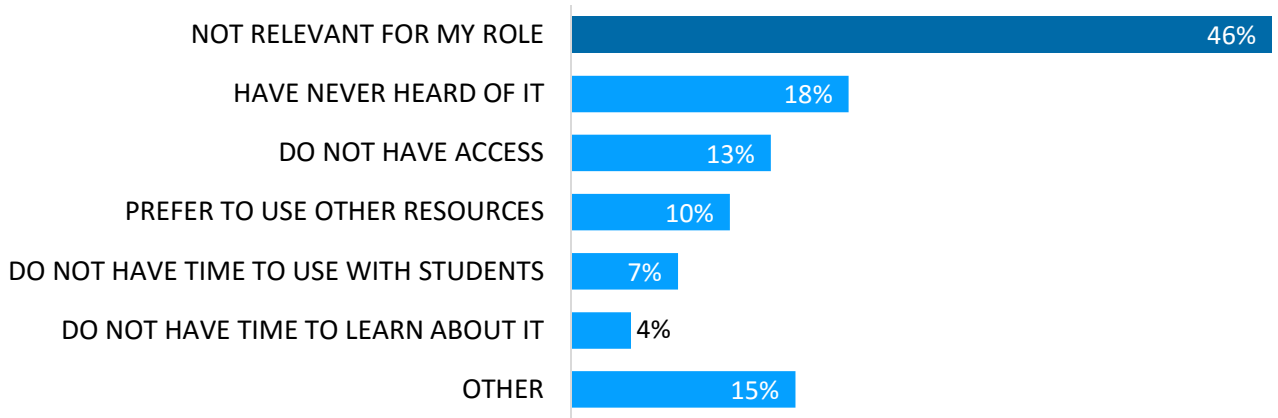
[data.mobymax.com/mc/share/InfoKit.pdf](https://data.mobymax.com/mc/share/InfoKit.pdf)

Those using MobyMax tended to report receiving information about it from other educators in the district, followed by MobyMax’s website.



n=157. Participants could select more than one response. “Other” responses commonly referenced “data coach.”

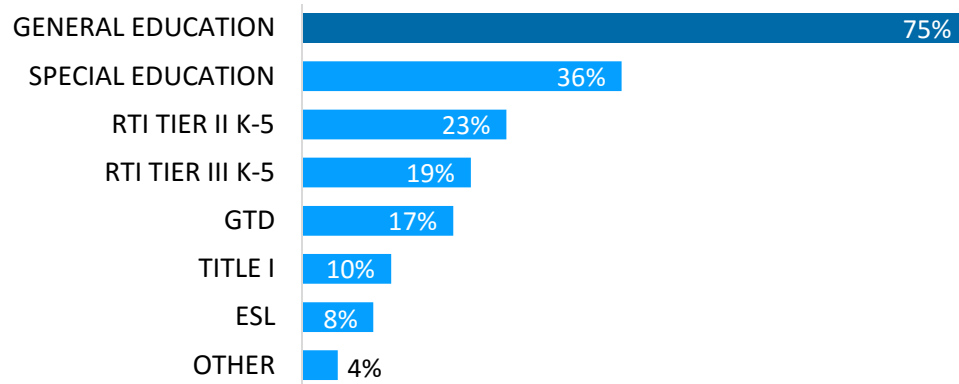
The most common reason for not using MobyMax was that it was not relevant to the participant’s role in the district.



n=259. Participants could select more than one response. “Other” responses did not contribute any unique information.

Participants most commonly reported using MobyMax with general education students.

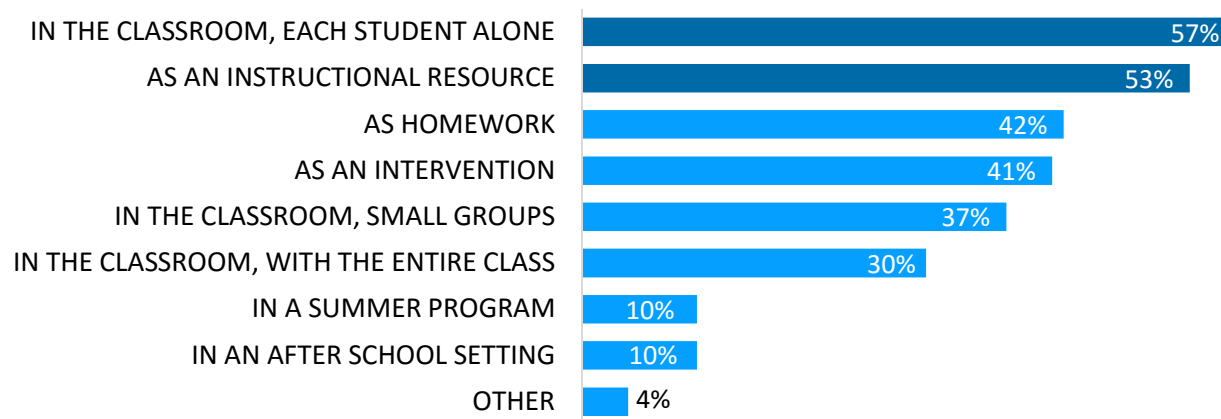
Responses also frequently noted special education students as MobyMax users.



n=166. Participants could select more than one response.

Survey data suggest MobyMax is primarily being used as an instructional resource in the classroom, with each student working alone.

Responses also frequently noted using this resource as homework, as an intervention and in the classroom in small groups.

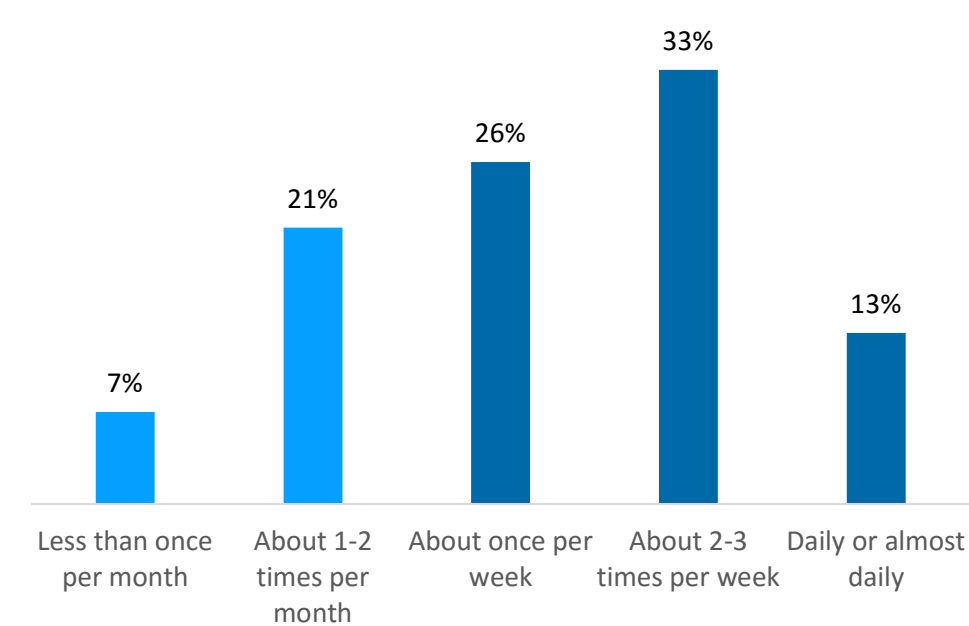


n=166. Participants could select more than one response.



Almost three-quarters of educators using MobyMax report students typically use it at least once per week, meeting the minimum requirements set forth by the resource’s developer.

The participants using MobyMax most commonly reported that students engage with MobyMax about 2 to 3 times per week.



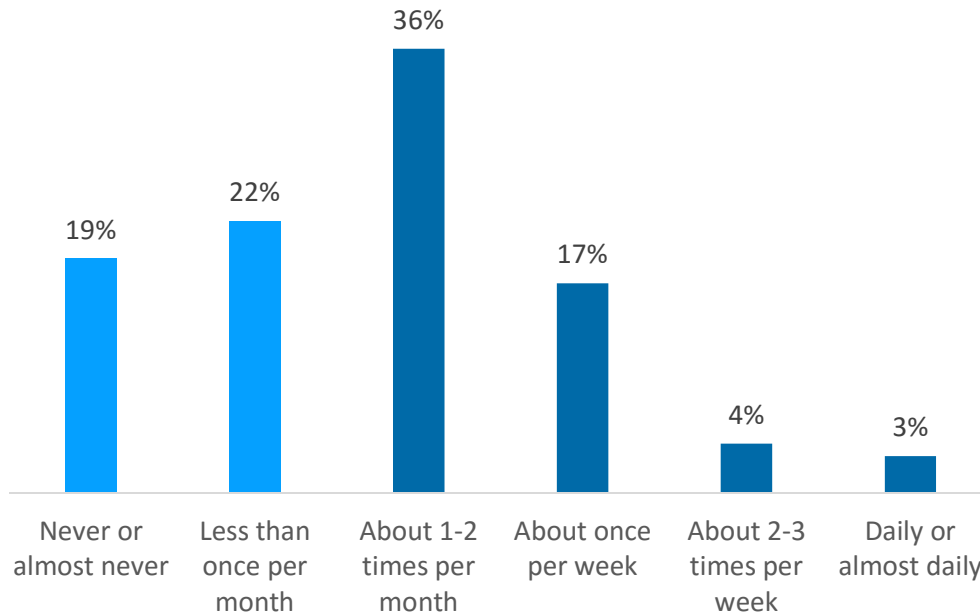
n=162

According to the resource developers, students should see growth if using MobyMax at least once per week.

*“We recommend that students consistently use MobyMax each day. However, our research shows that even students who use MobyMax just once a week see growth.”* – personal communication, February 2016

Over half of the respondents using MobyMax reported monitoring student progress data at least 1 to 2 times per month.

Most commonly, survey participants said they monitor student progress data about 1 to 2 times per month.



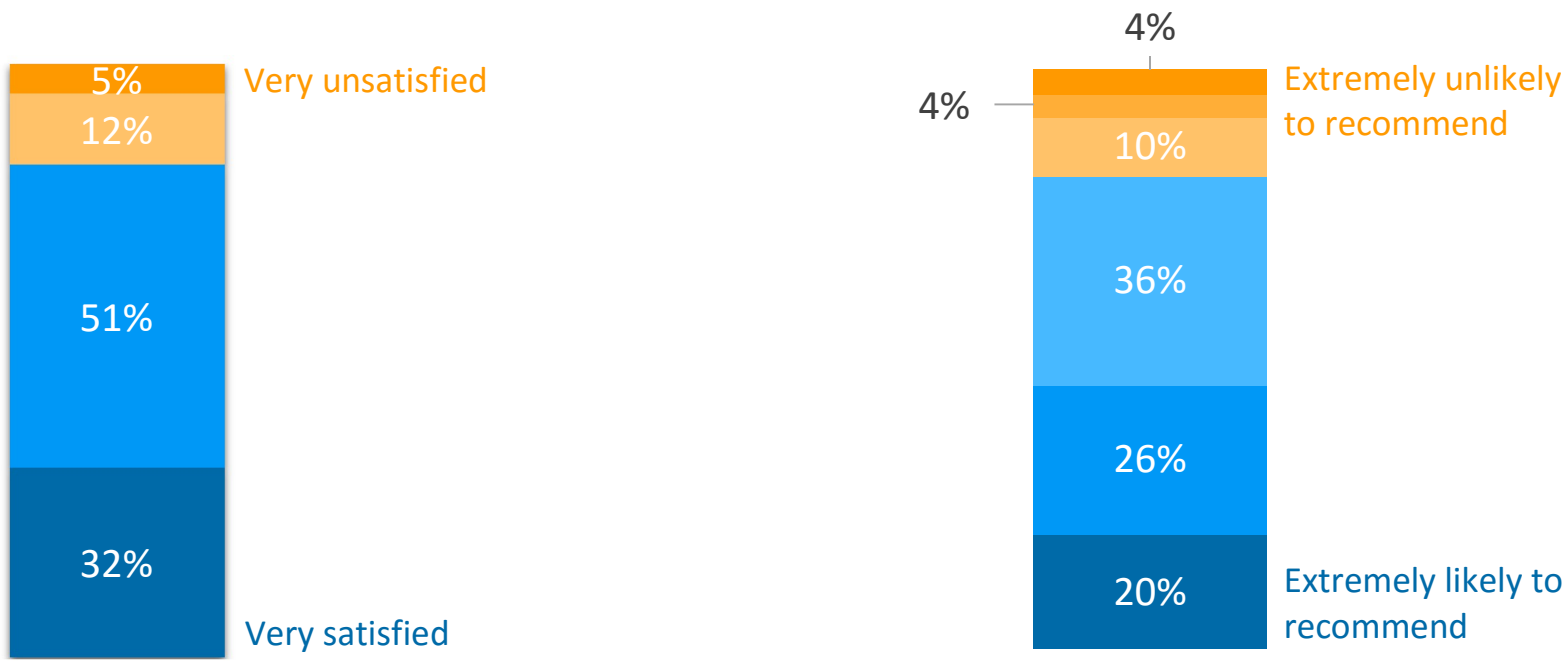
n=163

Open-ended responses suggest that educators are using MobyMax data in a variety of ways, including:

- Checking to see which skills students have mastered and areas where they need help.
- To assess whether students understand the material currently being covered in the class.
- To help guide and differentiate instruction.

Less common themes included using data to talk with parents and to report on IEPs.

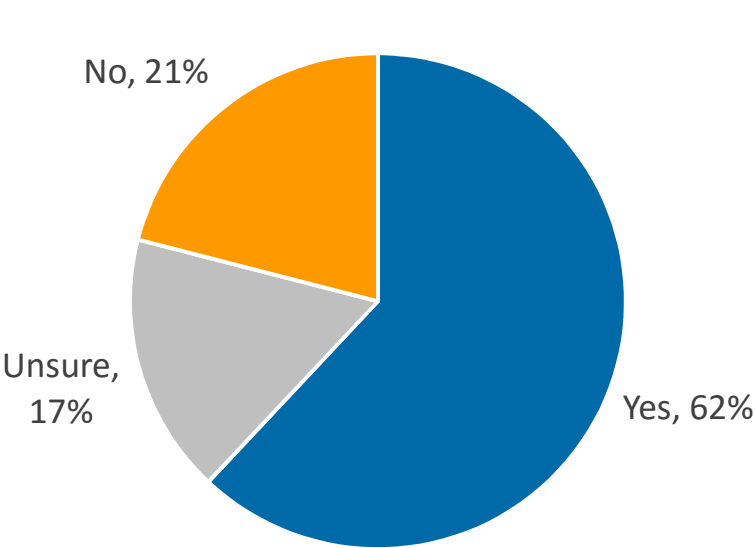
More than 80% of those using MobyMax reported being satisfied with the resource, and a similar number were at least somewhat likely to recommend it to a friend or colleague.



n=164. Response options were Very Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Unsatisfied and Very Unsatisfied

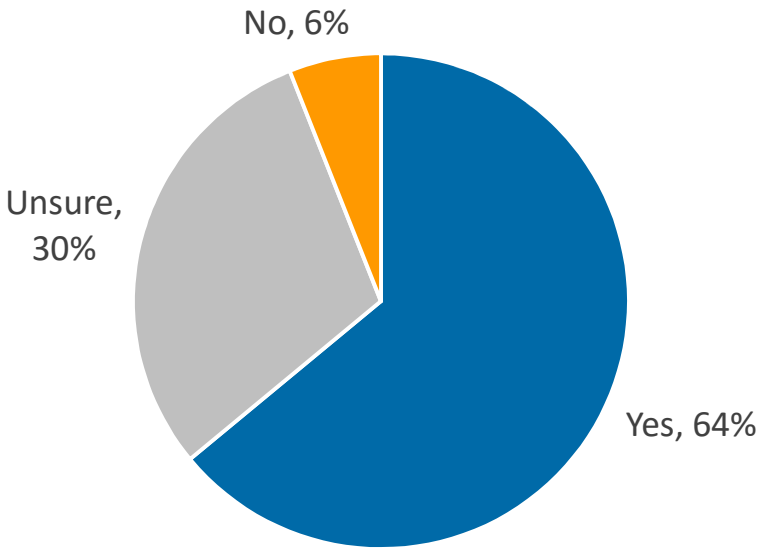
n=166. Response options were Extremely Likely to Recommend, Very Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Unlikely to Recommend, Very Unlikely to Recommend, Extremely Unlikely to Recommend

Although almost two-thirds of those using MobyMax reported that **most students enjoy using this resource**, over one-fifth disagreed.



n=165. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

Almost two-thirds of those using MobyMax believe it **is effective for student learning**, while a little under one-third were unsure.



n=165. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

Survey participants who reported that MobyMax is effective for student learning offered the following evidence:

*“Students are showing above average growth on NWEA Map and I am able to focus most class instruction on grade level standards instead of previous content.”* – Middle school Math teacher

*“Student fact fluency has improved due to classroom activities as well as MobyMax.”* – Third grade teacher

*“Student progress is documented on the student's page of Moby. All of my students have made progress.”* – Elementary special education teacher

*“The student made major gains in below grade level abilities pretty independently.”* – Fifth grade teacher

*“We see an increase in basic math fluency as well as building background knowledge for upcoming standards. Students are able to review content from previous grades that they have not mastered.”* – Fourth grade teacher

When we asked participants what they like **MOST** about MobyMax, the following themes were highly prevalent.

- MobyMax allows for differentiated instruction from the teacher. Teachers can see which skills individual students need to improve on and which standards each individual student has mastered.
- MobyMax continuously tailors its own programming based on each individual student's needs, and it allows each student to work at his/her own pace.
- Students are able to work with this resource independently.

Less commonly, participants noted that they like that MobyMax works on iPads, and that this resource is engaging for students.

Examples include:

*"It is aligned to the standards and automatically assigns lessons based on where student deficits are. Also, I can assign specific lessons to students based on their needs or things that we are doing in class."* – Middle school Math teacher

*"It tracks how long students are working on problems for and their effort level. MobyMax also will not let students go on to the next lesson until they have mastered the current topic. MobyMax has students complete lessons that are below, at, or above grade level; gives them lessons based on what they need and concepts they have yet to master."* – Middle school Math teacher

*"The data tracking is already done so I can just analyze it and use it to adjust instruction. I like that the lessons are linked to each student's individual assessment but I can also assign reinforcement lessons directly linked to current class content."* – Middle school Math teacher

*"I like that it has them working at their own level. It provides fun stories and activities for them to stay engaged."* – First grade teacher

When asked what they like **LEAST** about MobyMax, the following themes were most prevalent in respondents' comments.

- It can be “bland,” “not very engaging,” “a little dry,” or “boring” for students.
- The online interface is not particularly user-friendly, particularly for younger students. Some students have trouble using it independently.
- Logging in can be a challenge for students.<sup>2</sup>
- It is difficult to use on tablets, iPads or iPad minis. The font size cannot be increased, making it hard for students to click on answer choices.
- The initial assessment either incorrectly places some students or some students do not take it seriously, thereby ending up with personalized programming that is either too hard or too easy.

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<sup>2</sup> Note: the website forces students to search for their school name and scroll through for their city and state, or enter a school code, before entering a username and password.

# MOBYMAX SUMMARY

- Almost three-quarters of educators using MobyMax report that students are using it at least once per week, meeting the minimum implementation guidelines for frequency of use. The most common responses from educators was that students use it 2 to 3 times per week, making it a frequently-used resource within the district.
- MobyMax is primarily used as an instructional resource in the classroom, with each student working alone.
- Its key feature seems to be its ability to differentiate its own programming for individual students. It is also a “mastery” program, meaning that students cannot move on to the next concept until they have mastered the current one.
- A significant number of educators are unhappy with MobyMax and/or are unsure of its effectiveness. Dissatisfaction may be driven by the following reasons:
  - MobyMax is not ideal for younger students, who have trouble independently logging in and navigating the interface.
  - This resource’s assessment features may have some glitches, leading it to incorrectly place some students on a path that is either too easy or too hard.
  - There are reportedly some user experience/interface issues with using MobyMax on iPads. This resource may be best suited for use on computers.
  - It is not very engaging for the students using it.

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MOBYMAX

- Given its high frequency of use, the number of teachers using it, and the fact that students seem to have individual accounts in which both usage and progress data are tracked, MobyMax may be a good candidate for further study on effectiveness for student learning.
  - For a study of student outcomes, the key deciding factor may be what ease of access the district has to MobyMax data at the individual student level.
  - For a quasi-experimental study, we would also need to be able to make valid comparisons between users and non-users and use data other than what MobyMax itself provides.
- Within the set of 15 resources, MobyMax rated relatively low on perceptions of effectiveness for student learning. The district may want to consider investigating whether similar products are currently on the market.



# LEXIA (Lexia Reading Core 5, Lexia Strategies)

153 out of 424 survey participants reported using Lexia Reading Core 5 and/or Lexia Strategies.

- 101 (of 168) elementary classroom teachers
- 22 (of 24) elementary special education teachers
- 12 (of 21) middle school special education teachers
- 5 (of 9) data and instructional technology coaches
- 4 (of 6) language arts specialists
- 2 (of 14) middle school language arts teachers
- 2 (of 9) teacher librarians
- 2 (of 3) ESL teachers
- 1 (of 30) related services provider (Speech pathologist, social worker, psychologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, nurse)
- 1 (of 16) middle school science teacher
- 1 (of 1) Title I tutor
- 1 (of 3) early childhood teacher
- 3 (of 7) in “other” roles

## WHAT IS LEXIA?

“Lexia Reading Core5 provides explicit, systematic, personalized learning in the six areas of reading instruction, and delivers norm-referenced performance data and analysis without interrupting the flow of instruction to administer a test. Designed specifically to meet the Common Core and the most rigorous state standards, this research-proven, technology-based approach accelerates reading skills development, predicts students’ year-end performance and provides teachers data-driven action plans to help differentiate instruction.

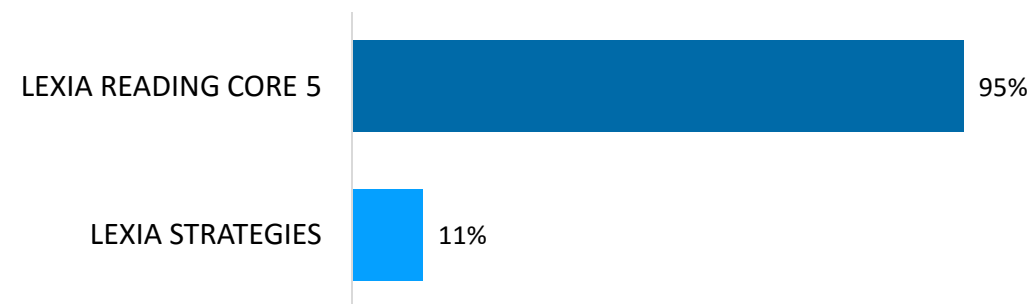
Lexia Strategies is designed for remedial students in grades 6 and above, at a Tier II and Tier III level. The program focuses on fundamental literacy skills, starting at first grade skill levels, with a more mature, age-appropriate interface and a range of content that covers basic phonological awareness through advanced decoding skills, vocabulary development, and comprehension activities. Lexia Strategies will help identify the remedial needs of each student and differentiate the instructional intensity needed to accelerate reading skills development.”

Sources:

[lexialearning.com/product/core5](http://lexialearning.com/product/core5)

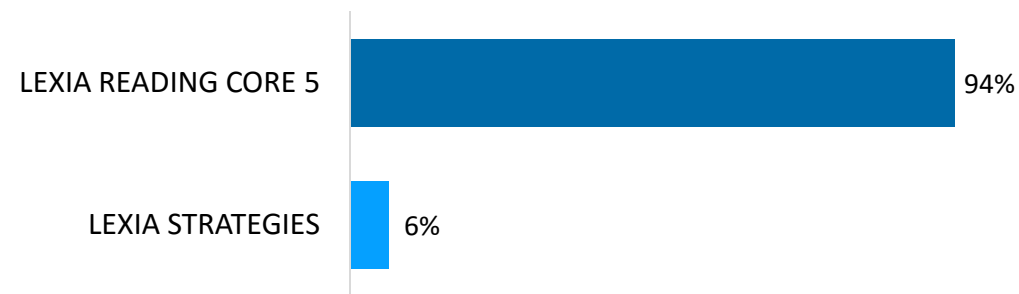
[lexialearning.com/lexia-strategies](http://lexialearning.com/lexia-strategies)

Of the two versions of Lexia used in the district, Lexia Reading Core 5 was used by the highest percentage of participants.



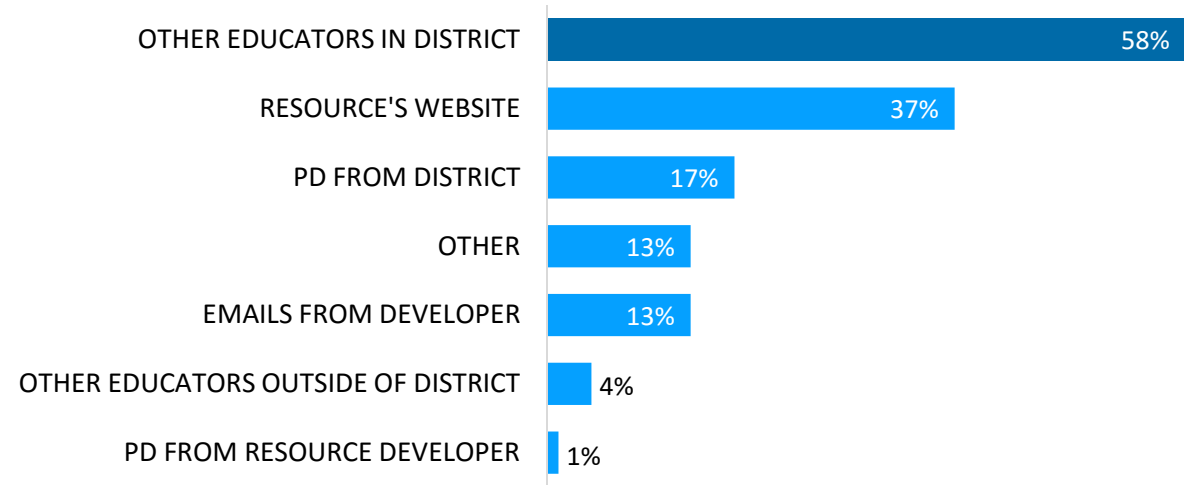
n=154; participants could select more than one response.

Lexia Reading Core 5 was also the product that participants reported using most frequently.



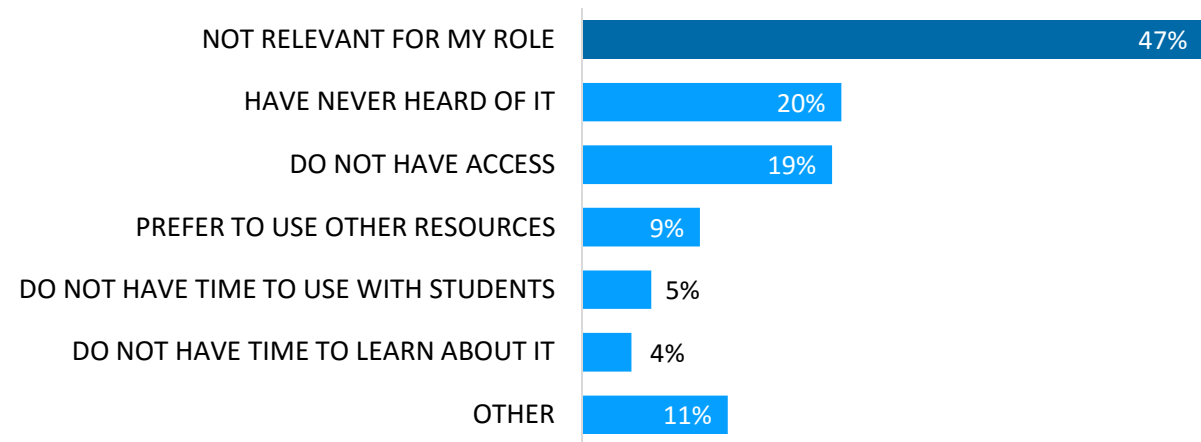
n=155

Those using Lexia tended to report receiving information about it from other educators in the district.



n=149. Participants could select more than one response.

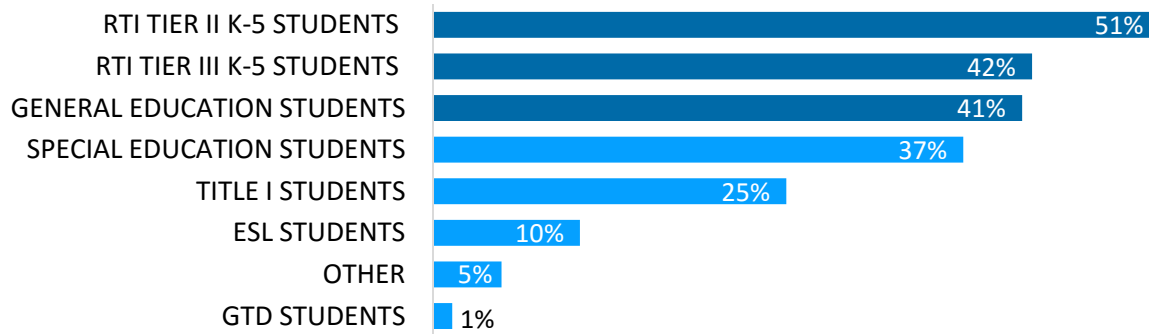
The most common reason for not using Lexia was that it was not relevant to the participant’s role in the district.



n=266. Participants could select more than one response. “Other” responses were idiosyncratic and/or did not provide any helpful information.

Participants most commonly reported using Lexia Core 5 with RTI Tier II and Tier III students and general education students.<sup>3</sup>

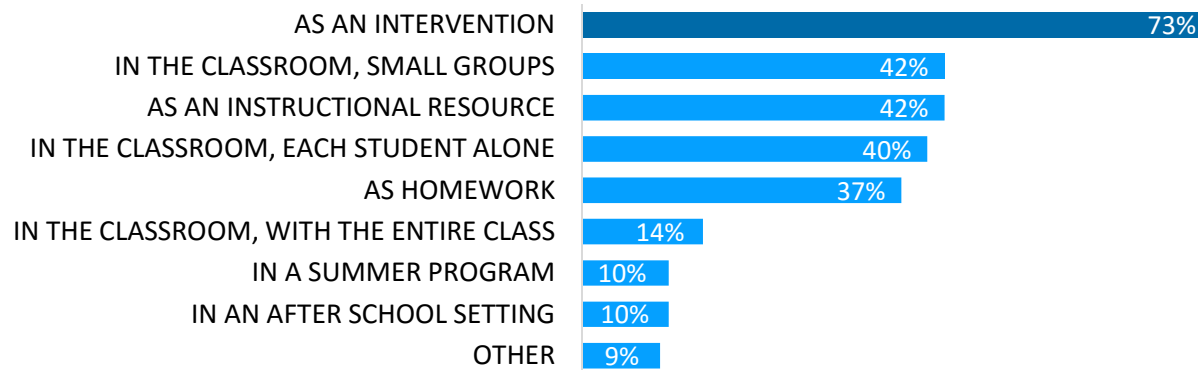
Additionally, more than one-third reported use with special education students.



n=146. Participants could select more than one response.

Survey data suggest that Lexia Reading Core 5 is primarily being used as an intervention.

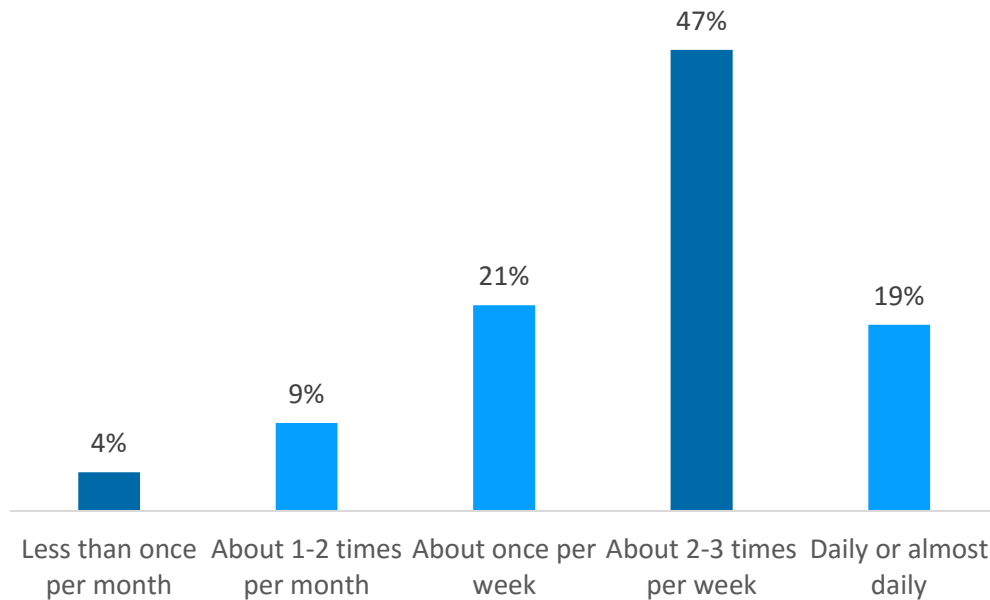
Using Lexia as an instructional resource, as homework, and/or in the classroom with students working in small groups or alone were also common responses.



n=153. Participants could select more than one response. "Other" responses commonly referenced "Lexia Lunch Club."

<sup>3</sup> Due to the very small number of educators reporting that they have used Lexia Strategies most frequently and its implementation being much different from that of Lexia Reading Core 5, only responses for Lexia Reading Core 5 are reported here.

The educators using Lexia Reading Core 5 most commonly reported that students engage with this resource about 2 to 3 times per week.

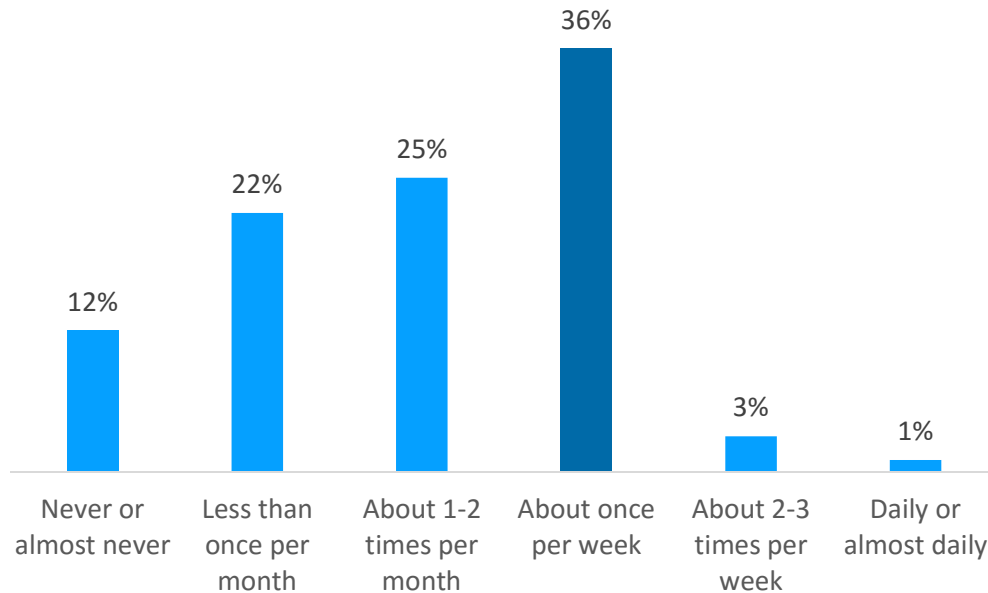


n=145

Rather than put forth a broad set of implementation guidelines for Lexia Reading Core 5, this resource tailors recommendations based on each student's need.

*"Based on each student's performance in the program, Core5 provides an individualized monthly Prescription of Intensity, which includes recommended minutes in the program, designed to increase the student's likelihood of achieving their end-of-year, grade-level benchmark. ... The Prescription of Intensity includes: 1. The minimum recommended number of minutes that the student should use the software on a weekly basis; 2. Targeted instruction delivered by the teacher with Lexia Lessons (available in the Teacher Resources); and 3. The suggested need for the teacher to monitor student data in myLexia regularly." – FAQs for Lexia, downloaded from [www.lexialearning.com](http://www.lexialearning.com), February 2016*

Educators using Lexia Reading Core 5 with students most often reported monitoring student progress data about once per week.



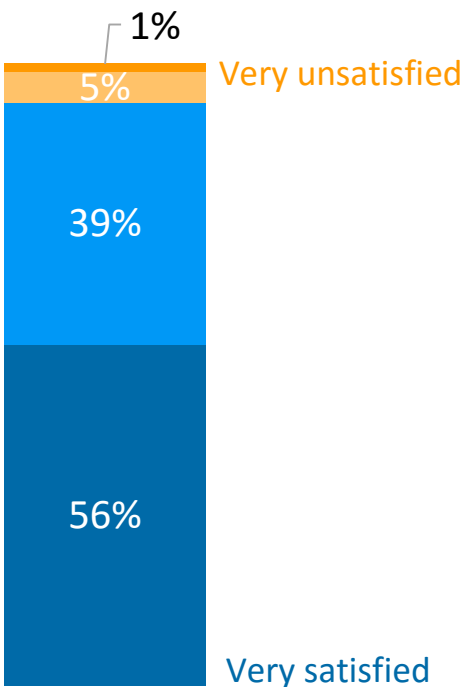
n=143

Open-ended responses suggest that educators are primarily using Lexia Core 5 data to:

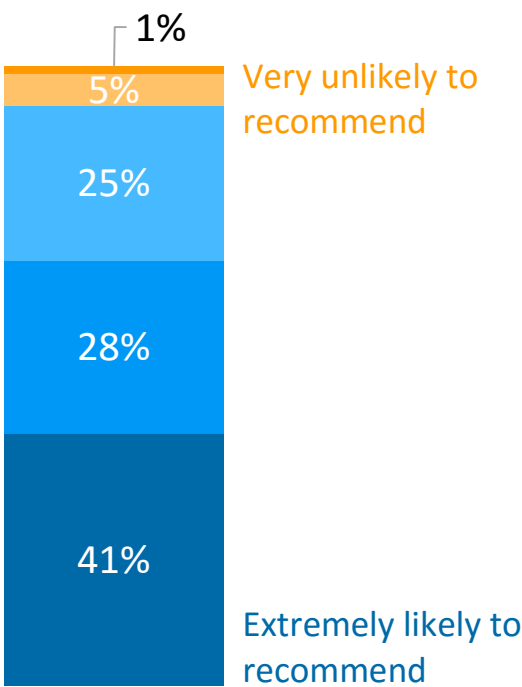
- Monitor student progress;
- Drive instruction when students “get stuck” on skills;
- To identify which skills need re-teaching; and
- To group students for instruction in small groups.

Less common themes included using Lexia data to talk with parents and using data as part of IEP reporting.

Respondents on the whole tended to report that they are satisfied with Lexia Reading Core 5 and would recommend it to a friend or colleague.

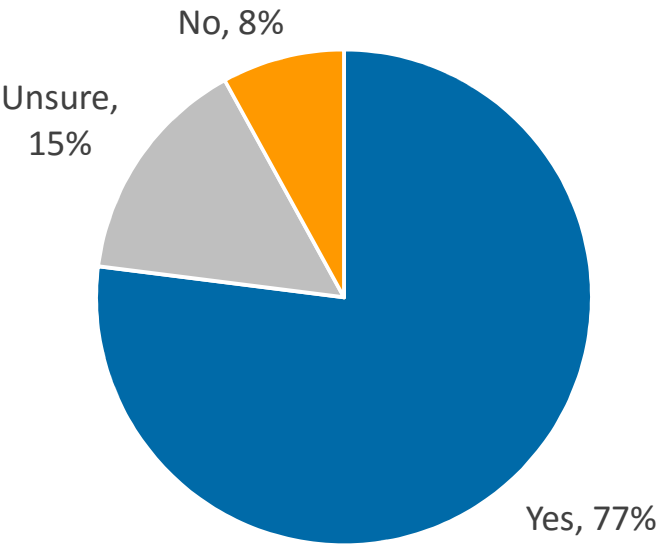


n=144. Response options were Very Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Unsatisfied and Very Unsatisfied



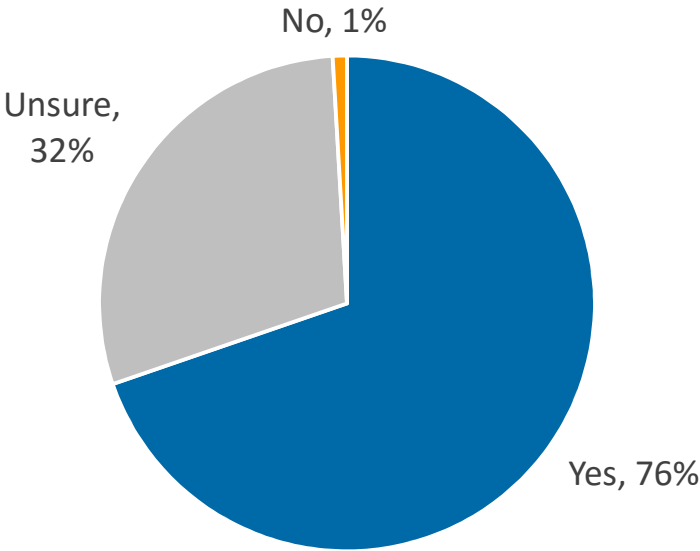
n=143. Response options were Extremely Likely to Recommend, Very Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Unlikely to Recommend, Very Unlikely to Recommend, Extremely Unlikely to Recommend

Three-quarters of those using Lexia Core 5 reported that, in their experience, **most students enjoy using the resource**, while the remainder were unsure or disagreed.



n=143. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

Three-quarters of those using Lexia Core 5 reported beliefs that **this resource is effective for student learning**, while almost one-third were unsure.



n=144. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure



Educators who reported that Lexia Reading Core 5 is effective for student learning offered the following evidence:

*“Data has shown first grade is making strides in their Dibels Data. I also had a fourth grade student who we put on Lexia for a reading intervention, his MAP scores went from the 11th to the 34th percentile.”* –Elementary data coach

*“I see improvements in phonics, phonemic awareness, spelling, and reading that correlates to the work the kids do on Lexia. For instance, I had a student struggling with words that have a silent e at the end and make the long vowel sound. I set up one on one and small group practice but I also noted that she had extra practice in that same area in Lexia. I gave her some extra time on Lexia and within a week or so she was showing a true understanding of the concept in her reading as well as written work.”* –First grade teacher

*“Students who use Lexia regularly (working for the recommended number of minutes) seem to progress through the skill levels and make noticeable progress.”* –Third grade teacher

*“My students will say ‘I learned this in Lexia’.”* –Kindergarten teacher

*“Lexia has helped my students with reading deficits and dyslexia understand the core phonics principles. Students who use Lexia throughout the week (at least 60 min.) a week improve in their reading fluency and spelling.”* –Middle school special education teacher

When we asked participants what they like **MOST** about Lexia Reading Core 5, the following themes were most common in their responses.

- Lexia Reading Core 5 is “interactive” and “fun” for students.
- The resource offers personalized, differentiated instruction after an initial placement test, and students progress at their own pace.
- Students can work on Lexia independently, either at school or at home.
- Students enjoy earning certificates in Lexia and are excited when they graduate to a new level.
- Lexia offers the teacher skill-specific resources to use with individual students who are struggling.
- Lexia provides data to teachers on student and class performance.

Examples include:

*“Students are extremely engaged and interested in Lexia. They can work pretty independently which is great for small groups and stations. It is also a really great thing to assign for homework.”* – Elementary special education teacher

*“The students are engaged in it because it has a 'game' like format. They are excited to 'beat' each level and achieve a higher score.”* – Middle school special education teacher

*“I like that it provides individual and class data. I love that it gives lessons for students who are struggling in certain areas. Also my kids love getting certificates when they master a level. We play pomp and circumstance and have a class ‘graduation’ celebration.”* – First grade teacher

*“It is engaging and gives students who have trouble working independently an opportunity to find success. It is very easy to differentiate for each type of learner. The printable resources tab is wonderful. It connects to lessons in the CCSS that we do as large and small groups.”* – Elementary special education teacher

According to open-ended responses, those using Lexia Reading Core 5 like LEAST:

- “Nothing.”
- Connection problems lead to pages freezing and/or students being “kicked off” and having to log in again, which is frustrating for students. Some educators also report problems logging in.
- Some educators do not have enough devices and/or licenses to use Lexia with all of their students.
- Some educators feel it is challenging to find enough time to use Lexia with students.
- Some students get bored with Lexia and/or are not motivated by it. Some students think it is too “babyish.”

# LEXIA SUMMARY

- District educators are most familiar with Lexia Reading Core 5. Very few respondents reported using Lexia Strategies most frequently.
- Lexia Reading Core 5 is primarily being used as an intervention with Tier II and Tier III students, with students working in the classroom in small groups or alone, or as homework.
- Students are typically engaging with this resource two to three times per week, making it a frequently-used resource within the district.
- Lexia Reading Core 5's key feature seems to be its ability to differentiate its own programming for individual students. It is also a "mastery" program, meaning that students cannot move on to the next concept until they have mastered the current one.
- Issues with internet connectivity, an insufficient number of licenses and devices and difficulties logging in may be causing some frustration among those using Lexia Reading Core 5.
- Although participants tended to report that most students enjoy using Lexia, open-ended responses suggest that some students grow bored with it and/or are unmotivated by it, or that it is too "babyish."
- Some teachers report not having enough time to use Lexia Reading Core 5 with students.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LEXIA

- Given its frequency of use, the number of teachers using it, and the fact that students seem to have individual accounts in which both usage and progress data can be tracked, Lexia Reading Core 5 may be a good candidate for further study on effectiveness for student learning.
  - For a study of student outcomes, the key deciding factor may be what ease of access the district has to Lexia data at the individual student level.
  - For a quasi-experimental study, we would also need to be able to make valid comparisons can be made between users and non-users and use outcomes data other than what Lexia itself provides.
- Although not frequently used, Lexia Strategies is also a potential candidate for further study given its discrete use with specific students in a summer program.
- If follow-up interviews are planned with key stakeholders, one area for exploration may be students' varying levels of engagement with Lexia Reading Core 5. A key informant who is well-versed in Lexia's use with general education, RTI and special education students and at varying grade levels may be able to provide some insight into who responds best with this resource. A second area of potential investigation is the reason(s) why almost one-third of educators are unsure of Lexia Core 5's effectiveness for student learning. Open-ended responses on this survey did not contain any themes as explanation. Finally, we might also explore in interviews how to help more students use Lexia if they need this type of intervention. Some educators do not feel they have enough time to use Lexia with students.
- The district may want to expand the current number of licenses for Lexia, as well as the number of devices on which students can use it, to address some of the frustrations currently experienced by educators and students.

# FLOCABULARY<sup>4</sup>

118 out of 424 survey participants reported using Flocabulary.

- 60 (of 168) elementary classroom teachers
- 13 (of 21) middle school special education teachers
- 8 (of 30) related services providers (Speech pathologist, social worker, psychologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, nurse)
- 6 (of 9) teacher librarians
- 6 (of 24) elementary special education teachers
- 5 (of 17) middle school math teachers
- 5 (of 15) middle school humanities teachers
- 5 (of 14) middle school language arts teachers
- 3 (of 16) middle school science teachers
- 2 (of 74) special areas teachers (PE, Health, Art, General Music, Instrumental Music, World Language, Design, Speech/Drama/Debate)
- 2 (of 8) GTD teachers
- 1 (of 9) data and instructional technology coach
- 1 (of 3) ESL teacher

## WHAT IS FLOCABULARY?

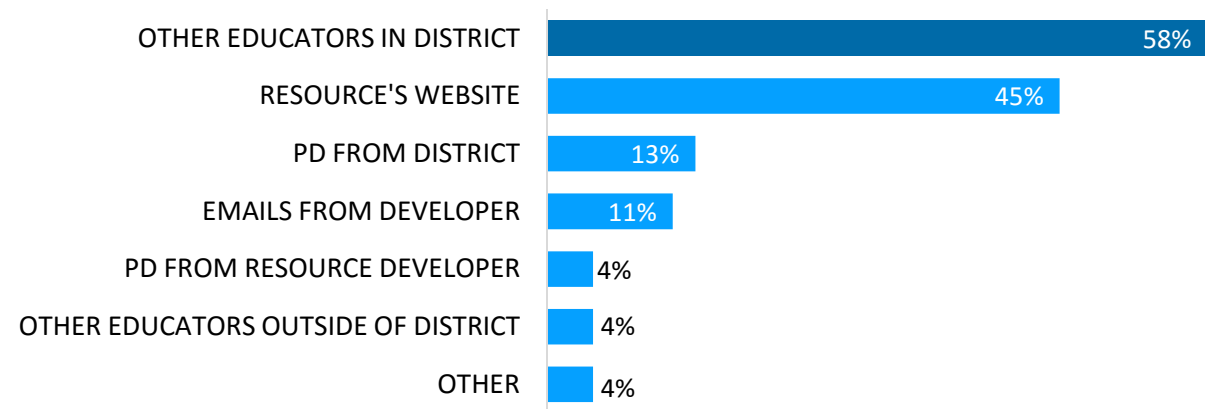
“Flocabulary is an online library of educational hip-hop songs and videos for grades K-12. Over 35,000 schools use Flocabulary to engage and inspire students. Our team of artists and educators is not only committed to raising test scores, but also to fostering a love of learning in every child.”

Source:  
[www.flocabulary.com](http://www.flocabulary.com)

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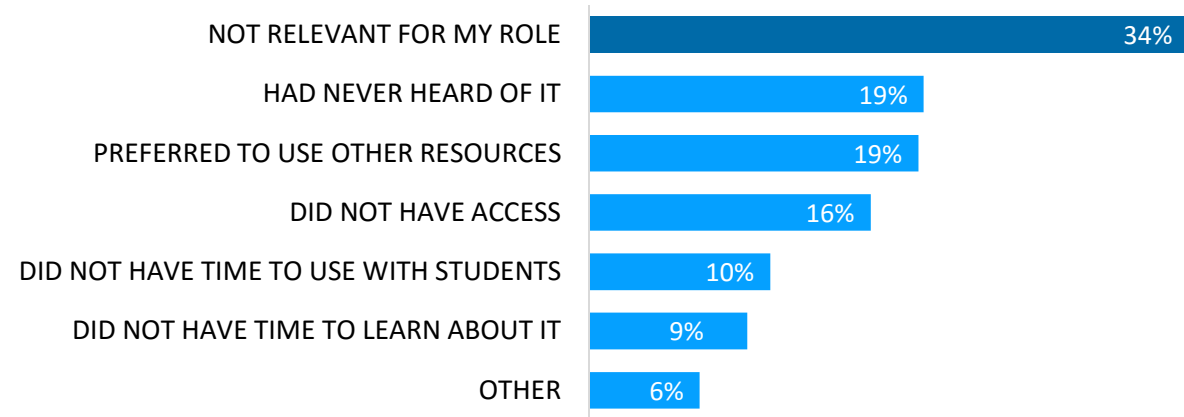
<sup>4</sup> Implementation questions for Flocabulary referenced the 2014-15 school year, because this resource was not purchased for the 2015-16 school year.

Those using Flocabulary tended to report receiving information about it from other educators in the district, followed by the resource’s website.



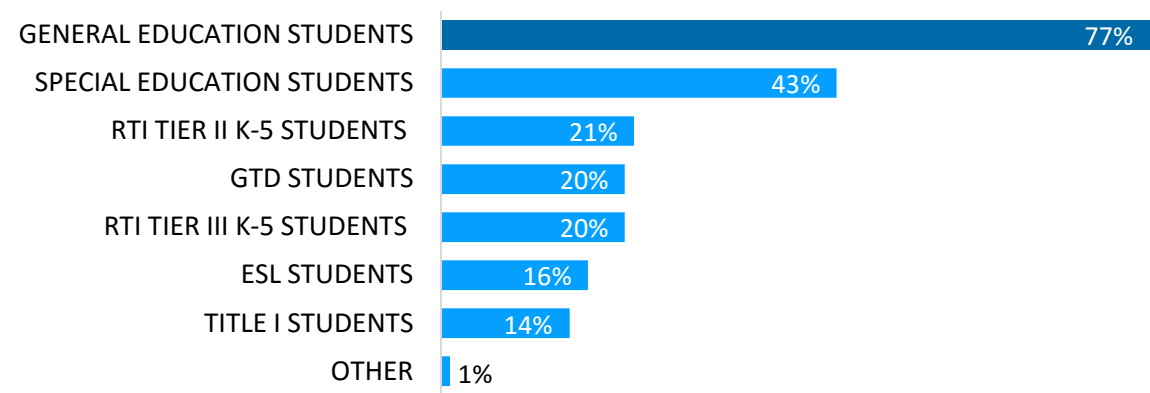
n=112. Participants could select more than one response.

The most common reason for not using Flocabulary was that it was not relevant to the participant’s role in the district.



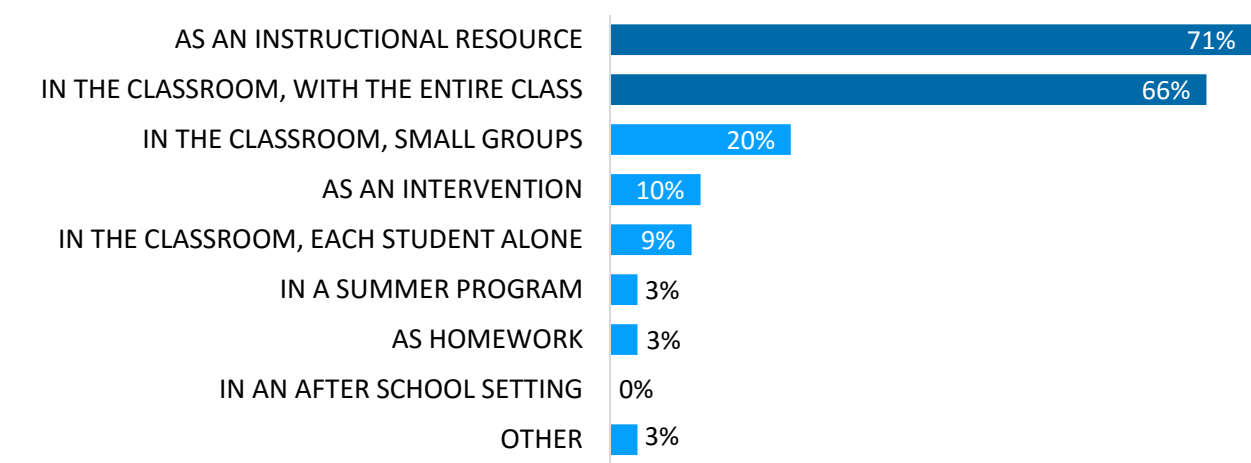
n=299. Participants could select more than one response.

Survey data indicate that Flocabulary was primarily used with general education students. Special education students were also commonly cited as users of this resource.



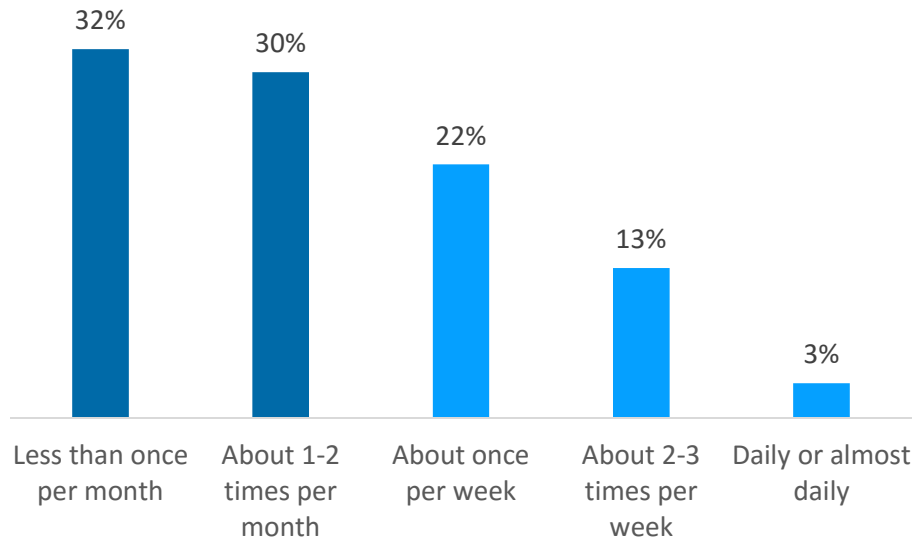
n=118. Participants could select more than one response.

Educators most commonly reported using Flocabulary as an instructional resource in the classroom, with the entire class.



n=118. Participants could select more than one response.

Educators most often reported that students typically engaged with Flocabulary less than once per month, followed by “about 1 to 2 times per month.”



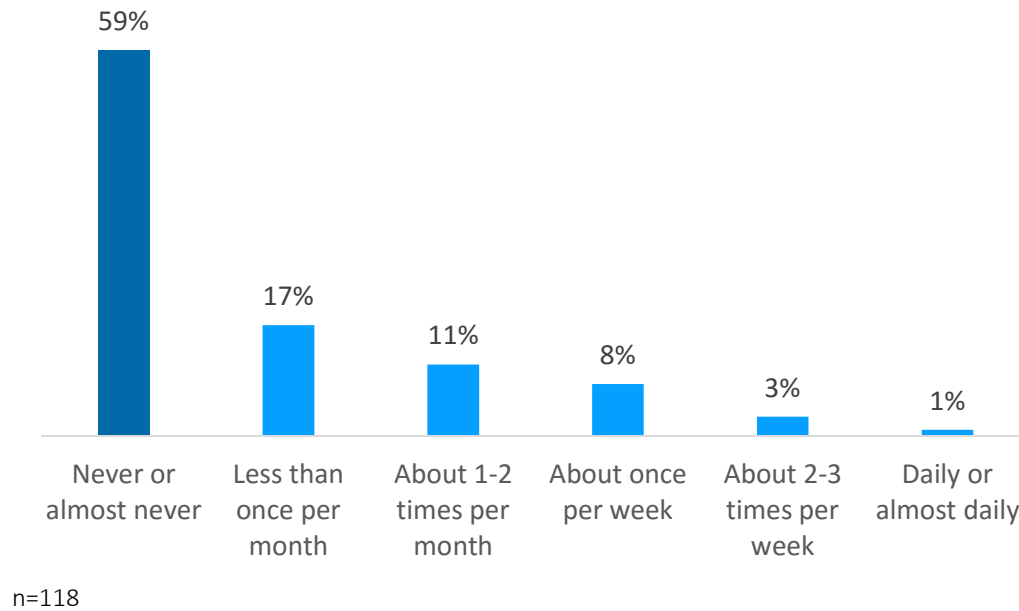
n=117

Rather than put forth guidelines for implementation in an attempt to ensure effectiveness, Flocabulary prefers to offer teachers flexibility. For example, with their “Word Up Project,” Flocabulary offers suggested lesson plans for building vocabulary using videos, worksheets, games and pre- and post-assessments with answer keys.

*“We suggest the class spend 2 weeks per video, using all the activities and tests that go with it. However, Flocabulary is very flexible and teachers can do what works for them.”* – personal communication, February 2016



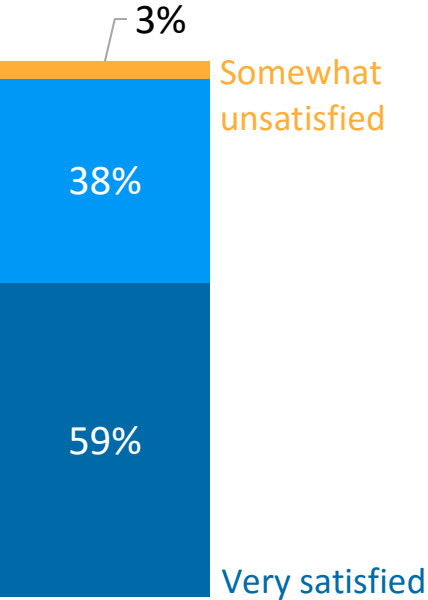
Survey responses indicate that district educators were not often using Flocabulary's quizzes.



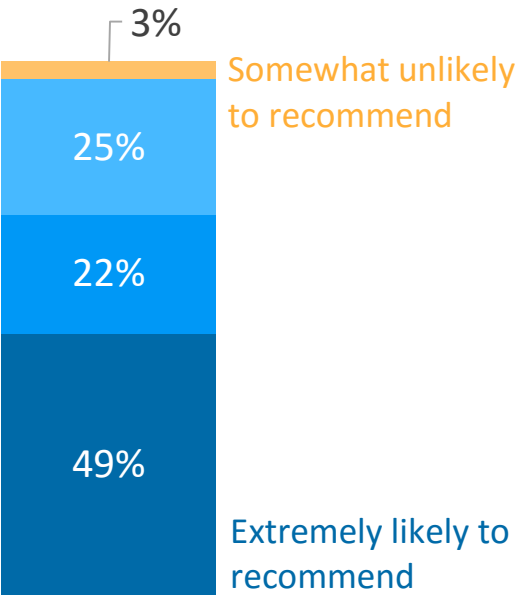
Open-ended responses from Flocabulary users indicate that the few educators using Flocabulary's quizzes were:

- using them to check comprehension; and/or
- as formative assessments to guide lesson planning.

Respondents on the whole tended to report that they were satisfied with Flocabulary and would recommend this resource to a friend or colleague.

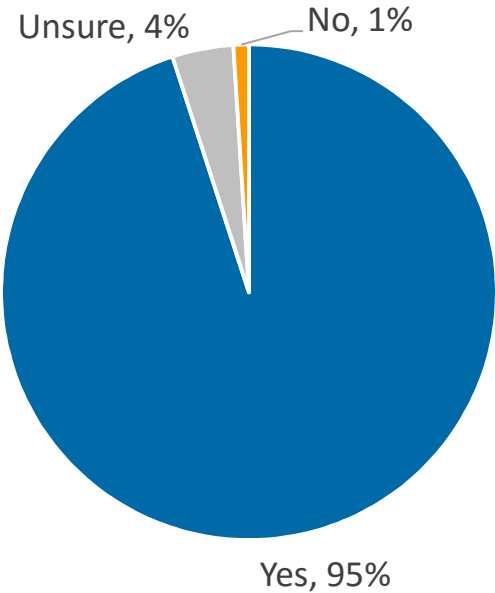


n=117. Response options were Very Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Unsatisfied and Very Unsatisfied



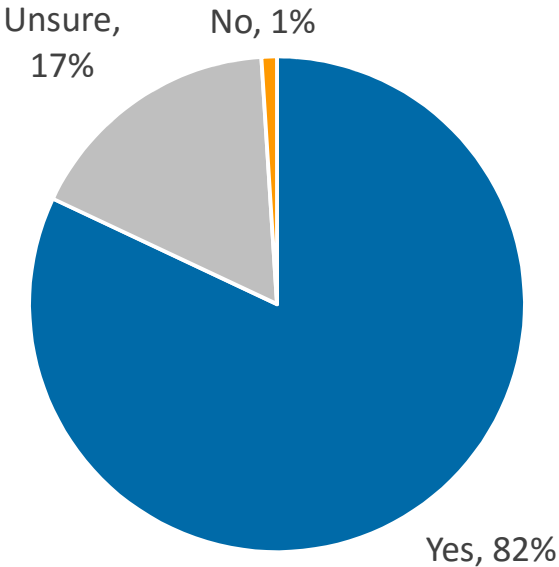
n=118. Response options were Extremely Likely to Recommend, Very Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Unlikely to Recommend, Very Unlikely to Recommend, Extremely Unlikely to Recommend

Almost all respondents reported that, in their experience, **most students enjoy using Flocabulary**, while a small number were unsure or disagreed.



n=118. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

More than four-fifths of respondents reported that **Flocabulary is effective for student learning**, while almost one-fifth were unsure or disagreed.



n=118. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

Educators who reported that Flocabulary is effective for student learning offered the following evidence.

*“The songs are sticky and the kids really pick up on the messages offered in song form. It also encourages them to use song and rhythm and rhyming to help them remember concepts.”* – Middle school science teacher

*“Students find the videos fun and interactive, and they memorize concepts taught in the videos through mnemonic devices. Struggling students use songs learned to remind themselves of concepts during class.”* – Elementary classroom teacher

*“Engagement is key. Moreover, the catchy lyrics and tunes stuck in students' heads for retention of content material.”* – Elementary classroom teacher

*“I have heard even my most challenging students singing or repeating lines of songs to themselves. The activities that accompany the songs are also incredibly engaging and fun. Each activity is linked to common core standards, so you know you are helping to support learning with common core. I just felt like this introduced concepts in such a unique, exciting way and that students truly 'bought in'.”* – Middle school special education teacher

*“Students learn new vocabulary and concepts they would otherwise not have.”* – Elementary special education teacher

When we asked participants what they liked **MOST** about Flocabulary, the following themes were most common in their responses.

- The videos and songs are “engaging,” “fun” and “catchy.”
- The content is memorable to students because of the way it is presented.
- Educators liked using the “Week in Rap” for students to learn about current events.
- The resource offers songs and videos on a variety of topics.

Examples include:

*“Quick and very engaging for so many areas. The videos were applicable to every subject I teach, and students that struggle often were able to remember the material because of the way the video approaches the concepts. The current event videos had become a part of my daily meetings and discussions, and it often spurred students to find new areas to research.”* – Fourth grade teacher

*“Week in Rap! Great for having discussions about current events in cool way that gets the students talking about what's going on right now in the world around him.”* – Middle school humanities teacher

*“Super engaging, catchy, and motivational for students. On-topic. A wide variety of materials available for different subject areas.”* – Elementary classroom teacher

*“It totally engages the students and makes them want to learn more about the content. It's a great introduction to content material and a helpful review resource.”* – Middle school humanities teacher

*“I used it mostly for the current events videos. The students LOVE it and it opened up many topics of discussion. There are also videos/songs that teach math concepts that the students still remember from years ago. Learning through music is very effective for some of our students.”* – GTD teacher

*“I loved the math videos. My students would be singing those songs for weeks to come! I miss it!!!!!!”* – Middle school math teacher

According to open-ended responses, those who used Flocabulary liked **LEAST**:

- “Nothing.”
- The district no longer pays for a subscription, and teachers want to have free access again.
- Some of what Flocabulary offers is not appropriate or appealing for every child. Some of it may be too advanced. Some students may think it is “cheesy.”
- District educators want Flocabulary to cover more topics. Some reported that the topics did not always match well with what was needed.
- There were occasional technology issues with playing videos.

# FLOCABULARY SUMMARY

- Flocabulary was a highly valued resource within the district. Educators were highly satisfied with it, tended to report that students enjoy using it and tended to report that it is effective for student learning.
- Despite its popularity, Flocabulary was not used very often in the 2014-15 school year, the last school year in which it was purchased by the district. Students typically engaged with this resource less than once per month.
- In the 2014-15 school year, Flocabulary was primarily being used with general education students as an instructional resource in the classroom, with the whole class participating.
- Flocabulary's key feature seems to be that its songs and videos are engaging for students, and the "catchiness" of the song lyrics may help students learn and recall information.
- Responses suggest that some of what Flocabulary offers is not appropriate or appealing for every child. In addition, educators reported occasional technology issues with playing videos.

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FLOCABULARY

- If the district re-purchases a Flocabulary license, a small study on student learning outcomes may be possible if teachers can implement Flocabulary and its quizzes in a more systematic manner.

# DREAMBOX

104 out of 424 survey participants reported using DreamBox.

- 83 (of 168) elementary classroom teachers
- 6 (of 24) elementary special education teachers
- 1 (of 21) middle school special education teachers
- 3 (of 9) data and instructional technology coaches
- 3 (of 30) related services providers (Speech pathologist, social worker, psychologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, nurse)
- 2 (of 2) student support specialists
- 2 (of 9) teacher librarians
- 1 (of 3) ESL teacher
- 1 (of 8) GTD teacher
- 1 (of 6) language arts specialist
- 1 (of 1) Title I tutor
- 1 (of 7) in “other” roles

## WHAT IS DREAMBOX?

“We’re the effective elementary and middle school math software solution that:

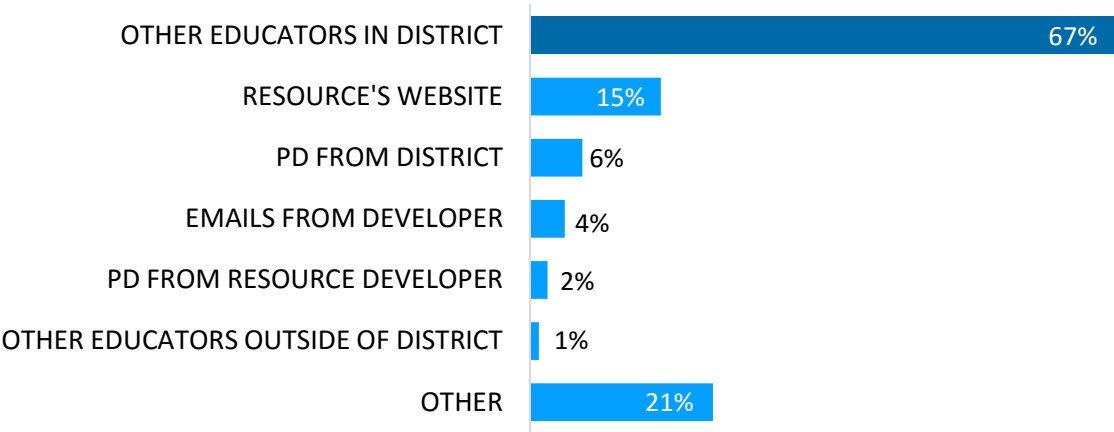
- Adapts to the individual learner
- Personalizes instruction from intervention through enrichment
- Provides equity and access for ELLs
- Develops skills and closes gaps fast
- Integrates assessment with instruction
- Aligns to state and regional standards
- Empowers with actionable data and reporting
- [Offers] professional Development”

Source:

[www.dreambox.com/why-dreambox](http://www.dreambox.com/why-dreambox)

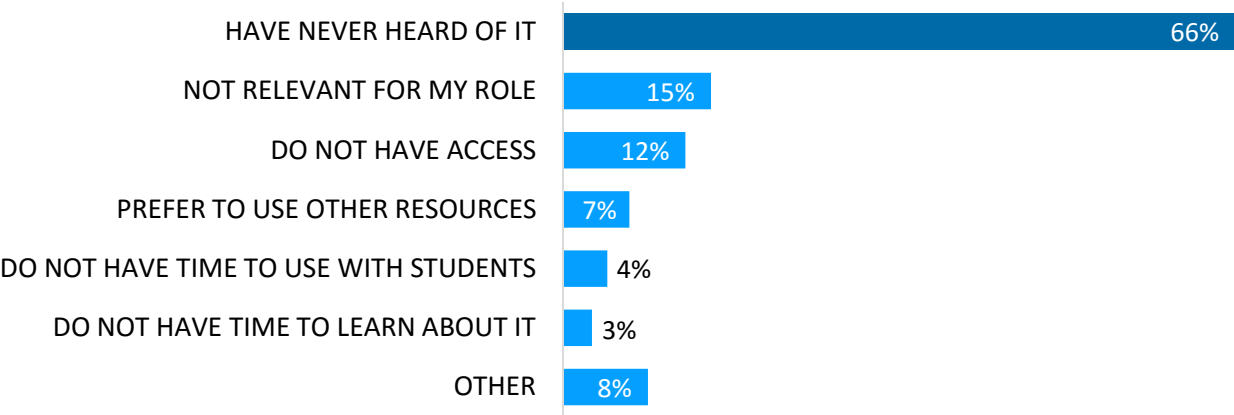


Survey respondents tended to report receiving information about DreamBox from other educators in the district.



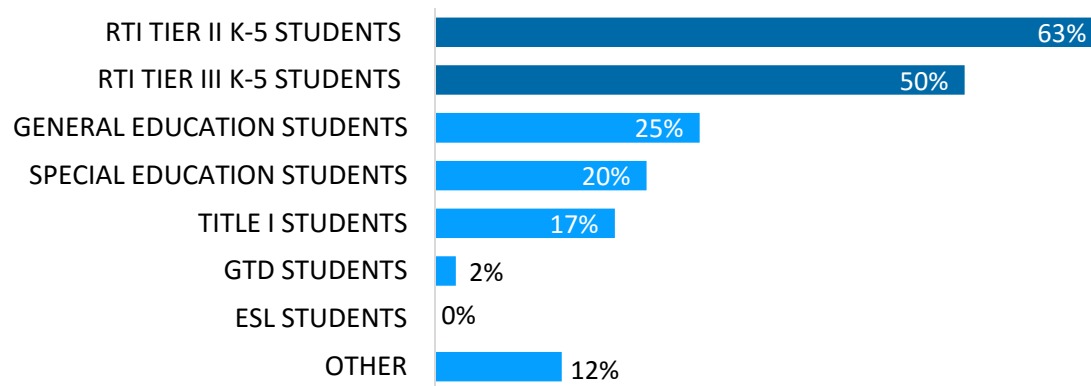
n=101. Participants could select more than one response. Some of the “other” responses mentioned Data and Technology Coaches.

The most common reason for not using DreamBox was that the participant had never heard of it.



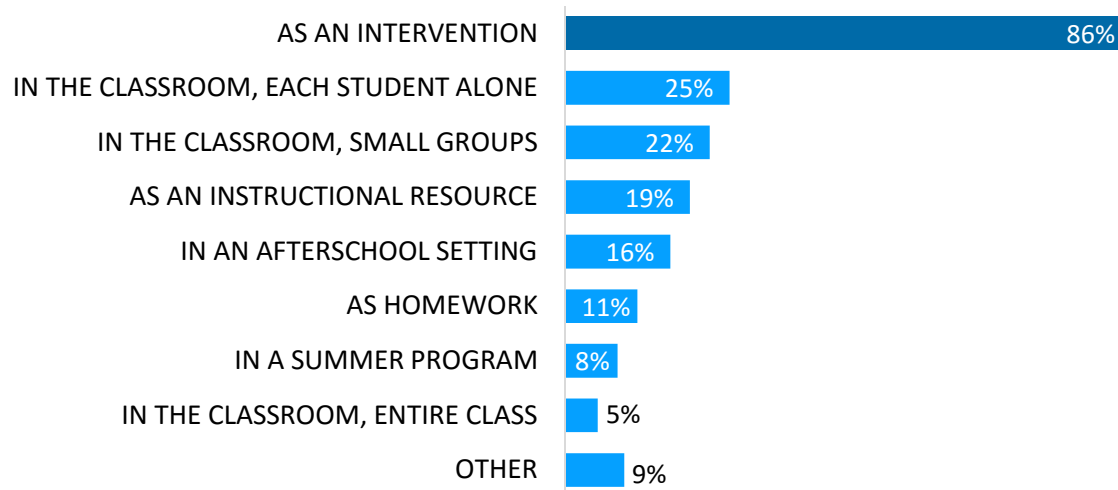
n=324. Participants could select more than one response.

## Responses indicate that Dreambox is primarily used with RTI Tier II and Tier III students ...



n=104. Participants could select more than one response. Other responses commonly reference “Prep for Success” students.

## ... as an intervention.

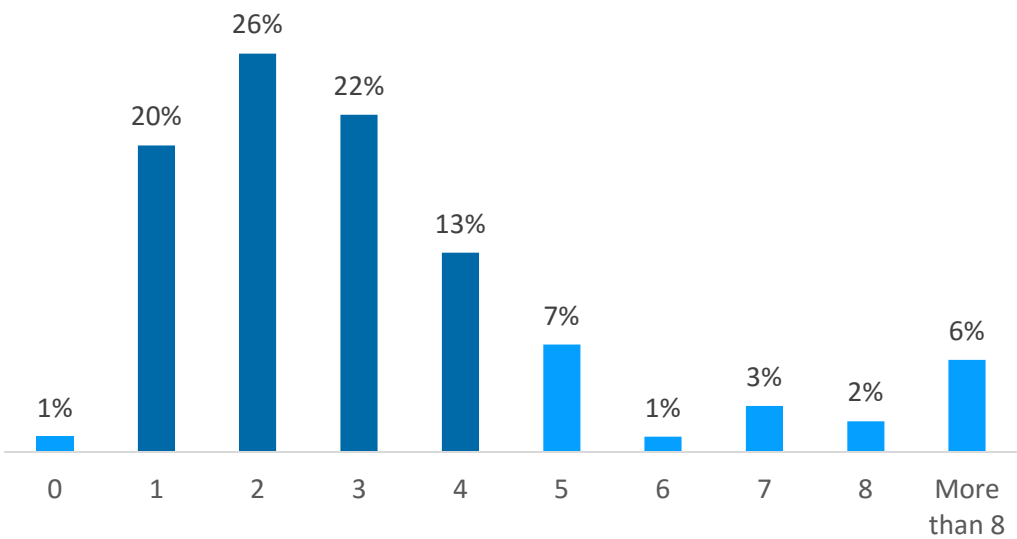


n=104. Participants could select more than one response.

The implementation guidelines offered by DreamBox’s creators indicate that each student should be completing at least 5 to 8 lessons per week.

*“Your child should spend at least 60-90 minutes a week and complete at least 5-8 lessons. This amount ensures that DreamBox can accurately track your child's learning path. This does not have to be in a single session. However, a minimum of 20 minutes per session helps ensure your child has sufficient time to finish a lesson in a single session.”<sup>5</sup>*

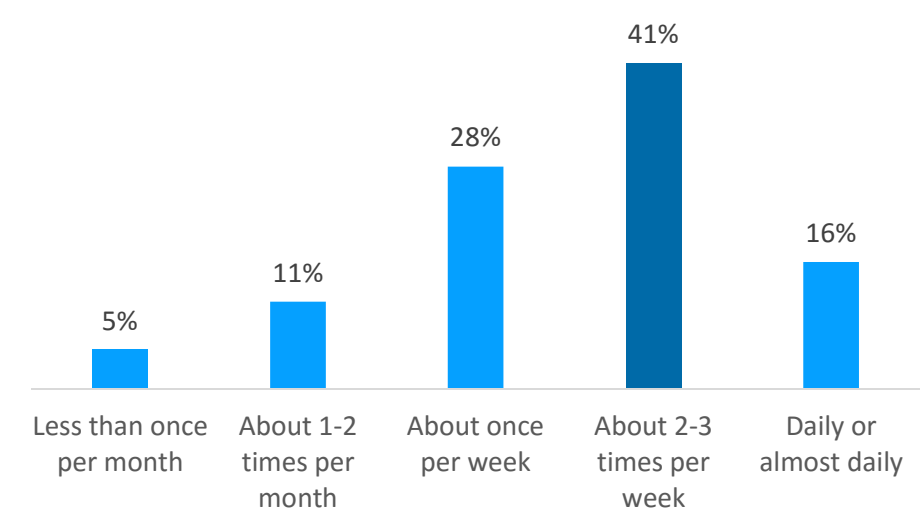
Survey data suggest that the District 97 students using Dreambox are typically completing between 1 and 4 lessons per week, falling short of the resource’s recommendation.



n=101

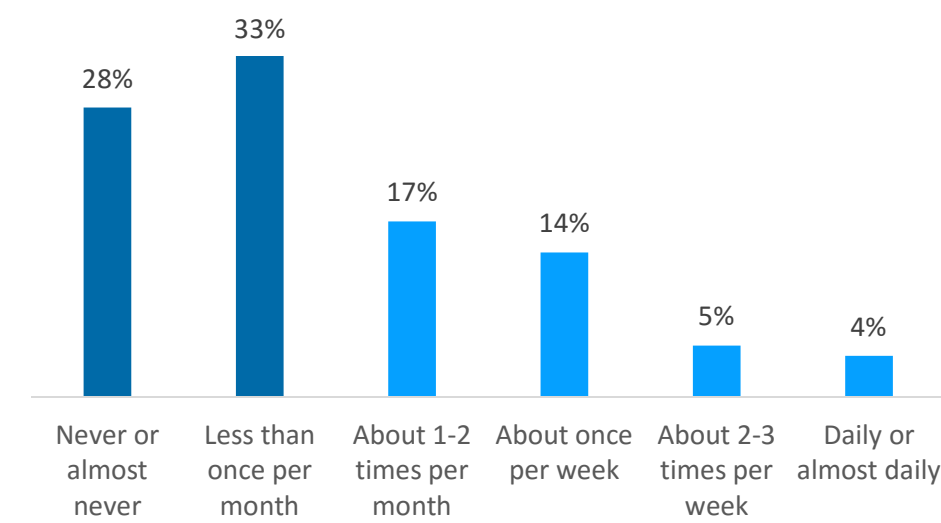
<sup>5</sup> Source: <https://support.dreambox.com/hc/en-us/articles/205591537-How-To-Get-The-Most-Out-Of-DreamBox-Learning>

Survey data suggest that students typically engage with DreamBox about 2 to 3 times per week.



n=101

Educators using DreamBox reported monitoring student progress data less than once per month, if ever.



n=102

Open-ended responses from participants about data use suggest that the ways that educators are currently using DreamBox (and student data from DreamBox) is quite varied, for example:

*“The data that I receive only lists the percentage of grade level completion my student is at, so I do not use the data.”* – Fifth grade teacher

*“Used for RTI intervention, so we discuss student progress during RTI meetings.”* – Third grade teacher

*“In the past I used this with students who struggled with math for an extra intervention, but this year we used it in our math passport “lower” group. I would use it to help figure out what they needed extra practice on to guide my lessons and to give extra support.”* – Kindergarten teacher

*“Data is used for Math RTI groupings and interventions. This helps identify areas for instruction.”* – First grade teacher

*“I use this data to drive supplemental teaching in order to fill in the gaps of students’ Math skills.”* – Fifth grade teacher

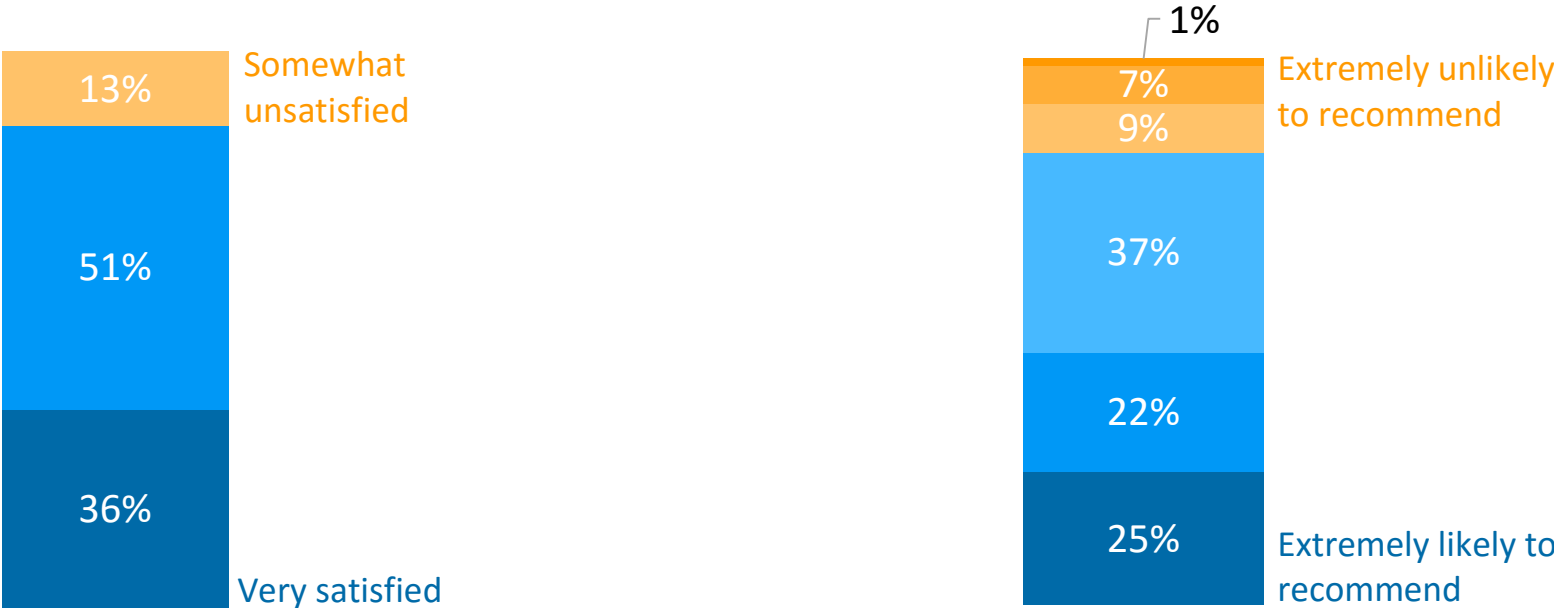
*“I am the resource teacher and my students would use DreamBox if time permitted during math times if other work was finished. Maybe 5 or 10 minutes. My students enjoy it.”* – Elementary special education teacher

*“Share data with staff, use it to show students their progress and use it to help identify what areas that I should communicate with teachers their students are struggling.”* – Student support specialist

Common themes from open-ended responses to this question and others suggested that:

- Not all of the educators whose students are using DreamBox have access to its data or know how to use the data, possibly because some or all students are pulled out of classrooms to use it.
- Some educators have only recently started using DreamBox.

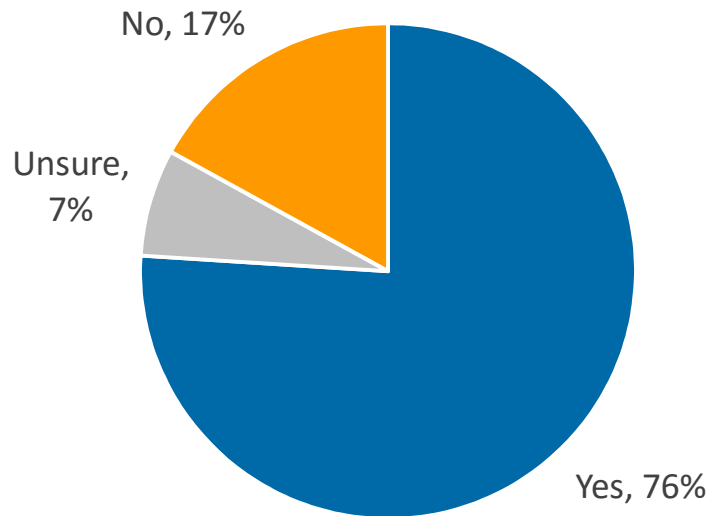
Respondents tended to report that they are at least “somewhat” satisfied with DreamBox and at least “somewhat” likely to recommend this resource to a friend or colleague.



n=102. Response options were Very Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Unsatisfied and Very Unsatisfied

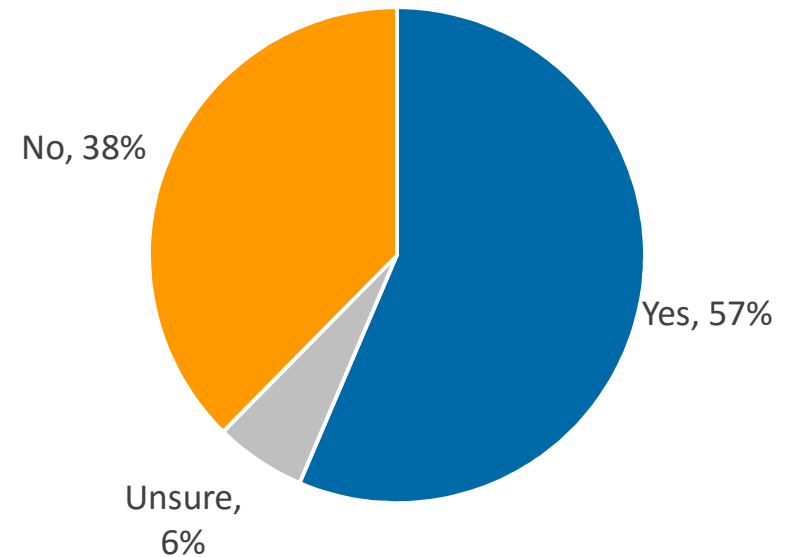
n=102. Response options were Extremely Likely to Recommend, Very Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Unlikely to Recommend, Very Unlikely to Recommend, Extremely Unlikely to Recommend

Three-quarters of respondents reported that, in their experience, **most students enjoy using DreamBox**, while the remainder disagreed or were unsure.



n=102. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

More than half of respondents reported that **DreamBox is effective for student learning**, but a substantial minority disagreed or were unsure.



n=104. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

Educators who reported that DreamBox is effective for student learning offered the following evidence:

*“My students are excited to go to DreamBox and feel lucky that they have this opportunity. The students that use it are able to more concretely mentally manipulate numbers.”* – Second grade teacher

*“Data shows growth when used diligently.”* – Third grade teacher

*“Dreambox has been a useful tool to help the student gain confidence and fluency in her number sense. She no longer requires tier 3 or tier 2 interventions in math.”* – Kindergarten teacher

*“My students who use[d] it last trimester have grown a lot in Math.”* – Third grade teacher

*“On some Math concepts the student has improved on the MAP test.”* – Third grade teacher

*“I had a student use it and move out of tier 2 and I could see a difference in some of his basic math skills.”* – Third grade teacher

A substantial minority reported that they do not believe DreamBox is effective, with open-ended comments suggesting that:

- Some educators think it is too early to determine benefits.
- Some teachers have not accessed DreamBox data.
- For some students, the program has not been implemented with fidelity.
- Some teachers have not seen students relate DreamBox to anything learned in class, or have not otherwise seen positive effects in the classroom.



When we asked participants what they like **MOST** about DreamBox, the following themes were most common in their responses.

- DreamBox is engaging and fun for students, and they are motivated to use it.
- DreamBox is tailored for each student's individual needs.
- Students can work on DreamBox independently and progress at their own pace.
- DreamBox seems to be helping students learn.

Examples include:

*"It helps students practice math skills that they struggle with but in a more fun, engaging way."* – Kindergarten teacher

*"I like that it is individualized and allows students to work independently at their own level. I wish we had it for all students, rather than as an intervention."* – Kindergarten teacher

*"Engages students. Automatically monitors student progress. Efficiently addresses needed math skills."* – Kindergarten teacher

*"My students that have been working on it seem to like it. I have seen small improvements in some skills and their confidence in Math increase."* – Third grade teacher

*"It is very motivating and very easy for students to use. The incentives are great!"* – Kindergarten teacher

*"The program is engaging for students and it is also adaptable. These features are desirable and it would be great to with students at home over the summer to help them fill in the missing skills."* – Data and Technology Coach

When asked what they like **LEAST** about DreamBox, the following themes were most common.

- Many educators want to know more about it, be trained on how to use it and/or have better communication on their students' progress.
- The students who need to use DreamBox often also need to use other programs (e.g., Lexia), "so their time is limited."
- They wish they could use it with all of their students. Some commented that they do not have enough licenses.

Less common themes included:

- It is hard to find a good time to use it when only a few students need to use it.
- The data reports can be vague or confusing.

# DREAMBOX SUMMARY

- DreamBox's key features seem to be its ability to differentiate its own programming for individual students and deliver instruction in an engaging, interactive manner.
- DreamBox is primarily being used as an intervention with RTI Tier II and Tier III students in K-5.
- Survey data indicate that students are typically working with this resource two to three times per week, making it a frequently-used resource in the district.
- The survey participants using DreamBox with students are, on average, monitoring student data once per month or less. This may be driven at least in part because some of them either do not have access to the data or do not know how to use it.
- Despite frequent use, students are reportedly only completing between 1 and 4 lessons per week, falling short of the resource's recommendation to complete 5 to 8 lessons per week. It is unclear whether students are actually completing very few lessons or the survey participants are not fully aware of how many lessons students are completing.
- Also unclear is how much educators' lack of knowledge about DreamBox is contributing to their relatively poor perception of student engagement and effectiveness for student learning. About one-quarter were unsure or disagreed that most students enjoy using DreamBox, and over two-fifths were unsure or disagreed that DreamBox is effective for student learning.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DREAMBOX

- Given its frequency of use and the fact that students seem to have individual accounts in which both usage and progress data can be tracked, DreamBox may be a good candidate for further study on effectiveness for student learning.
  - For a study of student outcomes, the key deciding factor may be what ease of access the district has to DreamBox data at the individual student level. A good first step would be to examine the actual level of implementation – i.e., how many lessons per week are students completing?
  - For a quasi-experimental study, we would also need to be able to make valid comparisons between users and non-users and use outcomes data other than what DreamBox itself provides.
  - However, we caution that for many educators, DreamBox seems to be a new resource and they claim to not be fully trained on how to use it. For this reasons, we might delay further study on DreamBox's effectiveness until educators have a chance to become more comfortable with it.
- Some educators asked for better communication on DreamBox, DreamBox data and their students' progress.

# READING A-Z

98 of 424 participants reported using Reading A-Z.

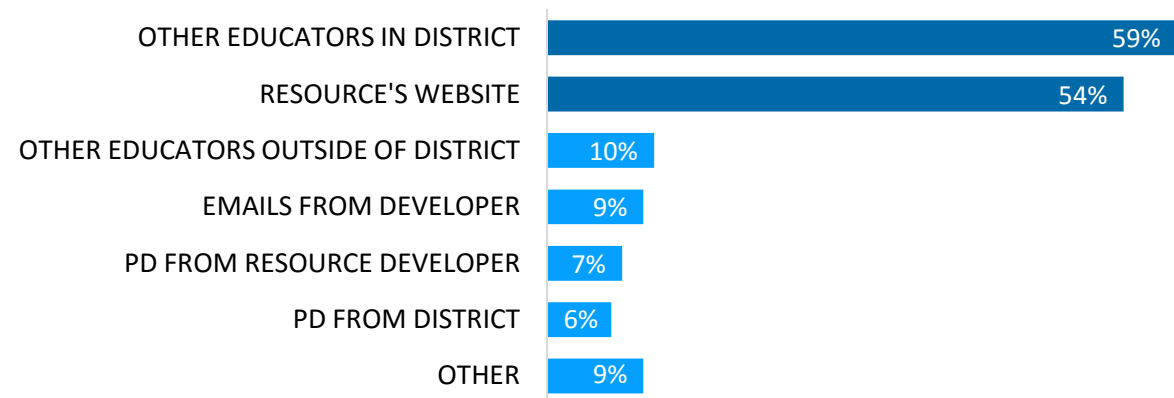
- 69 (of 168) elementary classroom teachers
- 14 (of 24) elementary special education teachers
- 4 (of 6) language arts specialists
- 2 (of 30) related services providers (Speech pathologist, social worker, psychologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, nurse)
- 2 (of 3) ESL teachers
- 2 (of 3) early childhood teachers
- 1 (of 21) middle school special education teacher
- 1 (of 15) middle school humanities teacher
- 1 (of 9) data and instructional technology coach
- 1 (of 2) student support specialist
- 1 (of 8) GTD teacher
- 1 (of 1) Title I tutor
- 1 (of 7) in “other” role

## WHAT IS READING A-Z?

“Already being used in nearly half of the school districts in the U.S. and Canada and 155+ countries worldwide, discover how Reading A-Z's affordable, easy-to-use teacher resources fill the teaching gaps left by many reading education programs. Books and resources correlated to state and Common Core Standards. Reading lessons, decodable books, reader's theater scripts, reading worksheets and assessments. Leveled readers spanned across 29 levels of difficulty. Fluency passages to improve reading rate, accuracy and expression. Phonological awareness and phonics lessons, flashcards, worksheets. Vocabulary books, graphic organizers, word sorts and other vocabulary resources.”

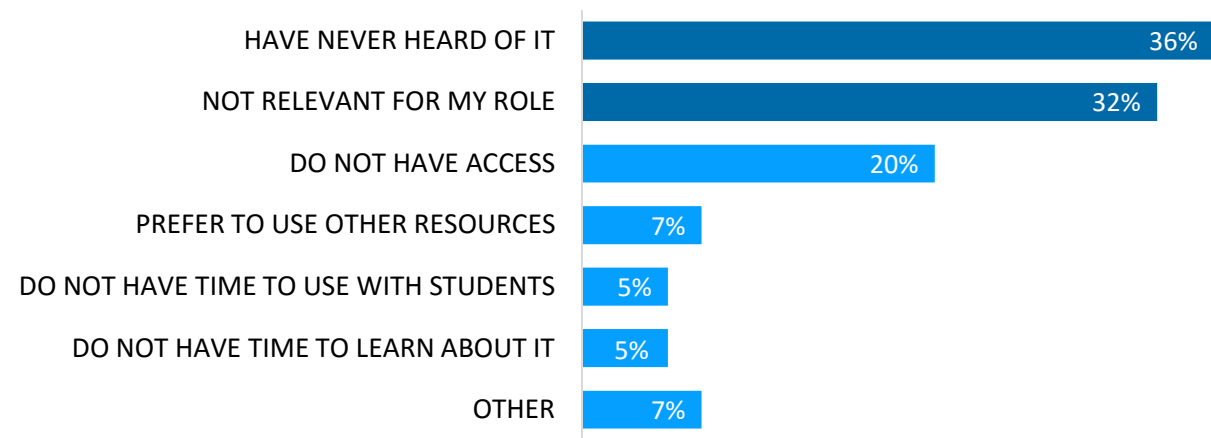
Source:  
[www.readinga-z.com](http://www.readinga-z.com)

Participants most often reported that they received information about this resource from other educators in the district and/or the resource’s website.



n=87. Participants could select more than one response.

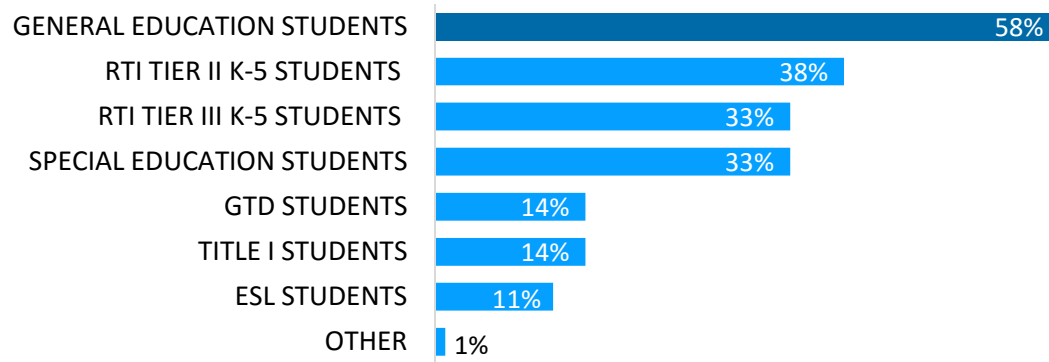
The most common reasons for not using Reading A-Z were that the participant had never heard of it and/or that it was not relevant to the participant’s role in the district.



n=312. Participants could select more than one response.

Responses indicate that Reading A-Z is primarily being used with general education students.

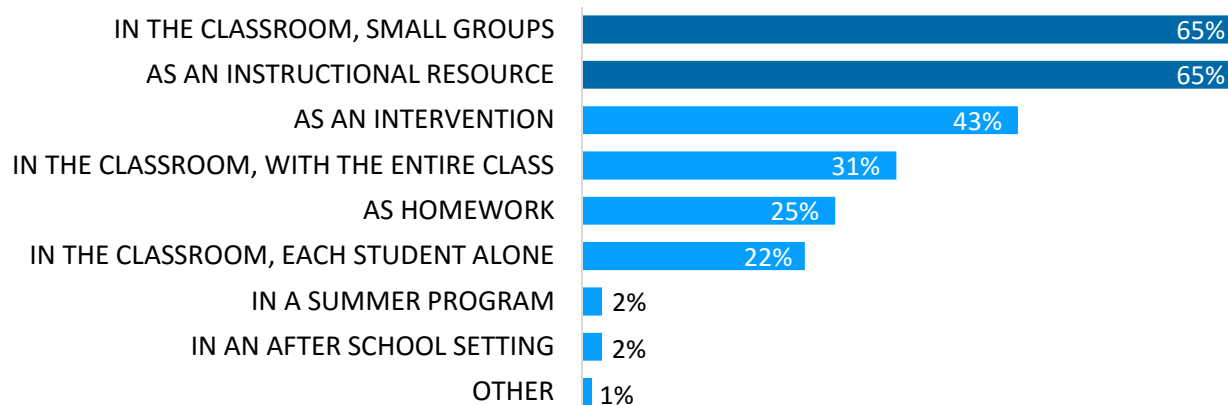
RTI Tier II and Tier III students and special education students were also commonly cited as users of Reading A-Z.



n=101. Participants could select more than one response.

Educators are most commonly using it as an instructional resource in the classroom, with students working in small groups.

More than two-fifths of respondents reported using Reading A-Z as an intervention, and almost one-third reported using it in the classroom with the entire class participating.



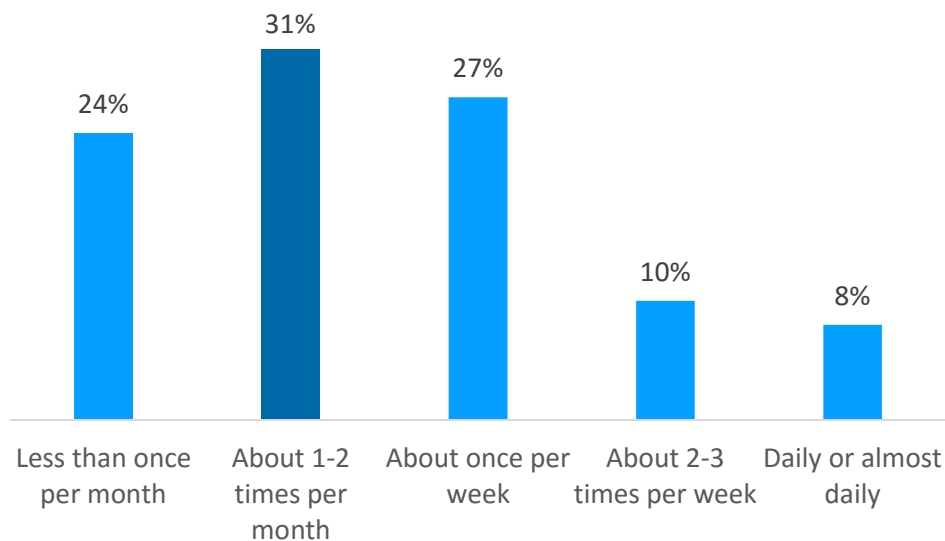
n=104. Participants could select more than one response.

Reading A-Z's parent company, Learning A-Z, does not offer implementation guidelines.

*"We strongly believe that good teachers, given quality, developmentally appropriate tools, will do a better job of meeting individual student needs than we could in dictating the manner in which our resources should be utilized. Because an efficacy study would require regimented and restrictive guidelines for the use of our materials, we do not believe its limitations are a good fit for our flexible supplemental program. Generally speaking, however, we recommend teachers provide independent reading practice in class for 15-20 minutes a day 3-4 times a week as a reasonable goal to set for your students."* – personal communication, February 2016

Survey data suggest that educators in District 97 who use Reading A-Z with students are most commonly doing so about 1 to 2 times per month.

Almost one-half of survey participants reported that students are using Reading A-Z once per week or more.



n=97

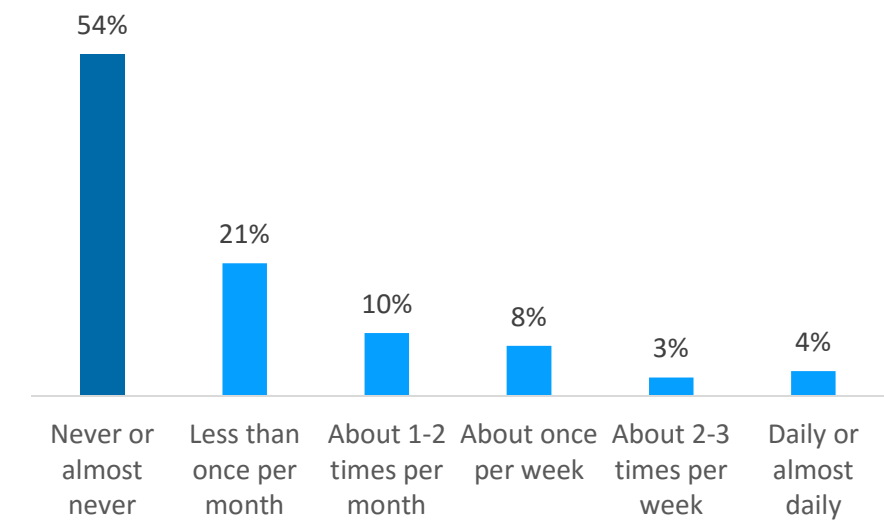
This resource recommends a three-step process for teachers to assess reading skills using benchmark passages and books, and using the results, to determine the level of instruction for each students (either moving up a level, down a level, or staying at the same level). They also offer additional assessments (e.g., for phonics, high frequency words, etc.).

Reading A-Z offers the following assessment schedule for determining students’ reading levels:<sup>6</sup>

Developmental Level	Reading Level	Schedule
Early Emergent readers	Levels aa-C	every 2 to 4 weeks
Emergent readers	Levels D-J	every 4 to 6 weeks
Early fluent readers	Levels K-P	every 6 to 8 weeks
Fluent readers	Levels Q-Z	every 8 to 10 weeks

*Students who are not progressing at the expected rate should be assessed even more frequently than the Assessment Schedule suggests.*

More than half of participants using Reading A-Z with students reported that they “never or almost never” monitor student progress with this resource.



n=97

<sup>6</sup> Source: [www.readinga-z.com/helpful-tools/about-running-records/](http://www.readinga-z.com/helpful-tools/about-running-records/)

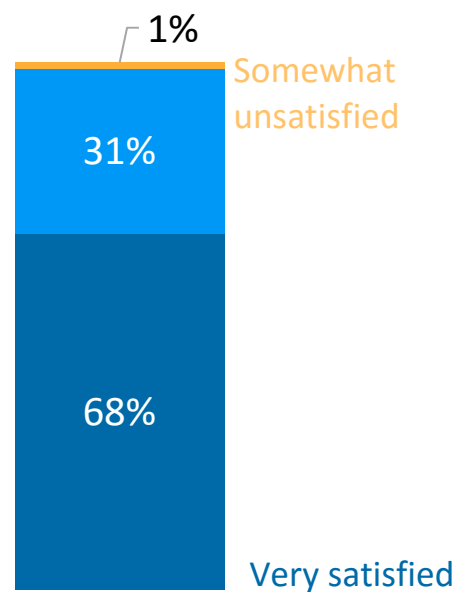


Open-ended responses suggest that educators using Reading A-Z's assessments do so:

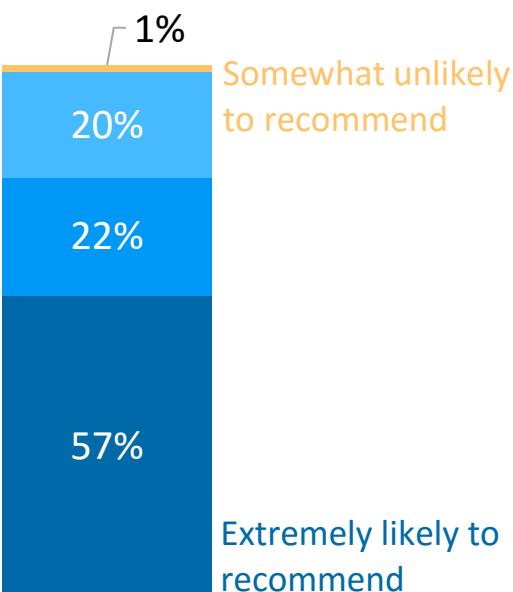
- To check on students' comprehension and fluency; and
- To advance students' reading levels.

Less commonly, participants reported using the data to drive instruction or as part of IEP goals and reporting.

Almost all respondents using Reading A-Z reported that they were satisfied with this resource and would recommend it to a friend or colleague.

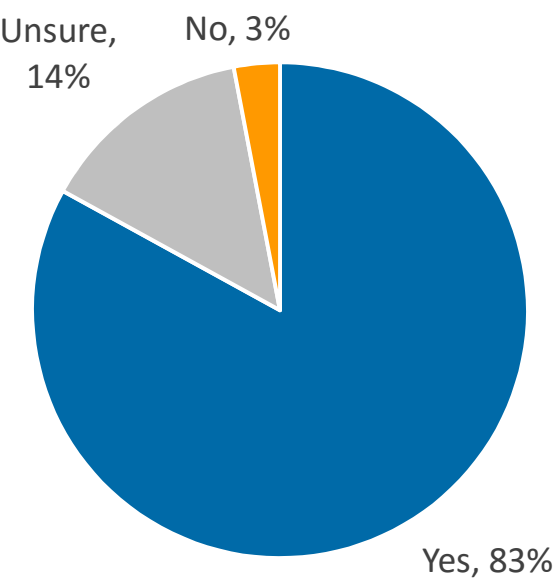


n=98. Response options were Very Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Unsatisfied and Very Unsatisfied



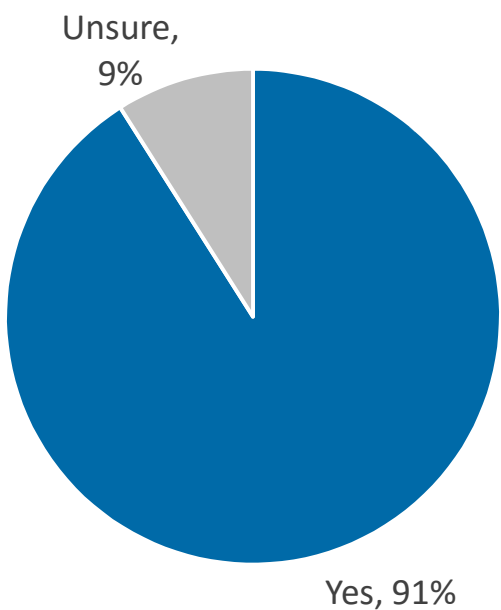
n=99. Response options were Extremely Likely to Recommend, Very Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Unlikely to Recommend, Very Unlikely to Recommend, Extremely Unlikely to Recommend

More than four-fifths of educators using Reading A-Z reported that, in their experience, **most students enjoy using Reading A-Z**, while the remainder disagreed or were unsure.



n=98. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

Almost all respondents reported that **Reading A-Z is effective for student learning**, while almost 10% were unsure.



n=98. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

Educators who reported that Reading A-Z is effective for student learning offered the following evidence:

*“Students can readily see improvement which boosts confidence.”* – Fifth grade teacher

*“They become better readers.”* – Third grade teacher

*“Students make progress in reading levels.”* – Elementary special education teacher

*“I can see growth in reading skills.”* – Kindergarten teacher

*“Gains in reading fluency.”* – Elementary special education teacher

When we asked participants what they like **MOST** about Reading A-Z, the following themes were most common in their responses.

- Reading A-Z offers a variety of leveled resources (such as books, reading passages and worksheets) that are appropriate for students at all levels and allow for differentiation.
- The resources are printable, so students can take them home with them.
- Resources include both fiction and non-fiction texts.
- This resource is accessible and easy to use.

To a lesser extent, responses also mentioned Reading A-Z's assessments and benchmarked passages.

Examples include:

*"There are thousands of resources to pull [from] and use during small group instruction. The stories are at the perfect level for my students no matter what level they are at."* – First grade teacher

*"Nice books at all levels, and ebooks can be accessed on student iPads and also projected in the classroom. There are leveled books in all content areas too. Love all of the teacher tips. The website is full of information but easy to navigate."*  
– Related services provider

*"Accessibility; range of topics and grade levels; I like being able to print the materials and send them to print shop. I would love to have the ESL component!"* – ESL teacher

*"Love the opportunity to access teaching materials by skills, fluency, provide differentiation."* – First grade teacher

*"I like that there are assessments for both accuracy and comprehension. I also like that the stories are engaging and that there are worksheets supplemental to the story."* – Elementary special education teacher

When asked what they like **LEAST** about Reading A-Z, the following themes were most common:

- “Nothing.”
- Printing materials takes time, some books are harder to print than others, and/or teachers have to send materials to the print shop.

Less common themes indicated that some teachers are personally paying for Reading A-Z and that there may be better resources available for leveled readers<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Two teachers cited Fountas and Pinnell. <http://www.fountasandpinnellleveledbooks.com/>

# READING A-Z SUMMARY

- Reading A-Z is a highly valued resource in the district. Educator satisfaction with Reading A-Z is very high, and more than 90% of those using this resource with students believe it is effective for student learning.
- Reading A-Z's key features according to district educators are its leveled reading materials, which meet the needs of all students and allow for differentiation. The online resources are also printable, which allows students to take them home. Educators also report that this resource is accessible and easy to use.
- Survey data indicate that this resource is primarily being used with general education students, although RTI Tier II and Tier III students and special education students were also frequently cited as users. Educators are most commonly using Reading A-Z as an instructional resource in the classroom, with students in small groups, but it is also often used as an intervention.
- Reading A-Z appears to be a moderately- to frequently-used resource. Although the largest percentage of participants reported that students use it 1 to 2 times per month, almost half of respondents reported that students use it once per week or more.
- Reading A-Z offers assessment materials for educators to implement themselves with students to determine if students are using the appropriately leveled reading materials. Although participants did not report using them very often (with more than half monitoring student progress “never or almost never”), open-ended responses suggested that at least some of those using them are doing so for the reasons specified by the developer.
- In responses to what they “liked least” about this resource, educators cited issues they had with printing materials.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR READING A-Z

- The nature of this resource (numerous, varied materials appropriate for many, if not all, students in the district, which can be used as the educator sees fit) does not easily lend itself to rigorous study on its effectiveness for student learning. If the district would like to pursue a student outcomes study for this resource, we would ideally want a group of educators to 1) use the materials within it systematically as part of their instruction and 2) use the assessments more systematically.
- Reading A-Z and Raz Kids (see the next section) appear to be very similar in the features they offer, the main difference being that Reading A-Z has printable and projectable materials and Raz Kids is an online resource. In addition, they share the same developer, and according to Learning A-Z's website, work well together. The district may want to ask one or more educators with access to both of them to detail the key “pros and cons” of using Raz Kids alone, Reading A-Z alone, and using them in tandem. This information may help in decision-making about future purchases and could be the subject of follow-up in-depth interviews with key stakeholders.

# RAZ KIDS

86 of 424 participants reported using Raz Kids.

- 62 (of 168) elementary classroom teachers
- 12 (of 24) elementary special education teachers
- 3 (of 3) ESL teachers
- 3 (of 6) language arts specialists
- 2 (of 21) middle school special education teachers
- 1 (of 9) data and instructional technology coach
- 1 (of 30) related services provider (Speech pathologist, social worker, psychologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, nurse)
- 1 (of 2) student support specialist
- 2 (of 7) in “other” roles

## WHAT IS RAZ KIDS?

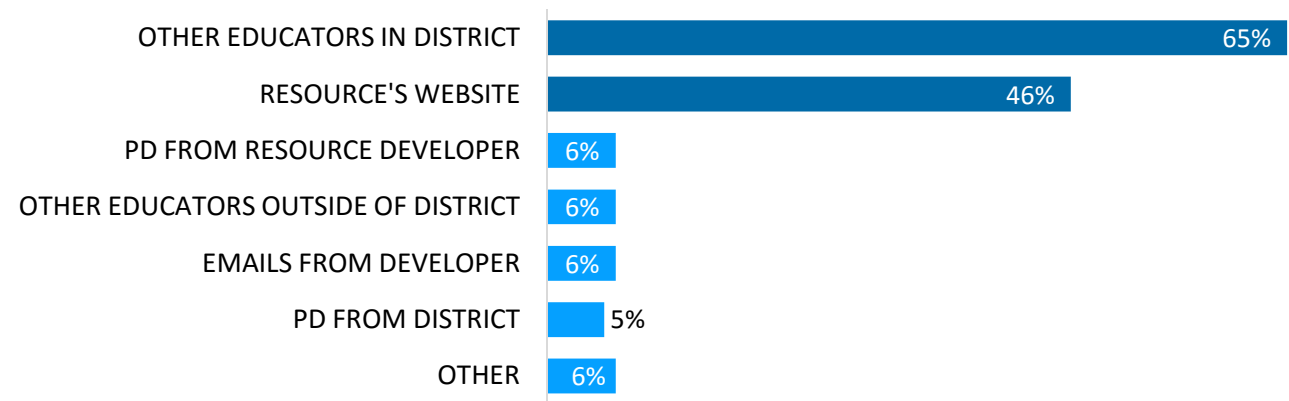
“Raz-Kids delivers hundreds of interactive, leveled eBooks spanning 29 levels.

- 400+ eBooks and open-book eQuizzes, with new books added every month, even in Spanish!
- Corresponding eQuizzes test comprehension, providing teachers with skill reports for data-driven instruction
- Online running records let teachers digitally assess each student, saving valuable classroom time
- The motivational "Raz Rocket" gets students excited about reading and strengthens the school-to-home connection.”

Source:  
[www.raz-kids.com](http://www.raz-kids.com)

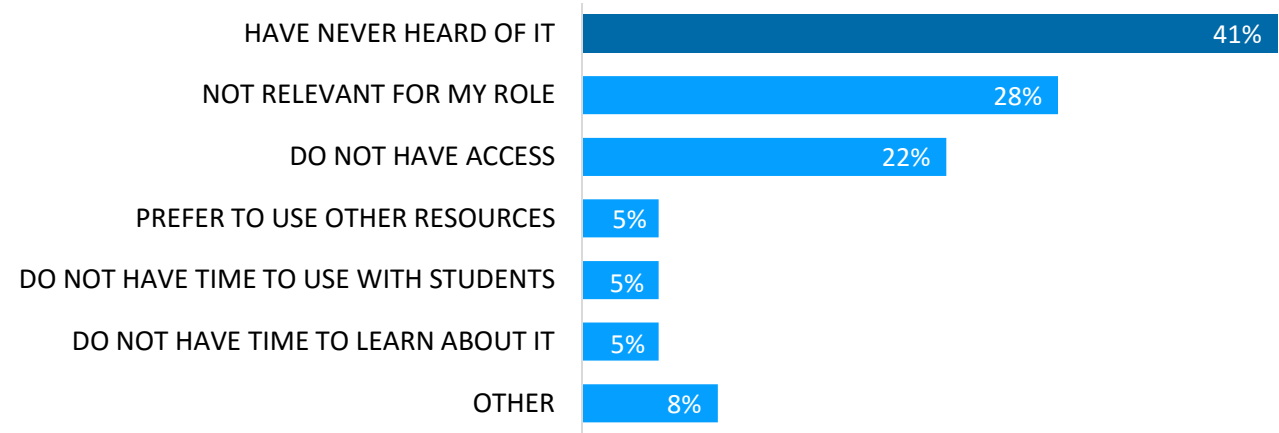


Participants most often reported that they received information about this resource from other educators in the district, followed by the resource’s website.



n=84. Participants could select more than one response.

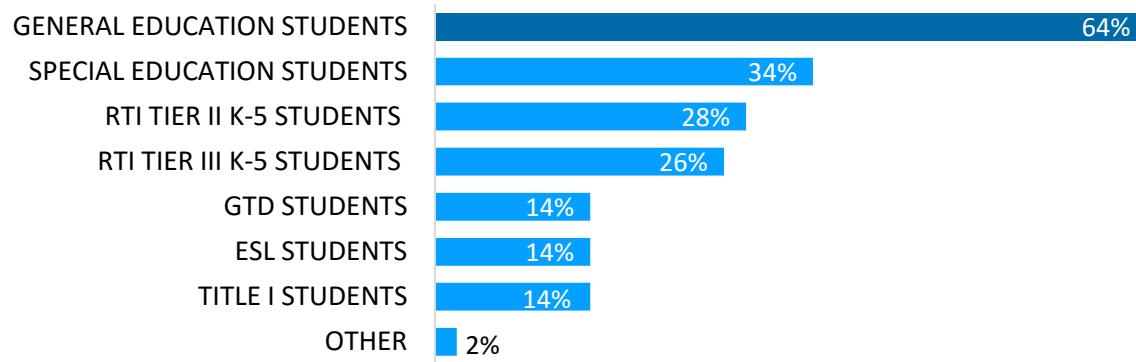
The most common reason for not using Raz Kids was that the participant had never heard of it.



n=330. Participants could select more than one response.

Responses indicate that Raz Kids is primarily being used with general education students.

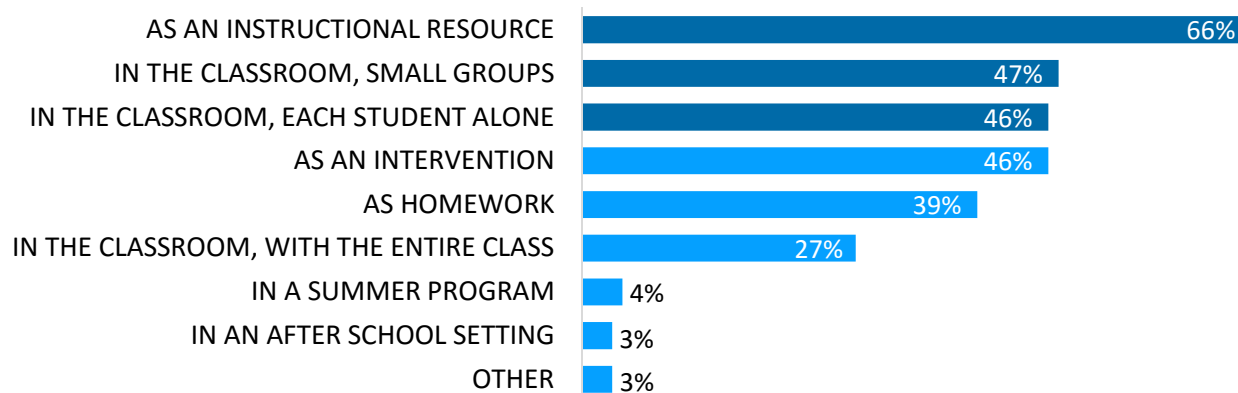
Special education students and RTI Tier II and Tier III students were also frequently cited as users of Raz Kids.



n=88. Participants could select more than one response.

Educators are most often using Raz Kids as an instructional resource in the classroom with students working either alone or in small groups.

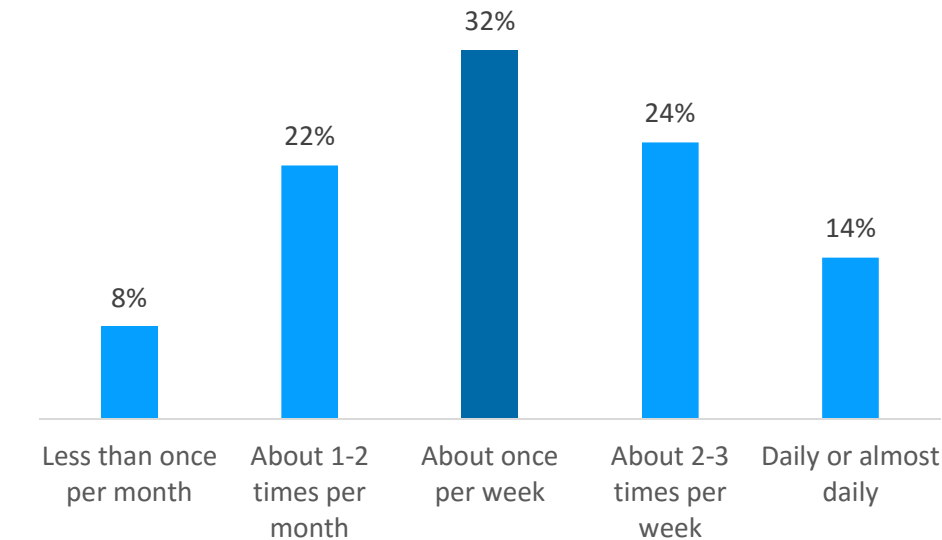
In addition, almost half of participants reported using Raz Kids as an intervention, and more than one-third reported using it for homework.



n=89. Participants could select more than one response.

Educators using Raz Kids most often said they use this resource with students about once per week.

More than two-thirds reported that students use this resource once per week or more.



n=87

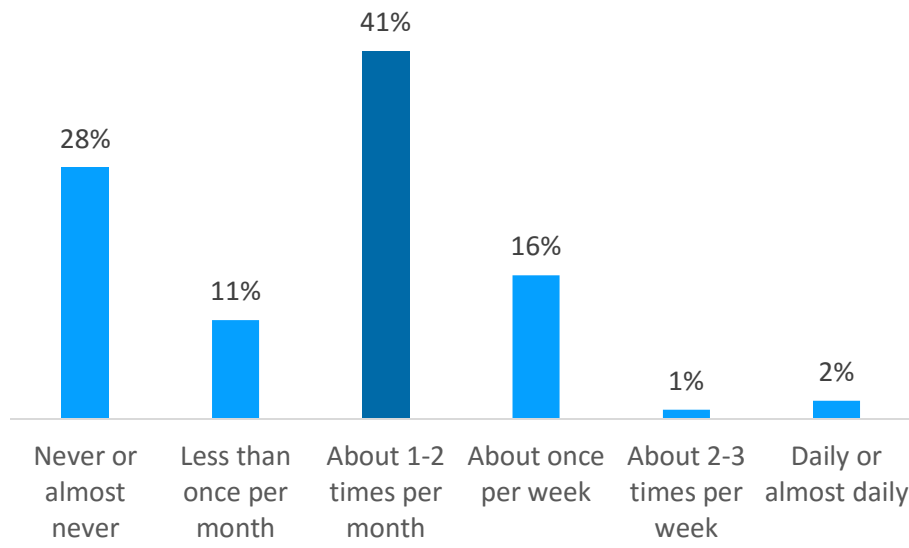
Raz Kids is developed by Learning A-Z, the makers of Reading A-Z, and similarly, they do not offer implementation guidelines for Raz Kids.

*“We strongly believe that good teachers, given quality, developmentally appropriate tools, will do a better job of meeting individual student needs than we could in dictating the manner in which our resources should be utilized. Because an efficacy study would require regimented and restrictive guidelines for the use of our materials, we do not believe its limitations are a good fit for our flexible supplemental program. Generally speaking, however, we recommend teachers provide independent reading practice in class for 15-20 minutes a day 3-4 times a week as a reasonable goal to set for your students.” – personal communication, February 2016*

Like Reading A-Z, Raz Kids recommends a three-step process for teachers to assess reading skills with benchmark passages and books, and using the results, to determine the level of instruction for each students (either moving up a level, down a level, or staying at the same level). They also offer “High Frequency Words Assessments” and “Alphabet Assessments.”

Participants using Raz Kids with students most often reported that they monitor student progress with this resource 1 to 2 times per month.

The second most common responses was “never or almost never.”



n=88

Like Reading A-Z, Raz Kids offers the following assessment schedule for determining each student’s reading level:<sup>8</sup>

Developmental Level	Reading Level	Schedule
Early Emergent readers	Levels aa-C	every 2 to 4 weeks
Emergent readers	Levels D-J	every 4 to 6 weeks
Early fluent readers	Levels K-P	every 6 to 8 weeks
Fluent readers	Levels Q-Z	every 8 to 10 weeks

*Students who are not progressing at the expected rate should be assessed even more frequently than the Assessment Schedule suggests.*

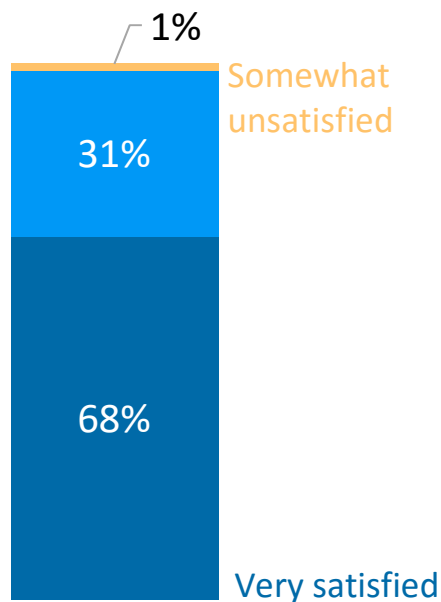
<sup>8</sup> Source: [www.raz-kids.com/main/ViewPage/name/RunningRecordInfo/](http://www.raz-kids.com/main/ViewPage/name/RunningRecordInfo/)

Survey participants most commonly reported using student assessment data from this resource to:

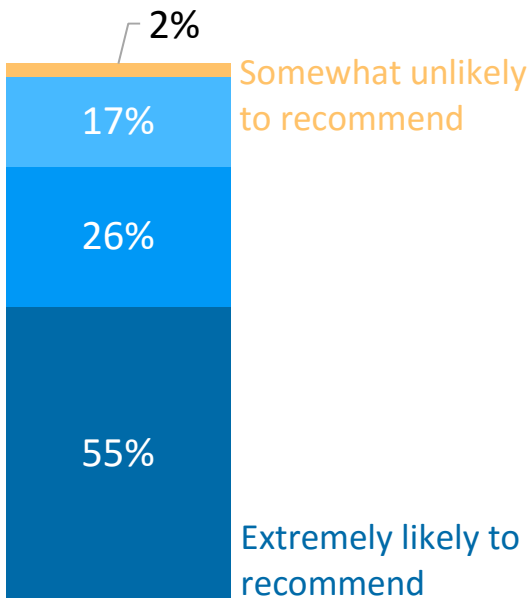
- Check on students' reading comprehension and fluency;
- Adjust reading levels for individual students; and/or
- See which skills students need help with, and areas where they have grown.

Less commonly, they reported using the information to drive instruction.

Almost all respondents using Raz Kids reported that they were satisfied with this resource and would recommend it to a friend or colleague.

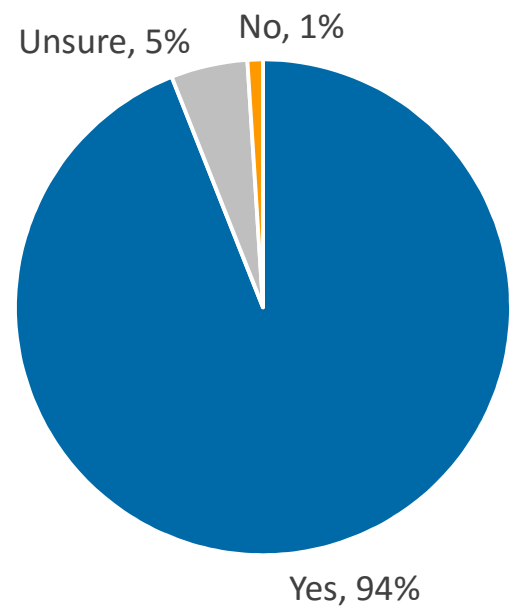


n=88. Response options were Very Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Unsatisfied and Very Unsatisfied



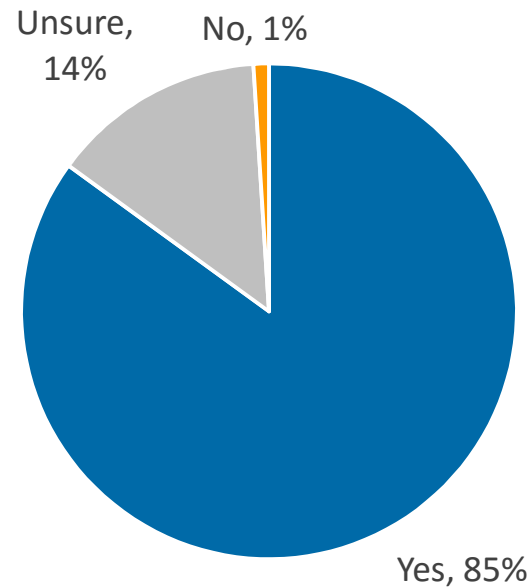
n=88. Response options were Extremely Likely to Recommend, Very Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Unlikely to Recommend, Very Unlikely to Recommend, Extremely Unlikely to Recommend

Almost all participants using Raz Kids agreed that **most students enjoy using this resource**, while a small percentage were unsure or disagreed.



n=89. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

The vast majority reported that **Raz Kids is effective for student learning**, while about 15% were unsure or disagreed.



n=87. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

Educators who reported that Raz Kids is effective for student learning offered the following evidence:

*“My students DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency scores mostly exceeded the expectations for MOY.”* – First grade teacher

*“I can see student progress on their quizzes.”* – Second grade teacher

*“Gets them excited about reading, pushes them to sit down and read, and they show growth in basic skills.”* – Elementary special education teacher

*“Improved Reading MAP scores.”* – Second grade teacher

*“Kids are reading books at their level and moving up levels.”* – Third grade teacher



When we asked participants what they like **MOST** about Raz Kids, the following themes were most common in their responses.

- Student engagement with this resource is high; students find it “engaging,” “interesting,” and they are motivated to use it.
- The leveled books and stories make differentiation easy for students at all levels.
- The resource is easy for students to use and they can work with it independently or in small groups.

A less frequent theme was appreciation of the resource’s comprehension quizzes.

Examples include:

*“It’s a great differentiation tool for reading and the kids love that they can read the book, listen to it, or record their voice.”* – Kindergarten teacher

*“LOVE the independence of reading books at their level with checks for understanding! The app is easy for children to use. They love the built-in motivator of earning points or stars!”* – First grade teacher

*“Leveled texts, motivators to complete tasks, ability to record child reading and the comprehension check.”* – Language arts specialist

When asked what they like **LEAST** about Raz Kids, the following themes were most common:

- “Nothing.”
- Students are able to click through this resource’s online quizzes without really trying.

# RAZ KIDS SUMMARY

- Raz Kids is a highly valued resource within the district. Educator satisfaction is very high for this resource, with respondents strongly tending to agree that students are engaged when using it and that it is effective for student learning.
- It appears to be a moderately- to frequently-used resource, with more than two-thirds of educators reporting that students use it once per week or more.
- According to educators' reports, Raz Kids is mainly being used as an instructional resource in the classroom, with students working alone or in small groups.
- The key features of this resource appear to be its engaging, online, leveled readers.
- In addition to online quizzes, Raz Kids offers assessment materials for educators to implement themselves with students to determine if students are using the appropriately leveled reading materials. Although participants did not report using them very often (with more than half monitoring student progress "never or almost never"), open-ended responses suggested that at least some of those using them are doing so for the reasons specified by the developer.

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RAZ KIDS

- The nature of this resource (numerous, varied materials appropriate for many, if not all, students in the district, which can be used as the educator sees fit) does not easily lend itself to rigorous study on its effectiveness for student learning. If the district would like to pursue a student outcomes study for this resource, we would ideally want a group of educators to 1) use the materials within it systematically as part of their instruction and 2) use the assessments more systematically.
- Raz Kids and Reading A-Z (see the section preceding this one) appear to be very similar in the features they offer, the main difference being that Reading A-Z has printable and projectable materials and Raz Kids is an online resource. In addition, they share the same developer, and according to Learning A-Z's website, work well together. The district may want to ask one or more educators with access to both of them to detail the key "pros and cons" of using Raz Kids alone, Reading A-Z alone, and using them in tandem. This information may help in decision-making about future purchases and could be the subject of follow-up in-depth interviews with key stakeholders.

# ROSETTA STONE

47 of 424 participants reported using Rosetta Stone.

- 18 (of 74) special areas teachers (PE, Health, Art, General Music, Instrumental Music, World Language, Design, Speech/Drama/Debate)
- 19 (of 168) elementary classroom teachers
- 3 (of 3) ESL teachers
- 2 (of 9) data and instructional technology coaches
- 1 (of 21) middle school special education teacher
- 1 (of 24) elementary special education teacher
- 1 (of 16) middle school science teacher
- 1 (of 30) related services provider (Speech pathologist, social worker, psychologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, nurse)
- 1 (of 7) in “other” role

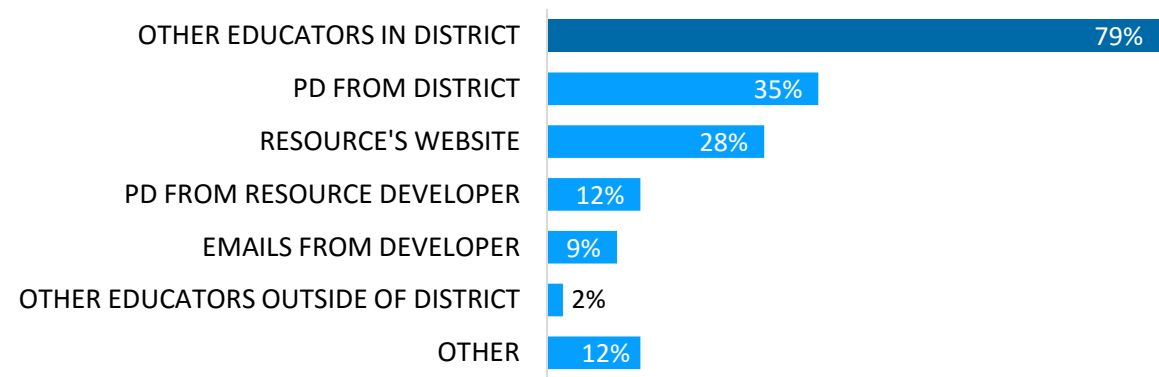
## WHAT IS ROSETTA STONE?

“Founded in 1992, Rosetta Stone pioneered the use of interactive software to accelerate language learning and is widely recognized today as the industry leader in providing effective language programs. The company's cloud-based programs allow users to learn online or on-the-go via tablet or smartphone, whether in a classroom, in a corporate setting, or in a personal learning environment.”

Source:

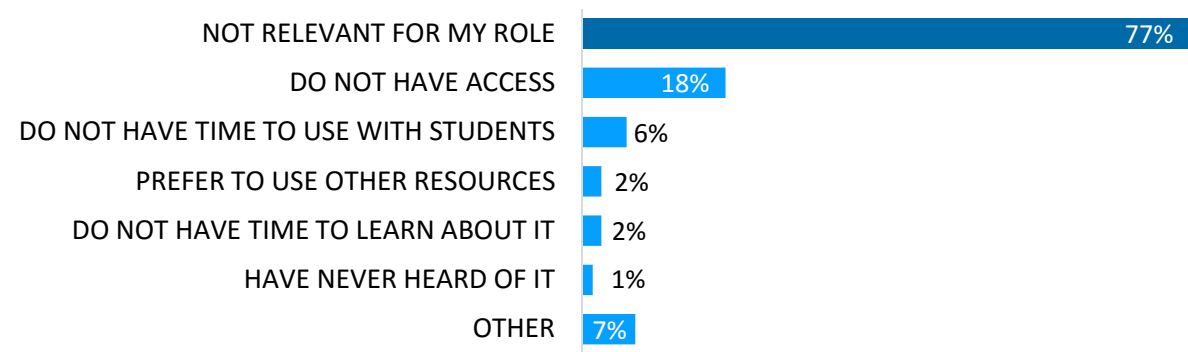
[www.rosettastone.com/about](http://www.rosettastone.com/about)

Participants most often reported that they received information about this resource from other educators in the district.



n=43. Participants could select more than one response.

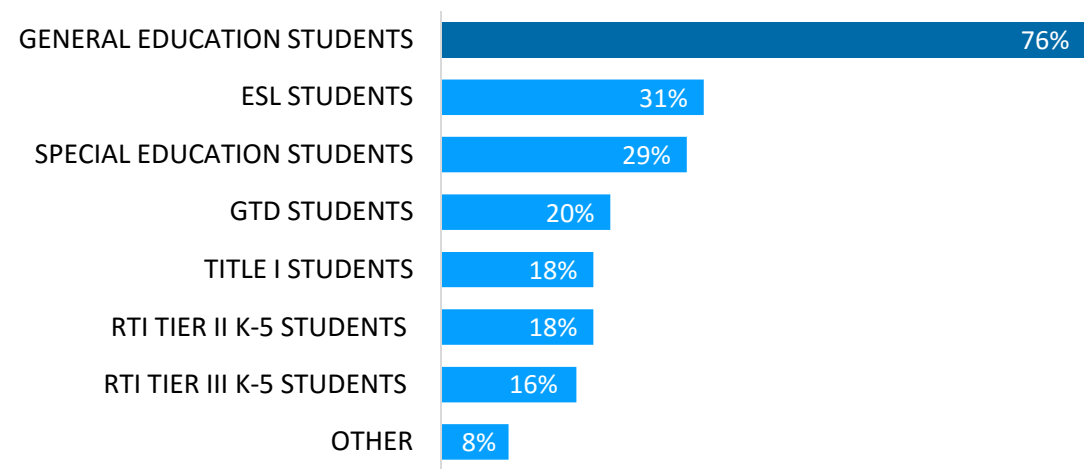
The most common reason for not using Rosetta Stone was that it was not relevant to the participant’s role in the district.



n=372. Participants could select more than one response.

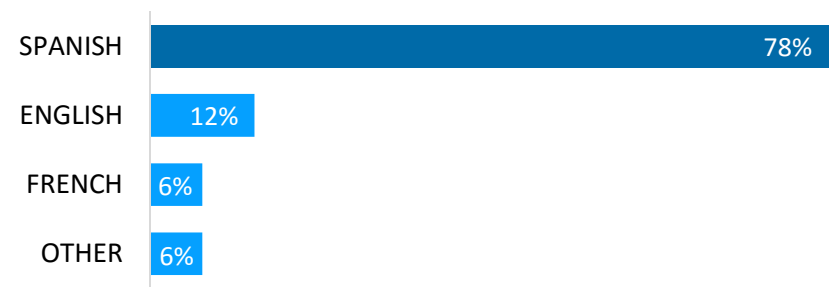
Responses indicate that Rosetta Stone is primarily used with general education students.

ESL students and special education students were also often cited as users of Rosetta Stone.



n=49. Participants could select more than one response.

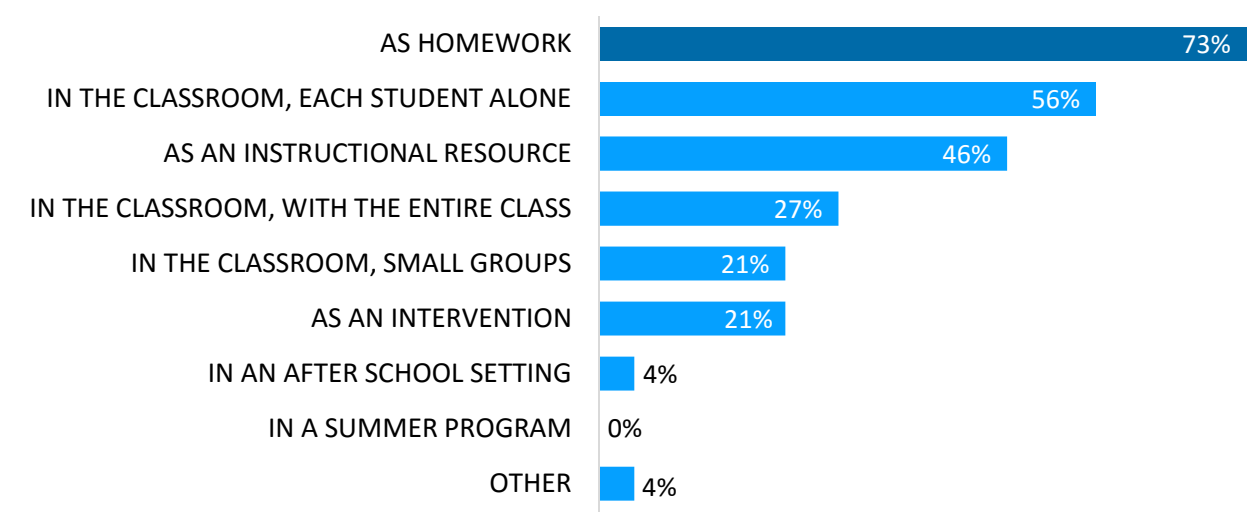
Participants most frequently reported using the Spanish version of Rosetta Stone.



n=50. Participants could select more than one response.

Survey data suggest educators are most commonly using this resource for homework.

Participants also frequently cited its use as an instructional resource in the classroom with each student working alone.

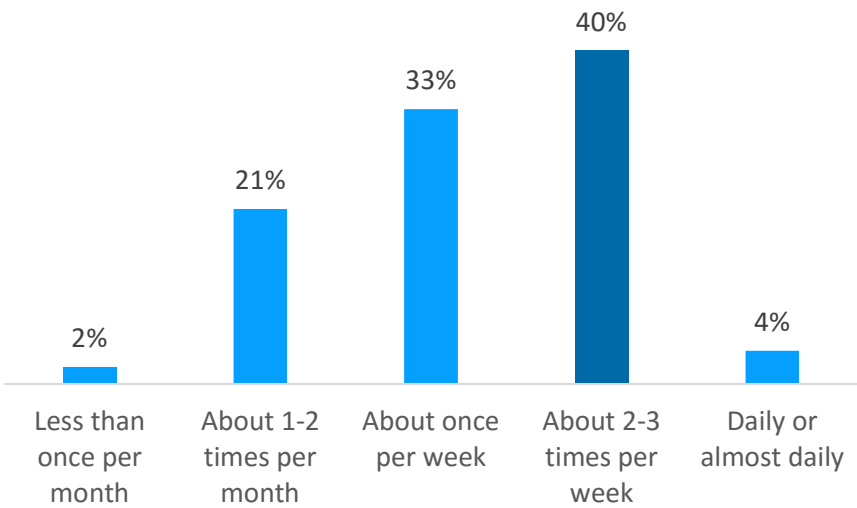


n=48. Participants could select more than one response.

Rosetta Stone does not offer implementation guidelines for use of their product. Instead, they recommend that their customers “study” about 30-45 minutes per day, 5 days per week.<sup>9</sup>

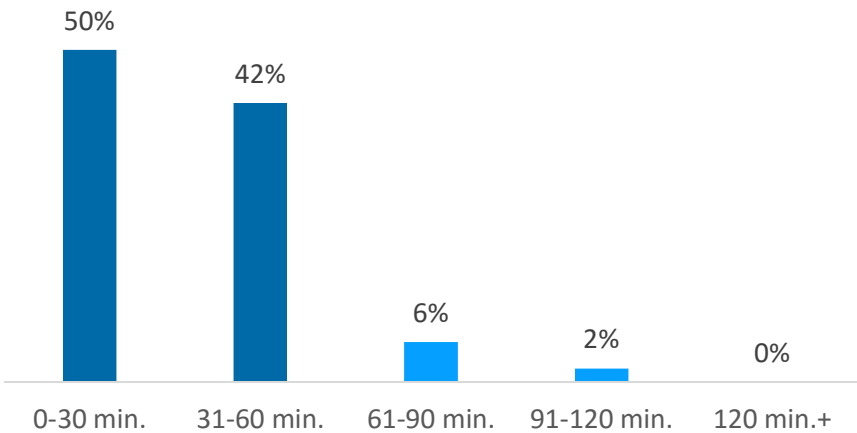
Educators using Rosetta Stone most often reported that students are typically using this resource about 2 to 3 times per week, with students spending between 0 and 60 minutes per week with this resource in almost all cases.

Frequency of Student Use



n=48

Minutes Per Week of Student Use



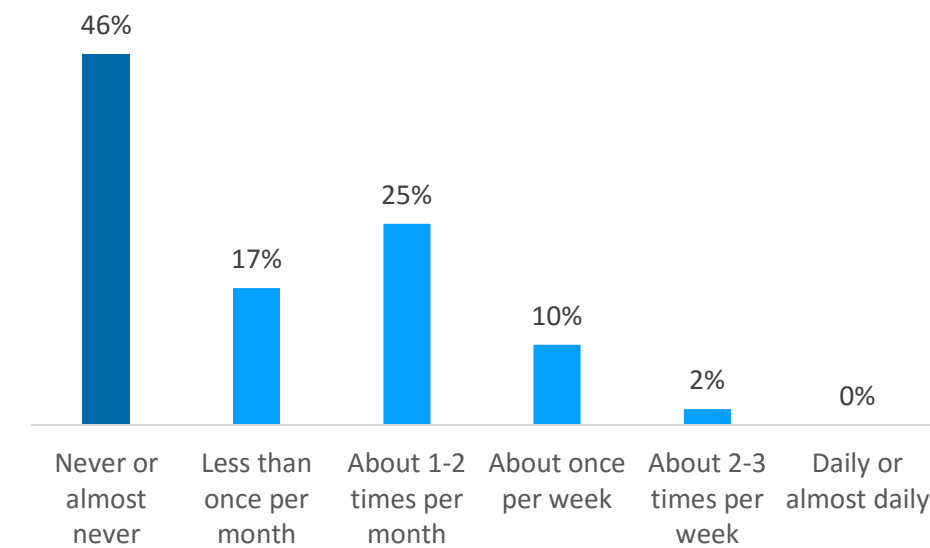
n=48

<sup>9</sup> Personal communication, February 2016



Almost half of educators using Rosetta Stone with students reported that they “never or almost never” monitor student progress data with this resource.

One-quarter reported monitoring student data 1 to 2 times per month.

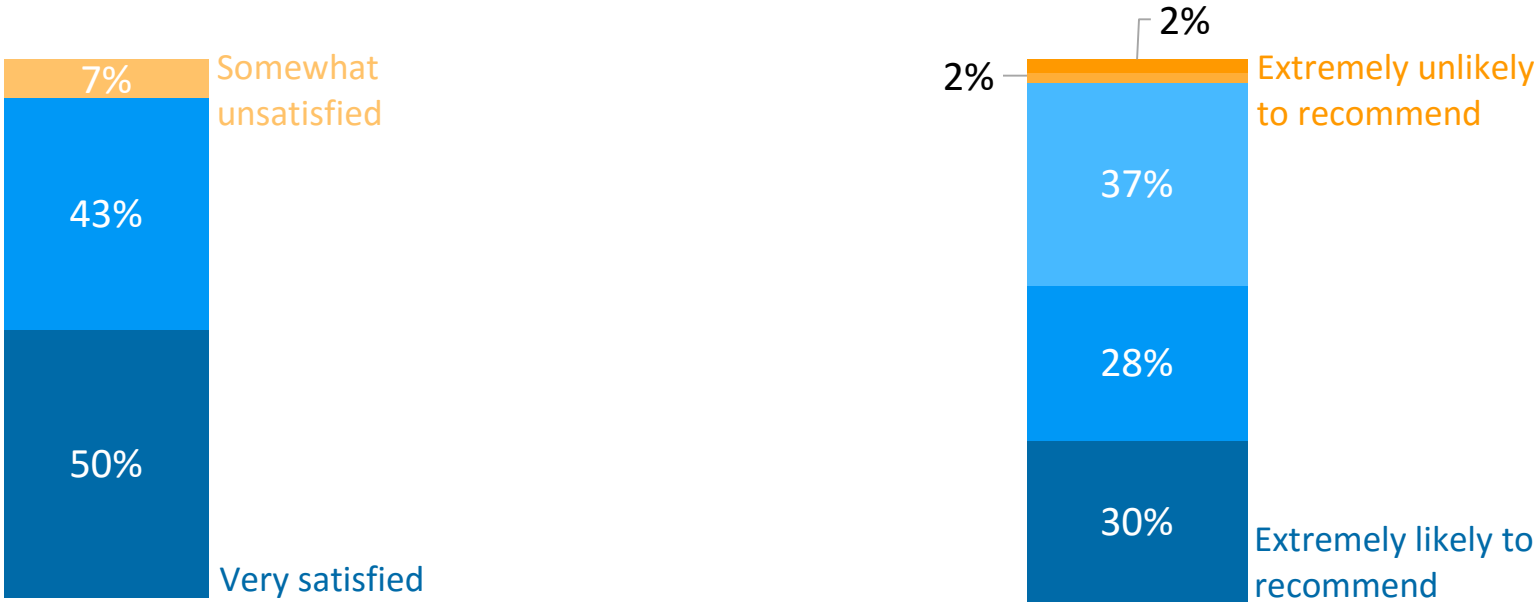


n=48

Open-ended responses indicate that students’ data are being monitored mainly to check how much time students are spending with the program.

The responses also indicated that many of the educators who reported using this resource with students are not responsible for checking on students’ progress (e.g., “the Spanish teacher monitors the Rosetta Stone data”).

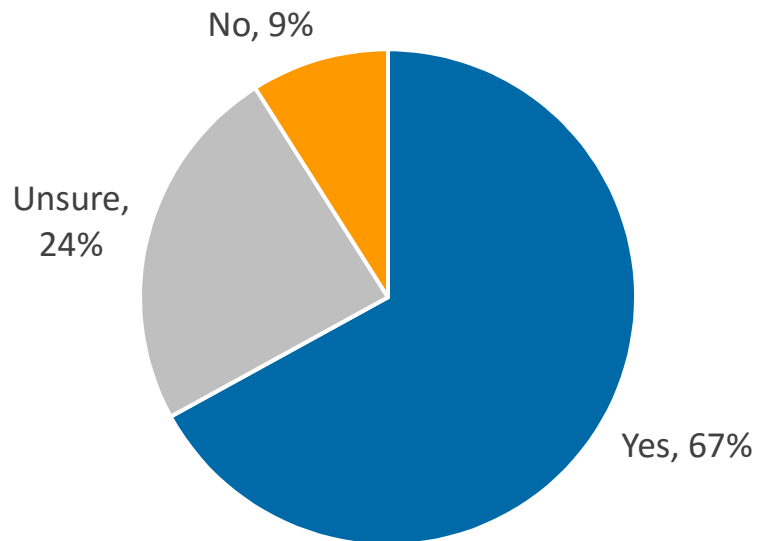
Respondents tended to report that they are satisfied with Rosetta Stone and would recommend this resource to a friend or colleague.



n=46. Response options were Very Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Unsatisfied and Very Unsatisfied

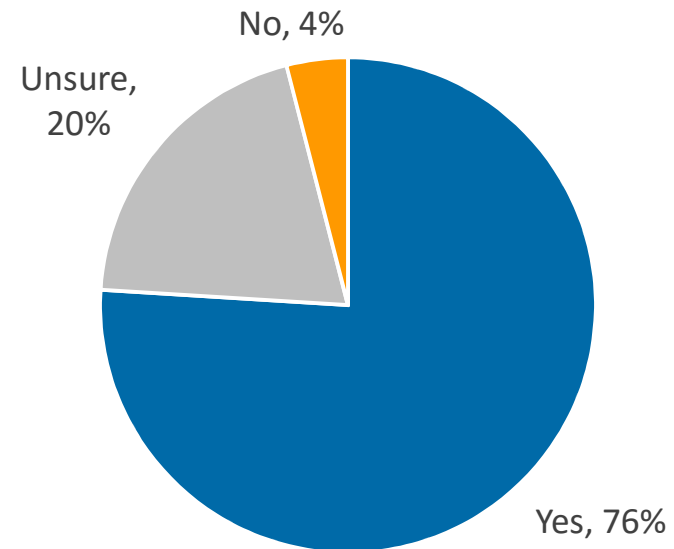
n=46. Response options were Extremely Likely to Recommend, Very Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Unlikely to Recommend, Very Unlikely to Recommend, Extremely Unlikely to Recommend

Two-thirds of respondents using Rosetta Stone reported that **most students enjoy engaging with this resource**, while the remainder were unsure or disagreed.



n=46. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

About three-quarters of respondents reported that **Rosetta Stone is effective for student learning**, while the remainder were unsure or disagreed.



n=46. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

Educators who reported that Rosetta Stone is effective for student learning offered the following evidence:

*“In addition to being immersed in the English language and receiving support from the ESL teacher, a particular student of mine learned so quickly, and I know that Rosetta Stone and allowing her to independently practice and gain confidence was really beneficial.”* – Second grade teacher

*“Students who use Rosetta Stone with fidelity show increased confidence in their speaking, stronger pronunciation and vocabulary, and grammar skills which they are able to bring into their classroom experience and hence into real world language use.”* – Special areas teacher

*“It improves their pronunciation. They are exposed to vocabulary beyond our textbook. It gives immediate feedback and allows autonomy from teacher.”* – Special areas teacher

*“I have seen students using the language they have learned in the program in class. Students who log in regularly have improved pronunciation when learning new vocabulary not in the program. I can get a sense for the speaking ability of shy or soft spoken students who do not participate as much in class.”* – Special areas teacher

When we asked participants what they like **MOST** about Rosetta Stone, the following themes were most common in their responses.

- Rosetta Stone is easy to access and use.
- This resource is personalized to students, and they are able to progress at their own pace.
- The resource supplements, reinforces and/or allows students to practice what they learned in class.
- The methods the program uses (e.g., “immersion,” exposure to accents, opportunities to practice speaking) are what students need to learn a language.

Examples include:

*“Rosetta Stone focuses on reading, listening and speaking and helps build grammar foundations as well as confidence in using the language. It allows students to proceed at their own rate. It has voice recognition as well as touch screen. It is meant as a supplement to what we do in the classroom, so while it does not directly reinforce the specifics of our units, it helps with vocabulary building and foundational skills. Rosetta Stone is also a great resource for having a sub use in the absence of the language teacher.”* – Special areas teacher

*“I think Rosetta Stone's methodology (picture driven instruction, no translation, repeating native speaker, listening comprehension) is excellent. I think it is the correct way to instruct a world language. I like that students can move at their own pace. Since we do not have leveled/tracked classes (I have gifted French 3 students mixed with kids who failed French 1 & 2) and differentiation is a challenge, Rosetta Stone gives kids a nice opportunity to make progress at their own speed.”* – Second grade teacher

*“Repetitive (in a good way), easy to navigate, practical language usage.”* – Special areas teacher

When asked what they like **LEAST** about Rosetta Stone, the following themes were most common.

- The system seems to have technical glitches, including not always recording students' voices when it's supposed to, that are frustrating for students.
- The program is not always easy to use for younger children, and the language used is not always relevant to students (e.g., "saying 'My wife drives a car'").
- The resource produces data reports that are not user-friendly for educators.

# ROSETTA STONE SUMMARY

- According to survey data, Rosetta Stone is primarily being used with general education students, as homework or as an instructional resource in the class with each student working alone. Educators most often reported using the Spanish version of Rosetta Stone.
- Rosetta Stone appears to be a moderately- to frequently-used resource in the district, with students typically using it 2-3 times per week or less, for up to 60 minutes per week.
- Rosetta Stone's key features seem to be its ability to supplement and reinforce what students are learning in class and allow them to practice speaking and listening while they move at their own pace through the program.
- When asked what they like most about this resource, one theme that emerged was its ease of use. However, when asked what they like least about this resource, educators also noted that it can be hard for younger students to use. Educators also noted that the data reports produced by Rosetta Stone are not particularly user-friendly, and the resource has some technological/interface issues that can frustrate students. The resource's language is also not always relevant to children's lives, and may be targeted more toward adult users.
- Respondents on the whole tended to report that they are satisfied with Rosetta Stone and would recommend it to others. However, a substantial minority of them are unsure whether most students enjoy using it and whether it is effective for student learning.

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ROSETTA STONE

- If follow-up interviews are planned with key stakeholders, one area of exploration may be the ambiguity around whether Rosetta Stone is engaging for students and whether it is effective for student learning. Interviews could explore with whom and in what context(s) this resource appears to be most engaging and effective.
- This resource seems to be best for tracking students' use, rather than assessing language skills in ways that might be useful for an outcomes study. For this reason, to conduct a study of student outcomes, we would likely need educators to implement additional assessments in order to track students' progress over time. For a quasi-experimental study, we would also need to be able to make valid comparisons between users and non-users on those additional assessments.

# SLANT

43 of 424 survey participants reported using SLANT lessons and materials.

- 20 (of 24) elementary special education teachers
- 14 (of 168) elementary classroom teachers
- 5 (of 21) middle school special education teachers
- 3 (of 6) language arts specialists
- 1 (of 8) GTD teacher
- 1 (of 2) IB coordinator
- 2 (of 7) in “other” roles

## WHAT IS SLANT?

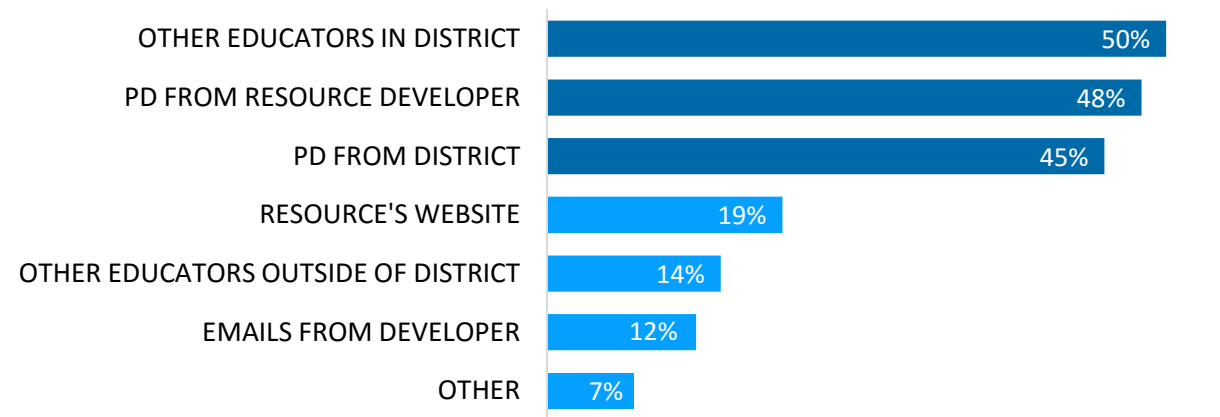
“The SLANT System® is a professional development program based on scientific research in the field of reading instruction. The program is supported by systematic and explicit teaching materials that incorporate multisensory instructional techniques and emphasize the structure of the English language.

Training in The SLANT System® provides teachers with a knowledge base of English language structure that can be applied to the teaching of reading at all grades and levels.”

Source:  
Personal communication,  
February 2016

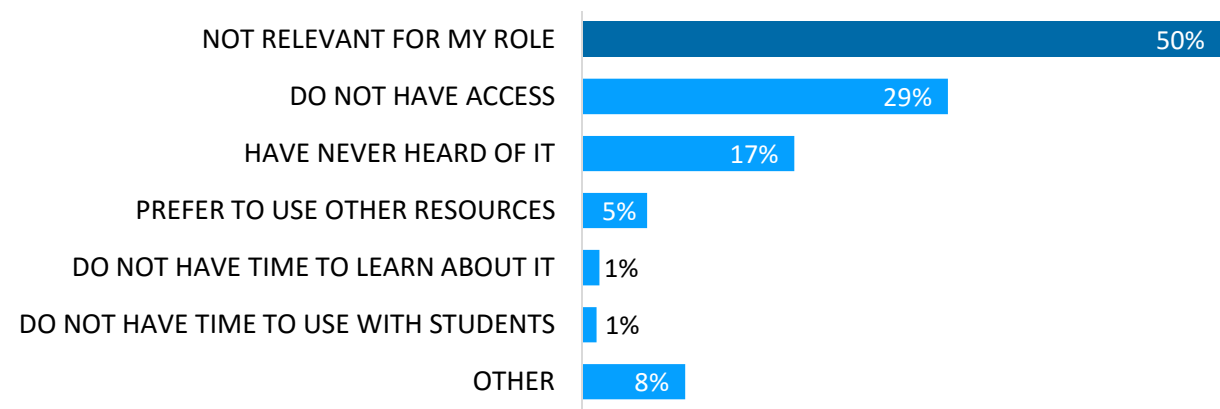


Participants most often reported that they received information about this resource from other educators in the district, PD from SLANT’s developer and/or PD from district.



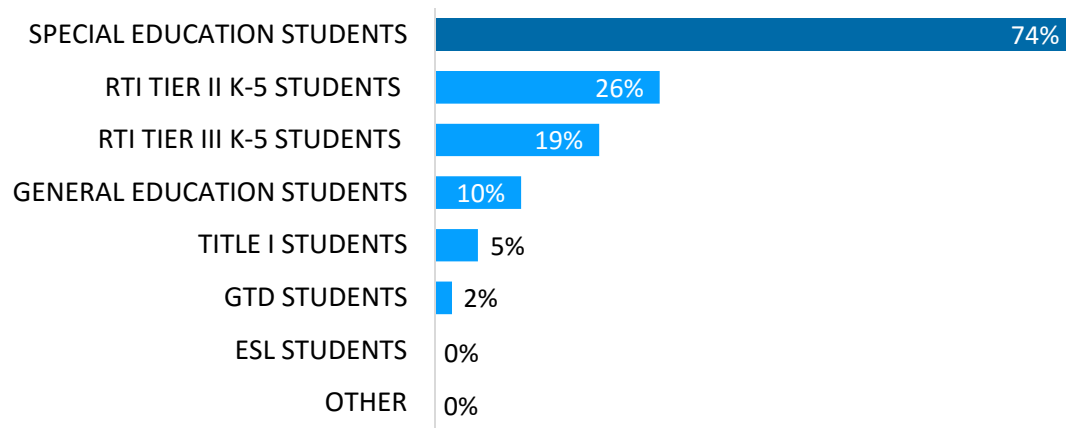
n=42. Participants could select more than one response.

The most common reason for not using SLANT was that it was not relevant to the participant’s role in the district.



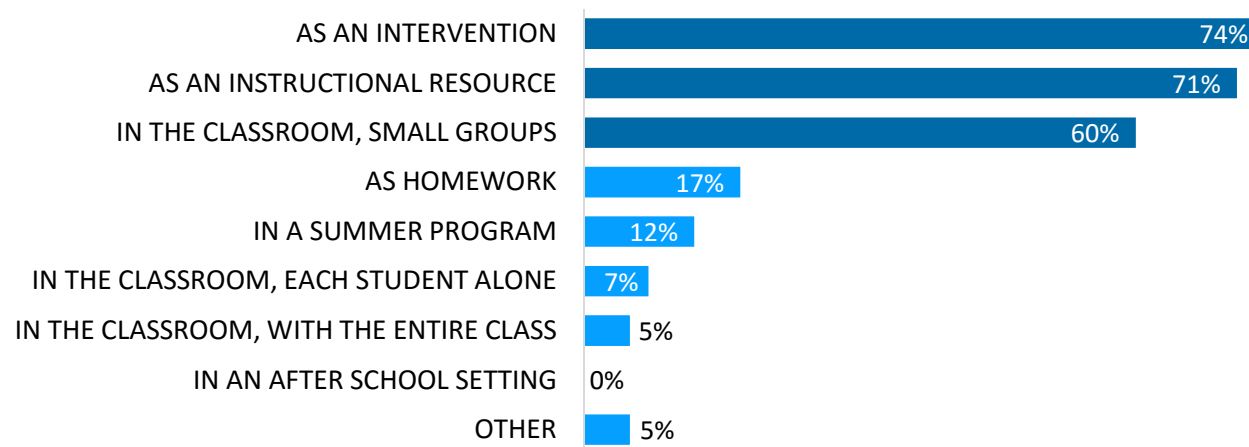
n=371. Participants could select more than one response.

Responses indicate that SLANT lessons and materials are primarily used with special education students.



n=42. Participants could select more than one response.

Educators are most commonly using this resource as an intervention or as an instructional resource in the classroom with students working in small groups.



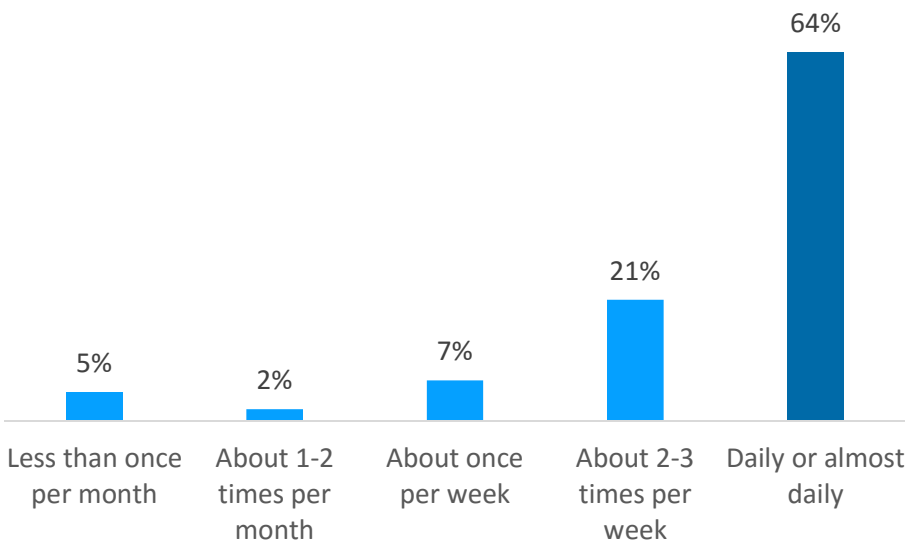
n=42. Participants could select more than one response.

SLANT’s developer offers the following implementation guidelines for using this resource as part of an RTI model:

- Tier I: 20-30 minutes per day, 3 days per week (total of ~75 minutes per week)
- Tier II: 30-40 minutes per day, 5 days per week (total of ~175 minutes per week)
- Tier 3: 50 minutes per day, 5 days per week (total of 250 minutes per week)

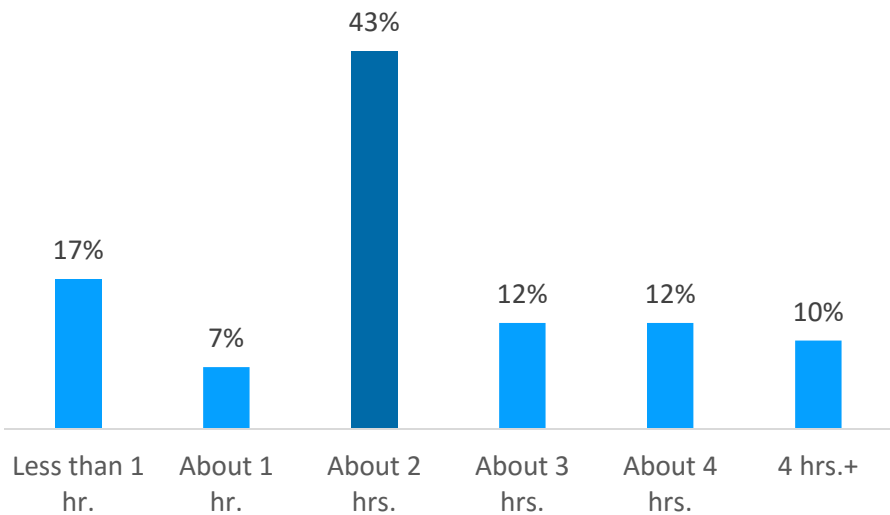
Educators in District 97 most commonly reported that their students engage with SLANT lessons and materials “daily or almost daily” for a total of about 2 hours (or 120 minutes) per week.

Frequency of Student Use



n=42

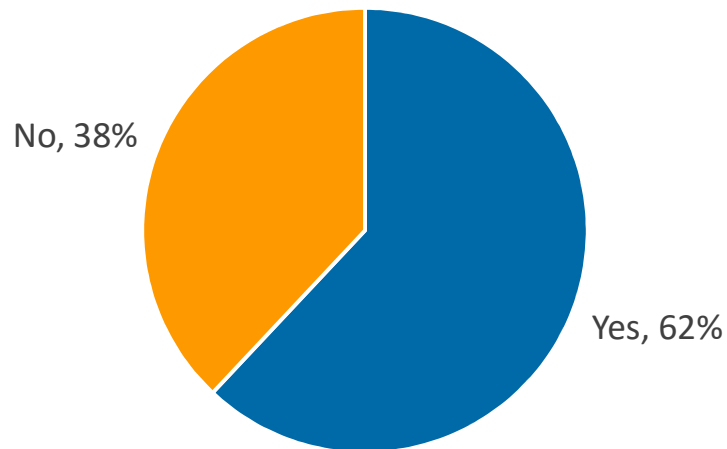
Total Time Per Week



n=42

Educators become certified in SLANT through a rigorous PD program and assessment process. Certifications run for 3 years, and teachers are expected to re-certify by completing 30 CPDUs in specific areas of study.<sup>10</sup>

Of the 42 educators who reported using SLANT lessons and materials with students, 26 (62%) reported they currently hold a SLANT certification.

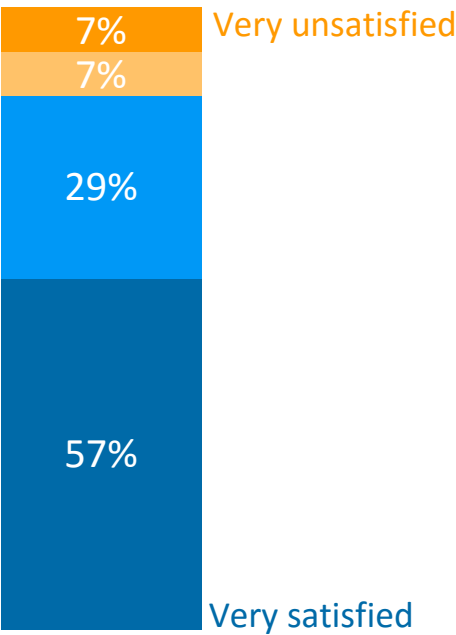


n=42. Response options were Yes, No and I'm Not Sure.

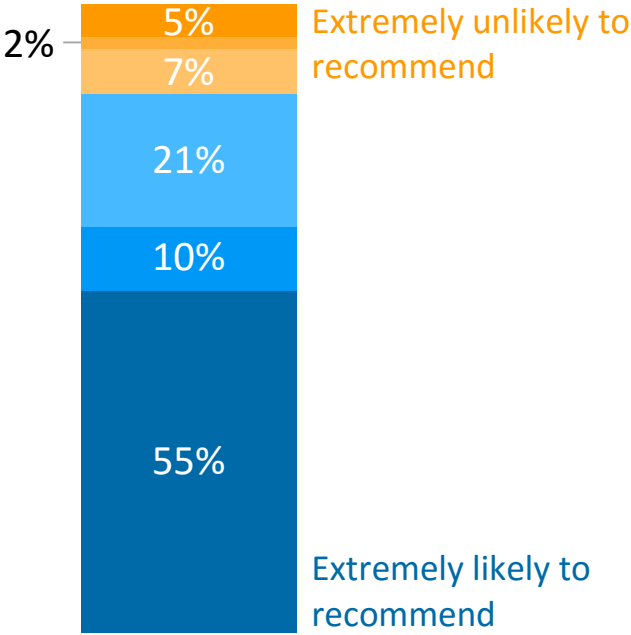
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<sup>10</sup> Personal communication, February 2016

Respondents tended to report that they are satisfied with SLANT and would recommend this resource to a friend or colleague, although more than 10% appear to be unhappy with this resource.

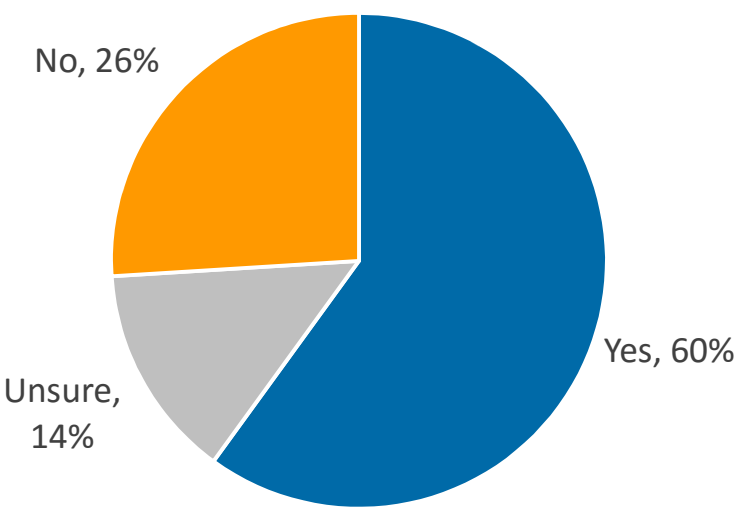


n=42. Response options were Very Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Unsatisfied and Very Unsatisfied



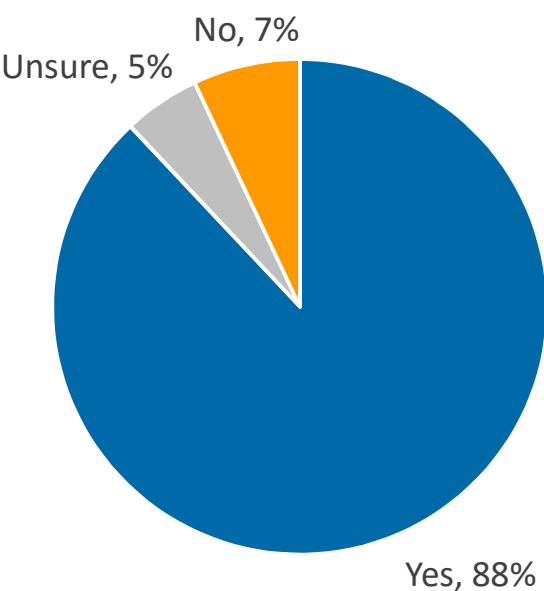
n=42. Response options were Extremely Likely to Recommend, Very Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Unlikely to Recommend, Very Unlikely to Recommend, Extremely Unlikely to Recommend

The majority of participants using SLANT agreed that **most students enjoy using SLANT materials and lessons**, but a substantial minority disagreed or were unsure.



n=42. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

Educators tended to report that SLANT **lessons and materials are effective for student learning**, but more than 10% were unsure or disagreed.



n=42. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

## Educators who reported that SLANT is effective for student learning offered the following evidence:

*“When I look at MAP scores and fluency levels I see good growth for my students. Depending on the student I find great to good progress.”* – Elementary special education teacher

*“Over the years I have seen students dramatically increase the accuracy levels of their decoding skills based on the pre & post assessments in SLANT.”* – Middle school special education teacher

*“My students make significant progress with reading. It's explicit enough that a student who had convinced herself she was not capable of reading is now reading CVC words and words with digraphs.”* – Elementary special education teacher

*“I do find SLANT to help my students. I do see improvement in my students decoding and with some, spelling. Students do appear confident when reading the stories given because they are at his/her decodable instructional level. It is shown in tandem to Reading A to Z. Some students have progressed from one reading level to the next due to SLANT.”* – Elementary special education teacher

When we asked participants what they like **MOST** about SLANT, the following themes were most common in their responses.

- This resource has a multi-sensory approach to learning.
- It explicitly teaches phonics and decoding.
- It is highly structured and methodical.
- Educators are seeing positive changes in their students' reading abilities, which they attribute to SLANT.

Examples include:

*"It is explicit instruction with reading skills. It is meant for small group work. It allows children successes, they are reading!"* – First grade teacher

*"I like the systematic, multi-sensory approach to decoding."* – Elementary special education teacher

*"I love the sentences for dictation, the direct instruction and the methodical way in which the sounds are taught."* – Middle school special education teacher

*"It is a systematic intervention that has a good balance of multisensory activities that help students to make good progress. Typically after the second year in the program students are making good gains in their reading."* – Elementary special education teacher



When asked what they like **LEAST** about SLANT, the following themes were most common.

- Educators report that SLANT is “boring,” “dull,” “tedious” or “not engaging” for students.
- The structure of it is too “rigid” to allow the educator much flexibility.
- It doesn’t have a strong comprehension component and cannot be used as a complete reading program.
- It is time-consuming and/or can be tricky to implement from a scheduling perspective.

# SLANT SUMMARY

- SLANT is an educator PD program. Our survey data suggest that its lessons and materials are primarily being used with special education students as an intervention and an instructional resource in the classroom, with students in small groups.
- SLANT is a frequently-used resource in the district, with educators most commonly reporting that students typically engage with SLANT lessons and materials “daily or almost daily” for 2 hours per week.
- Educator satisfaction with this resource was high in general, but a minority of educators appear to be unhappy with it. Educators like “least” that SLANT can be boring for students, and that it does not allow for much flexibility. It also seems to focus primarily on phonics and decoding without adequate attention to reading comprehension, and educators report it cannot be used as a complete reading program. Teachers also reported scheduling difficulties and issues with finding time to implement SLANT.
- Despite some downsides to using this resource, 88% of respondents using this resource believe it is effective for student learning, and many provided evidence of student learning in open-ended responses.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SLANT

- SLANT’s developer indicates that progress monitoring for students can be accomplished in multiple ways.<sup>11</sup> SLANT itself offers some assessment materials. Teachers are also free to use measures including DIBELS or AIMSweb. A study of student outcomes with SLANT may be possible if we can use common assessment data systematically across educators. For a quasi-experimental study, we would also need to be able to make valid comparisons between SLANT users and non-users on those assessments.

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<sup>11</sup> Personal communication, February 2016

# FAST FORWARD

41 of 424 participants reported using Fast ForWord.<sup>12</sup>

- 21 (of 168) elementary classroom teachers
- 5 (of 30) related services providers (Speech pathologist, social worker, psychologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, nurse)
- 3 (of 24) elementary special education teachers
- 3 (of 9) data and instructional technology coaches
- 2 (of 21) middle school special education teachers
- 2 (of 9) teacher librarians
- 1 (of 16) middle school science teacher
- 1 (of 2) student support specialist
- 1 (of 8) GTD teacher
- 1 (of 6) language arts specialist
- 1 (of 7) in “other” role

## WHAT IS FAST FORWARD?

“More than 250 research studies prove that Fast ForWord can build the foundational language and cognitive skills that so many students with special needs, struggling readers and English Language Learners need to succeed. After Fast ForWord, students can improve their language and reading skills by up to two grade levels in as little as three months, simultaneously boosting performance across all areas of study. And research has shown that these gains endure over time.

Our LANGUAGE (Elementary) and LITERACY (Middle/High School) products build foundational reading and language skills to help districts move special needs learners to successful learners in the general classroom.

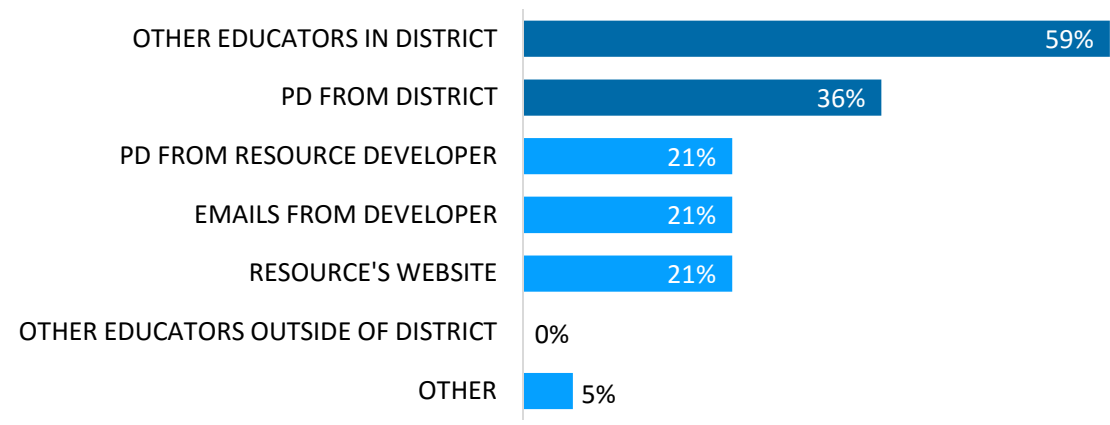
Our READING (PK-12) products increase processing efficiency and build critical reading skills in schools so districts get the most from their existing instructional approach.”

Source:  
[www.scilearn.com/products](http://www.scilearn.com/products)

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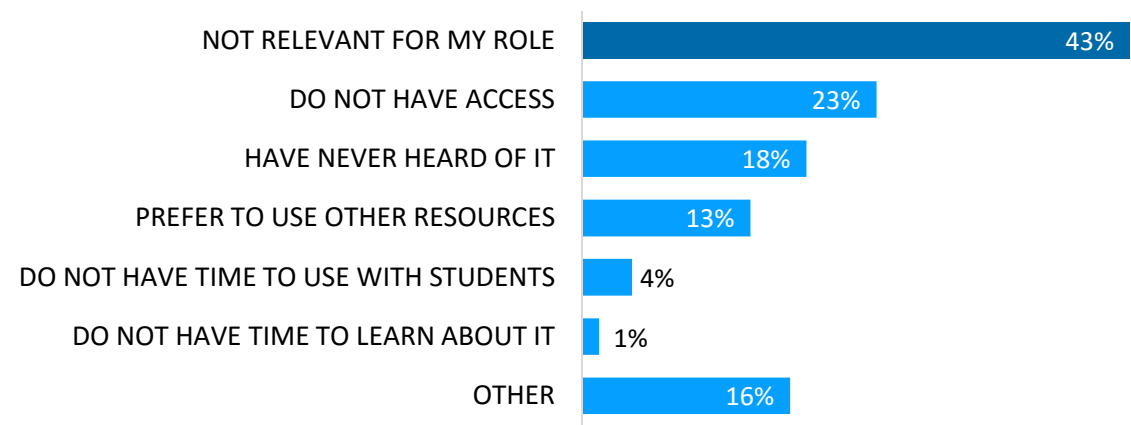
<sup>12</sup>Although SurveyMonkey logged 41 respondents’ reports that they used this resource, 45 went on to answer subsequent questions about its implementation, suggesting that the online survey failed to log 4 responses to the initial question of use of Fast ForWord.

Participants most often reported that they received information about this resource from other educators in the district, followed by PD from the district.



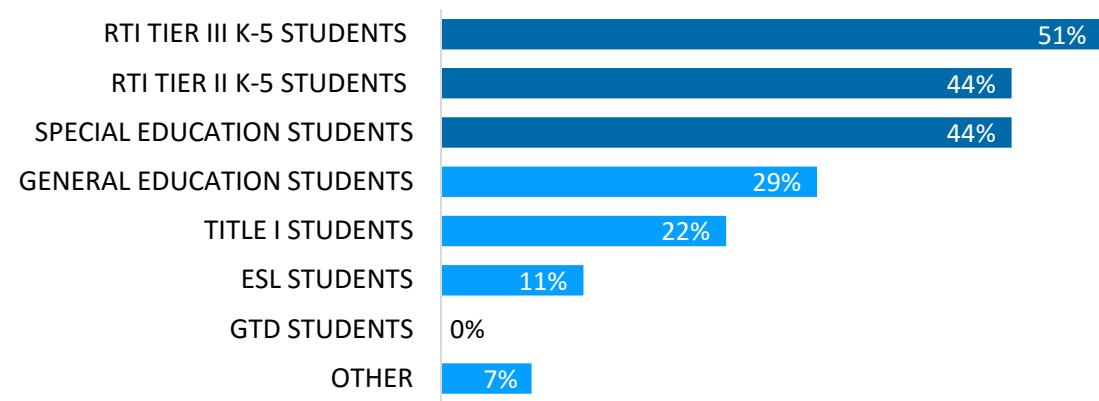
n=39. Participants could select more than one response.

The most common reason for not using Fast ForWord was that it was not relevant to the participant’s role in the district.



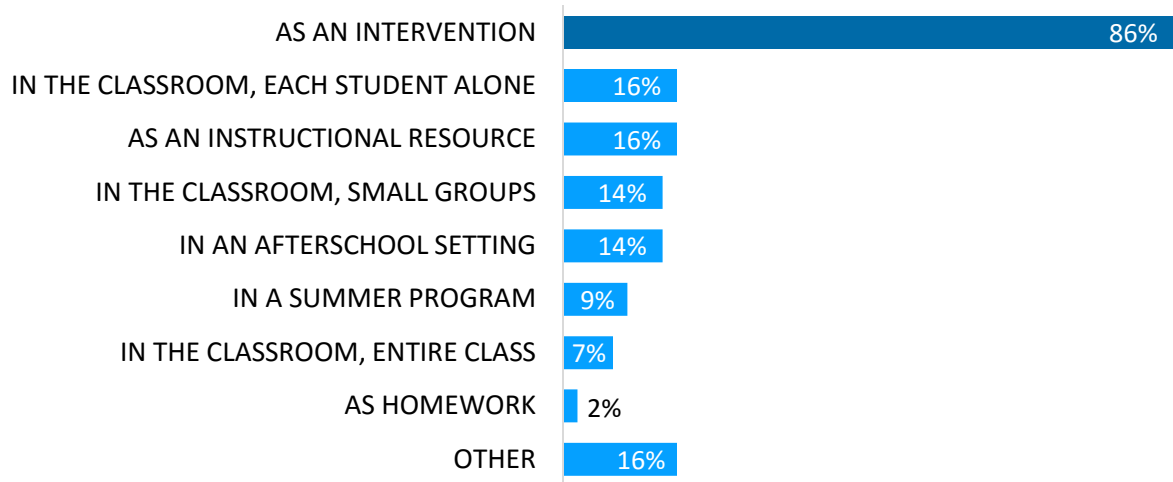
n=380. Participants could select more than one response. “Other” responses referenced beliefs that this program is ineffective and/or not appropriate for all students.

Responses indicate that Fast ForWord is primarily being used with RTI Tier II and Tier III students and special education students ...



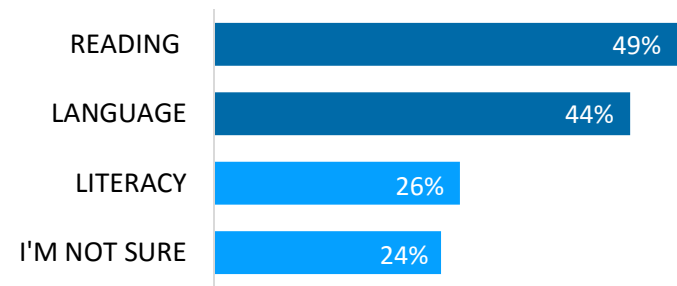
n=45. Participants could select more than one response.

... as an intervention.



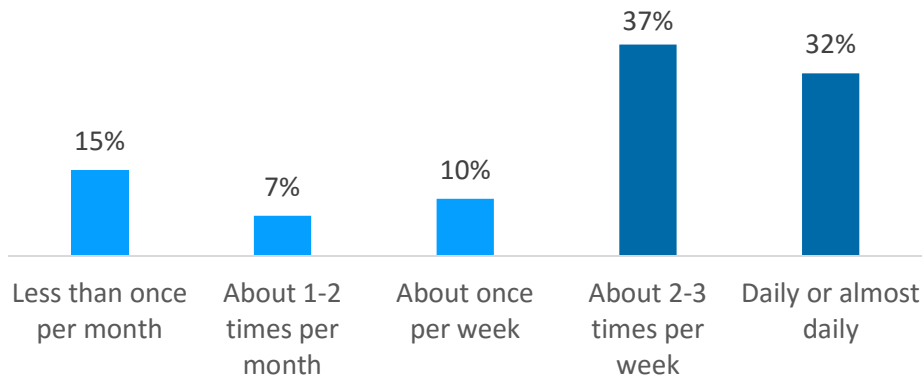
n=45. Participants could select more than one response.

Survey participants most frequently reported using Fast ForWord’s Reading Series, followed by the Language Series.



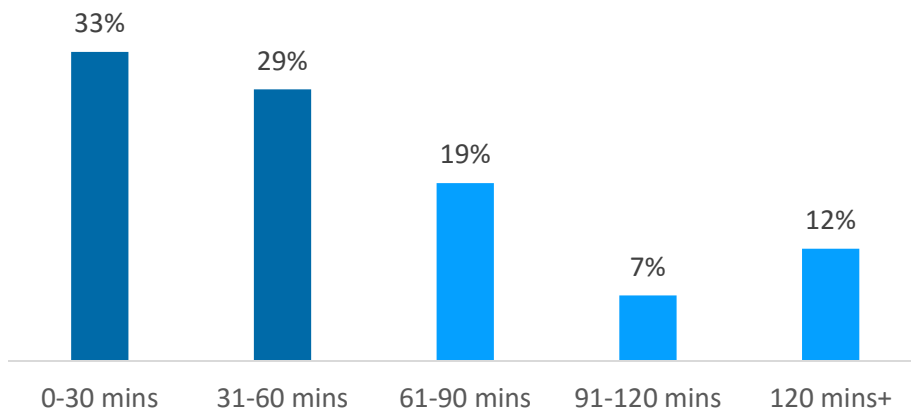
n=45. Participants could select more than one response.

Educators using FastForWord most commonly reported that students use this resource 2 to 3 times per week, followed by “daily or almost daily.”



n=41

Despite frequent use, reports of students’ typical total usage were most often “0 to 30 minutes per week” followed by “31 to 60 minutes per week.”



n=42

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES FOR FAST FORWARD

Fast ForWord did not respond to our requests for implementation guidelines.

We were able to locate some information on their website, but it was not clearly stated. For example, there appear to be 6 different models all offering the same level of effectiveness:

*“Students can double their expected reading gains using one of our prescribed protocols:*

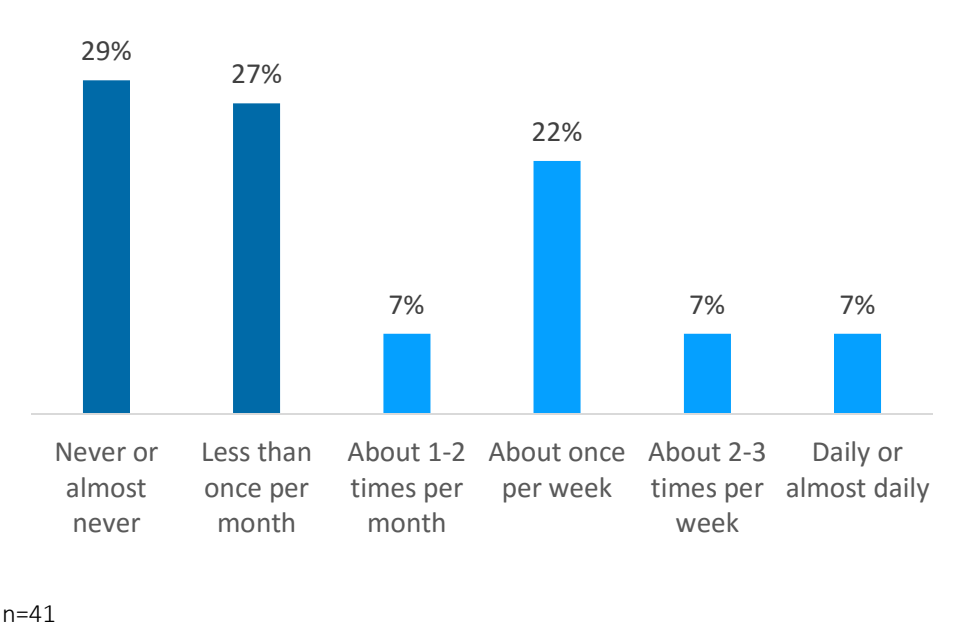
- *Three days per week for 30 or 50 minutes.*
- *Five days per week for 30, 40, 50, or 90 Minutes.”*

Source:

[www.scilearn.com/products/fast-forward/language-series/language](http://www.scilearn.com/products/fast-forward/language-series/language)

The educators using Fast ForWord with students most often reported that they “never or almost never” monitor student progress data with this resource, followed by “less than once per month.”

More than 1 in 5 reported monitoring student data about once per week.

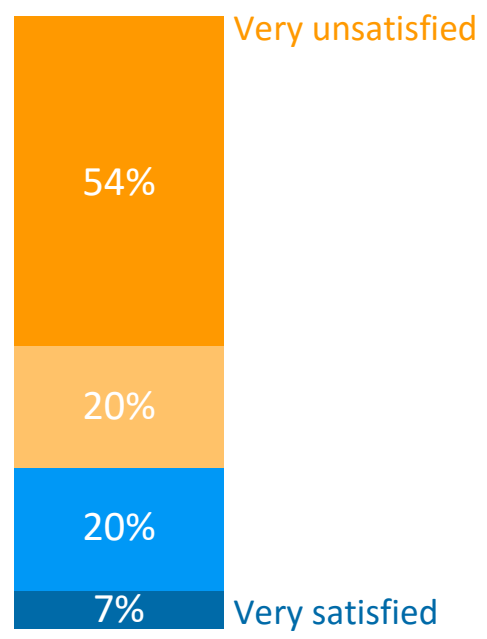


Open-ended responses regarding how student data revealed that:

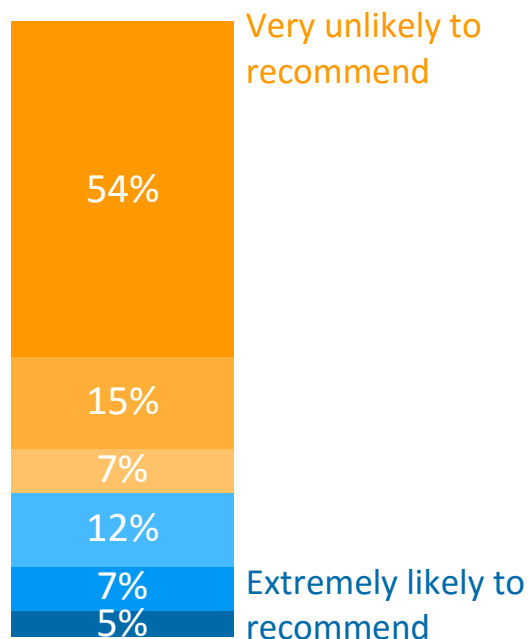
- Some educators use the data from FastForWord to monitor student usage levels and progress on skills, identify areas for re-teaching and/or identify students for further supports (such as special education).
- Some educators with students using FastForward do not have access to student data from this resource.



Three-quarters of respondents using FastForward reported that they they are unsatisfied with this resource and a similar percentage are unlikely to recommend this resource to a friend or colleague.

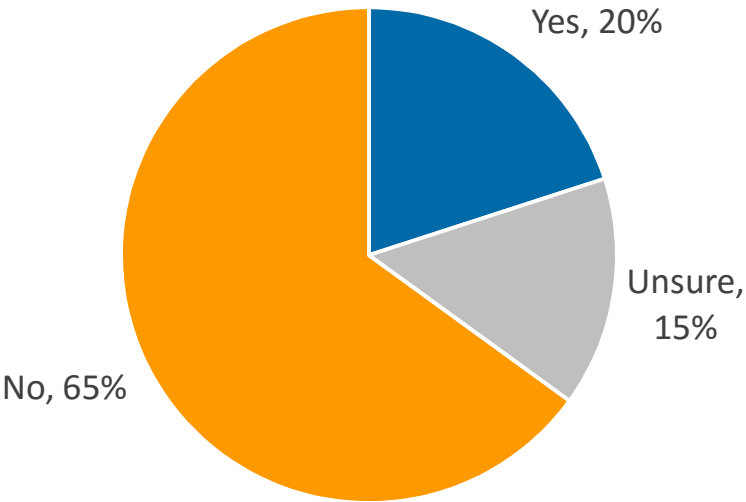


n=41. Response options were Very Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Unsatisfied and Very Unsatisfied



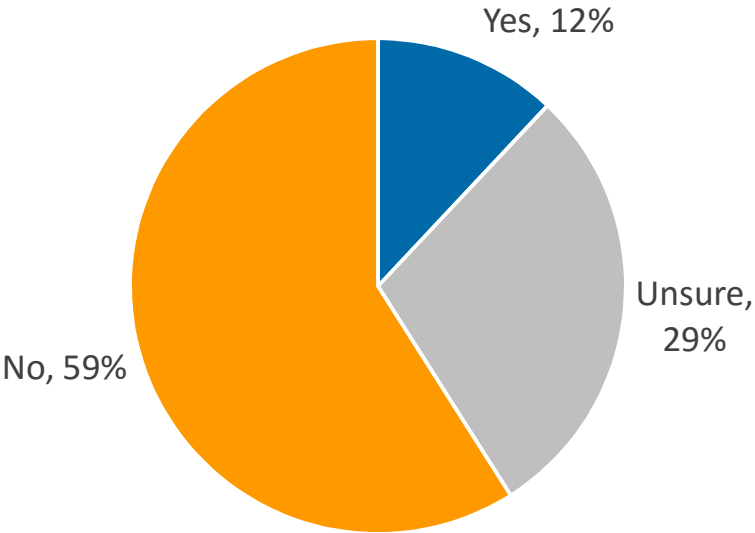
n=41. Response options were Extremely Likely to Recommend, Very Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Unlikely to Recommend, Very Unlikely to Recommend, Extremely Unlikely to Recommend

Almost two-thirds of the educators using Fast ForWord reported beliefs that **most students do NOT** enjoy using this resource.



n=40. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

A slightly smaller percentage reported that **Fast ForWord is NOT** effective for student learning.



n=41. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

Educators who reported that Fast ForWord is effective for student learning offered the following evidence<sup>13</sup>:

*“Increase in student reading and language skills with time and consistency.”*

*“Students reported being able to read better, sound out words more effectively, and remember what they had learned more easily.”*

*“We have had a number of students grow on their MAP scores after participating in the Fast ForWord program. Their reading skills also improved.”*

*“After about 1 year or 2 of the FF products we were so pleased to see gains on DIBELS, MAPS and classroom performance for the majority of the students.”*

Educators who reported that Fast ForWord is NOT effective for student learning offered the following evidence:

*“My students were bored and frustrated. They did not seem to gain from the program. They have made more progress this year using the time for more direct intervention in reading.”*

*“I never saw any dramatic positive changes in students that were supposed to occur.”*

*“It was clear from the initial data that the program did not benefit any students. Shameful that students were forced to waste time on it.”*

*“I saw no correlation with their practice and classroom improvement.”*

*“I saw many students struggling who never made much progress, and it did not seem to ‘train’ their brains as the company claimed.”*

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<sup>13</sup> Because some of the open-ended comments regarding Fast ForWord may be viewed as controversial, we did not attribute any quotations for this resource.

When we asked participants what they like **MOST** about Fast ForWord, the only commonality across responses was that they liked “nothing” about it, but a few comments suggested it may be engaging and/or effective for some students in some ways:

*“If the students are placed manually into reading levels and used as a proper intervention it can be beneficial.”*

*“For some students the language program appeared beneficial.”*

*“For some students, they were appearing really engaged in the activities.”*

When asked what they like **LEAST** about Fast ForWord, respondents most commonly stated that FastForWord:

- Is ineffective for student learning (or the benefits are not apparent);
- Is a waste of district money; and/or
- Is not a good use of instructional time.

For example:

*“It used instructional time that could have been better utilized.”*

*“It is my opinion that it is a total waste of time and the district's money. It was pushed by the previous superintendent and approved by the board. Apparently teachers were not consulted. Students in summer school who piloted it did not like it, ended up in tears. Who needs that?”*

*“I couldn't see the benefit, relevance considering the amount of time/money spent.”*

*“At this point, it was so forced that students see it as punishment. The levels also don't let kids pass easily and make them repeat over and over until it is perfected, but there is no instruction with it. This is not a useful intervention program in my experience.”*

# FAST FORWARD SUMMARY

- According to survey data, this resource has been used primarily as an intervention with RTI Tier II and Tier III students and special education students. It is a moderately- to frequently-used resource, with students typically engaging with it 2 to 3 times per week or “daily or almost daily” for between 0 and 60 minutes per week.
- Educator dissatisfaction with this resource is high, and the majority of respondents using it with students do not think it is engaging for students and do not think it is effective for student learning. Open-ended comments indicate that many educators believe using this resource is a waste of money and instructional time.
- Despite the opposition to this resource, a few participants were able to offer evidence of its effectiveness that referenced positive student learning outcomes. On the other hand, other participants offered responses suggesting a lack of positive student outcomes when using this resource.

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FAST FORWARD

- If in-depth interviews are planned with key stakeholders, it may be worth exploring further questions of Fast ForWord’s effectiveness, and for whom and in what context it might be effective. Depending on those results, the district could explore a small student outcomes study for Fast ForWord.
- As a general rule, it is difficult to implement programs with fidelity when students are not engaged in it. The reported lack of student engagement with this resource might be reason alone for the district to stop purchasing it.

# TENMARKS

25 of 424 participants reported using the paid or “Premium” version of TenMarks.

- 19 (of 168) elementary classroom teachers
- 3 (of 8) GTD teachers
- 1 (of 24) elementary special education teacher
- 1 (of 17) middle school math teacher
- 1 (of 9) data and instructional technology coach

## WHAT IS TENMARKS?

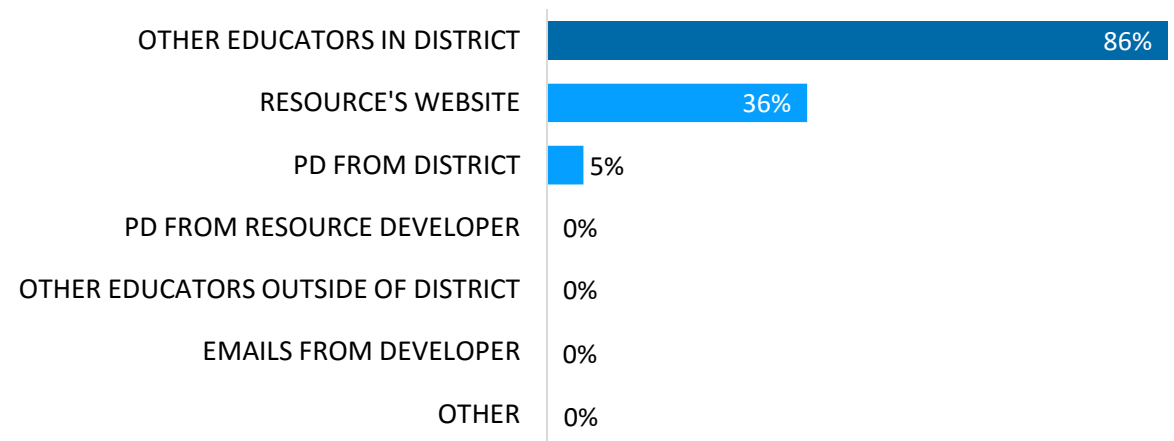
“TenMarks partners with your teachers, schools and districts to drive an integrated model of curriculum and instruction, supported by technology and 1:1 personalization. To accomplish this we have created a content-driven technology strategy, focusing on 3 core areas.

- Learn. Engaging and challenging platform for every student to master math.
- Teach. Instructional resources to empower teachers with the rigor of the new math standards.
- Share. Our vision is to create, curate, discover and share content with fellow educators.

Source:

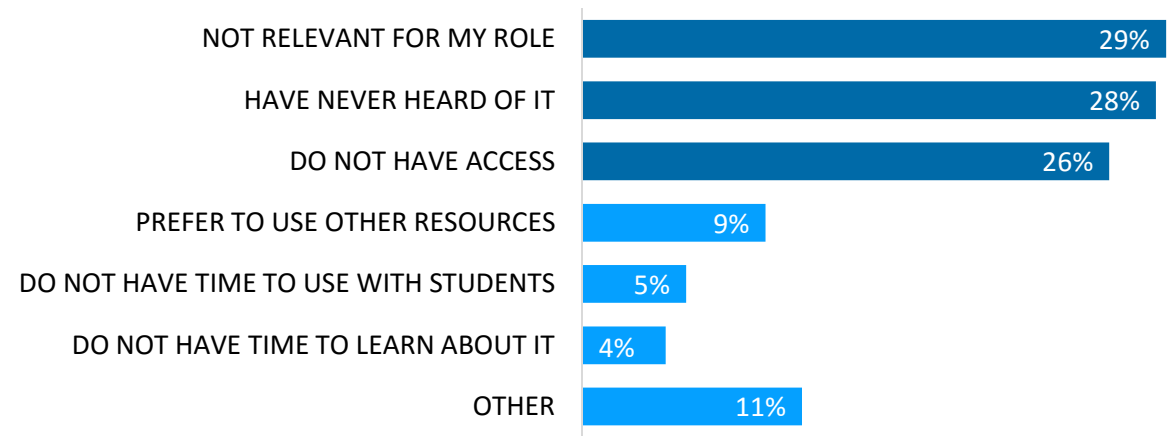
<http://www.tenmarks.com/about>

Participants most often reported that they received information about this resource from other educators in the district.



n=22. Participants could select more than one response.

The most common reasons for not using TenMarks Premium were that it was not relevant to the participant’s role in the district, the participant had never heard of it and/or he or she did not have access to it.

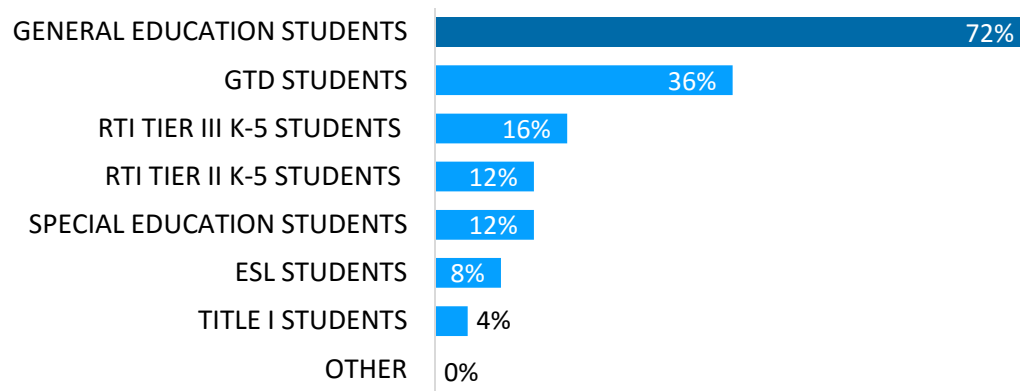


n=390. Participants could select more than one response. "Other" responses suggested that many are using the free version of this resource.



Responses indicate that TenMarks is primarily used with general education students.

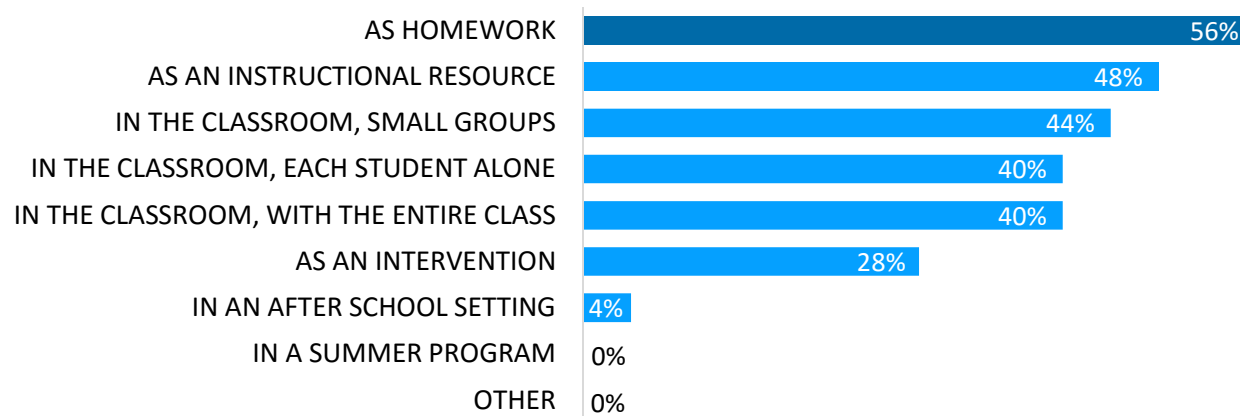
Gifted and talented students were also frequently cited as users of this resource.



n=25. Participants could select more than one response.

Educators most often reported using TenMarks for homework.

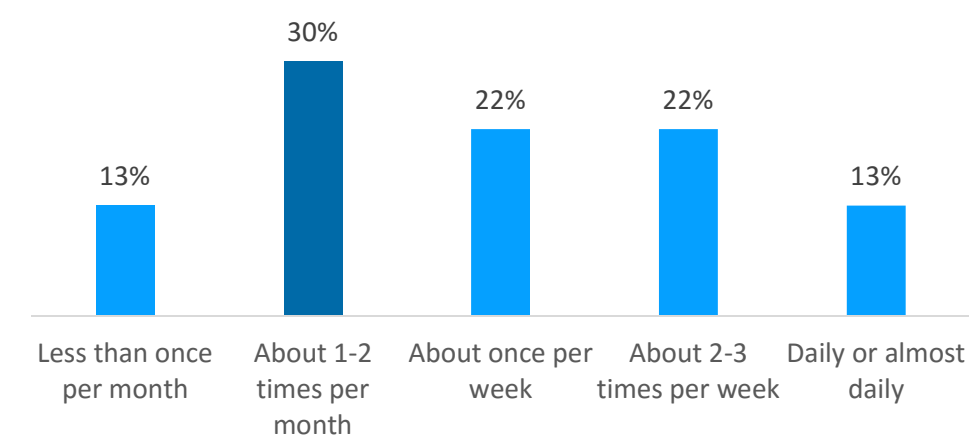
Also common were reports of using TenMarks as an instructional resource in the classroom, with students working in small groups or alone, or with the entire class.



n=25. Participants could select more than one response.

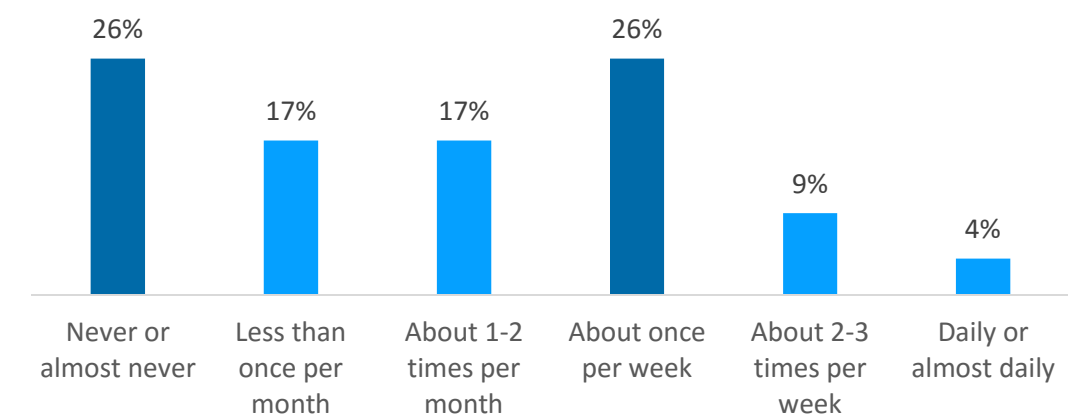
Educators most often reported that students typically use TenMarks “about 1 to 2 times per month.”<sup>14</sup>

More than half reported that students are using this resource once per week or more.



n=23

An equal number of participants reported monitoring student data for this resource “never or almost never” and “about once per week.”



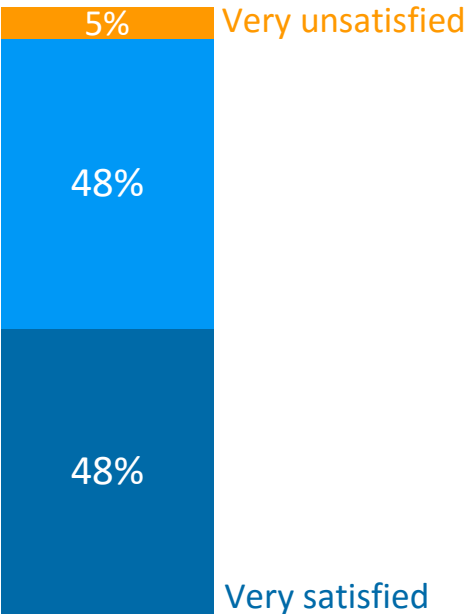
n=23

<sup>14</sup> TenMarks does not offer implementation guidelines or recommendations, according to personal communication received in February 2016.

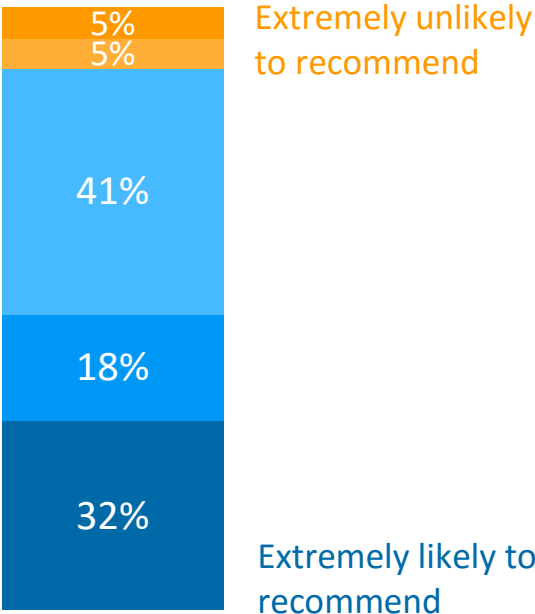
Open-ended responses regarding monitoring student progress data indicate that data are being used:

- To see if students are understanding concepts;
- To group students and make other instructional decisions; and
- To identify students who are “struggling.”

Respondents tended to report that they were satisfied with TenMarks and would recommend this resource to a friend or colleague.

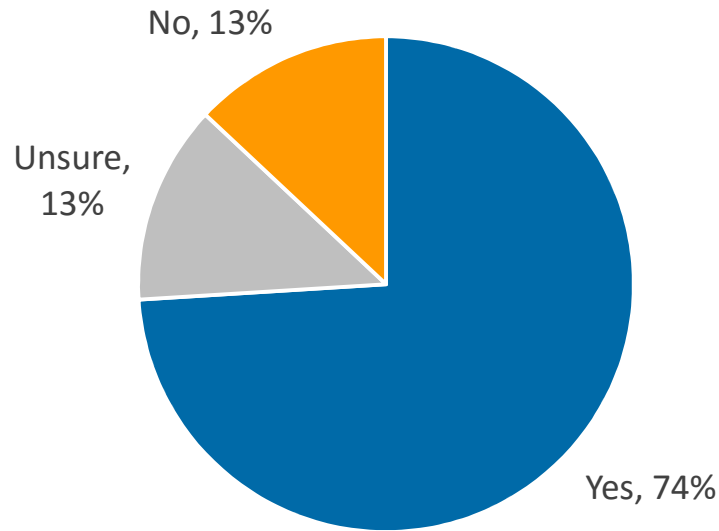


n=21. Response options were Very Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Unsatisfied and Very Unsatisfied



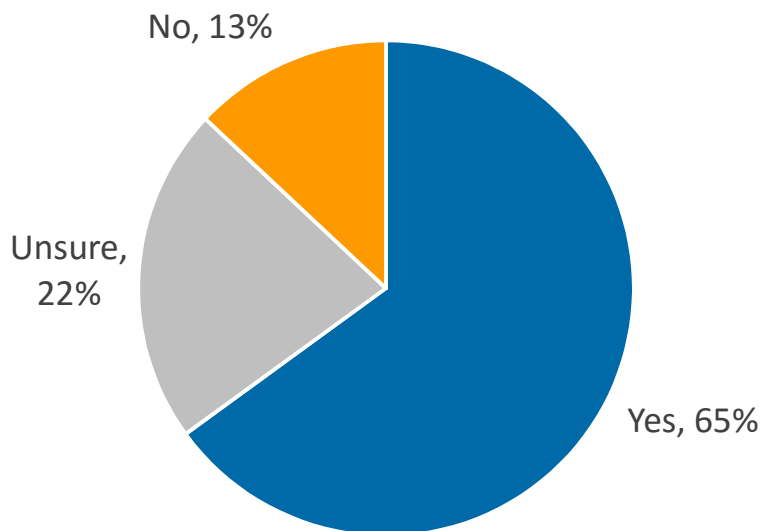
n=22. Response options were Extremely Likely to Recommend, Very Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Unlikely to Recommend, Very Unlikely to Recommend, Extremely Unlikely to Recommend

About three-quarters of participants using TenMarks agreed that **most students enjoy using this resource**, while the remainder were unsure or disagreed.



n=22. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

About two-thirds reported that **TenMarks is effective for student learning**, while the remainder were unsure or disagreed.



n=23. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

Nine educators who reported that TenMarks is effective for student learning offered the following evidence, none of which referenced an actual change in student learning outcomes:

*“It allows the student to move at his own speed.”*

*“Standards practice.”*

*“Extra support in filling gaps in learning for students who have been accelerated in math.”*

*“They always asked for it.”*

*“Students worked at their level.”*

*“They really love to earn points so they can play games.”*

*“Students ask for more work assigned when they complete assignments. The students can apply what they learn in class to solve problems.”*

*“Ties directly to CCSS.”*

*“I like to use it for reteaching and for monitoring progress.”*

When we asked participants what they like **MOST** about TenMarks, the commonalities across responses were:

- that the resource is aligned to standards (CCSS) and the educators can “see where students are” according to the standards; and
- that students progress at their own pace.

When asked what they like **LEAST** about TenMarks, the only common responses were “nothing” or “n/a.”

# TENMARKS SUMMARY

- Survey data indicate that TenMarks Premium is primarily being used with general education students as homework or as an instructional resource in the classroom.
- TenMarks appears to be a moderately-used resource in the district, with more than half of educators reporting that their students engage with it once per week or more.
- Its key features seem to be that it is aligned to CCSS and students work with the program at their own pace.
- About three-quarters of the respondents using this resource with students reported monitoring student progress data at least some of the time (“less than once per month” or more). These data are reportedly being used to some extent to monitor student understanding of concepts, identify struggling students, and make instructional decisions.
- Respondents tended to report that students enjoy using this resource, and that it is effective for student learning. However, in open-ended responses, none of them provided actual evidence of student learning outcomes, possibly due in part to the small number of educators reporting on TenMarks.
- Some of the survey data suggest that many educators in the district are currently using the free version of this resource.

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TENMARKS

- Ask educators and/or district staff with a paid subscription to log-in to explore the differences between the free and Premium versions of TenMarks. This information may be helpful for deciding whether the added features of the paid subscription are worth the price.
- The limited number of educators reporting on TenMarks and the brevity of their open-ended responses did not allow us to get a good read on implementation within the district and how educators feel about it. If follow-up interviews are planned with key stakeholders, it may be worth asking questions about this resource.



# COMPASS LEARNING

20 of 424 participants reported using Compass Learning.

- 8 (of 14) middle school language arts teachers
- 4 (of 17) middle school math teachers
- 3 (of 30) related services providers (Speech pathologist, social worker, psychologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, nurse)
- 2 (of 21) middle school special education teachers
- 2 (of 16) middle school science teachers
- 1 (of 7) in “other” role

## WHAT IS COMPASS LEARNING?

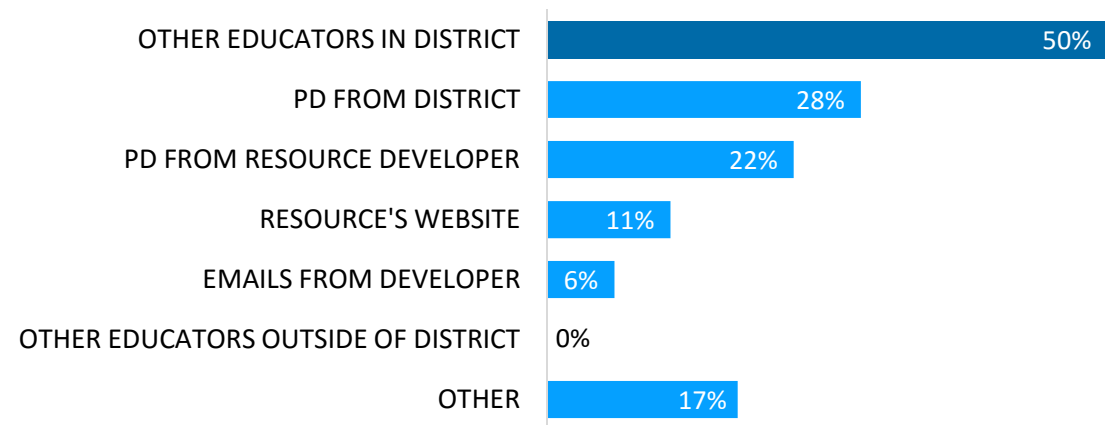
“Proven K–12 digital solution for greater progress—faster.

Compass Learning Odyssey® includes lessons and activities built upon current, proven research about the way students learn. Compass Learning Odyssey features:

- Pretests to determine needs and pinpoint skill gaps for each student
- Automatically generated individualized learning paths
- Engaging, rigorous instruction delivered through video, audio, animation, and interactive writing tools
- Reporting functions to generate reliable data for instructional decision making”

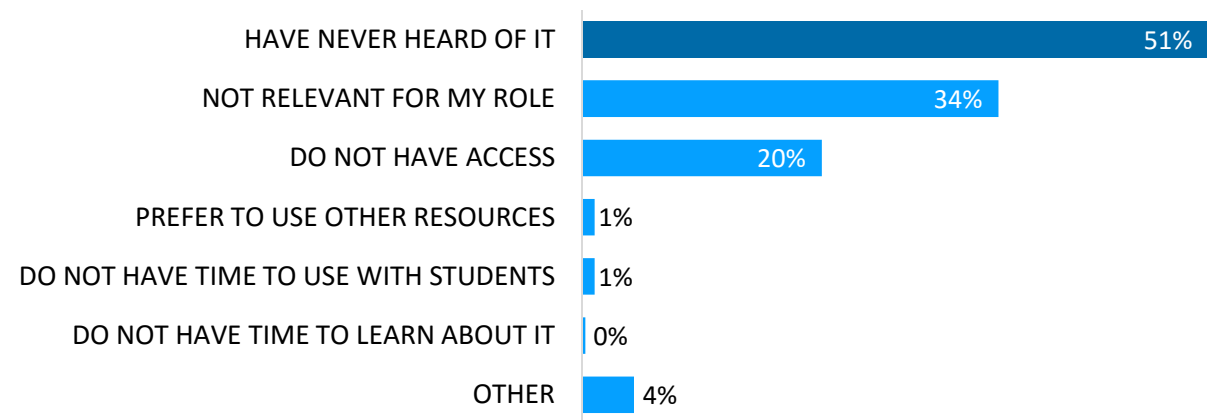
Source:  
[compasslearning.com/odyssey/](https://compasslearning.com/odyssey/)

Participants most often reported that they received information about this resource from other educators in the district.



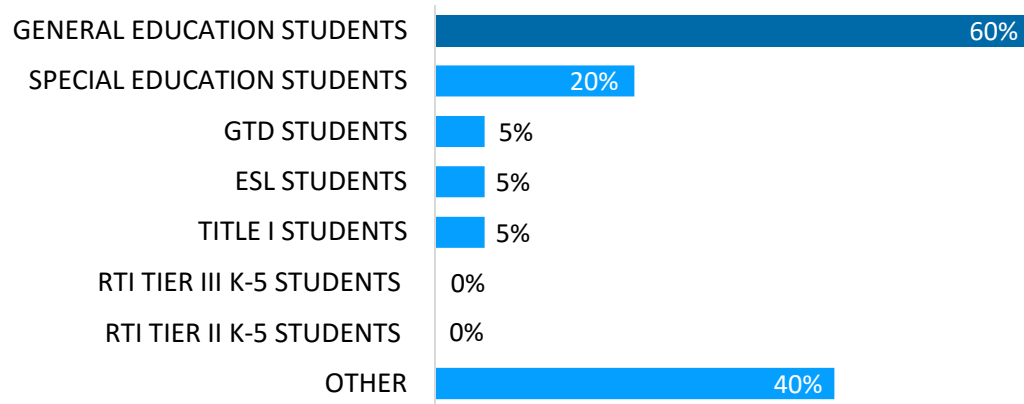
n=18. Participants could select more than one response.

The most common reason for not using Compass Learning was that the participant had never heard of it. Participants also frequently reported that using Compass was not relevant to their role in the district.



n=399. Participants could select more than one response.

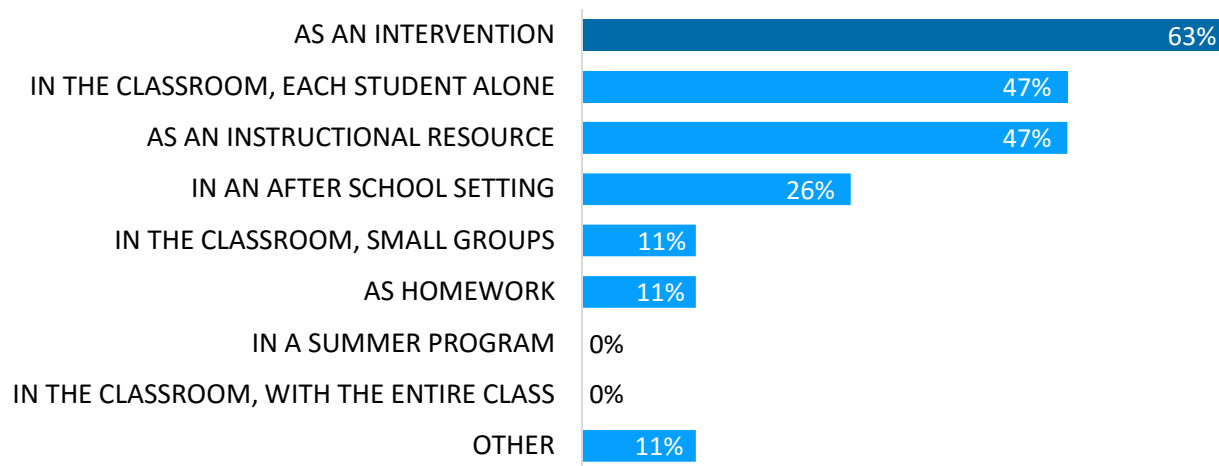
Responses indicate that Compass Learning is primarily used with general education students.



n=20. Participants could select more than one response. "Other" responses referenced "academic support" students and an afterschool program.

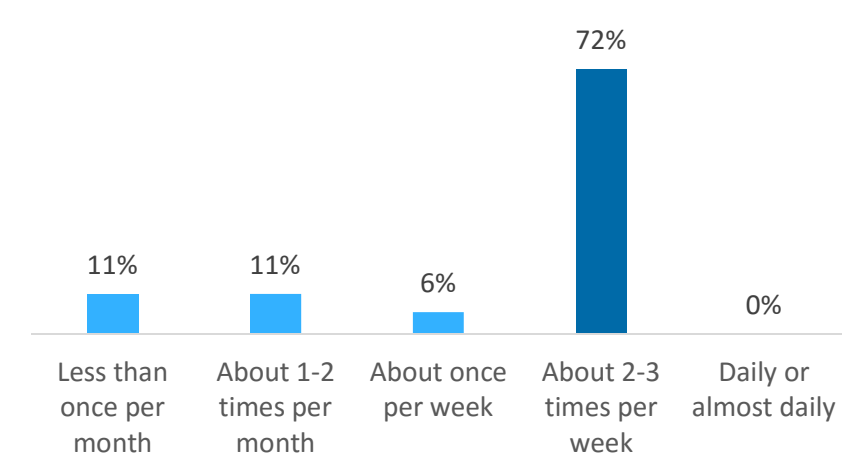
Educators most often reported using Compass Learning as an intervention.

Also common were reports of using Compass as an instructional resource in the classroom, with students working alone.



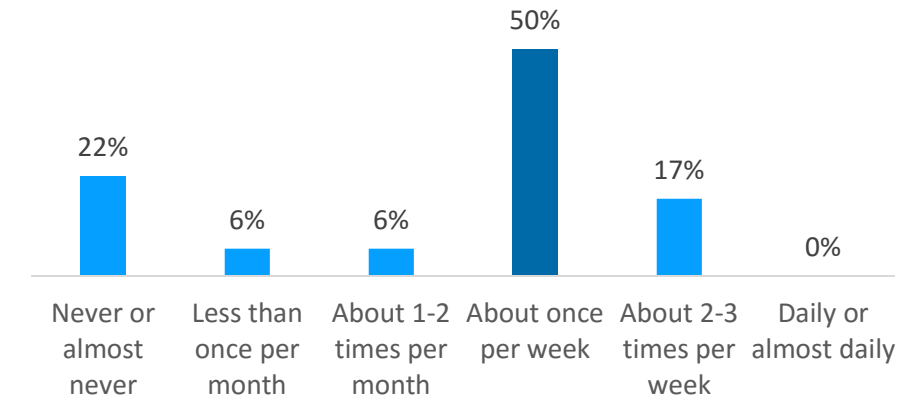
n=19. Participants could select more than one response.

Educators responses suggest that most students using Compass are doing so about 2 to 3 times per week, making this a frequently-used resource.



n=18

Educators using Compass with students most commonly reported monitoring student progress data “about once per week.”



n=18

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES FOR COMPASS LEARNING ODYSSEY

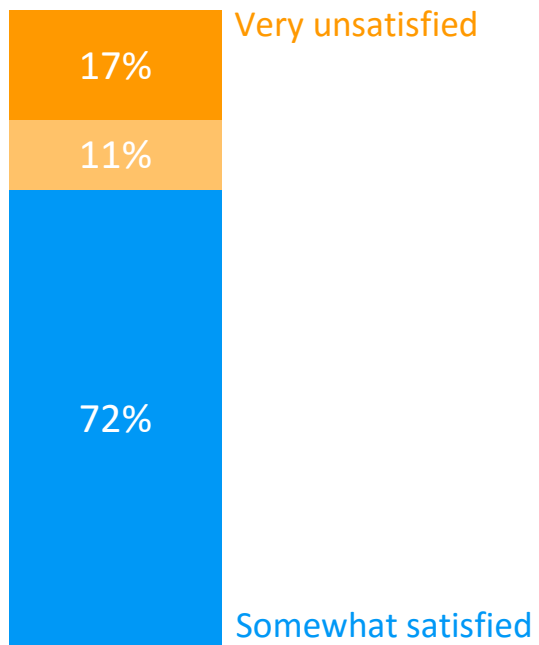
We could not locate any information on Compass’ website regarding how this resource should be implemented with students.

Although we contacted this resource’s developer several times, they were not forthcoming with implementation guidelines for Odyssey.

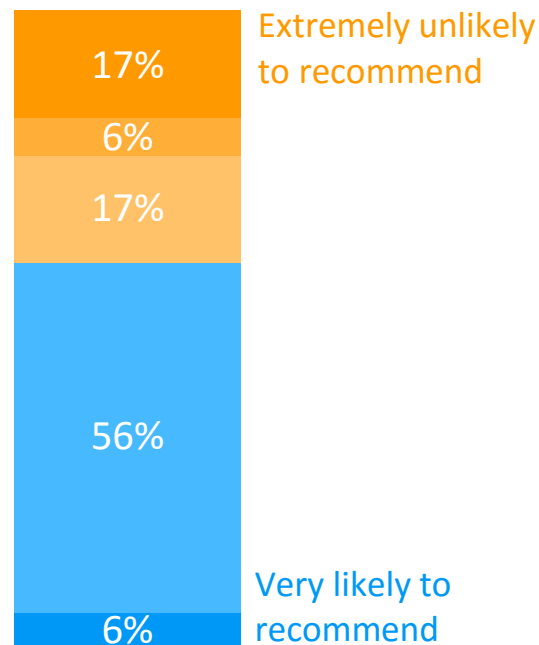
Educators' open-ended responses indicated that student data are being used to:

- Monitor student activity level on the resource;
- Monitor progress on skills;
- Check comprehension;
- Identify areas for re-teaching; and/or
- Differentiate instruction.

Respondents tended to report that they are “somewhat” satisfied with Compass and “somewhat” or “very” likely to recommend this resource to a friend or colleague, but none are “very satisfied” or “extremely likely to recommend,” the most positive points on the two scales, and a **substantial minority are unhappy with this resource.**

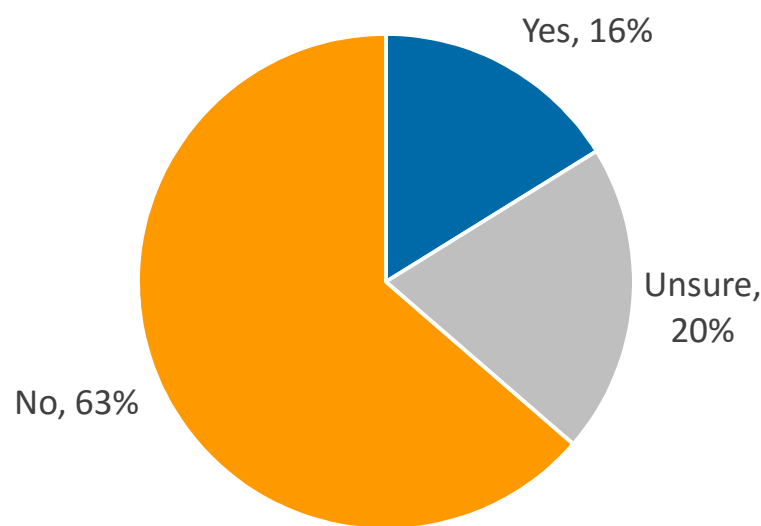


n=18. Response options were Very Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Unsatisfied and Very Unsatisfied



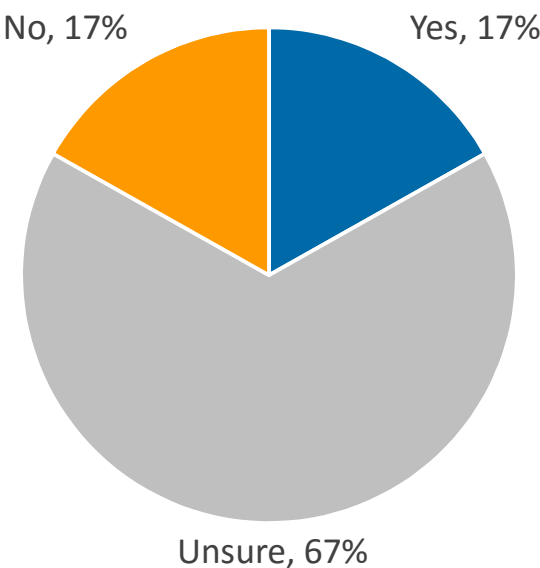
n=18. Response options were Extremely Likely to Recommend, Very Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Unlikely to Recommend, Very Unlikely to Recommend, Extremely Unlikely to Recommend

Almost two-thirds of participants using Compass with students reported that **most students do NOT** enjoy using this resource.



n=19. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

About two-thirds reported that they are “unsure” whether Compass is effective for student learning.



n=18. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

One educator who reported that Compass is effective for student learning offered the following evidence:

*“Overall, student MAP scores have increased from last winter to this winter.” – Middle school special education teacher*

When we asked participants what they like **MOST** about Compass, the only commonality across responses was that this resource is tailored for each student to address needed skills.

When asked what they like **LEAST** about Compass:

- Educators most commonly said that students do not like it, are “bored” with it, or think it is too “elementary” or “childish.”
- Comments also referenced the way it is currently being implemented with Academic Support, and questioned its effectiveness overall and relative to other supports.



# COMPASS LEARNING SUMMARY

- This resource is being used by educators with a variety of roles, most often as an intervention with general education students.
- It is a frequently-used resource, with students typically engaging with it 2 to 3 times per week.
- Its key feature seems to be its ability to personalize the online learning environment for students.
- According to survey data, its major drawback seems to be that students do not enjoy engaging with it.
- Educators also questioned its effectiveness. When asked what evidence they could provide of its effectiveness, only one educator was able to provide a response referencing student learning outcomes, possibly because there are not a lot of district educators using Compass and those who are tend to be “unsure” of its effectiveness.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMPASS LEARNING

- If in-depth interviews are planned with key stakeholders, it may be worth exploring further questions of Compass’ effectiveness, and for whom and in what context it might be effective. Depending on those results, a study of student outcomes may be possible.
- As a general rule, it is difficult to implement programs with fidelity when students are not engaged in it. The reported lack of student engagement with this resource might be reason alone for the district to stop purchasing it.

# NEWSELA

18<sup>15</sup> of 424 participants reported using the paid or “Pro” version of Newsela.

- 11 (of 168) elementary classroom teachers
- 3 (of 16) middle school science teachers
- 2 (of 21) middle school special education teachers
- 1 (of 3) ESL teacher
- 1 (of 8) GTD teacher

## WHAT IS NEWSELA?

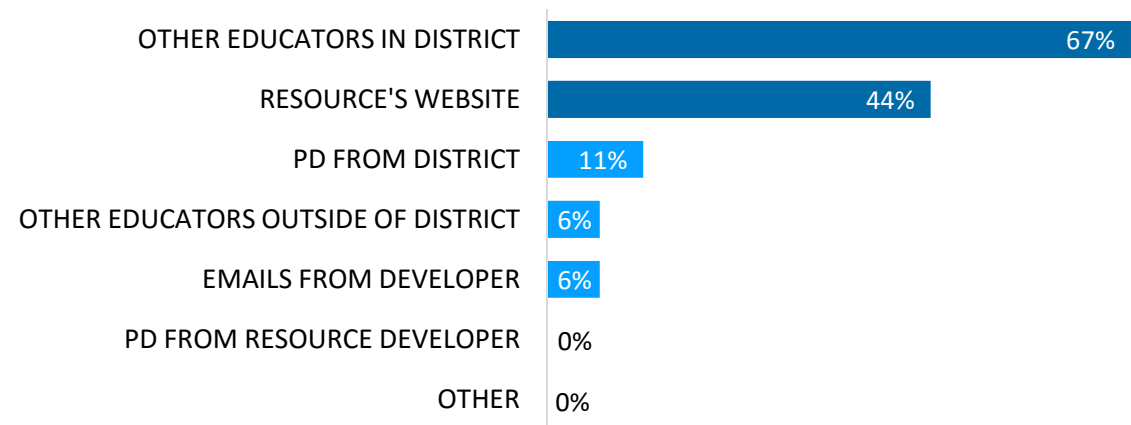
“Newsela is an innovative way to build reading comprehension with nonfiction that's always relevant: daily news. It's easy and amazing. Newsela makes it easy for an entire class to read the same content, but at a level that's just right for each student.”

Source:  
[newsela.com/about/](https://newsela.com/about/)

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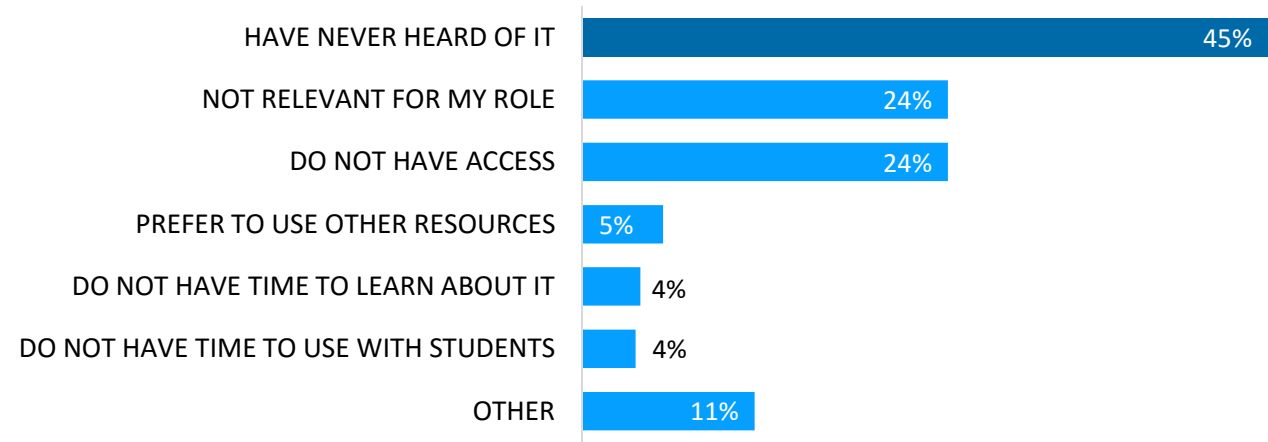
<sup>15</sup> Although SurveyMonkey logged the responses of 18 participants who reported that they have used Newsela with students, 19 went on to answer questions about this resource, suggesting that the online survey failed to log 1 response to the initial question.

Participants most often reported that they received information about this resource from other educators in the district, followed by the resource’s website.



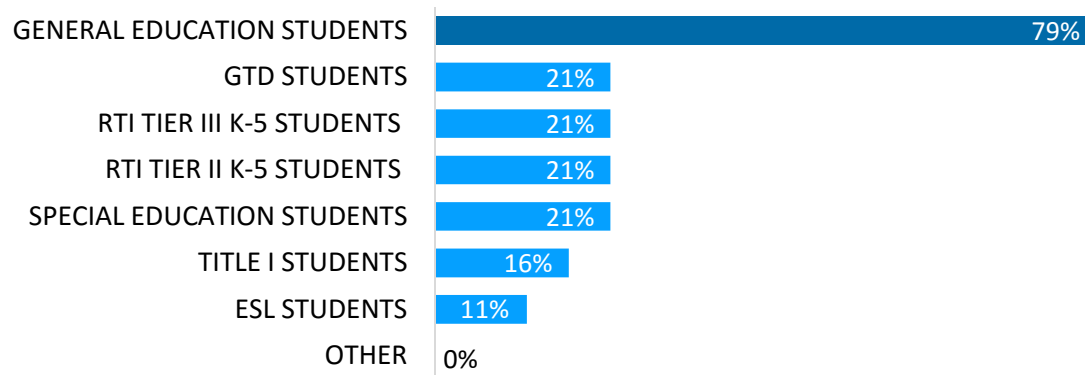
n=18. Participants could select more than one response.

The most common reason for not using Newsela Pro was that the participant had never heard of it.



n=400. Participants could select more than one response. “Other” responses typically indicated that the participant uses the free version of Newsela.

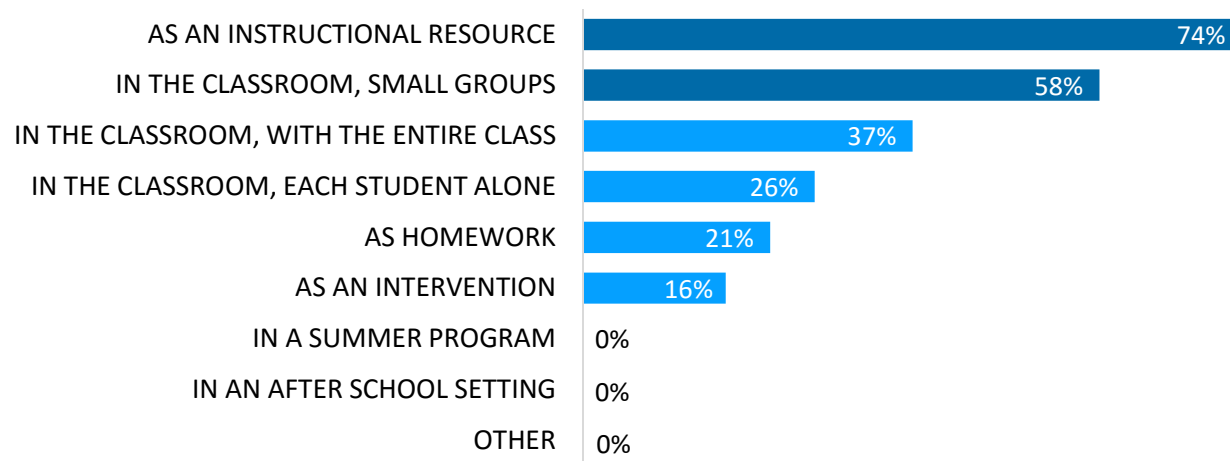
Responses indicate that Newsela Pro is primarily used with general education students.



n=19. Participants could select more than one response.

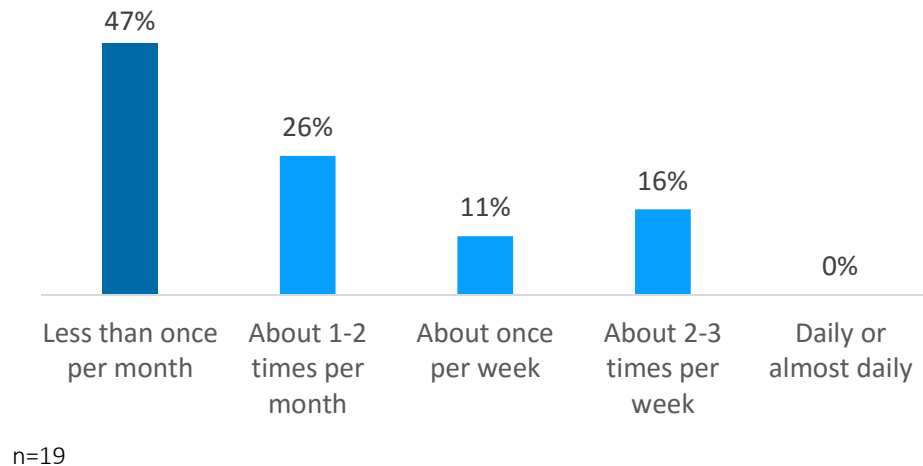
Educators most often reported using Newsela Pro as an instructional resource in the classroom, with students working in small groups.

Responses also frequently cited the use of Newsela in the classroom with the entire class.

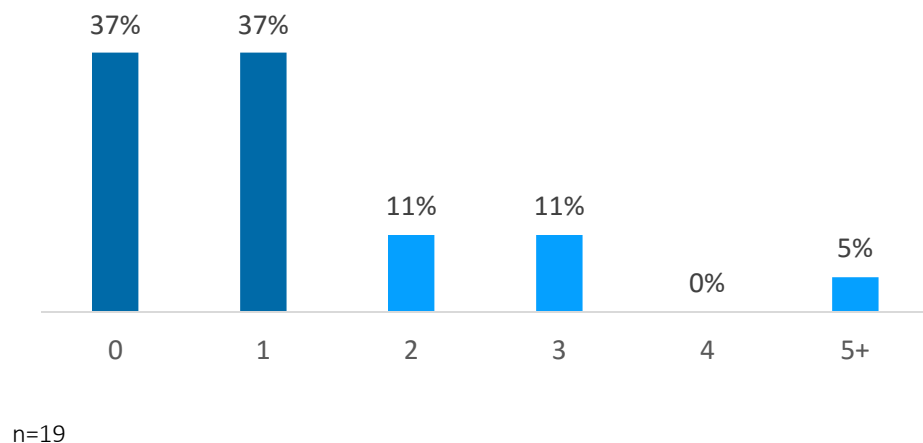


n=19. Participants could select more than one response.

Survey data suggest that most often, students are using Newsela Pro less than once per month.



Educators tended to report that students are taking up to 1 quiz on Newsela per week, falling short of the resource's recommendation to implement 2 quizzes per week.



## IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEWSELA

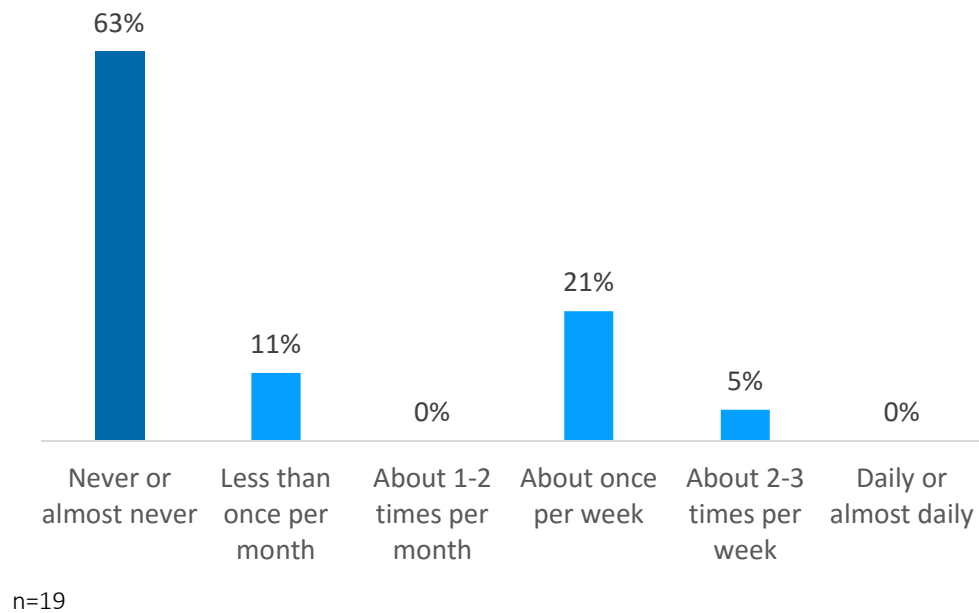
Newsela does not go so far as to provide guidelines for use of this resource, but rather offers recommendations based on its own observational research on implementation and student outcomes.

*"We recommend the following prescription for great readers:*

- ***Have your students take 2 quizzes a week for 3 consecutive months.*** Consistency helps build students' fluency in nonfiction text. That really just means keeping up with the news, doesn't it?
- ***Ask your students to spend at least 3 minutes on a quiz.*** When students read too quickly, they are more likely to skip over portions of the article, which then leads to a gap in their comprehension of the text.
- ***Have your students read at least 2 articles a month that do not have quizzes.*** Reading more helps improve reading comprehension.
- ***Annotate articles with your students.*** Our annotation feature is a simple way to cultivate active reading skills. Many of our teachers share their own annotations with their students."

Source: <http://support.newsela.com/hc/en-us/articles/204169119-Best-Practice-Two-Quizzes-a-Week-for-High-Reading-Gains>

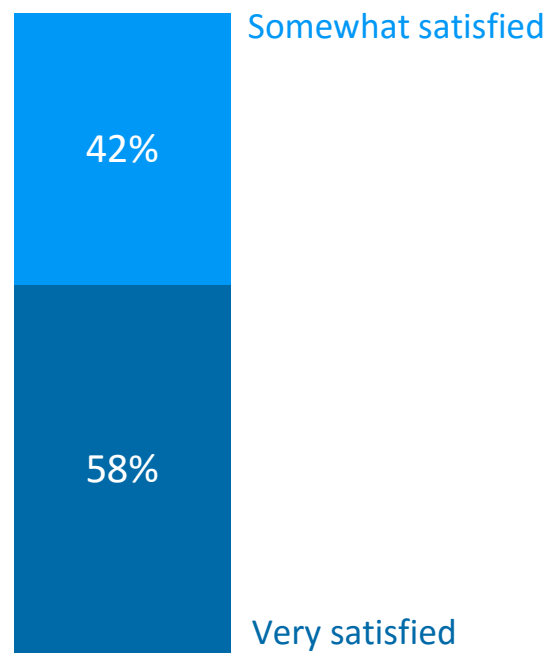
Educators also tended to report that they “never or almost never” monitor data for each student using this resource.



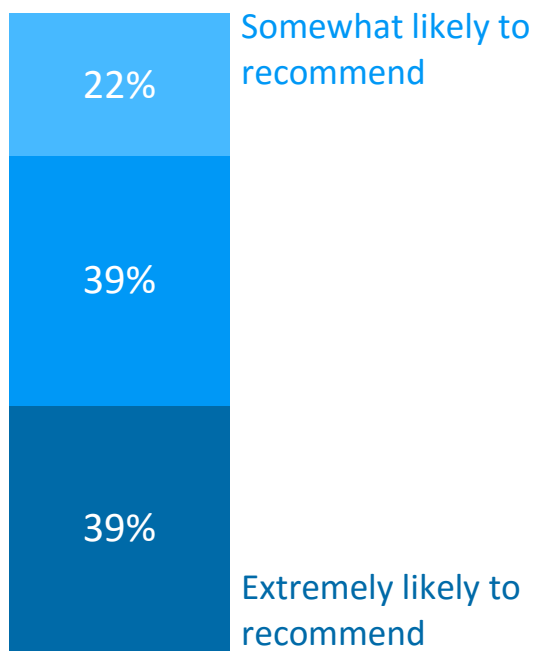
Responses indicated that the educators using Newsela Pro’s quizzes to do so:

- to assign leveled readings,
- group students,
- as formative assessment and/or
- to drive instruction.

The district educators who have used Newsela Pro all reported that they are satisfied with this resource and would recommend it to a friend or colleague.

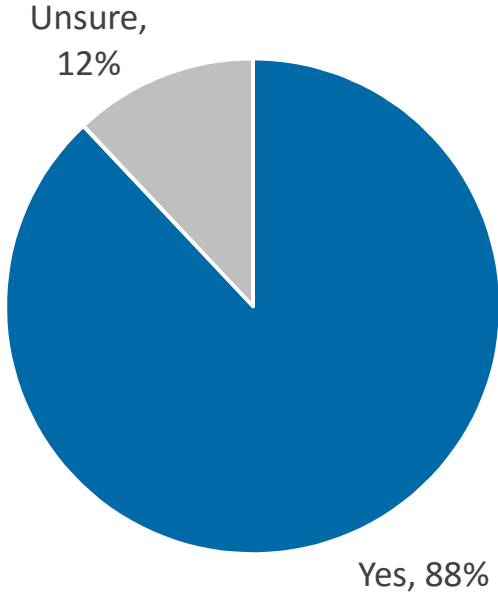


n=19. Response options were Very Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Unsatisfied and Very Unsatisfied



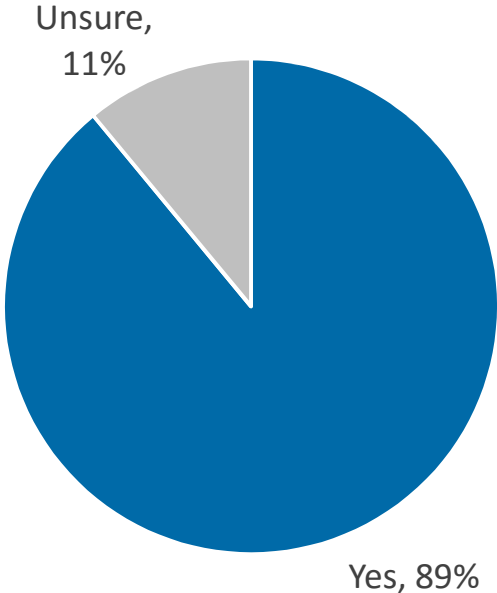
n=18. Response options were Extremely Likely to Recommend, Very Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Unlikely to Recommend, Very Unlikely to Recommend, Extremely Unlikely to Recommend

Almost all participants using Newsela Pro agreed that **most students enjoy using this resource**, while more than 10% were unsure.



n=17. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

The vast majority reported that **Newsela Pro is effective for student learning**, while more than 10% were unsure.



n=18. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure



One educator who reported that Newsela is effective for student learning offered the following evidence that referenced a positive change in student outcomes:

*“Students are engaged with the articles and class use of the program helped us make progress towards proficiency with the informational reading standards.” – Fourth grade teacher*

When we asked participants what they like **MOST** about Newsela, the following themes were most common in their responses.

- Educators appreciate that Newsela offers leveled readings to engage students at varying lexile levels, offering opportunities for differentiation.
- The news stories are “current,” “relevant” and “interesting,” and students enjoy reading them.

When asked what they like **LEAST** about Newsela, the following themes were most common:

- “Nothing.”
- Educators report that sometimes the articles are written at too high of a level.

# NEWSELA SUMMARY

- Survey responses indicate that Newsela Pro is primarily used with general education students in the classroom, with students working in small groups.
- The respondents using Newsela Pro reported high levels of satisfaction with it, tended to report that most students enjoy using it, and tended to report that it is effective for student learning.
- Despite high levels of satisfaction with this resource, it is infrequently used by educators, with most respondents saying their students use it less than once per month. Educators are also using the resource's quizzes less frequently than what is recommended by its developer.
- Perhaps because of its infrequent use and/or the fact that few survey respondents were using it, only one educator offered evidence of student learning that referenced student learning outcomes.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEWSELA

- Ask educators and/or district staff with a paid subscription to log-in to explore the differences between the free and Pro versions of Newsela. This information may be helpful for deciding whether the added features of the paid subscription are worth the price. The survey data suggest that many educators in District 97 are currently using the free version. In addition, those using the Pro version may not be taking full advantage of the added features, given the infrequency of use.
- Due to the infrequency of use, this resource is not currently a good candidate for further study on effectiveness for student learning.

# READ 180

13 out of 424 survey participants reported using Read 180.

- 11 (of 21) middle school special education teachers
- 1 (of 30) related services provider (Speech pathologist, social worker, psychologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, nurse)
- 1 (of 2) IB coordinator

## WHAT IS READ 180?

“READ 180 is a comprehensive system of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development proven to raise reading achievement for struggling readers in grades 4—12+.

Originally developed by Dr. Ted Hasselbring and his team at Vanderbilt University, READ 180 is now the most thoroughly researched reading intervention program in the world. Hundreds of studies, five peer-reviewed journals, and the federal government’s What Works Clearinghouse, have all documented READ 180’s effectiveness.

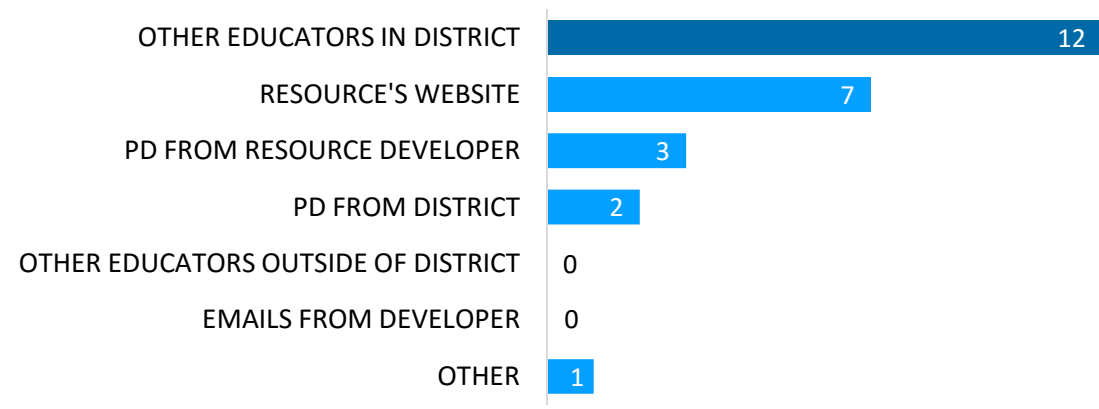
Designed for any student reading two or more years below grade level, READ 180 leverages adaptive technology to individualize instruction for students and provide powerful data for differentiation to teachers.

READ 180 is filled with engaging multimedia science and social studies content as well as literature.”

Source:

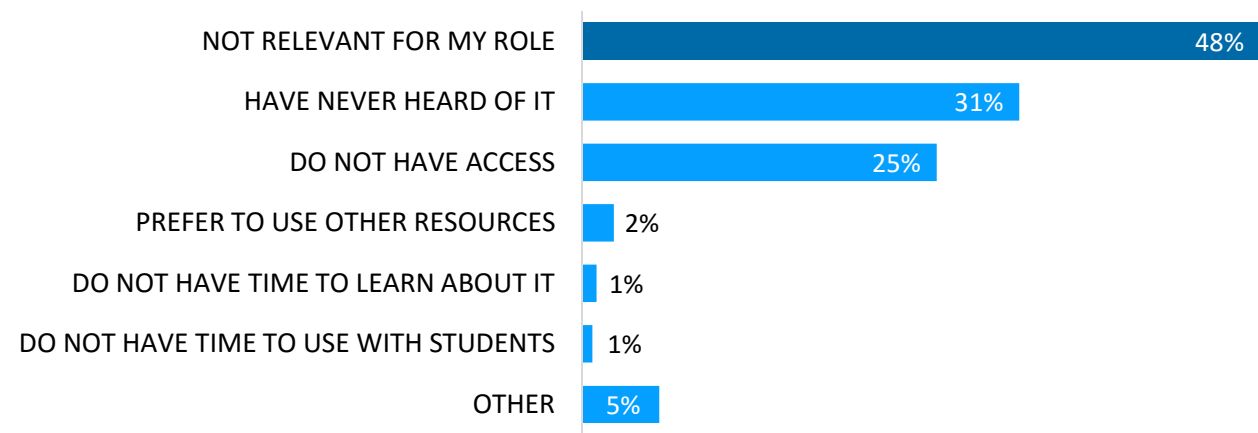
[www.hmhco.com/products/read-180/contact-us/faq.htm#](http://www.hmhco.com/products/read-180/contact-us/faq.htm#)

12 of 13 using Read 180 with students reported that they received information about this resource from other educators in the district.



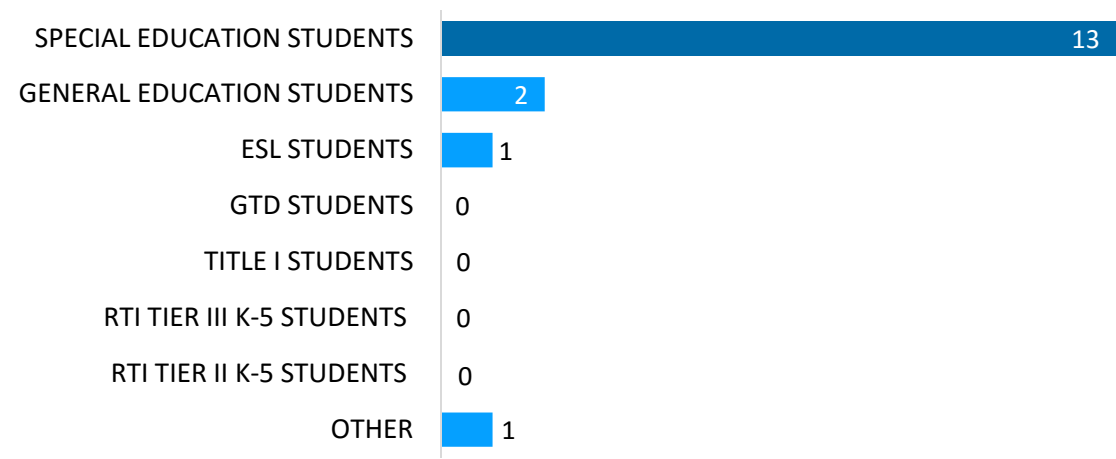
n=13. Participants could select more than one response.

The most common reason for not using Read 180 was that it was not relevant to the participant's role in the district.



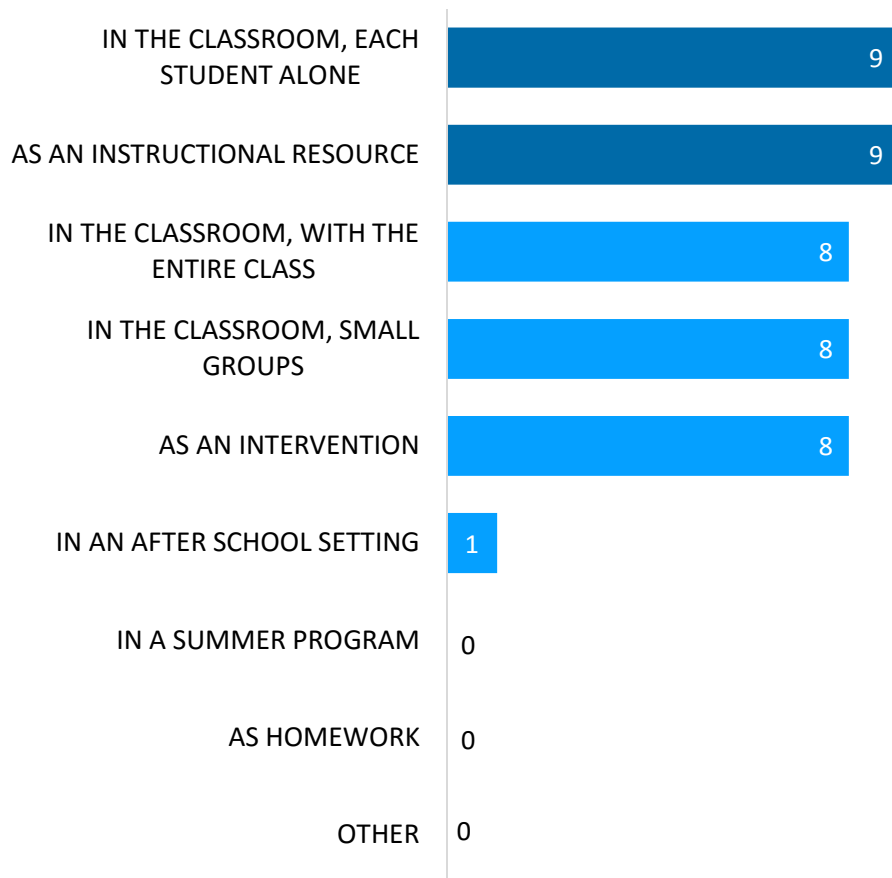
n=400. Participants could select more than one response.

All 13 respondents using Read 180 reported doing so with special education students.



n=13. Participants could select more than one response.

Educators reported using Read 180 in a variety of ways and contexts in the classroom, seeming to reflect the models offered by the resource’s developer.



n=13. Participants could select more than one response.

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES FOR READ 180

The Read 180 website offers models for:

- 1) single period,
- 2) extended single period, and
- 3) double period.

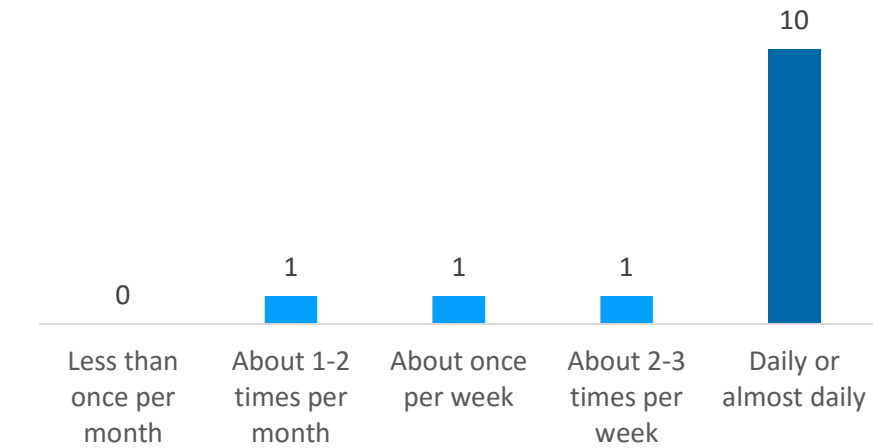
For the single period and extended single period models, the resource developer “recommends that students receive an additional period of core literacy instruction in addition to a single period of READ 180.”

The models start with Whole Group Instruction and conclude with Whole Group Wrap Up. In between, students cycle through stations involving:

- 1) “Student Application: Students work independently on the READ 180 Universal Student Application, following a personalized path that accelerates their learning,”
- 2) “Independent Reading: Students have their choice of engaging, content-rich texts to which they can apply their newly acquired vocabulary and comprehension skills,” and
- 3) “Small-Group Learning: In a small-group setting, students receive targeted, data-driven instruction unique to their individual learning needs while building meaningful relationships with their teachers.”

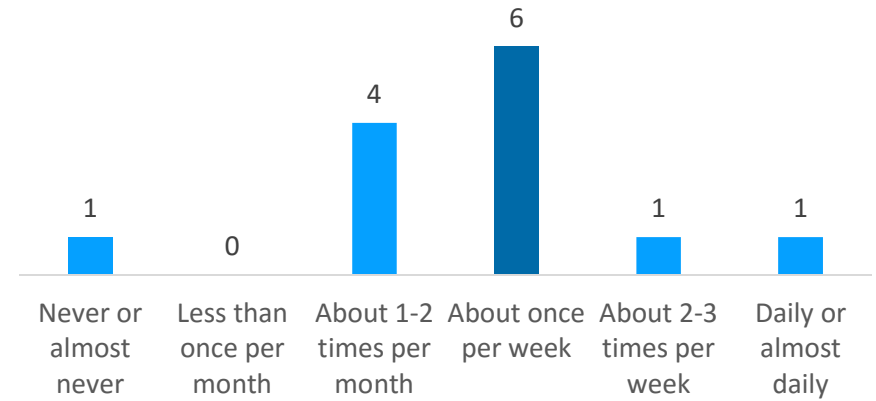
Source: [www.hmhco.com/products/read-180/read-180-experience/model-for-blended-learning.htm](http://www.hmhco.com/products/read-180/read-180-experience/model-for-blended-learning.htm)

10 of 13 educators reported that students using Read 180 do so “daily or almost daily.”



n=13

6 of 13 educators reported monitoring student progress data for this resource “about once per week.”

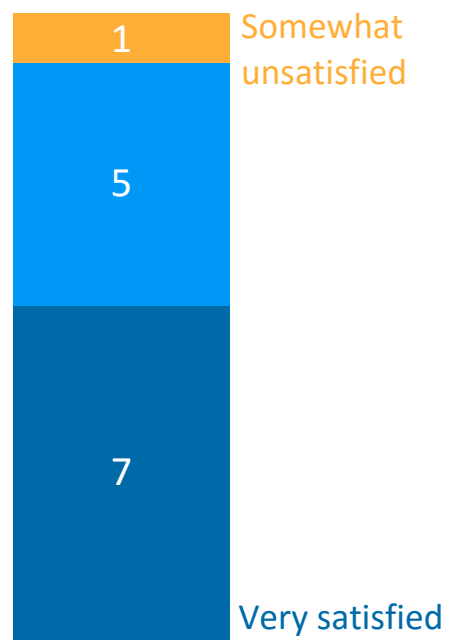


n=13

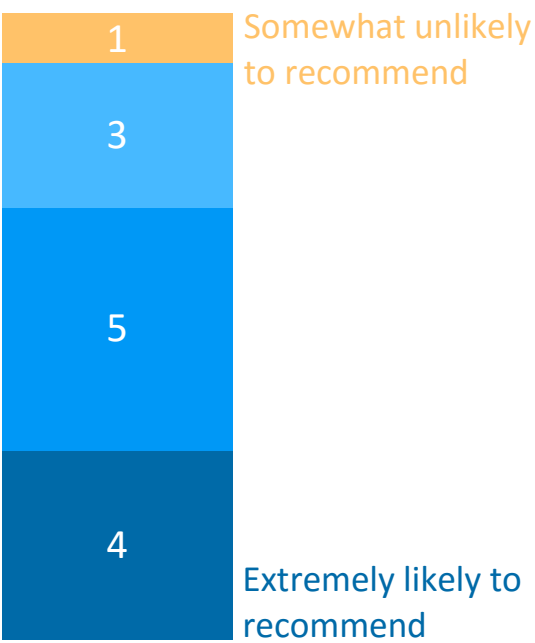
Open-ended responses on the use of student progress data most commonly referenced:

- monitoring student progress and growth on lexile scores,
- motivating students,
- goal-setting and
- IEPs.

12 of 13 respondents reported that they were satisfied with Read 180 and would recommend this resource to a friend or colleague.



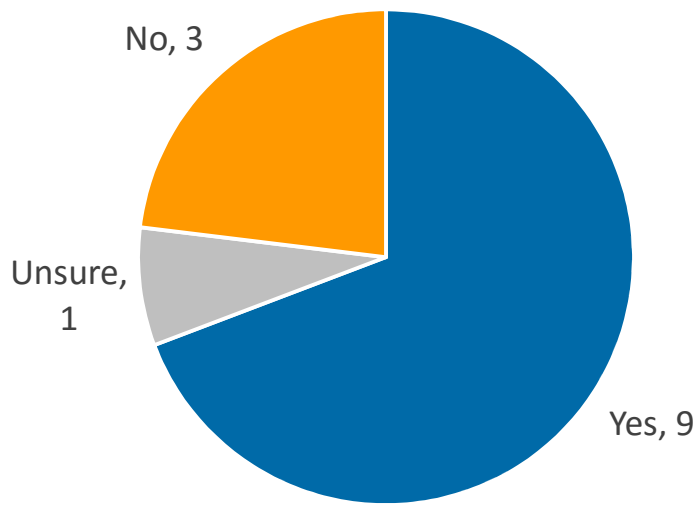
n=13. Response options were Very Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Unsatisfied and Very Unsatisfied



n=13. Response options were Extremely Likely to Recommend, Very Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Unlikely to Recommend, Very Unlikely to Recommend, Extremely Unlikely to Recommend

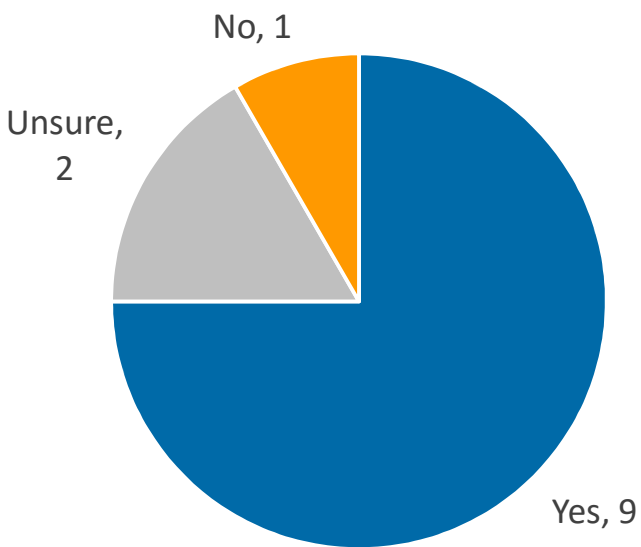


9 of 13 participants using Read 180 agreed that **most students enjoy using this resource**, while 4 disagreed or were unsure.



n=13. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

9 of 12 reported that **Read 180 is effective for student learning**, while 3 were unsure or disagreed.



n=12. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

Educators who reported that Read 180 is effective for student learning offered the following evidence, which mainly referenced increases in students' lexile scores<sup>16</sup>:

*"I have 9 students in my reading class. Of those nine, 7 raised their lexile scores between September and January. I see their growth and comfort in reading aloud in either the co-La or instructional LA as well."*

*"Students who started with low lexiles have moved out of special education reading classes and joined the mainstream in their least restrictive environment. Students can see specific target areas they need to practice to grow. Students improve their grades across the curriculum. Excellent way to progress monitor and communicate with parents which in turn benefits students' learning."*

*"Students comprehension and word recognition in gen-ed/co-taught classroom settings has increased."*

*"Over the years I've used Read 180, 15-20 students have "graduated" from it because they've reached their grade level lexile."*

*"I have seen students really increase their lexile scores which have shown me they are making progress. I also monitor the accuracy levels for comprehension, spelling, word fluency, etc. so that lets me know that students are also making progress."*

*"Growth in lexile score, increased enjoyment of reading."*

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<sup>16</sup> Due to the small number of educators implementing Read 180 in the district, we did not attribute any quotations for this resource.

When we asked participants what they like **MOST** about Read 180, they offered the following responses.

*“Engagement with the students. Data availability. Growth that most students make.”*

*“I love all of the data collection that it does for you, I like that it has many different components (reading, spelling, writing, R-Books, silent reading, etc.)”*

*“It's the best intervention I've ever used to help kids improve their lexiles in an efficient way. Please do NOT get rid of this program.”*

*“Motivates students. I see measurable, significant progress every year, it helps students read in other content settings, there is a variety of learning opportunities, I can use the data provided to pinpoint my instruction to make it most efficient, it is fun, students like it.”*

*“Structure, easy to read, printable data sheets, interactive with kids.”*

*“Student directed learning with an easy-to-use interface. The program mixes traditional print materials with online resources to create a system that allows students to approach the lesson from multiple backgrounds.”*

*“The kids like the computer work, the R-Book is helpful and the program gives the kids time to actually read a book with support. The data is helpful too.”*

*“The students like the computers.”*

When asked what they like **LEAST** about Read 180, the responses most frequently referenced computer/interface issues and the program not being implemented in a 90-minute double period<sup>17</sup>, for example:

*“This year, more than most, there seems to be more glitches on the computers with the zones within the program. These glitches haven't been fixed throughout the year, specifically with one student's zones. Also, Read 180 should be used in a block period for full advantage of the program but our current schedule does not allow a double period.”*

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<sup>17</sup> The Compendium of Research for Read 180 offers evidence for the “90 minute model,” “90 minute blended learning model,” and 30-, 50- and 52-minute models, but language on the resource website favors the 90-minute model. Source: [http://www.hmhco.com/products/read-180/pdfs/8194R180U\\_Compendium-2015.pdf](http://www.hmhco.com/products/read-180/pdfs/8194R180U_Compendium-2015.pdf)

# READ 180 SUMMARY

- The survey data suggest that Read 180 is a frequently-used resource in the district, with the students using it typically engaging “daily or almost daily.”
- This resource is primarily being used with special education students in middle school.
- Although satisfaction with Read 180 seems to be high, with 12 of 13 educators reporting satisfaction with the resource, they were less consistent overall on whether students enjoy engaging with it and whether it is effective for student learning. Some uncertainty on the participants’ part may be driven by beliefs that the current level of implementation is inappropriate and/or technological issues with the resource and the computers being used, among other reasons.
- The handful of Read 180 users who reported it to be effective were able to offer evidence of student learning which they attributed to this resource.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR READ 180

- The district may want to seek further guidance from the resource developer on how this program can be best implemented within time constraints.
- It may be possible to pursue further study on Read 180’s effectiveness for student learning, even if it is not being completely implemented in the way recommended by its developers. The way it is currently being implemented (which appears to be daily, but for not as long as recommended) may be providing some level of effectiveness.
  - For a study of student outcomes, the key deciding factor may be what ease of access the district has to Read 180 data at the individual student level.
  - For a quasi-experimental study, we would also need to be able to make valid comparisons between users and non-users and use outcomes data other than what Read 180 itself provides.
- If in-depth interviews are planned with key stakeholders, one area of exploration may be the reason(s) why some educators do not believe this resource is effective for student learning (or are unsure), and why some do not think students like using it (or are unsure).

# VOCABULARYSPELLINGCITY (PREMIUM)

11 out of 424 survey participants reported using the paid or “Premium” version of VocabularySpellingCity<sup>18</sup>.

- 7 (of 168) elementary classroom teachers
- 1 (of 21) middle school special education teacher
- 1 (of 24) elementary special education teacher
- 1 (of 9) data and instructional technology coach
- 1 (of 8) GTD teacher

## WHAT IS VOCABULARY- SPELLINGCITY?

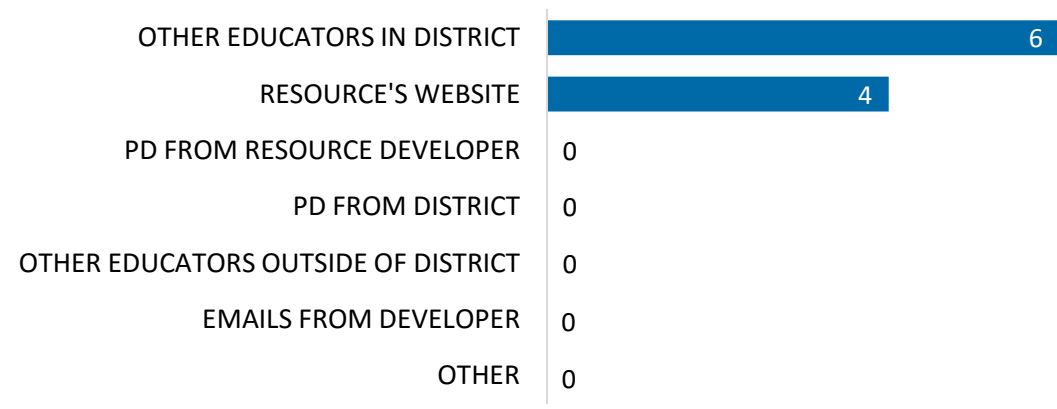
“VocabularySpellingCity provides spelling, vocabulary, writing, and language arts activities for K-12 cross-curricular word study. VocabularySpellingCity was initially created to save teachers time by automating weekly spelling tests, (i.e. administering, grading and recording) and providing immediate feedback for students. Our primary focus is now on vocabulary, especially the meaning of words used in specific contexts. We offer seven vocabulary games and activities, plus two writing activities, in which students can demonstrate their mastery of the meaning of words by using them in context, writing their own sentences and paragraphs. Our activities to build phonological awareness and phonics skills use a patent-pending technology developed by VocabularySpellingCity. These games let students see and hear words sounded out, spelled, and used in a sentence.”

Source:  
[www.spellingcity.com](http://www.spellingcity.com)

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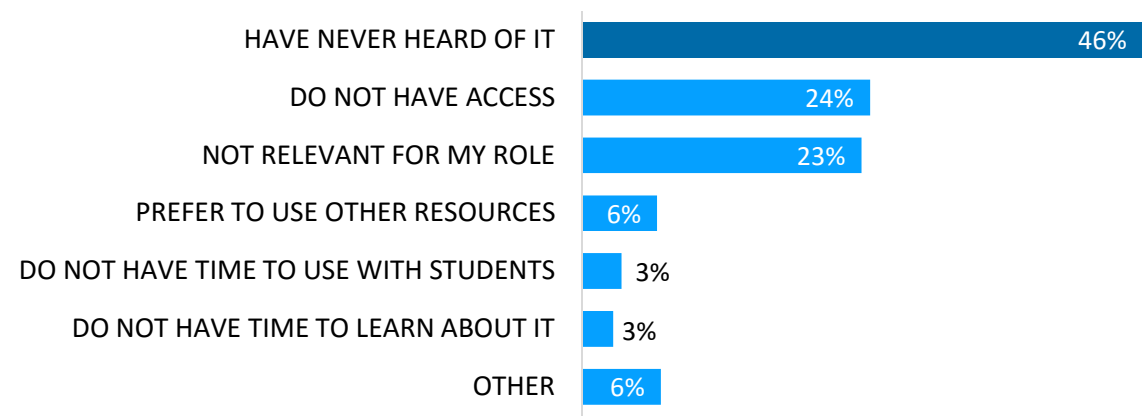
<sup>18</sup> Personal communication from this resource’s developer indicated that as of February 2016, 89 teachers in the district were registered but most were using the free version of this resource.

Participants reported that they received information about this resource from other educators in the district and/or the resource’s website.



n=8. Participants could select more than one response.

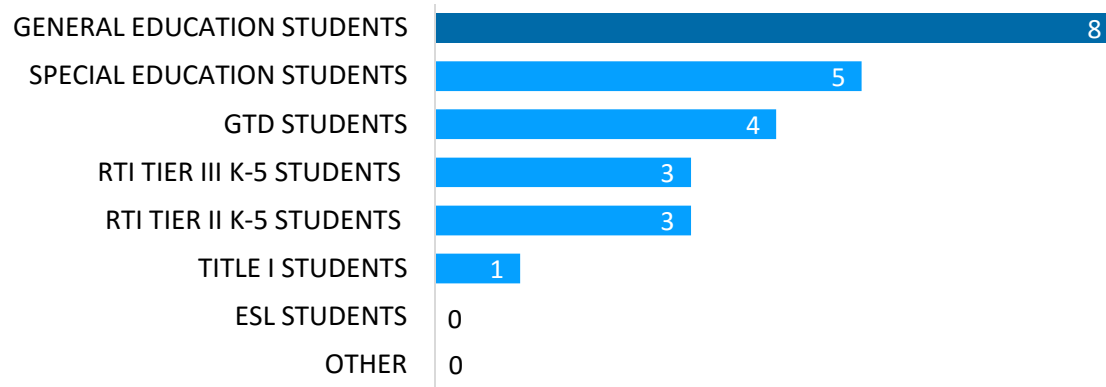
The most common reason for not using VocabularySpellingCity (Premium) was that the participant had never heard of it.



n=408. Participants could select more than one response.

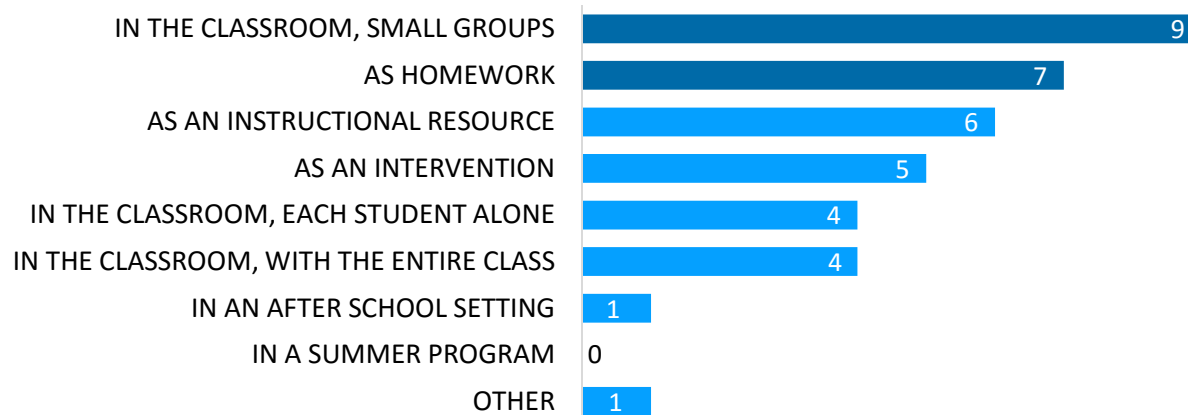
Responses indicate that VocabularySpellingCity is primarily used with general education students.

Special education, GTD, RTI Tier II and III, and Title I students were also cited as users of this resource.



n=11. Participants could select more than one response.

Educators most often reported using VocabularySpellingCity in the classroom, with students working in small groups, or as homework.



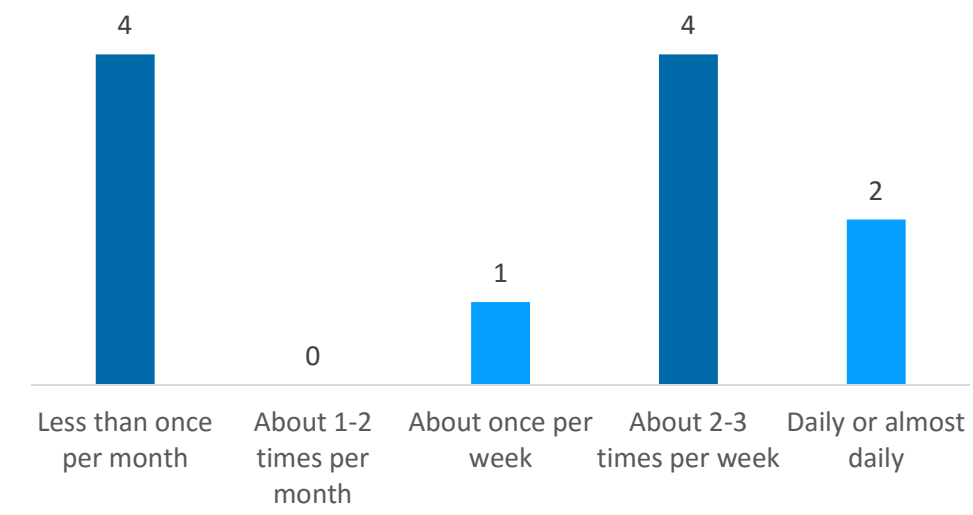
n=11. Participants could select more than one response.



This resource’s developer does not offer implementation guidelines but says they can be developed depending on the district’s goals.

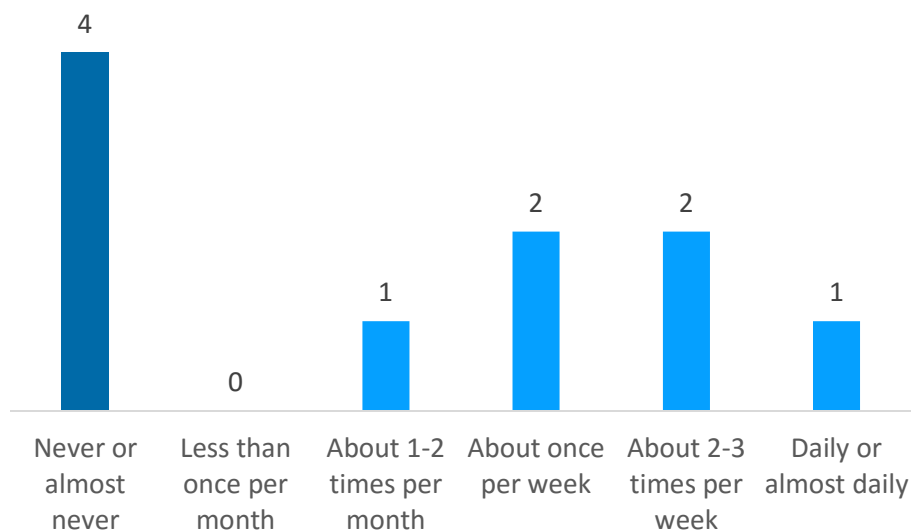
*“Seeing how we are a supplemental product, and not a complete curriculum, the fidelity to which your teachers use the site is really dependent upon your own specific academic goals. We currently do not have any specific “Best Practices” guidelines, as we are used for everything from developing sight words and phonics skills to spelling and vocabulary and even in adult education programs. ... If teachers are using us specifically to support [McGraw Hill Treasures] (or another reading program) then weekly practice and testing criteria can be established to reflect your goals. If your use of VocabularySpellingCity includes phonics practice and vocabulary development than the fidelity criteria may look a little different.” – personal communication, February 2016*

An equal number of participants (4) selected “less than once per month” and “about 2 to 3 times per week” when asked how often their students use VocabularySpellingCity.



n=11

Although “track[ing] student data,” “vocabulary test[s]” and “differentiated instruction” are advertised as key features of this resource’s Premium version, participants using it most often reported monitoring student data “never or almost never.”



n=10

When asked how they use these data, if at all, four participants responded<sup>19</sup>.

*“Students do spelling and vocabulary tests and homework with this.”*

*“I keep track of student spelling progress.”*

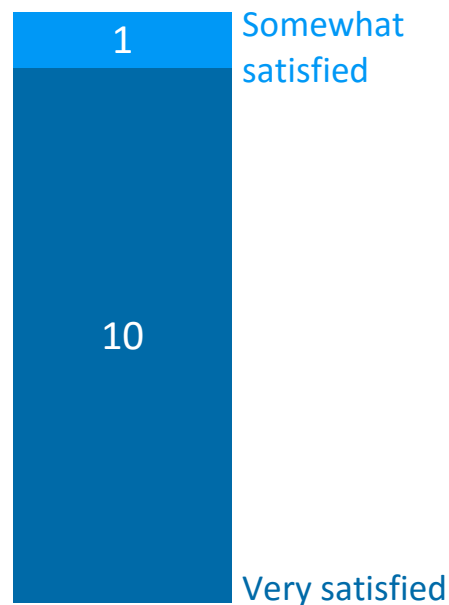
*“The 4th grade team uses it for their spelling list, they like how they can create different spelling lists and differentiate for different groups.”*

*“Data points are available on every activity the students participate in which helps in making curricular decisions.”*

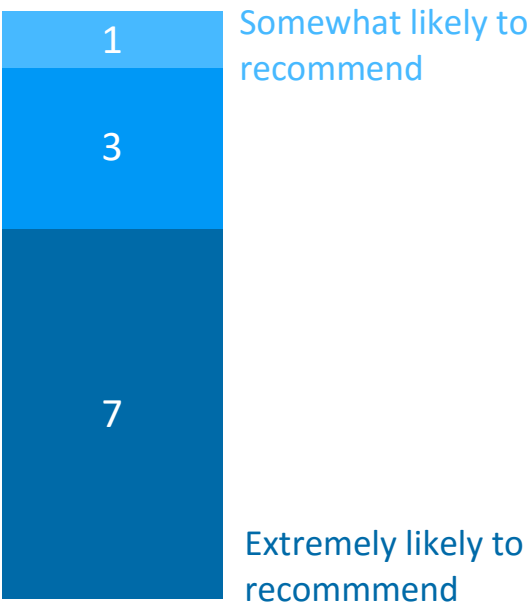
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<sup>19</sup> Due to the small number of educators using VocabularySpellingCity Premium, we did not attribute any quotations for this resource.

All respondents using VocabularySpellingCity reported that they are satisfied with this resource and would recommend it to a friend or colleague.

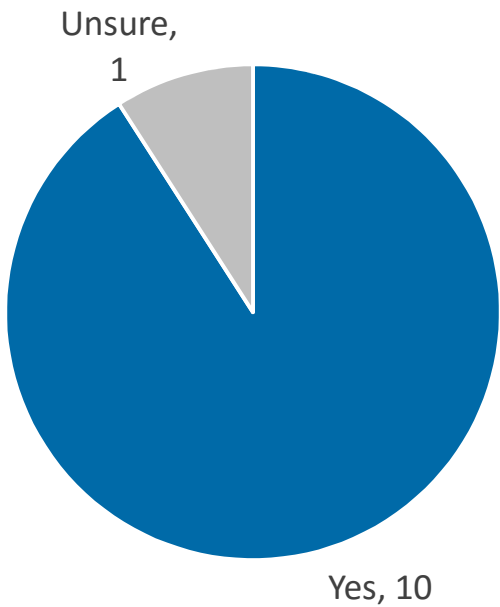


n=11. Response options were Very Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Unsatisfied and Very Unsatisfied



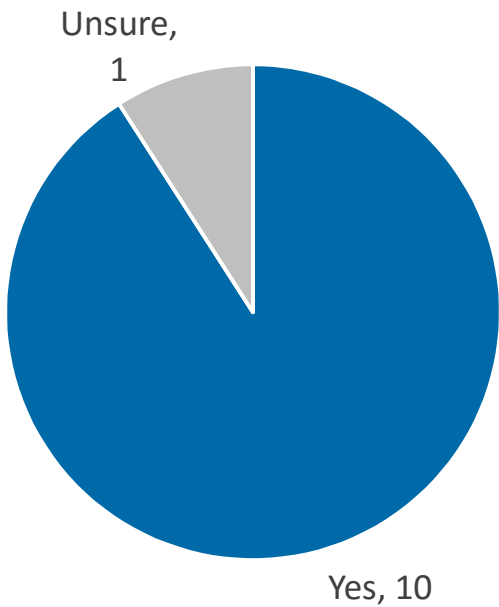
n=11. Response options were Extremely Likely to Recommend, Very Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Likely to Recommend, Somewhat Unlikely to Recommend, Very Unlikely to Recommend, Extremely Unlikely to Recommend

10 of 11 participants using VocabularySpellingCity agreed that **most students enjoy using this resource**, while 1 was unsure.



n=11. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

10 of 11 reported that **VocabularySpellingCity is effective for student learning**, while 1 was unsure.



n=11. Response options were Yes, No, Unsure

When asked what evidence they can provide to explain why they believe this resource is effective for student learning, four educators responded, but none contained references to changes in student learning outcomes:

*“They can practice vocabulary and spelling words over and over.”*

*“It is engaging and interactive.”*

*“They like the assigned exercises.”*

*“The skills tie closely to those in the CCSS for all grade levels.”*

When we asked participants what they like **MOST** about VocabularySpellingCity, they responded:

*"All of the available resources."*

*"It can be used for both spelling and vocab, and it is easy to share and create w/ team members. Students can use in all subjects to practice vocabulary and spelling words. It is easy to monitor, and the kids really like it."*

*"I like how you can customize the spelling and vocabulary."*

*"I like that I can put in my own spelling words and offer differentiation for students. I like that it has fun games to learn the words instead of more traditional paper-and-pencil activities."*

When asked what they like **LEAST** about VocabularySpellingCity, two wrote "n/a" or "nothing." Another two responded:

*"It is not free, and although I think it is extremely beneficial, I do not like having to spend my money on the subscription."*

*"I stopped using it because it could not be accessed on students' ipads."*

# VOCABULARYSPELLINGCITY SUMMARY

- The Premium version of VocabularySpellingCity is currently used by very few educators in District 97, according to survey results and information from the resource's developer.
- This resource is primarily being used with general education students, as homework or with students working in small groups in the classroom.
- Those using this resource are highly satisfied with it and believe it is effective for student learning. Perhaps due to the small number of educators reporting on it, in open-ended responses we did not see anything that we judged to be actual evidence of positive student learning outcomes.

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR VOCABULARYSPELLINGCITY

- A small study on student learning outcomes may be possible if teachers can implement this resource and its assessments in a systematic manner.
- Ask educators and/or district staff with a paid subscription to log-in to explore the differences between the free and Premium versions of VocabularySpellingCity. This information may be helpful for deciding whether the added features of the paid subscription are worth the price.