



i-Ready Stretch Growth[®] as a Path toward Proficiency

Executive Summary, November 2022



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Overview

Across the United States, more students are below grade level in reading and mathematics now than before the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the impacts of the pandemic on reading and mathematics performance, average student growth will not be sufficient. Instead, students will need to demonstrate an increase in the rate of growth to “catch up” from unfinished learning, especially those students who were performing below grade level before the pandemic and experienced disproportionate levels of unfinished learning. How do we get more students back on track for grade-level proficiency?

Growth goals that are intentionally designed to put students on a path toward grade-level proficiency will be essential for getting students back on track following the learning disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This study provides validity evidence for *i-Ready*'s Stretch Growth targets as a growth goal that is ambitious, attainable, and puts Grades K–8 students on a path toward proficiency. Conducted by Curriculum Associates, the study used data from more than 1.8 million students who completed the fall and spring Diagnostic for Reading and more than 1.9 million students who completed the fall and spring Diagnostic for Mathematics during the 2017–2018 and 2018–2019 school years.

Key Findings

- *i-Ready*'s Stretch Growth targets are ambitious. No more than 40% of students met Stretch Growth in a given subject, grade, and school year.
- *i-Ready*'s Stretch Growth targets are attainable. More than 30% of students met Stretch Growth in a given school year while about 12% of students met Stretch Growth in both years.
- Meeting Stretch Growth targets for two consecutive school years put students on a path toward proficiency, regardless of starting grade-level placement.
 - In reading, 79% of students ended the second year proficient (i.e., Mid On Grade Level or Above) and 94% ended the second year on grade level (i.e., Early On Grade Level or Above)
 - In mathematics, 82% of students who met their Stretch Growth target in both years ended the second year proficient (i.e., Mid On Grade Level or Above) and 95% ended the second year on grade level (i.e., Early On Grade Level or Above)
- On average, the percentage of students meeting Stretch Growth tended to be higher for students who started at a higher placement level, but this trend was not consistent across all subjects and grades.
- For the students who started below grade level:
 - Most students who started One Grade Level Below their chronological grade ended the second year proficient (78%)
 - Most students who started Two Grade Levels Below their chronological grade ended the second year on grade level (81%)

Table 1 below highlights the percentage of students who met Stretch Growth in one, two, or both school years by starting grade-level placement for the cohort of students who started in Grade 2 and ended in Grade 3 for reading and those who started in Grade 4 and ended in Grade 5 for mathematics. While a larger percentage of students who started on or above grade level met Stretch Growth, it is ambitious and attainable for students who started below grade level as well. These grades levels were chosen as examples here, as well as in the full report, because research shows these were the grades most heavily impacted by the pandemic in their respective subjects.

Table 1. Frequency of Students Meeting Stretch Growth by Starting Placement

Grade Cohort		Starting Placement	Percentage of Students Meeting Stretch Growth		
			2017–2018	2018–2019	Both Years
Reading Example	2→3	Mid or Above Grade Level	49%	55%	29%
		Early On Grade Level	33%	30%	16%
		One Grade Level Below	40%	42%	15%
		Two Grade Levels Below	22%	25%	7%
		Three or More Grade Levels Below	N/A	17%	N/A
Mathematics Example	4→5	Mid or Above Grade Level	46%	38%	21%
		Early On Grade Level	33%	24%	13%
		One Grade Level Below	34%	23%	9%
		Two Grade Levels Below	24%	19%	6%
		Three or More Grade Levels Below	21%	20%	5%

Table 2 shows the ending placement-level distribution results for students who met Stretch Growth in both years for the same cohort of students as in the example above. In reading, nearly all students (98%) who met Stretch Growth in both years ended Year 2 on grade level (16% Early On Grade Level and 82% Mid On Grade Level or Above). In mathematics, nearly all students (97%) who met Stretch Growth in both years ended Year 2 on grade level (12% Early On Grade Level and 85% Mid On Grade Level or Above). The [full report](#) includes the complete results for the frequency of meeting Stretch Growth across all subjects, grade levels, and starting placement levels as well as the placement distribution for students meeting Stretch Growth in both years.

Table 2. Ending Placement Distribution for Students Meeting Stretch Growth in Both Years

Grade Cohort		Ending Placement	
Reading Example	2→3	Mid or Above Grade Level	82%
		Early On Grade Level	16%
		One Grade Level Below	2%
		Two Grade Levels Below	0%
		Three or More Grade Levels Below	0%
Mathematics Example	4→5	Mid or Above Grade Level	85%
		Early On Grade Level	12%
		One Grade Level Below	2%
		Two Grade Levels Below	0%
		Three or More Grade Levels Below	0%

The full research paper, *i-Ready Stretch Growth as a Path toward Proficiency* (Rome & Daisher, 2022), is available for download [here](#).