



# Impact Report

2025–2026



## WHO WE ARE

Literacy First is a high-impact tutoring program that teaches students foundational reading skills. Founded in 1994 as a program of the Charles A. Dana Center at The University of Texas at Austin, Literacy First tutors have taught over 34,000 students how to read.

We are on a mission to equip students with the reading skills they need to excel in life and realize their dreams. We are proud to be the only high-impact early literacy tutoring program in the U.S. to offer tutoring in both English and Spanish.

## HOW IT WORKS

Our team trains tutors, school district staff, and other educators how to implement our model with daily, 30-minute lessons in one-to-one and small group settings.

Our approach is based on research and data, and the program consistently produces positive, validated student results.



The University of Texas at Austin  
Charles A. Dana Center

# Student Achievement



**84%**

of students showed accelerated progress toward reading goals, outpacing expected grade-level skill development

**2,285**

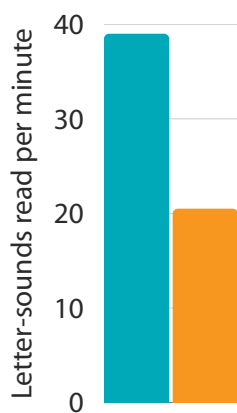
students learned foundational reading skills with a Literacy First tutor

**114,049**

high-impact sessions were delivered, averaging 55 sessions per student

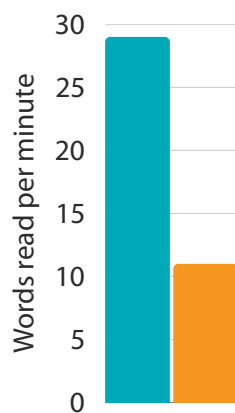
The graphs below show **average growth** achieved by Literacy First students from the beginning to end of the school year on specific skills. Students in the comparison group qualified for the program but did not receive Literacy First support; however, they may have qualified for other support services.

**KINDERGARTEN  
LETTER-SOUND  
FLUENCY**



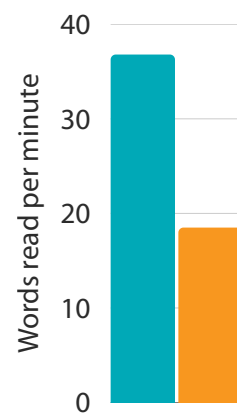
Average growth

**FIRST GRADE  
ORAL READING  
FLUENCY**



Average growth

**SECOND GRADE  
ORAL READING  
FLUENCY**



Average growth



Literacy First students



Comparison group



# Expanding Our Reach

## RECENT GROWTH AND INNOVATION

In the past five years, Literacy First doubled the number of sites where our services are offered and the number of collaborators with whom we work. We expanded our services in Central Texas, North Texas, and Tennessee. We also increased our capacity to train more tutors, reaching more students. This school year, we piloted our intervention in small group settings and are ready to serve more students with this model.

**+28**

school sites

**+8**

implementation  
collaborators

**+67**

tutors per year

**+700**

students served  
per year

## NEW TUTORS, SAME IMPACTFUL RESULTS



In 2025, we began working with the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga to train pre-service teachers to serve as tutors as they finish their degrees and enter the workforce. We also supported Chattanooga 2.0 in administering an AmeriCorps Tennessee program.

There are now 3 types of tutors delivering our intervention: AmeriCorps Volunteers, paraprofessional tutors, and pre-service teachers.

# Effectiveness Evidence

During this school year, Literacy First earned the highest designation of effectiveness evidence for K-2 intervention from the [What Works Clearinghouse](#) of the Institute of Education Sciences, and [Evidence for ESSA](#) at the Center for Research and Reform in Education at Johns Hopkins University.

In collaboration with The University of Texas at Austin's College of Education, we [published an article](#) in early 2026 examining program efficacy across student subgroups. The study found that students receiving English or Spanish interventions yielded significant gains, and the effects persisted across gender, initial skill level, bilingual status, special education status, and enrollment cohorts.



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