Impact Report

2017-2018 Georgia Milestones Reading Performance
for Students Using Achieve3000 Literacy in Glynn County, GA

December 2019

DISTRICT KEY

13,000
Students

17
Schools

13%
English Language
Learners
(ELL)

36%
Free and
Reduced Lunch
(FRL)

13%
Individualized
Education Program
(IEP)

INTRODUCTION

Achieve3000 conducted an analysis of Glynn County School District students' performance on the Georgia Milestone English Language Arts (ELA) test in relation to students' usage of Achieve3000 Literacy during the 2017-2018 school year.

Glynn County School District is based in Brunswick, Georgia and serves the communities of Brunswick, Country Club Estates, Dock Junction, and St. Simons Island. This large school district is one of Georgia's oldest public education systems originally chartered in 1788. It includes 17 schools and more than 13,000 students (Glynn County School System, 2018). Thirty-six percent of students receive free and reduced lunch.

Glynn County School District initially partnered with Achieve3000 in 2012 to provide differentiated literacy instruction for their struggling readers in grades 6-8. During the 2017-2018 school year, Achieve3000 Literacy was incorporated into the instructional strategy for struggling readers in grades 3-5 as well as students with limited English proficiency. The district set an expectation for every student to complete one lesson every week. Some schools encouraged students most in need of acceleration to complete two lessons each week.

METHODOLOGY

This report relies on Achieve3000 Literacy's usage and Lexile data as well as Georgia Milestones ELA data from spring 2017 and spring 2018 for 4th through 8th grade students. To examine the impact of usage on Lexile growth and performance on the state assessment a sample of 4,378 students who met the following inclusion criteria was identified:

✅ Had valid pre-test and end-of-year Lexile scores during the 2017-2018 school year

✅ Had at least 60 days between the date of their most recent Lexile assessment and their pre-test

✅ Completed at least 10 embedded assessments after reading a differentiated non-fiction article assigned by the teacher with Achieve3000 Literacy

Results were disaggregated for the four percent (n = 157) of English language learner (ELL) students, 15% (n = 641) of students with disabilities (SWD), and 64% (n = 2,797) of students qualified to receive free- or reduced-price lunch (FRL).

MEASURES

Lexiles and College and Career Readiness

Developed by Achieve3000 in partnership with MetaMetrics®, the LevelSet™ assessment identifies each student's Lexile reading measure and is a reliable means of matching student reading levels to informational text. The LevelSet assessment is administered two to three times a year to measure student progress and provide a benchmark measurement of student growth in English or Spanish.

Achieve3000 and MetaMetrics developed 4 grade-specific achievement level descriptors for college and career readiness: falls far below, approaches, meets, and exceeds. Achieve3000 considers students performing in the higher two achievement levels (meets and exceeds) to be "on track" for college and career readiness, whereas students performing in the lower two achievement levels (falls far below and approaches) are considered to be "not on-track".

Achieve3000 uses a Bayesian scoring algorithm, also developed by MetaMetrics, to provide continually updated measures that reflect the students' progress in reading development. As the student reads and responds to nonfiction text during their reading lessons, the Bayesian approach refines each student's Lexile measure.

By using multiple measures over time, the Bayesian scoring improves the accuracy of measurement as students learn. With this approach, Achieve3000's proprietary engine is able to improve its ability to match students with appropriate texts and to forecast student readiness for college and career benchmarks.

Georgia Milestones ELA

Students enrolled in grades 3-8 in Glynn County School District participate in the Georgia Milestones which measures student achievement in English Language Arts and mathematics. Students typically take the test one time per year, at the end of the spring semester. Georgia Milestones provides norm-referenced items in all content areas and courses, to complement the criterion-referenced information and to provide a national comparison. Student scores are categorized into one of three levels: Level 4: Distinguished Learner, Level 3: Proficient Learner, Level 2: Developing Learner, and Level 1: Beginning Learner (GA DOE, n.d.).

RESULTS

Achieve3000 Program Usage

Over the course of the 2017-2018 school year, participating students in grades 4 through 8 logged in an average of 77 times, completed 54 lessons (with embedded assessments), and demonstrated an average first-try score of 73 percent on embedded assessments (see Table 1). On average, students spent 24 hours using Achieve3000 Literacy.
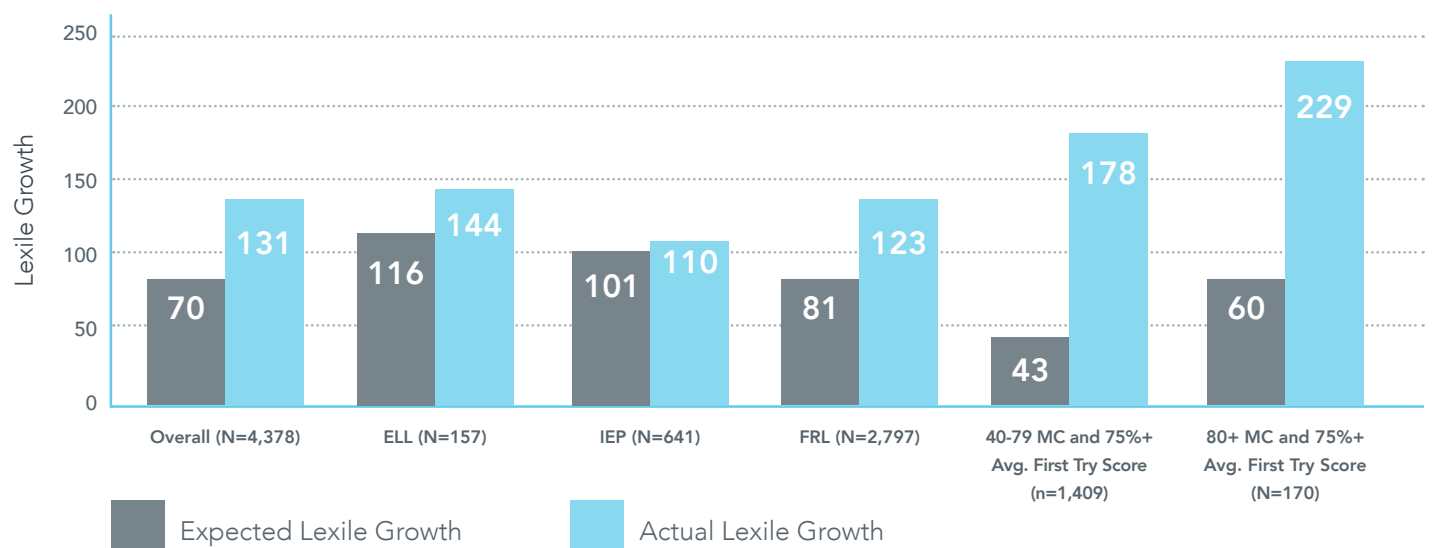
Table 1: Achieve3000 Students' Program Usage Summary, 2017-2018 School Year

	Average # Logins	Average # Program Hours	Average # MC Activities	Average First-Try Score
ELL (N = 157)	79	25	66 (total) 52 (eligible for autoadjust)	64%
SWD (N = 641)	71	21	71 (total) 48 (eligible for autoadjust)	64%
FRL (N = 2,797)	77	24	64 (total) 52 (eligible for autoadjust)	70%
All (N = 4,378)	77	24	65 (total) 54 (eligible for autoadjust)	73%

Impact of Achieve3000 on Levelset Performance

Overall, students using Achieve3000 Literacy demonstrated an average Lexile growth of 131L, which was 50L above their average expected growth of 70L. Students who used Achieve3000 Literacy with greater fidelity saw larger Lexile gains. Specifically, students who completed 40 or more lessons and had an average first-try score of greater than or equal to 75 percent on the embedded assessment achieved gains of 184L on average, which was over four times their expected growth of 45L (see Graph 1 for these results as well as those disaggregated for ELL, SWD, and FRL students). In addition, the percentage of students in this sample who were college & career ready increased from 21% to 35% over the course of the 2017-2018 school year.

Graph 1: Actual compared to expected Lexile growth for students overall, and students using Achieve3000 Literacy with high fidelity
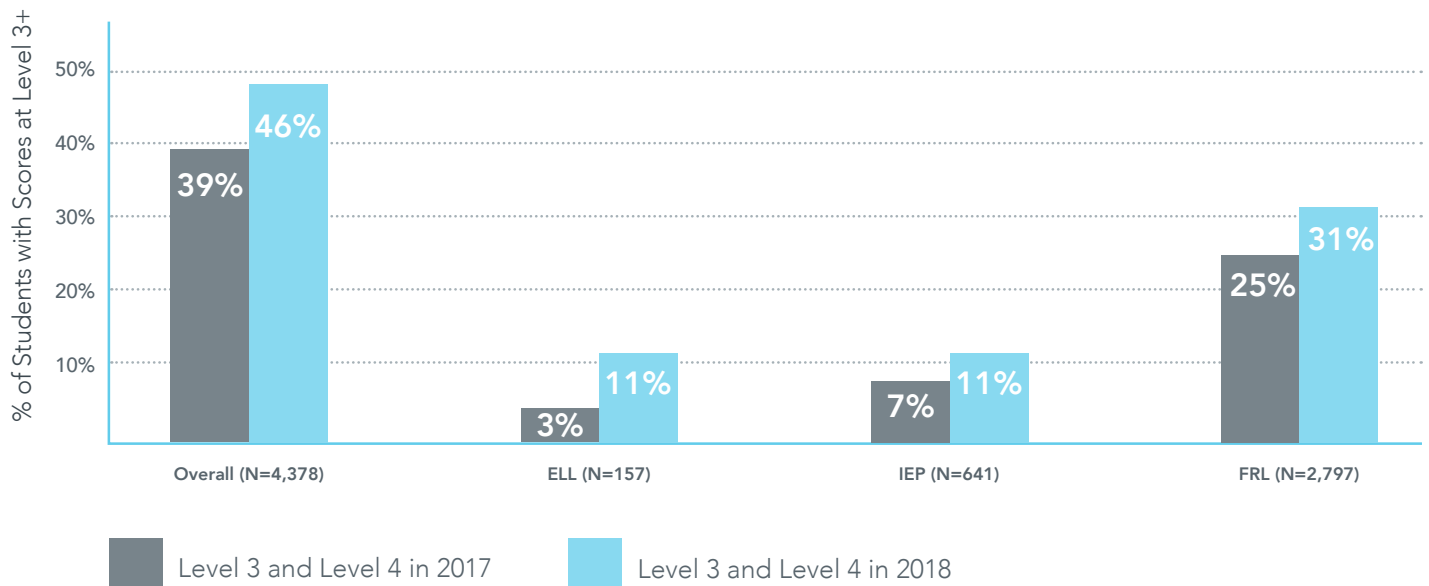
RESULTS (cont.)

Impact of Achieve3000 Literacy on Students' GA Milestones ELA Performance

From spring 2017 to spring 2018, more than a quarter of students (27%) who used Achieve3000 Literacy improved at least one Achievement Level on the Georgia Milestones ELA assessment. By spring 2018, almost half (46%) of the students using Achieve3000 Literacy in Glynn County School District achieved proficiency at Achievement Level 3 or above, an increase of 7% from the prior spring. Notably, 11% of ELL students were performing at Achievement Level 3 or above by 2018 compared with only 3% in 2017. Students with an IEP made progress as well, with 11% performing at Achievement Level 3 or above by 2018 as compared with 7% in 2017. Students who qualify for free and reduced lunch made similar gains with 31% performing in Level 3 or higher in 2018 compared to 25% in 2017. As seen with Lexile score gains, students who used Achieve3000 with greater fidelity saw greater increases in GA Milestones ELA performance level. (See graph 2.) Three-quarters (74%) of students who completed over 80 lessons and maintained an average first-try score of 75% or above on Achieve3000 Literacy's embedded assessment performed in Achievement Level 3 or above after one year of usage, an increase of 11% from the prior spring.

Graph 2: Percent of students using Achieve3000 Literacy with proficient scores (Level 3+) on the Georgia Milestones Assessment for English language arts

Legend: ■ Level 3 and Level 4 in 2017   ■ Level 3 and Level 4 in 2018

The number of students with proficient performance on the Georgia Milestones ELA exam

INCREASED BY ↗ 7%

after one school year of reading, writing, and thinking with Achieve3000 Literacy.

CONCLUSION

Overall, students in Glynn County School District showed improvement on both the LevelSet and the Georgia Milestones ELA tests after using Achieve3000 during the 2017-2018 school year. While students who used Achieve3000 with higher fidelity demonstrated the greatest gains on both the LevelSet and the GA Milestones ELA tests, students of different learning profiles such as English learners, students with an IEP and those who qualify for free and reduced lunch, showed improvements on both their growth in reading ability via Lexile gains and mastery of state standards on the Georgia Milestones ELA test. Together, these results demonstrate that students using Achieve3000 Literacy will see improvements on measures of reading achievement, and these improvements are more pronounced for students using Achieve3000 Literacy more frequently and with higher engagement.

References

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