

## Alabama Ready<sup>®</sup> Mathematics Success Story

Boaz City Schools and Saraland City Schools are two of many school districts across the state of Alabama that are using *i-Ready* and *Ready Mathematics* to help identify and address students' unfinished learning. In fact, these demographically different districts are the first users in the state to work with the diverse set of print and online resources *i-Ready* and *Ready Mathematics* offer. While these districts may be small in size, they found big success with the *Ready* mathematics resources in effectively supporting all students (i.e., Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3) with a common language and a single set of resources.

### Boaz City School District

Boaz City Schools, located in Marshall County, is a school district with a little more than 2,400 students in Grades pre-K–12. It operates five schools: three elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. 67.5 percent of the students in the district are identified as eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch.

In 2016, the district saw a growing number of students needing Tier 3 interventions. “We were looking at intervention or RTI processes noticing that our triangle was flipped upside down—we’ve got way too many in the red,” describes Ashley Walls, director of teaching and learning.

Walls knew she couldn’t wait for the state math curriculum adoption to find resources to help flip the triangle. Students were suffering, and she had to take action.

She also noticed her teachers used lots of different materials and strategies across student groups to teach the same skills. “Kids shouldn’t have to go, ‘Well, I’m in this teacher’s class. I’ve got to use this strategy and this program. Now, I’m going to this teacher’s class. Let me use this strategy and this program’—all learning the same skill,” Walls says. “I had to break some habits of teachers, and that’s when I ran across *i-Ready* and *Ready Mathematics*.”



**Ashley Walls,**  
Director of Teaching  
and Learning

With a diverse yet cohesive set of resources covering both digital and print, the *i-Ready* and *Ready Mathematics* curriculum also addressed the district’s blended learning needs that supported Walls’s approach to meet students and teachers where they are.

The district started small with the *Ready Mathematics* curriculum and resources, first with students with special needs and English Learners. A few grades were added each year, leading to all K–8 students using *Ready Mathematics* and *i-Ready* in the 2019–2020 school year.

<b>Boaz City Schools</b> Marshall County, AL
Enrollment: <b>2,400</b>
Grades: <b>Pre-K-12</b>
<b>Number of Schools:</b> Elementary Schools: 3 Middle Schools: 1 High Schools: 1
 Free and Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible: <b>67.5%</b>

Learn more about the programs mentioned in this story on page 2.

The *i-Ready* and *Ready Mathematics* resources provided a much-needed common language for teachers in the district. Teachers now have the data to help them identify what they are doing and why. *i-Ready Diagnostics* allowed students to be grouped based on their needs with personalized direction on what can be done to address them. The resources also allowed the district to simplify, consolidate, and deliver to students in Tiers 1, 2, and 3 through one set of resources.

As a result, when COVID-19 school closures occurred, the district was prepared for learning to continue, including resources that let parents know what students were working on and how they could support them. "Everybody started panicking about remote learning," Walls recounts. "But I knew with the *Ready* curriculum, I already had what we needed." Students continued their *i-Ready* online learning pathways, supplemented with printed packets so they could stay on pace.

## Results for Boaz City Schools

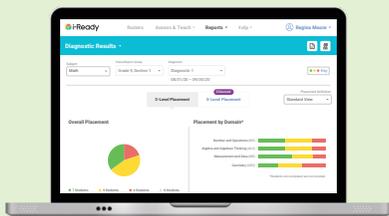
Since using the *Ready Mathematics* resources, the district has seen positive impacts in several areas.

On the teacher side, Walls believes that **"teachers know how to talk about data in a whole different way** than they used to. Now, they're coming to meetings able to answer questions like, "What group have you had them in? What prerequisites do you know they don't have?"

For students, the initial problem regarding growth in Tier 3 interventions was reversed. **Tier 3 interventions decreased from 30 percent to 18 percent of students in just four months**—as evidenced by the *i-Ready Diagnostics* for Mathematics.

For the district overall, Boaz City Schools outperformed the national trend line—**not losing any of the growth they saw before COVID-19**. "We kept our processes in place, so our kids performed at the same level," Walls says. "They didn't have to change what they were doing—and we saw the benefits."

## Learn More about the Programs



### ***i-Ready Diagnostic***

An adaptive assessment designed to provide teachers with actionable insight into student needs



### ***i-Ready Personalized Instruction***

Driven by insights from the *i-Ready Diagnostic*, online lessons provide tailored instruction that meets students where they are and encourages them as they develop new skills.



### ***Ready Mathematics***

Used as a core curriculum or to enhance mathematics instruction, this program develops strong mathematical thinkers, conceptual understanding using real-world problem solving, and helps students become active participants in their own learning.

## Saraland City School District

Another small district using *Ready Mathematics* resources is Saraland City Schools, located in Mobile County, which comprises a little more than 3,100 students across the district's four campuses. In 2018–2019, Saraland scored an "A" on the state report card, ranking it as one of the state's top five districts.

In looking for resources to supplement math instruction, it was important for Dr. Frankie Mathis, assistant superintendent of schools, to get teacher input. She worked with teachers to pilot *i-Ready* and quickly saw the value of the *i-Ready Diagnostics* and personalized instructional paths. After a passionate group of K–1 teachers attended a Curriculum Associates math discourse meeting, they came back convinced that *i-Ready* could help their students, saying, "Why can't we use *i-Ready*?"

By 2019–2020, the district implemented *i-Ready Diagnostics* and Personalized Instruction for all students in Grades 2–8, with *Ready Mathematics* curriculum also used for intervention students only.

During that first full year, the district administered all three *i-Ready Diagnostics*. Because of March 2020 school closures, the third Diagnostic was administered at home.

*i-Ready* proved to be an asset to the school as they dealt with school closures. Mathis believes *i-Ready* allowed them to have learning continuity, even though they were not a 1:1 district. "With students and teachers familiar with *i-Ready* and its alignment with Alabama Course of Study standards, we were able to use it to supplement instruction when we weren't in a building to provide in-person instruction," Mathis states.

Mathis also attributes the district's *i-Ready* success to the strong buy-in from teachers and the various ways they show students the value and importance of *i-Ready*.

"We believe we've been successful because *i-Ready* allows us to grow each year based on what we see the need to be," says Carmon Nitteberg, a middle school teacher. The middle school started with a few classrooms and now has complete school buy-in. This has ensured students can do 45 minutes of *i-Ready* each week as different departments like science assist in its administration.

"Since all teachers implement *i-Ready* with their students, we bring information from the Diagnostic to our RTI meetings," Nitteberg continues. "With this supplemental data, we can have a better understanding of our students and their learning styles. We know their weaknesses and can have better conversations to support them."

Several other activities are used by teachers to reinforce students' engagement with *i-Ready*. At the middle school, students carry cards showing their Diagnostic scores and goals, stressing accountability.

The middle school, along with the elementary school, holds regular celebrations for students with high Diagnostic scores and students who have shown the most growth. These celebrations include shoutouts and letters home to parents.



**Saraland City Schools**  
Mobile County, AL

Enrollment: **3,100**

Grades: **Pre-K–12**

**Number of Schools: 4**



**2018–2019 State  
Report Card**  
(One of the State's  
Top Five Districts)



**Dr. Frankie Mathis,**  
Assistant Superintendent  
of Schools

At the elementary school, data chats using *i-Ready* have helped keep both students and parents engaged in learning and student success.

"We use *i-Ready* when parents ask how to help their students who are struggling in math," says Ashley Lomax, an instructional partner at the elementary school. "The first suggestion that we give is always the individualized learning path through *i-Ready*."

Renee Black, an interventionist at the elementary school, uses data chats regularly with her students. Once a week, she pulls up students' learning paths and scores from their lessons and quizzes to review individually with students. "It's important for the students to get into a habit of inspecting what we expect from them—and for teachers to have conversations with students whether it be positive or a need of improvement," she states. "And the students look forward to the data chats, asking me, 'Can we look at our scores today?'"

While *i-Ready* has positively impacted all students, Black highlights the effect it—along with *Ready Mathematics*—is making on intervention. "Before *i-Ready* and *Ready Mathematics*, we had teachers in the building who were using multiple programs for Tier 2 and Tier 3, and there wasn't a lot of consistency," she says. "I feel these programs have transitioned our intervention program into being highly effective."

Looking at the district's journey to *i-Ready* and *Ready Mathematics*, Mathis concludes, "We were intentional in our selection and implementation of *i-Ready*, and it has resulted in student success."

*i-Ready* and *Ready Mathematics* provided these districts with the support and resources needed to keep their students (in Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3) on track before, during, and after school closures, including a robust set of materials to engage parents. These districts look forward to using the *Ready* mathematics resources this year and in the years to come.

### Results for Saraland City Schools

In its first year, Saraland City Schools saw the following improvements in its students, according to the *i-Ready Diagnostic* reports:

-  The district was **over-performing with 123 median percent progress toward average annual growth** vs. the expected 100 percent.
-  **61 percent of students are meeting at least one year's worth of growth.**
-  The percentage of **students at risk for Tier 3 interventions decreased by more than 40 percent.**



### Want to build a data-driven culture?

Visit [i-Ready.com/Empower](https://www.i-ready.com/Empower) to learn more about *i-Ready's* actionable data, easy-to-use dashboard, and robust reports.

