Program Overview

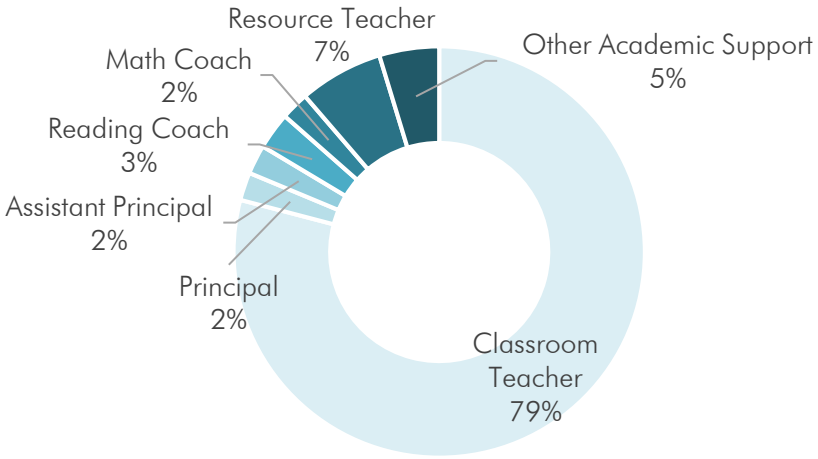
i-Ready is an interactive online instructional program that is aligned with Florida English and Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics standards. The program also offers an adaptive diagnostic assessment. During the 2018-19 school year, the i-Ready program was implemented in all non-charter elementary schools across the district for both reading and mathematics. All schools were required to utilize the diagnostic assessments, while the online instructional piece was optional for non-Extended Reading Time (ERT) schools. In addition, to ensure that students at ERT schools received additional supplemental reading instruction, these schools also received access to the i-Ready Teacher Toolbox in reading as well as the Ready Language Arts Florida Standards (LAFS) books. Schools were also able to purchase additional supports in mathematics through the i-Ready Teacher Toolbox in mathematics and the Ready Mathematics Florida Standards (MAFS) books.

The 2018-19 evaluation of the i-Ready program consists of results of a comprehensive survey given to elementary instructional staff to gather data on usage and perceptions, as well as an analysis of student implementation and achievement data.

Elementary Instructional Staff Usage and Perception Survey

In May 2019, a survey was disseminated to all non-charter elementary school teachers, resource teachers, coaches, and administrators in order to gather information on the usage and perceptions of i-Ready. The survey received 2,347 responses, with a 29% response rate.

The majority of survey responses were from classroom teachers.

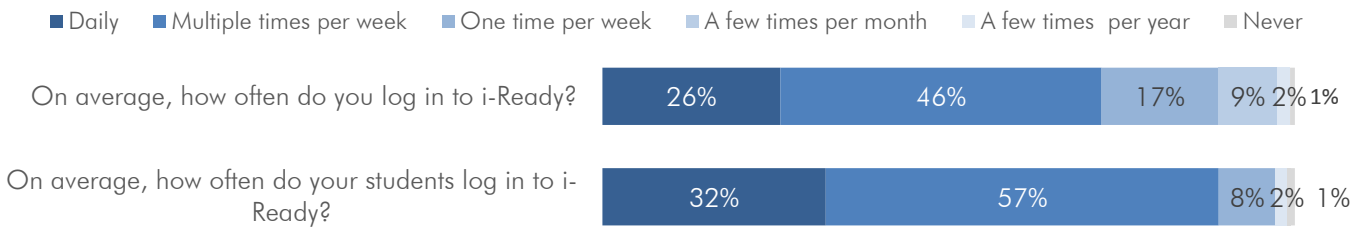


The survey was adaptive, so classroom teachers received different questions than coaches or administrators. Classroom teachers received the majority of the questions on the survey. Teachers were asked about their program usage, professional development received, barriers to implementing the program, and perceptions of the program and its impact on their students. If teachers indicated that their school had access to the i-Ready subject area toolboxes and/or the Ready LAFS/MAFS books, they were given an opportunity to share their perceptions of these supplemental resources. Additional questions on usage, barriers, and perceptions were posed to elementary coaches, resource teachers, and administrators.

Classroom Teacher Program Usage

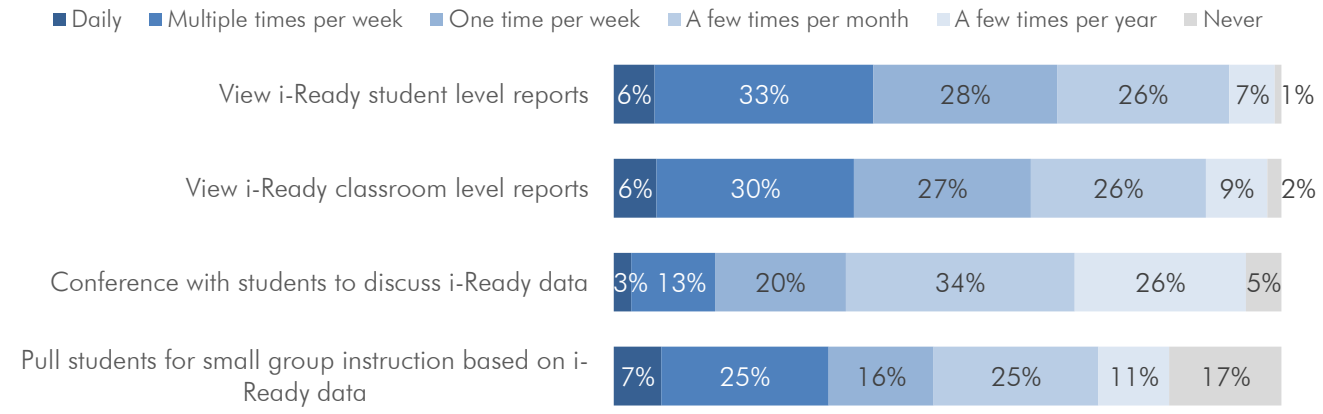
The vast majority of teachers indicated that they log into the program at least once a week, with a quarter logging in daily. More than a third of teachers indicated that their students logged into the program daily. Three quarters of teachers started using i-Ready by September 2018, and 96% reported beginning the online instruction by the end of October 2018. This timeline aligns with district guidelines. Online instruction can begin after completion of the first diagnostic assessment, which can be administered after the 20-day count through the first week of October. Students who test earlier in the testing window can start online instruction earlier; however, all kindergarten students must test the same week in late September/early October as their score is used for teacher evaluation.

Almost all teachers reported that both they and their students log in to i-Ready at least once a week.



Teachers also reported that their students generally received the recommended amount of online instruction per week. For reading, 79% of teachers indicated that their students logged between 30 and 60 minutes per week, and 75% of teachers reported that their students received between 30 and 60 minutes in math instruction.

More than 90% of teachers reported pulling i-Ready reports at least a few times per month. However, only 69% conference with students and 72% pull students for small group a few times a month.

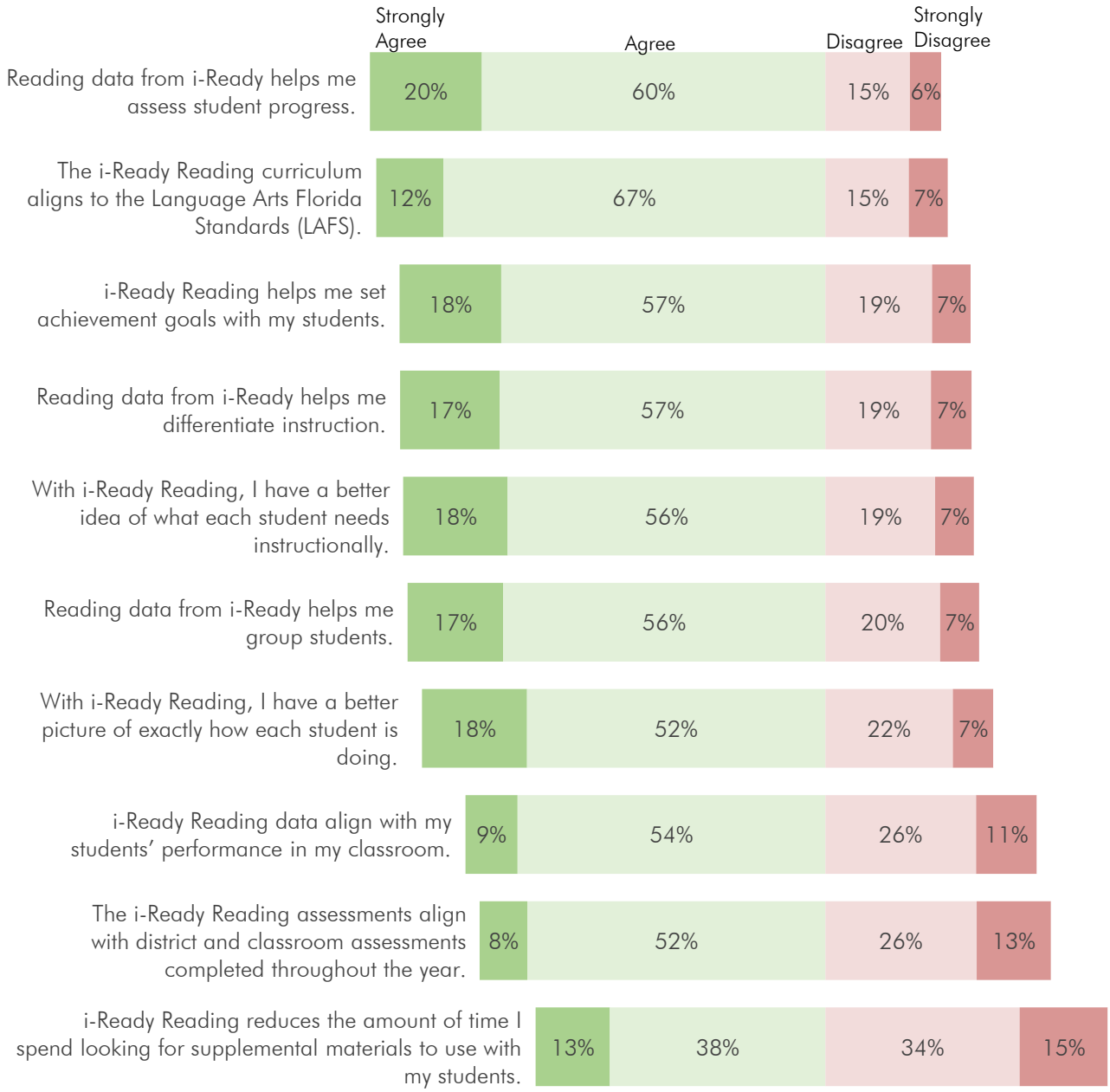


The majority of teachers (66%) indicated that they use both the school lab and classroom computers for student i-Ready usage. Teachers also generally indicated that their schedule is consistent, with 79% stating that their schedule is very consistent/consistent. Many teachers (43%) reported having no time during testing windows, while 30% have less lab time, and 15% are not impacted by the testing windows.

Classroom Teacher Perceptions

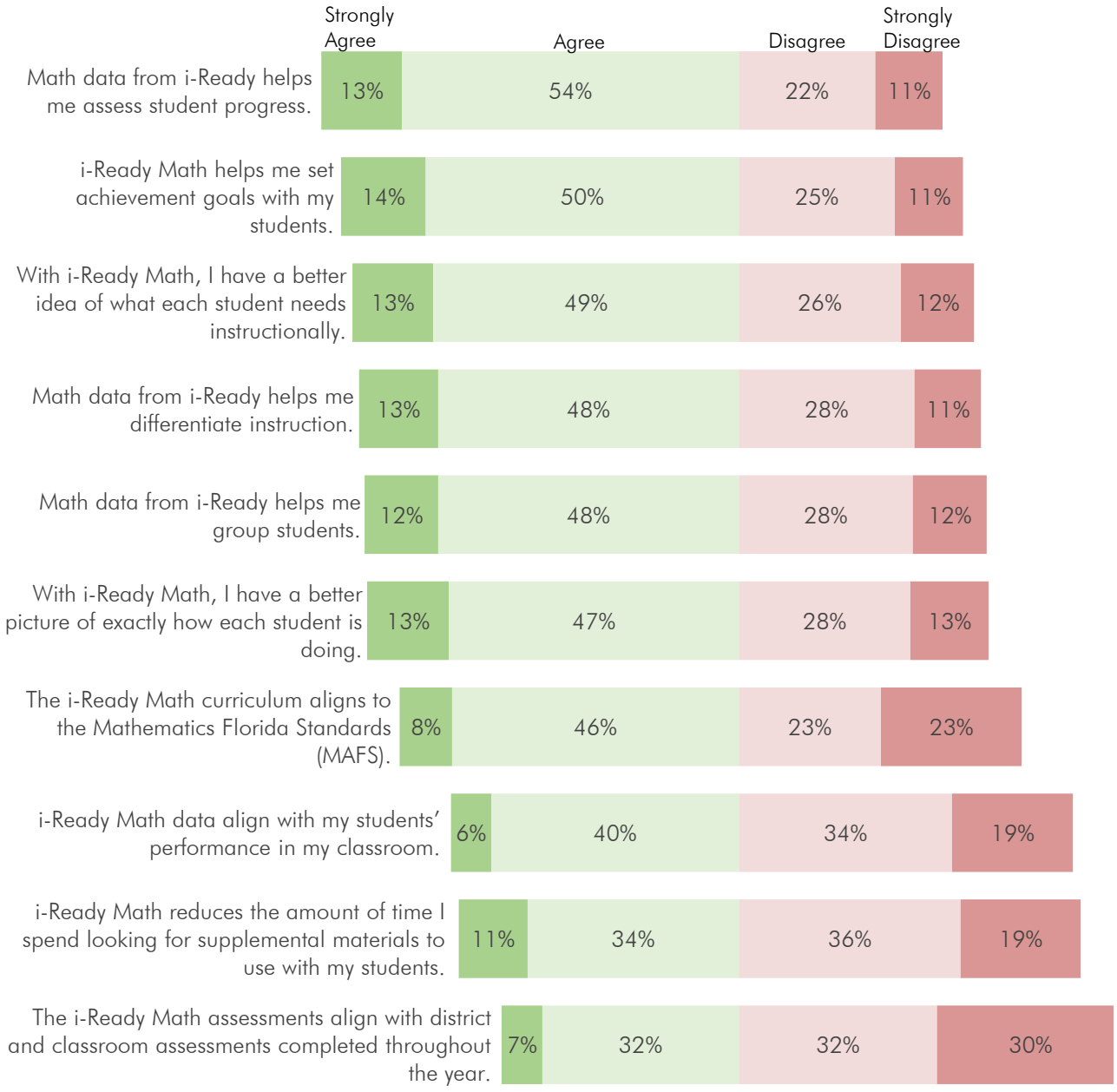
Overall, teachers felt positively regarding the i-Ready Reading program. They specifically felt that reading data helped them monitor student progress, set achievement goals, and differentiate instruction. Despite agreeing that the program aligns to the Language Arts Florida Standards (LAFS), they were less likely to agree that the i-Ready data aligned to other student performance measures. Additionally, only half of teachers who responded felt that i-Ready reduced the amount of time they spent looking for supplemental resources.

Teachers indicated that data from i-Ready Reading helped them assess student progess.
Half of teachers disagreed that i-Ready helped them reduce their time looking for supplemental materials.



Teachers felt slightly less positively regarding the i-Ready Math program; however, trends were similar. Most teachers agreed that the math data helped them assess student progress, and less than half agreed that i-Ready math reduced the amount of time they spent looking for supplemental materials. Many teachers also felt that i-Ready math did not align with MAFS and/or other student progress monitoring measures.

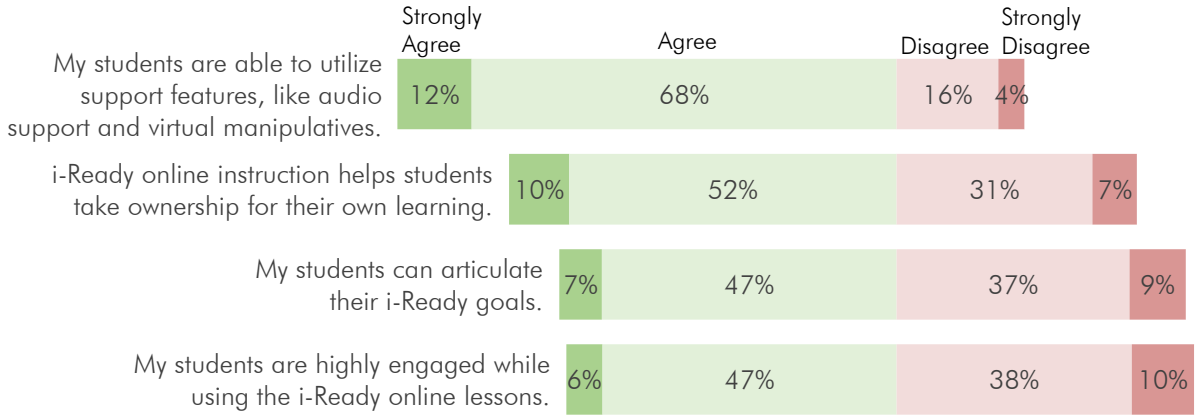
Teachers indicated that data from i-Ready math helps them assess student progress. However, many also felt that i-Ready did not align to standards and other progress monitoring measures.



Perceived Student Impact

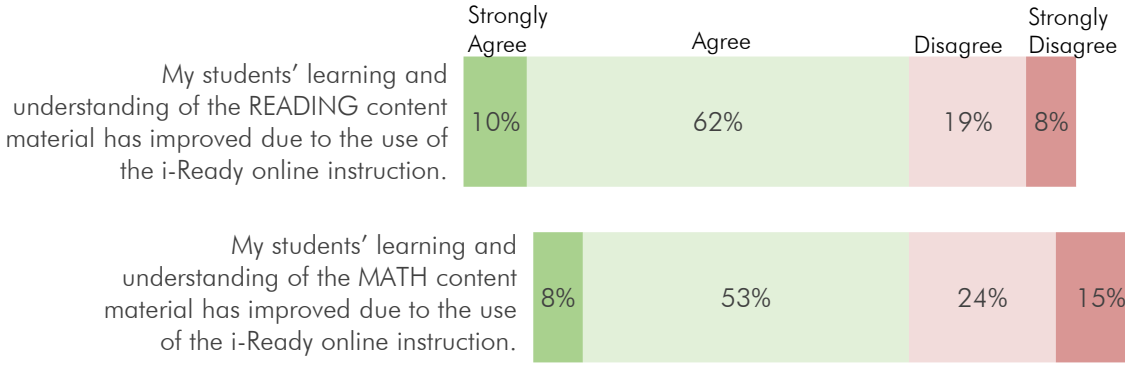
Teachers were also asked to report on the engagement and impact of i-Ready on their students. The majority of teachers (80%) reported that their students could utilize the support features in the online instruction and diagnostics with ease; however, this number was lower (54%) for kindergarten teachers. Just over half of teachers agreed that their students could articulate their goals (54%) and were highly engaged during the online lessons (53%).

Just over half of teachers agreed that their students could articulate their i-Ready goals and that their students were enaged during lessons.



Again, when asked about reading and math perceptions separately, teachers felt more favorably about i-Ready Reading. Almost three quarters of teachers felt that their students learning of reading content increased due to the use of i-Ready, while fewer (60%) felt that the Math i-Ready online instruction benefited their student's learning.

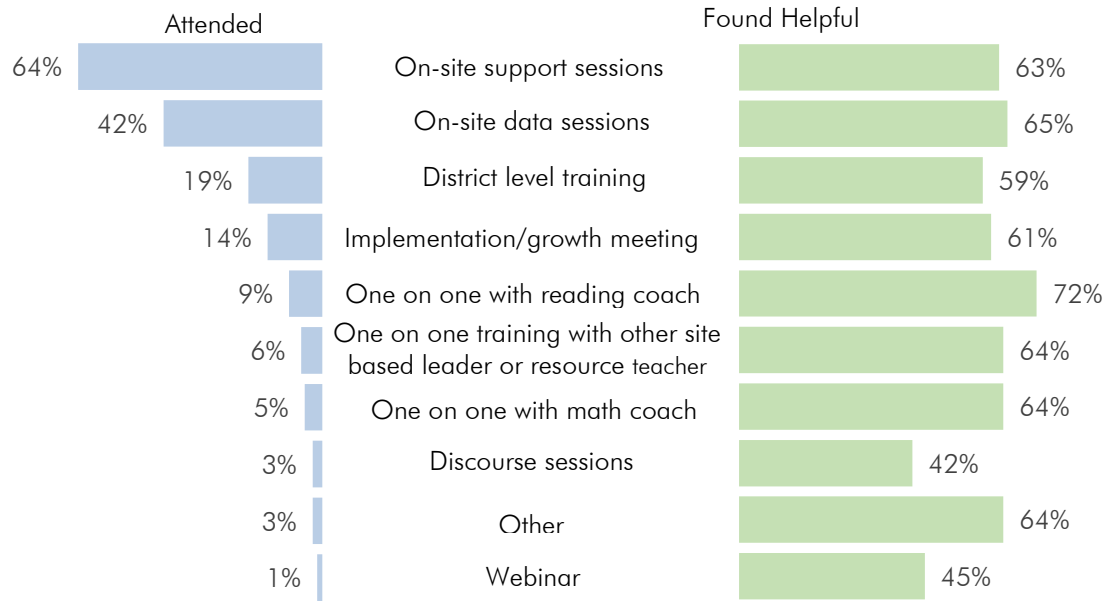
More teachers felt that i-Ready reading benefited student learning compared to i-Ready math. However, the majority of teachers did feel that both i-Ready subjects positively impacted their students.



Classroom Teacher Professional Development

The majority of teachers (64%) indicated that they felt they did NOT need additional professional development in order to utilize i-Ready with fidelity. Teachers were asked which professional development opportunities they attended and the helpfulness of each. Only 5% of teachers indicated that they had not attended any professional development during the 2018-19 school year.

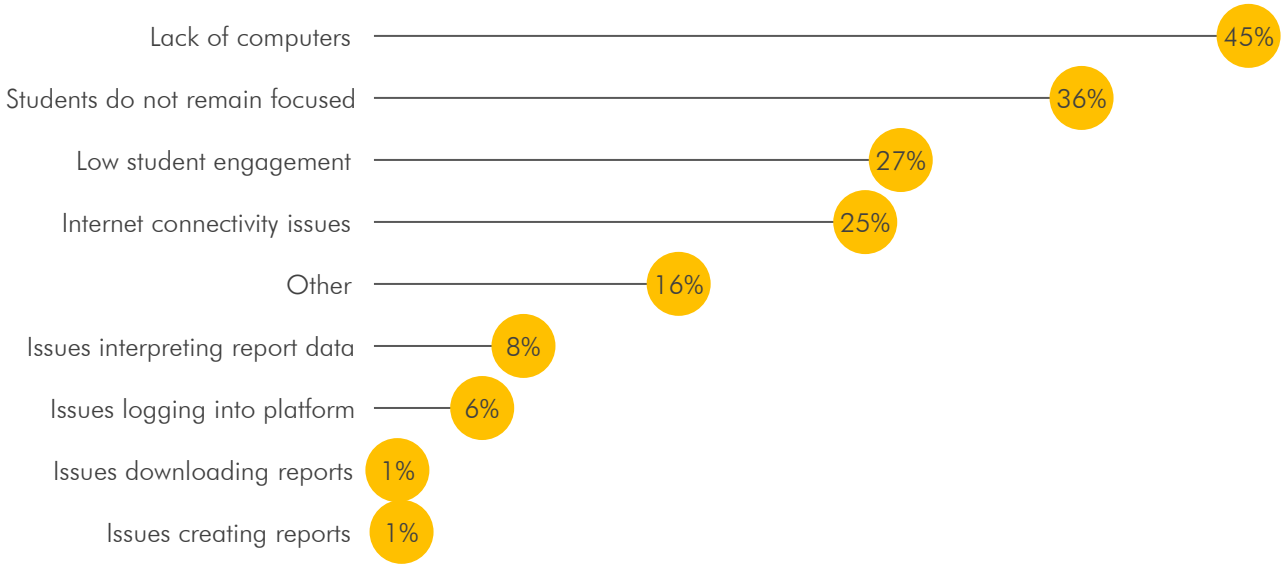
More teachers attended on-site professional development on their site.
Teachers found one-on-ones with reading coaches the most helpful.



Classroom Teacher Barriers to Implementation

Teachers were asked to identify their most common barriers to implementation. Despite 45% of teachers indicating that lack of computers was a barrier in implementation, only 36% of teachers indica ted that they needed additional technology to implement i-Ready.

Teachers most commonly identified barriers to implementation were issues with technology and student engagement.

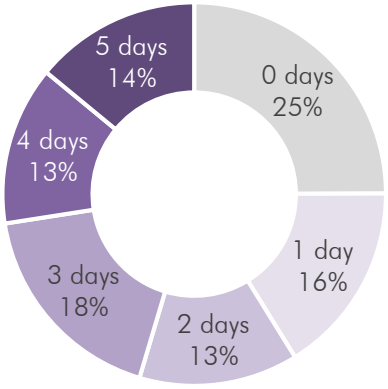


The barrier that was most commonly indicated as 'other' was time. Teachers noted that they struggled to find time in their week for their students to complete their online instruction with fidelity, review the i-Ready data, utilize the data in planning, and still ensure that students received enough instructional time.

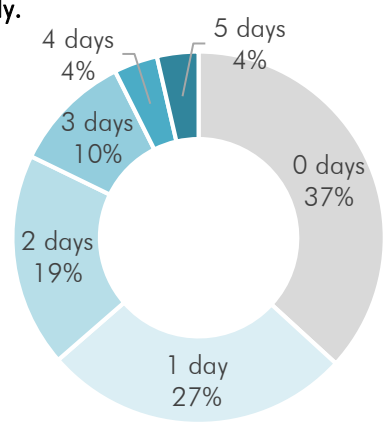
LAFS/MAFS Books Usage and Perceptions

A significant number of teachers who indicated that their school either purchased and/or received the Ready LAFS and/or MAFS Books reported using the resource an average of zero days per week.

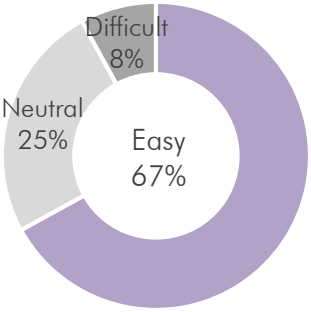
A quarter of teachers with access to the LAFS books did NOT utilize the resource regularly.

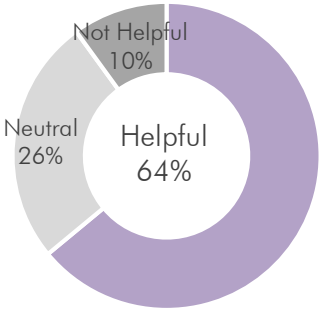


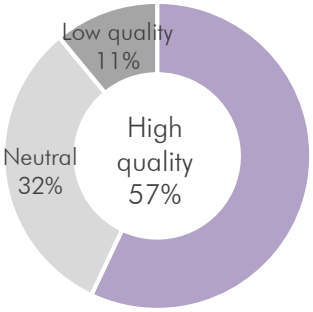
More than a third of teachers with access to the MAFS books did NOT utilize the resource regularly.



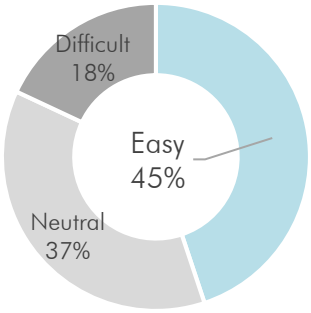
Despite many teachers indicating that they did not use the Ready LAFS books, most teachers who used the resource overall felt positively about the resource and noted that it was easy to use, helpful, and of high quality.

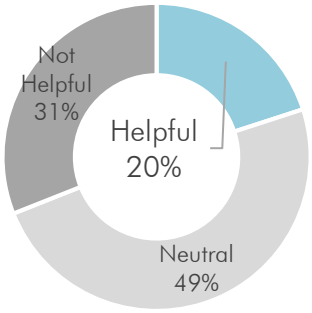


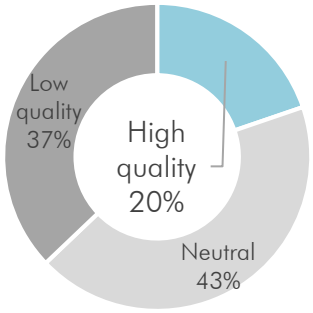




Teachers felt less positively about the Ready MAFS books, with less than half of respondents indicating that the resource was easy to use and only 20% indicating they felt the resource was helpful and of high quality.



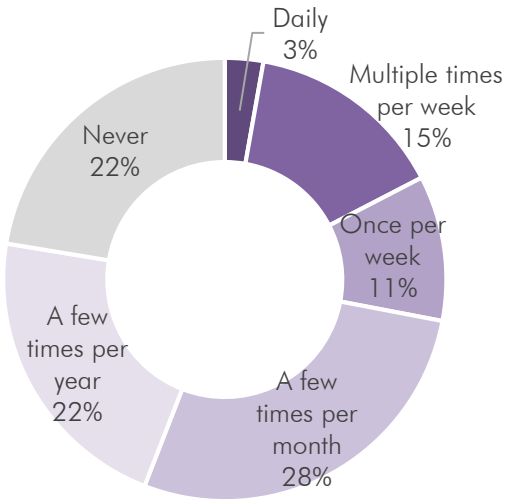




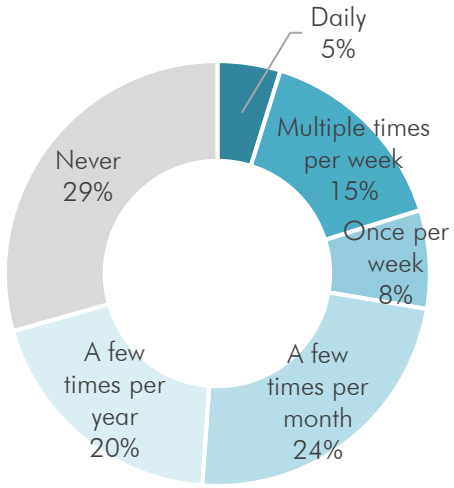
Toolbox Usage and Perceptions

Similarly to the LAFS/MAFS usage, a large number of teachers also indicated that despite having access to the Reading and/or Math Toolbox, they have never utilized the resources.

Almost a quarter of teachers with access to the Reading toolbox never utilized the resource.

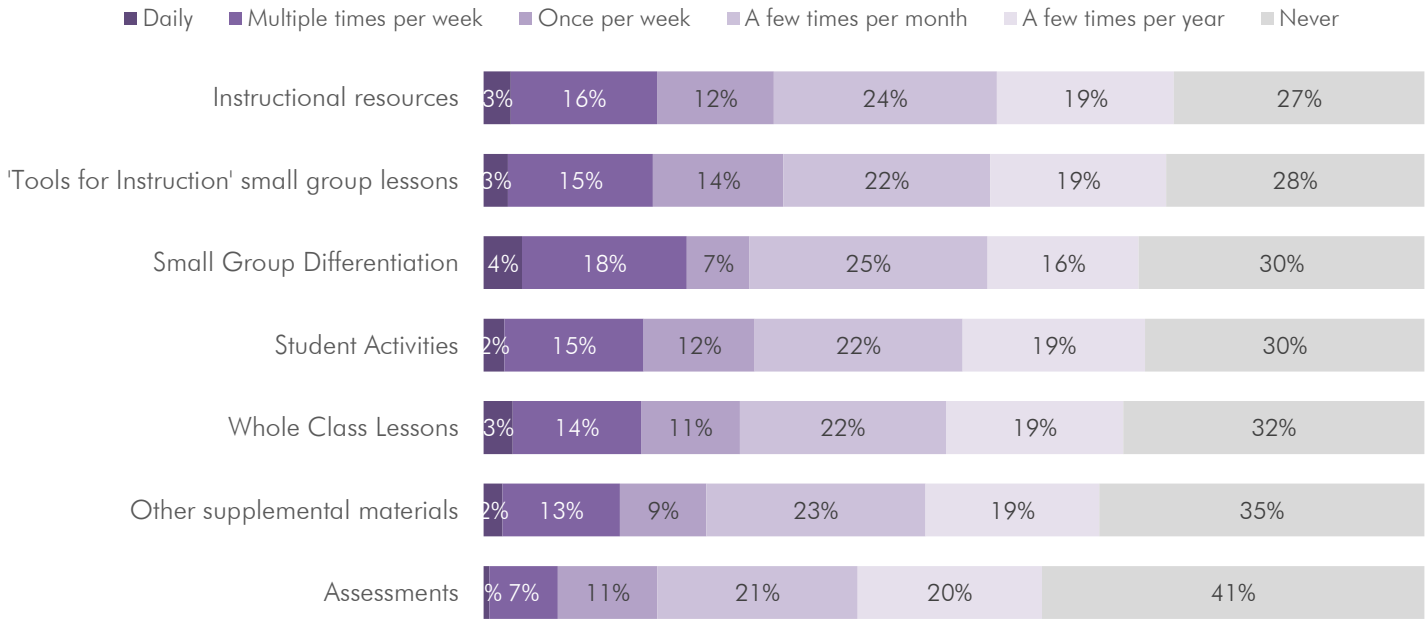


More than a quarter of teachers with access to the Math toolbox never utilized the resource.

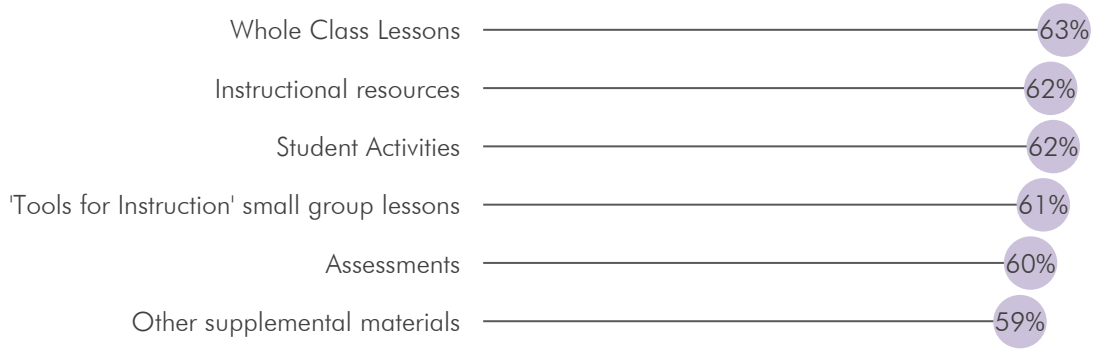


Teachers were asked how often they used each resource in the toolbox, and how helpful each resource was. In the reading toolbox, teachers utilized instructional resources and the 'Tools for Instruction' the most frequently. Most teachers who used the resources felt that they all were helpful.

Teachers most frequenlty utlized the instructional resources and small group lessons.
A large number of teachers with access to the resources rarely or never used them.

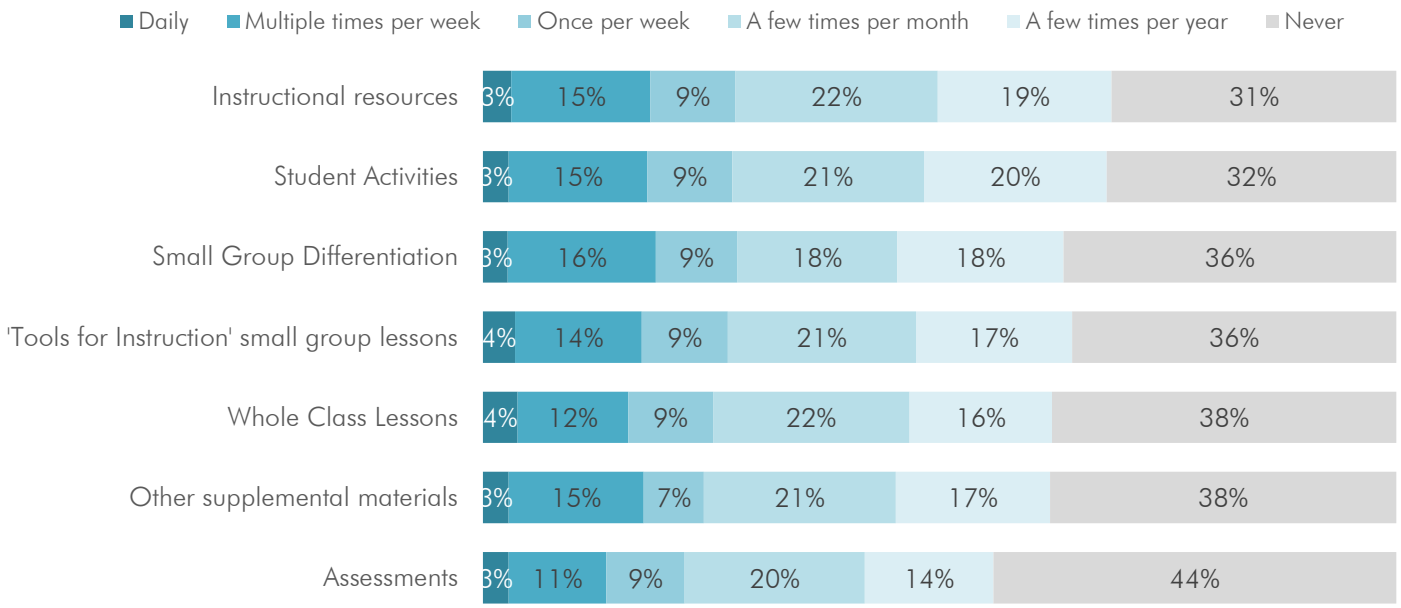


The majority of teachers who used each Reading Toolbox resource found them helpful.

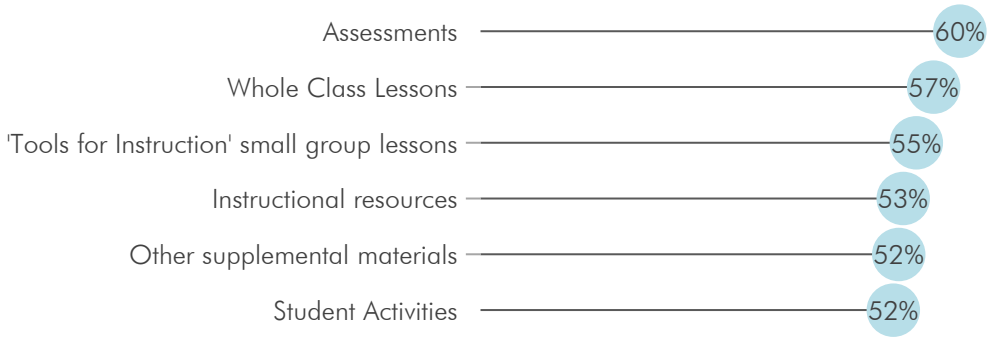


In the math toolbox, teachers most frequently used the instructional resources and student activities. Although assessments were generally used the least, those who used them found them the most helpful.

Teachers most frequenlty utlized the instructional resources and student activities.
A large number of teachers with access to the resources never used them.



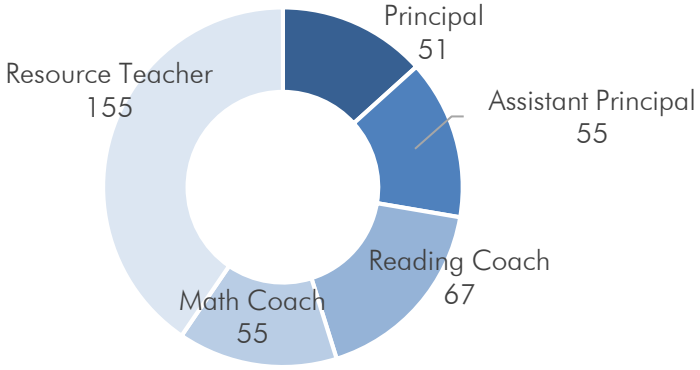
The majority of teachers who used each Math toolbox resource found them helpful, but less helpful than the reading resources.



Administrators, Coaches, and Resource Teachers

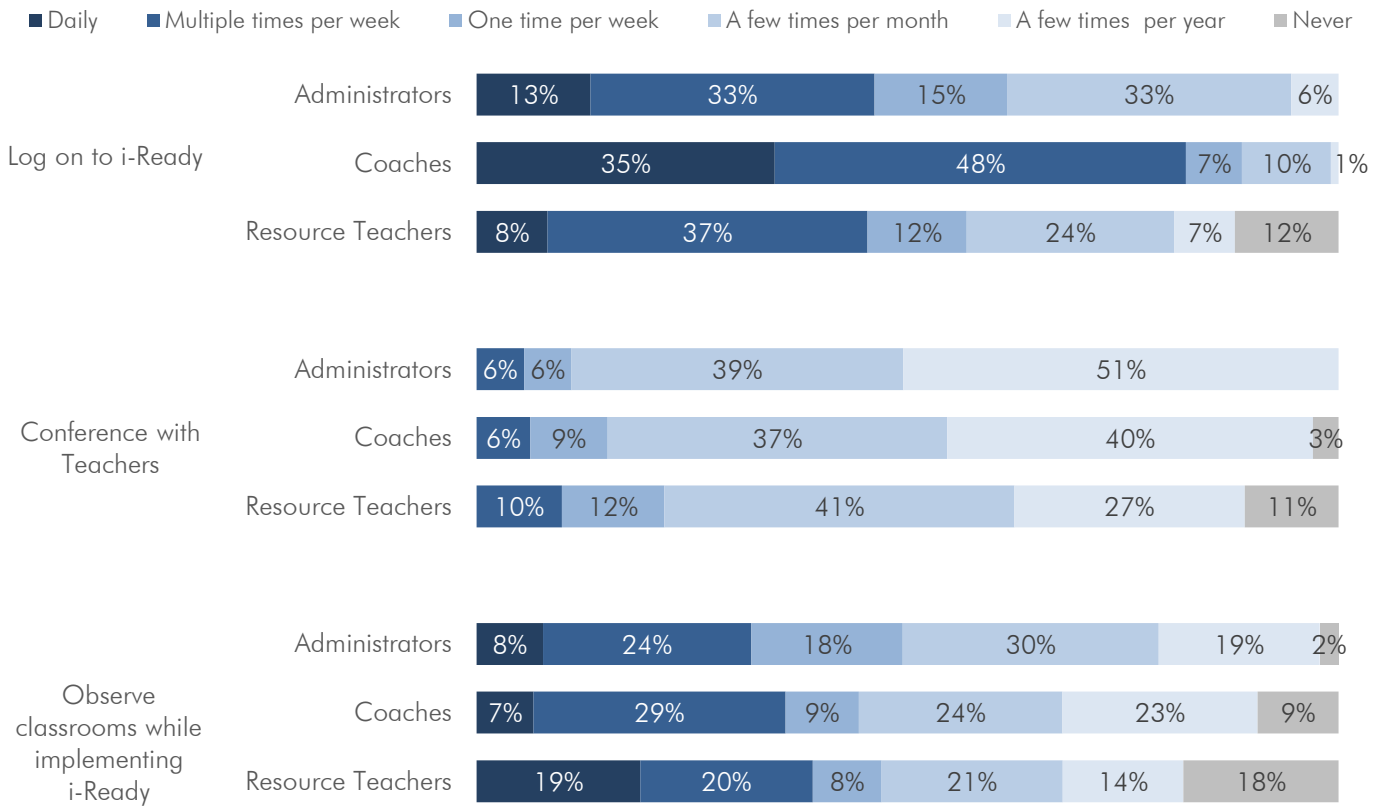
Administrators, reading coaches, math coaches, and resource teachers all were asked questions assessing their utilization and perceptions of the i-Ready program.

More resource teachers responded compared to coaches and administrators.



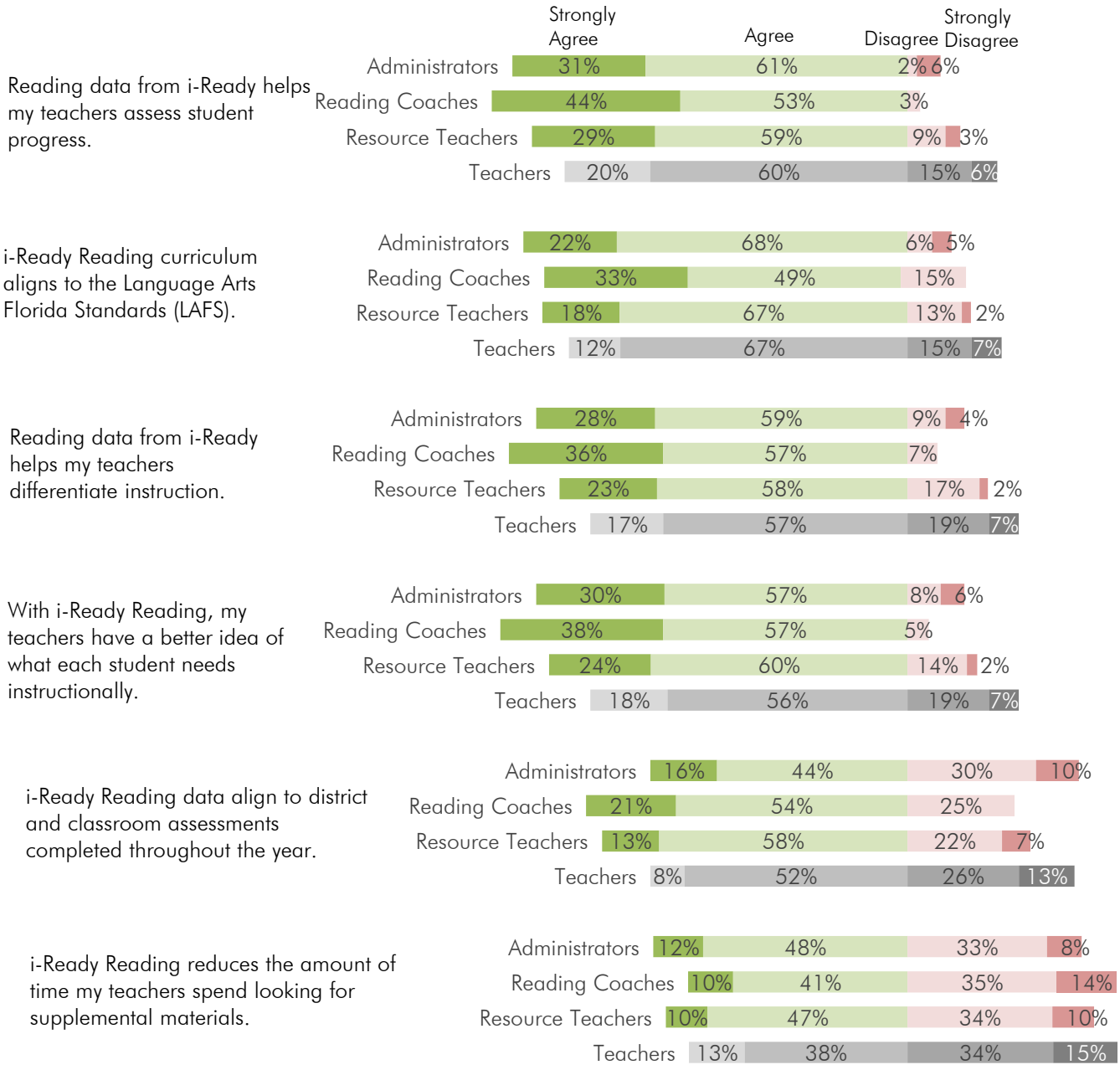
Reading and math coaches indicated that they logged into the program the most, with more than a third logging in daily. All administrators reported conferencing with teachers at least a few times a year, and 98% observed classrooms while implementing i-Ready a few times a year.

Coaches reported logging into i-Ready the most, while resource teachers reported conferencing with teachers and observing classrooms more often.



Overall perceptions of i-Ready Reading were positive. Administrators, coaches, and resource teachers tended to feel more favorably in regards to the program compared to teachers. The majority agreed that reading data helps teachers assess student progress, understand student needs, and differentiate instruction. Coaches felt more favorably about the reading data compared to administrators and resource teachers. In the chart below, teacher responses to the corresponding perception questions as reported earlier are added in gray to show differences between the groups.

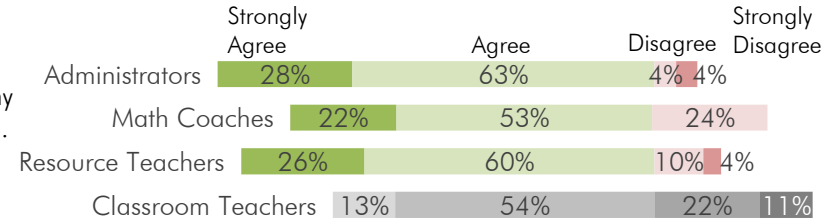
Like classroom teachers, administrators, coaches, and resource teachers agreed that i-Ready reading data helps teachers assess student progress.
Many also agreed that i-Ready did NOT help reduce the amount of time looking for supplemental materials.



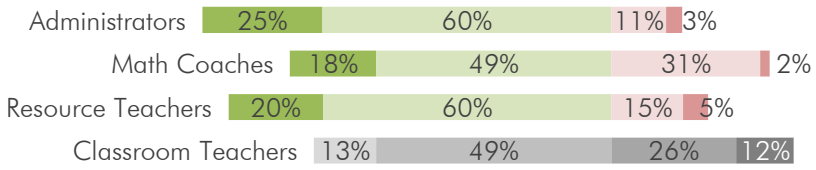
While administrators, coaches, and resource teachers felt less positively about the math i-Ready program compared to reading, they did indicate higher agreement rates compared to classroom teachers. Administrators, coaches, and resource teachers agreed that the data helps teachers assess student progress, understand student needs, and differentiate instruction. Fewer agreed that the math i-Ready data aligned to other student performance measures, and that the program reduced the amount of time looking for supplemental materials. Again, teacher responses for the corresponding perception questions are included below to illustrate differences in perceptions between groups.

Administrators, coaches, and resource teachers agreed that i-Ready math data helps teachers assess progress, student needs, and differentiate instruction.
Many in all groups disagreed regarding the alignment to standards and other performance measures.

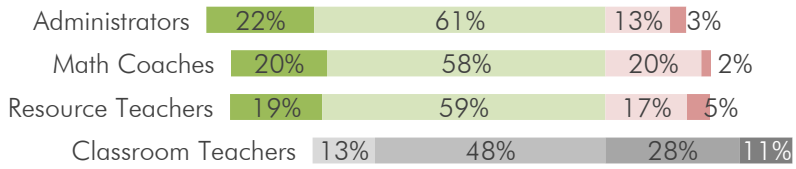
Math data from i-Ready helps my teachers assess student progress.



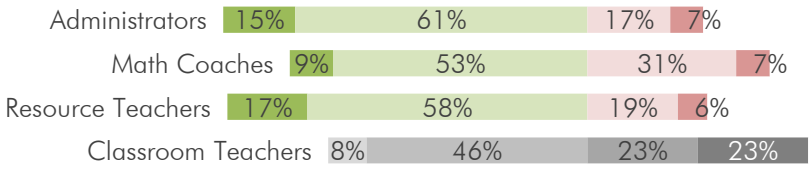
With i-Ready Math, my teachers have a better idea of what each student needs instructionally.



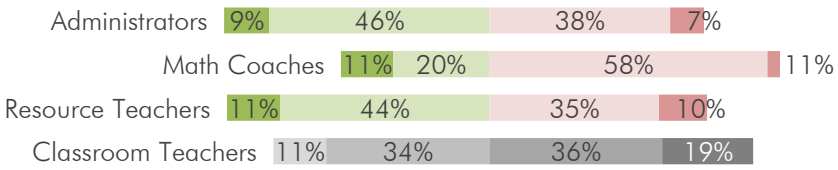
Math data from i-Ready helps my teachers differentiate instruction.



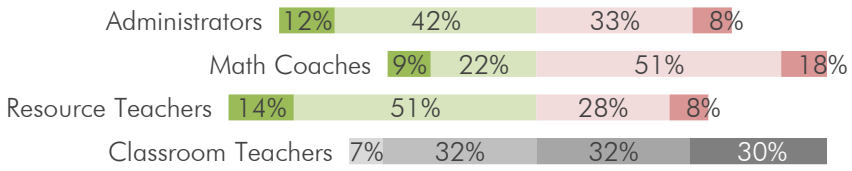
i-Ready Math curriculum aligns to the Mathematics Florida Standards (MAFS).



i-Ready Math reduces the amount of time my teachers spend looking for supplemental materials.



i-Ready Math data align to district and classroom assessments completed throughout the year.

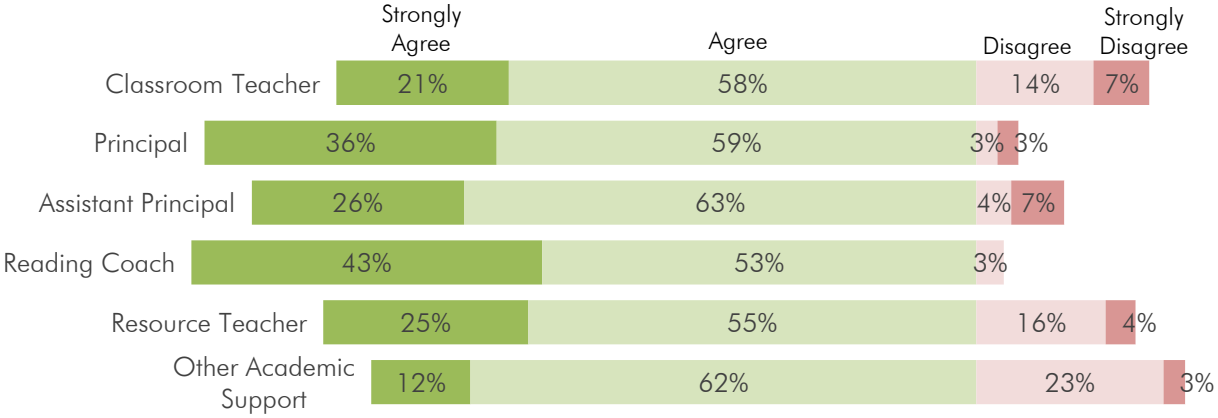


The majority of administrators, coaches, and resource teachers indicated that they did NOT need additional professional development to implement i-Ready with their teachers. When asked, they indicated that low student engagement (33%) and lack of computers (27%) were the largest barriers to implementation.

Overall Satisfaction

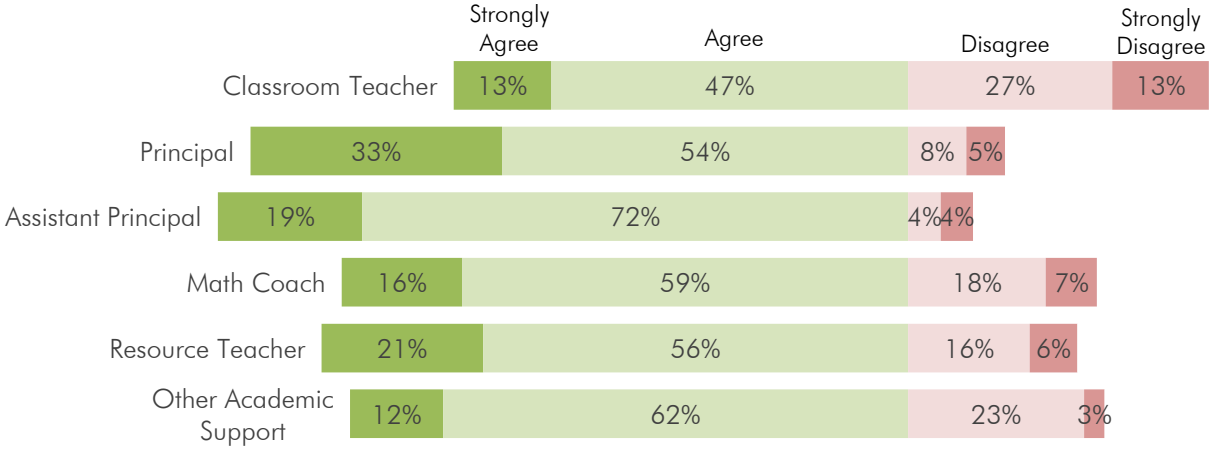
The majority of respondents (80%) indicated that they were satisfied with the i-Ready Reading program. However, satisfaction did differ by role. Reading coaches and principals reported the highest levels of satisfaction with the i-Ready Reading program.

Reading coaches and principals were the most satisfied with i-Ready Reading. Academic support other than coaches and resource teachers were the least satisfied.



While most respondents (65%) also indicated they were satisfied with the i-Ready Math program, satisfaction was overall lower than seen for Reading. Administrators (principals and assistant principals) reported the highest levels of satisfaction with the i-Ready math program. Classroom teachers indicated the lowest levels of satisfaction.

Administrators were the most satisfied with i-Ready Math. Classroom teachers were the least satisfied.



Respondents were also invited to share additional thoughts regarding the i-Ready program. Seven hundred and twenty eight (728) respondents completed the free response question. The most common themes are summarized below.

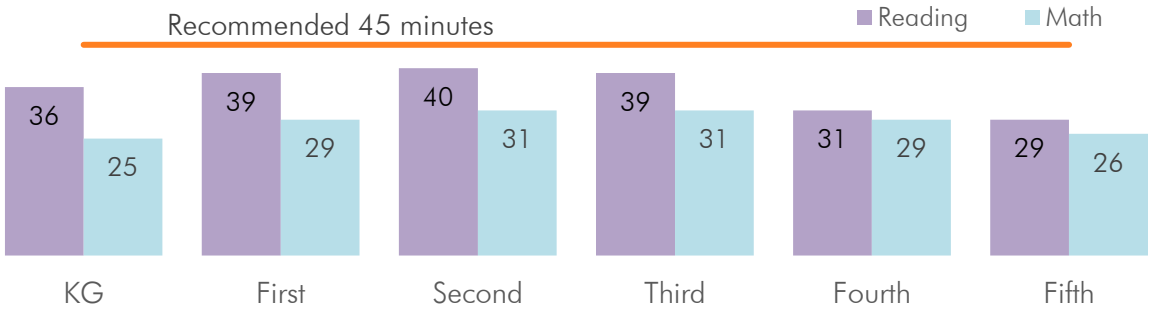
- Issues with the mathematics diagnostic assessment (274 responses). The most frequent theme seen across responses (with more than a third of responses) was in regards to the mathematics diagnostic assessment. Respondents remarked that they felt the diagnostic was not aligned to standards and not age appropriate. This was most common among teachers who stated they taught kindergarten or first grade. They reported that upon taking the diagnostic, students were presented with unfamiliar questions *at the beginning of the assessment* that were well beyond the scope of the curriculum. Students then became frustrated and visibly upset, which affected their ability to complete the rest of the diagnostic. Some of the teachers with this complaint acknowledged that they understand the fact that the diagnostic is adaptable and that students would be presented with advanced questions, and while they tried to prepare their students for this fact, they still had students who began crying and "shut down". Some respondents noted that these students were often their brightest students who were not used to not knowing the answer to a question. In turn, teachers felt that the results of the diagnostic did not align with other student assessments and classroom performance.
- Student engagement issues (53 responses). Some teachers noted that their students were not interested in the lessons. Some stated that their students "just sat there" until they physically sat near the students and monitored their progress. Respondents noted issues with engagement upon all grade levels; they stated that younger students had trouble focusing on a program for more than 15 minutes, while older students needed more variety of activities. Some also noted that this was particularly an issue with high-level and gifted students.
- Time away from instruction (46 responses). Respondents noted frustration that the online instruction and diagnostics take time away from core instruction. They felt that focusing on better core instruction and hiring quality teachers would be a better investment for the district.
- Not age appropriate (34 responses). A number of respondents who reported teaching kindergarten felt that the online nature of the program was not age appropriate. These younger students had trouble focusing on lessons and were more likely to rush through diagnostics.
- Data and reports (32 responses). Respondents mentioned several suggestions for improvements on i-Ready reports. Many wanted batch reporting for diagnostic growth reports and additional reports to show student performance on each standard. Other suggestions were a report that includes all diagnostics in one report and the ability to sort students by last name. Some resource teachers remarked that they needed school-wide access to data, but had to rely on their administrators for help as they did not have students on their roster.
- Technology issues (22 responses). Some respondents noted that they did not have enough computers to implement the online instruction with fidelity. As the entire school has to rotate through the computer lab, often each classroom does not get to the recommended 45 minutes in each subject per week.
- Positive (53 responses). While most of the responses were criticisms or suggestions for improvement, there were a number of respondents who stated they enjoyed the program. They wrote that it is "valuable support" and a useful supplemental tool for differentiating and monitoring student progress. Some wrote that they believe i-Ready helped their students perform well on FSA. A handful of respondents also noted that they appreciated the support they received from the Curriculum Associates representatives.

Student Level Usage and Achievement

Student Implementation

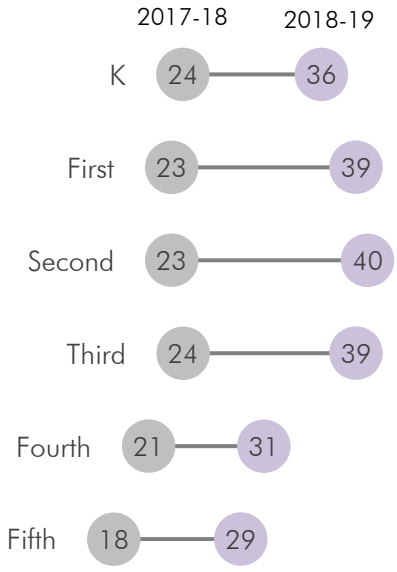
Recommended usage for students is 45 minutes of online instruction per content area per week. As online instruction was optional, not all students and schools utilized this piece of the program. Some schools implemented the online instruction across all students and others used it as a targeted intervention for groups of students. Less than one percent (N=699) of students spent zero time on the Reading online instruction, while 1% (N=758) of students did not use the math online instruction at all. Of the students who spent any time on the program throughout the year, 26% (N=23,831) of students met this recommended amount of time on the program for reading, and 12% (N=11,424) of students spent the recommended time in math.

For students who had any use of the online instruction, average use for both Reading and Math was below the recommended 45 minutes a week for all grade levels.

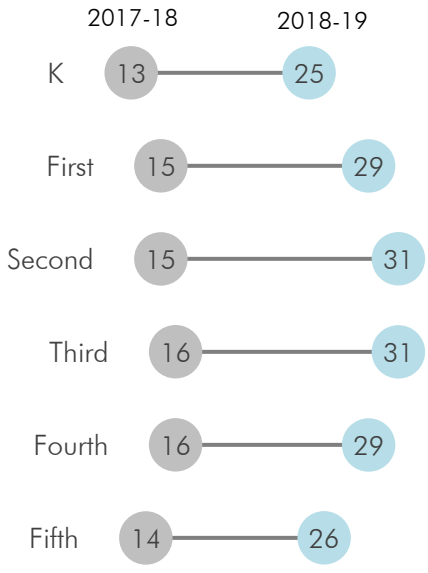


While the average usage for 2018-19 was still lower than recommended, usage in 2018-19 increased from 2017-18 in all grade levels in both subjects.

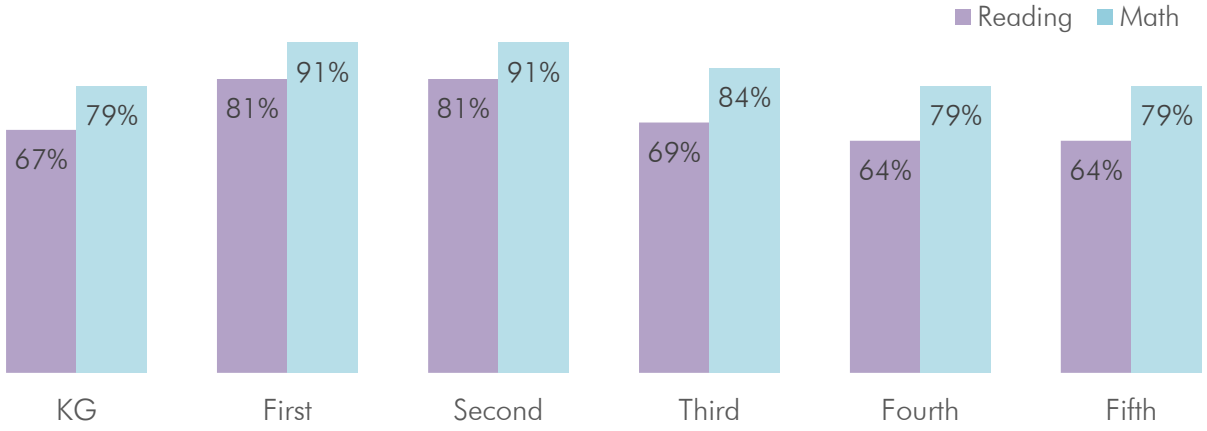
On average, students completed 14 more minutes per week in online reading instruction in 2018-19.



On average, students completed 13 more minutes per week in online math instruction in 2018-19.



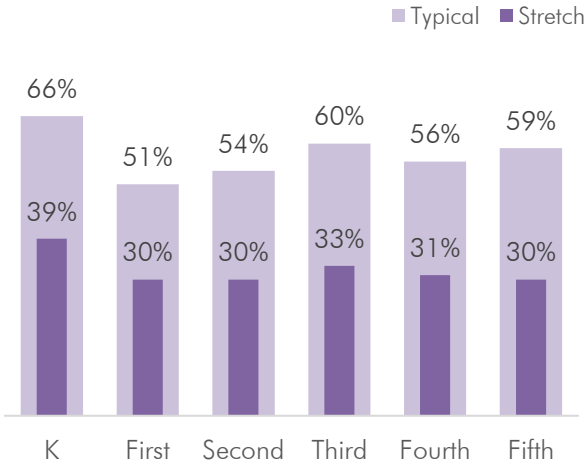
First and second graders had the highest pass rate for lessons for both in i-Ready Reading and Math instruction. Pass rates in 2018-19 did not differ from those in the prior year.



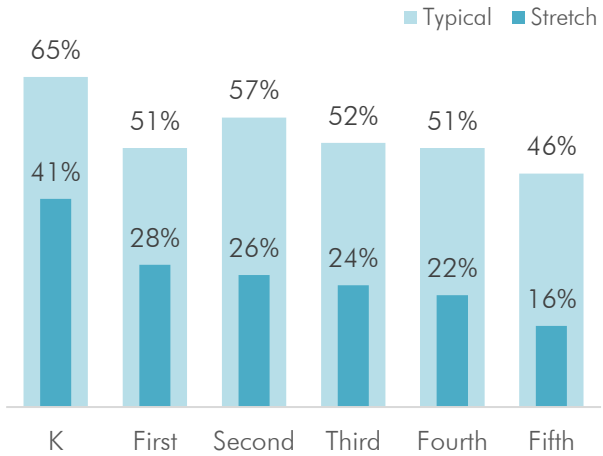
Typical and Stretch Growth

In 2018-19, i-Ready changed the way student growth throughout the year was measured. Instead of expecting all students in a grade level to grow the same amount, i-Ready acknowledged that growth over the year is often dependent on a student's placement level. Typical growth in i-Ready is defined as the average growth of students at a certain grade level and placement level. Stretch growth is a more ambitious level of annual growth recommended to put students scoring below grade level on a path to proficiency and students scoring on grade level on a path of advancement. Overall, a little over half of students made typical growth on their i-Ready diagnostic assessments, and 25-30% made their stretch growth goals in both subjects.

More kindergarten and third grade students made their typical and stretch growth targets in Reading.



More kindergarten students made both their typical and stretch growth targets in Math.
Less than half of fifth grade students made either their typical or stretch growth goals.



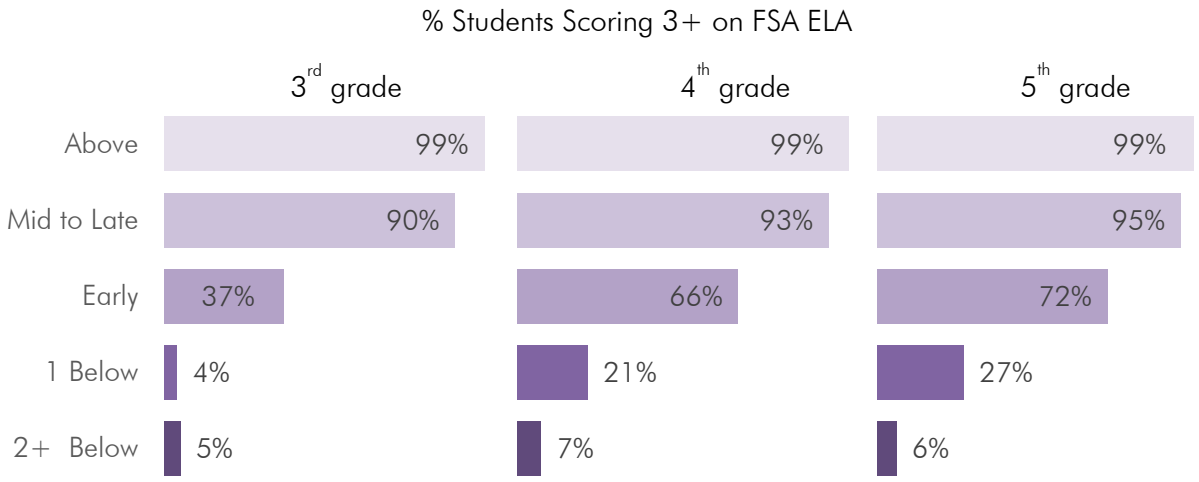
i-Ready and FSA

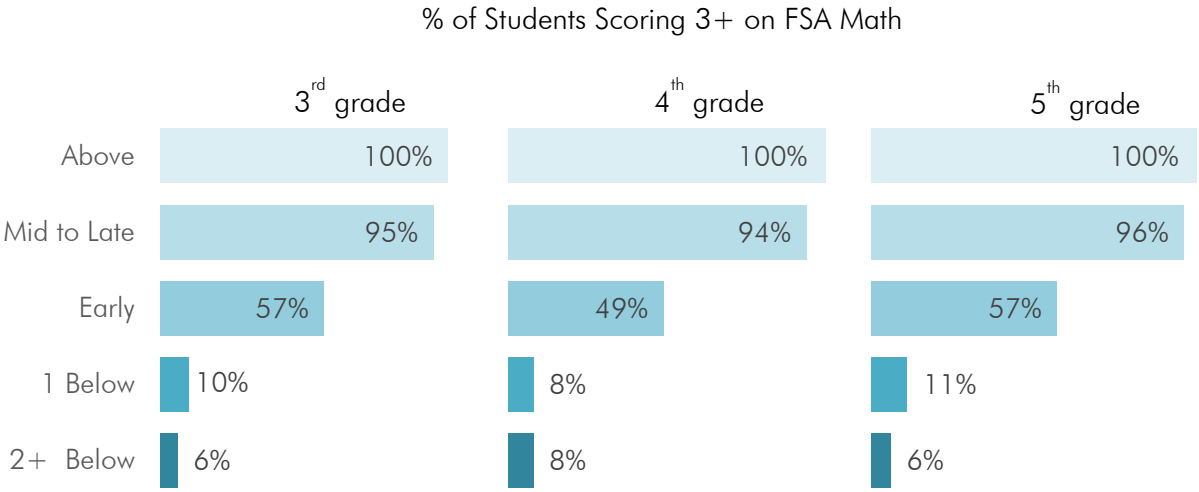
The i-Ready spring diagnostic assessment was **highly** correlated to the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) in both ELA and Math at all grade levels.

Grade	i-Ready Reading to FSA ELA	i-Ready Math to FSA Math
3rd	0.86	0.89
4th	0.85	0.90
5th	0.86	0.89

In other words, within each grade level, as the scale score increased on i-Ready, it also increased on FSA. Correlations greater than 0.7 are considered strong.

Another way to look at the data is the relative grade level placement. The vast majority of students who scored **at mid, late, or above** grade level by the final diagnostic assessment scored a level 3 or higher on FSA. A smaller number of students who were at **early** grade level and fewer students who were **below** grade level by the end of the school year scored a level 3 or higher on FSA.





Within the i-Ready online reports, there are 'views' that impact how student data are reported. The user can switch between 'Beginning of Year', 'Standard', and 'End of Year' views. In the default 'Standard' view, students scoring in the early grade level are coded as on-grade level. If a user changes the view to 'End of Year', these same student scores are coded as below grade level. At the beginning of a school year, scores in the early grade level should be coded as on-grade level and the 'Standard' view will give the user an accurate perspective of student achievement; however, by the end of the year this same view will overestimate how many students are actually performing on grade level.

An alternative to making decisions based on placement is to look at the percentile rank. In addition to a scale score, i-Ready provides a nationally normed percentile rank for each diagnostic assessment. This percentile is not affected by the view selected on a report. Currently, the Comprehensive Reading Plan designates using the 39th percentile as a cut score for Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) Tier 2 intervention.

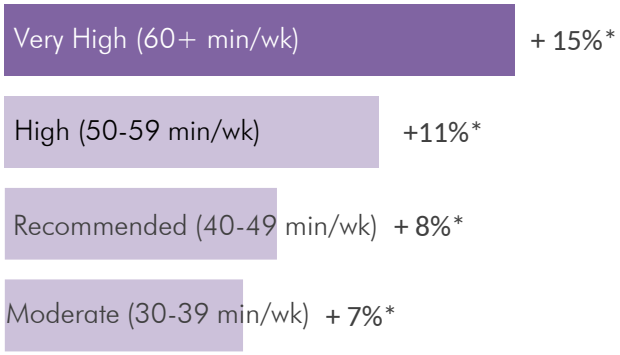
To increase the use of the percentile rank in data decisions, i-Ready has added this measure to their reports for the 2019-20 school year. Previously, percentile rank was not included in the default diagnostic user report and the user had to drill down to each student to view the percentile rank. The addition of percentile rank in data reports will aid both teachers gathering class level data as well as administrators who are trying to gather whole school data.

i-Ready Usage and Gains

To determine if time on the program had any influence on gains from the first to last diagnostic assessment, students with low online instruction usage (less than 20 minutes per week on the program) were compared to students with moderate (30-39 minutes per week), recommended (40-49 minutes per week), high (50-59 minutes per week) and very high (more than 60 minutes per week) usage. As usage had increased during the 2018-19 school year, the control group of low usage had to be expanded to less than 20 minutes a week to find enough students for matching. Students were matched to ensure similar baseline characteristics using propensity score matching. Students were matched on their fall diagnostic assessment scale score, whether the student attended a Title I and/or Achievement school, and grade level. **An assumption for this analysis is that students in all groups received equal, quality core instruction throughout the year and i-Ready was used as a supplemental tool.**

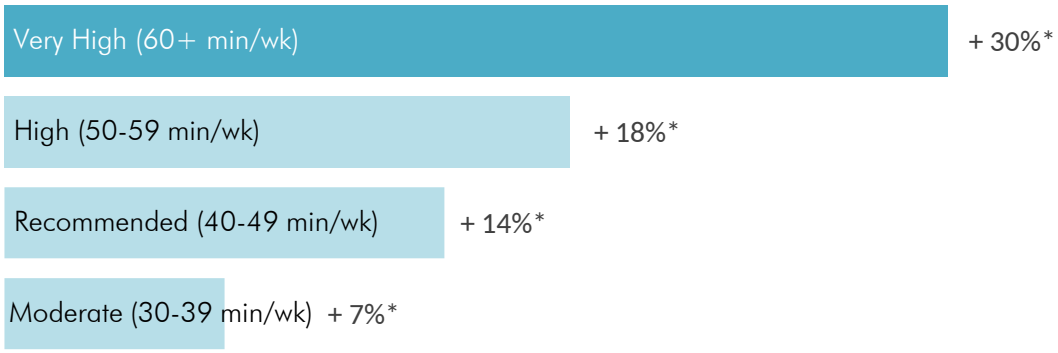
Significant increases in gains on the diagnostic assessment were found among all groups compared to matched students with low usage. While all the gains were significant, all had small effect sizes. Effect sizes for ELA gains were very small (d<0.1) and for math gains were small (d<0.3). To standardize the gains among all placement and grade levels, the percent of typical gains is shown below.

Students with **very high** (60+ minutes) usage in i-Ready Reading showed the greatest amount of gains on their diagnostic assessments compared to students with very low usage (<20 min/week).

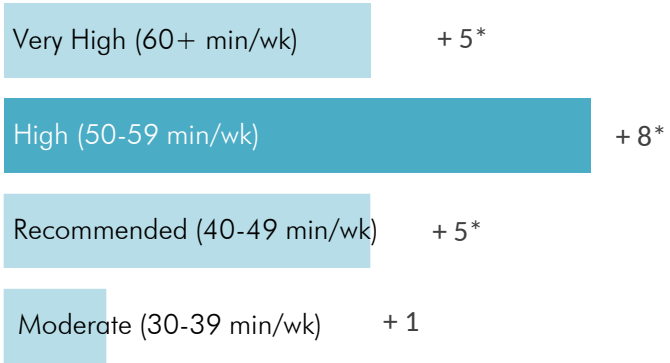


No significant differences were found between students with low usage and any other usage level on FSA ELA.

Students with **very high** (60+ min/week) usage in i-Ready Math showed the greatest amount of i-Ready diagnostic gains compared to students with very low usage (<20 min/week).



Significant differences on the FSA Mathematics scale score were found for students who received the recommended usage, high usage, and very high usage compared to matched students with low usage. Students with high usage (50-59 min/week) had the largest differences in scale scores. All effect sizes were small (d<0.3).



It should be noted that a limitation of this analysis is that time spent on the program beyond the recommended 45 minutes per week could be indicative of home usage. Students who use i-Ready online instruction at home may be different students than students with low usage in ways that cannot be captured in this analysis. Students using the program at home have access to technology including a computer and internet connection, and most likely have parental figures who are invested in the student's education. It is unknown if students with low usage have access to these two proven indicators of academic success. Therefore, while there appear to be some benefits for greater usage of the program, **it is still recommended** that students receive the 45 minutes of instruction per week as a supplement to strong core instruction.

Conclusions

Overall, teachers, coaches, resource teachers, and administrators generally felt positively about the i-Ready program. Teachers felt the data helped them assess student progress and differentiate instruction. Less than half of teachers felt that the resources with i-Ready helped reduce the time they spent looking for supplemental materials. Most teachers felt that i-Ready reading aligned to the state standards; however, fewer agreed that i-Ready math aligned to state standards or other student performance measures. Perceptions overall tended to be more positive in regards to the i-Ready reading program compared to math. Teachers in younger grades in particular had concerns about students becoming discouraged while taking the math diagnostic assessment.

In 2018-19, students spent more time per week on i-Ready online instruction in both subject areas compared to the prior year. Overall, about half of students made their recommended typical growth on the diagnostic, and 25-35% of students met their recommended stretch growth target. The FSA was highly correlated to i-Ready diagnostic scores in both subject areas. The vast majority of students who scored on mid, late, or above grade level on their spring diagnostic also scored a level 3 or higher on their FSA. Students who spent at least the recommended time on the i-Ready reading instruction had higher diagnostic gains compared to students with low usage, with the highest gains seen among the highest usage category. Students who spent at least the recommended amount of time on the i-Ready math instruction also had higher diagnostic gains compared to students with low usage. Again the highest gains were seen at the highest usage category. Students who used the i-Ready math program at least the recommended amount of time also had higher FSA mathematics scale scores compared to matched students with low usage. On FSA mathematics, the biggest increases in scale scores were seen at the high level of usage.

Recommendations

- **At the end of the year, only mid, late, or above grade level should be considered 'on level'.** Students who tested at early grade level were less likely to score a level 3 or higher on FSA and would benefit from extra targeted instruction and support. As the 'view' selected on the online i-Ready report can influence the color-coding and can be confusing, looking at national percentile as well as overall placement is recommended when making decisions regarding student interventions. This data piece has been added to i-Ready user reports for the 2019-20 school year.

- **Ensure quality core instruction.** While students utilizing the online instruction showed more gains on the diagnostic assessments, comparisons were made with the assumption that all students received equal, quality reading and mathematics instruction. i-Ready is a supplementary program and cannot replace quality classroom instruction.

- **If choosing to use the online instruction, implement with fidelity.** Curriculum Associates currently recommends 45 minutes of online instruction in each content area per week. While students overall spent more time on the program in 2018-19, only 26% met the recommended amount of time in reading and 12% in math.

- **Increase toolbox and LAFS/MAFS usage.** Between a quarter to a third of teachers who have access to the i-Ready toolbox and Ready LAFS/MAFS materials are not currently using them. Additional support and professional development should be provided so that teachers know how to best utilize the resources without adding additional planning time.

- **Re-examine the structure of the math diagnostic assessments for the younger students.** If more difficult questions must be asked first as part of the adaptive assessment, then provide teachers strategies for helping their frustrated students complete their diagnostics without becoming discouraged.