

Achieve3000® Research and Effectiveness Case Study

Independent Study: Impact of Achieve3000 on Reading Outcomes of English Learner Students in Cajon Valley Union School District, 2016-2017



ABOUT ACHIEVE3000

Differentiated Instruction. Accelerated Learning.

Achieve3000 is the leader in online differentiated instruction, serving over three million students worldwide. Based on decades of scientific research, Achieve3000's cloud-based solutions for grades PreK-12 and adult education reach students at their individual reading levels to accelerate learning, improve high-stakes test performance, and advance college and career readiness.

Our powerful platform also extends teachers' reach without adding to their workloads or time demands. By combining embedded assessment, differentiated instruction, regular skills practice, and targeted scaffolds in a single program, Achieve3000's solutions empower educators to increase their students' reading gains surely and steadily, level by level.

Achieve3000's platform is powered by a patented methodology that delivers grade-appropriate lessons to the entire class and simultaneously tailors them to each student's Lexile® reading level. Achieve3000's solutions have been proven to rapidly accelerate reading comprehension, language acquisition, writing proficiency, and vocabulary development.

INTRODUCTION

In 2016 and 2017, Digital Promise conducted an independent third-party research study of the impact of Achieve3000 usage on the reading outcomes of English Learner (EL) students in Cajon Valley Union School District (USD) (Luke, Gibson, and Francisco, 2017). Digital Promise states its approach as working "at the intersection of education leaders, researchers, entrepreneurs, and

developers to improve learning with the power of technology."

This report summarizes the findings from the Digital Promise study and includes information primarily sourced from the Digital Promise report previously cited, along with contextual information added by Achieve3000.

IMPLEMENTATION CONTEXT

Cajon Valley USD in Southern California serves over 16,500 students across 30 schools. Almost 35 percent of students in Cajon Valley USD are ELs, and 12 percent of students receive special education services. In addition, 70 percent of students receive free or reduced-price lunch. The district's ELs speak an array of languages at home, including Spanish, Arabic, and Chaldean.

Cajon Valley USD piloted Achieve3000 during the 2016-2017 school year with EL students at five elementary and middle schools. The goal of the pilot was to improve reading outcomes for EL students at risk of becoming long-term ELs (LTELs). A total of 521 students, 99 percent of whom do not speak English at home, and 13 teachers participated.

Students had access to the Achieve3000 platform from the end of October 2016 to mid-June of 2017. Prior to the pilot launch, all teachers participated in an average of two to three hours of training provided by Achieve3000 implementation consultants. During the implementation period, students used Achieve3000 for an average of 34 hours and completed an average of 63 activities in the program.

METHODOLOGY

Digital Promise used a mixed-methods data collection approach comprising student and teacher surveys, teacher focus groups, classroom observations, product usage, and pre- and post-assessment.

To measure the impact of Achieve3000 on reading outcomes, students in the pilot group were compared with EL students at two schools that did not participate in the pilot.

From 2015-2019, California's language acquisition assessments are transitioning from the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) to the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) (California Department of Education, 2016). Since the study's evaluation period occurred during the transition from the

CELDT to the ELPAC, Digital Promise relied on reading comprehension as the primary outcome measure and chose to use Achieve3000's proprietary assessment, LevelSet™, to measure student growth for both the pilot and comparison groups.

To further measure the impact of Achieve3000 usage on student performance, Digital Promise used data collected by the Achieve3000 system for students in the pilot group and from surveys, focus groups, and classroom observations.

MEASURES

Developed by Achieve3000 in conjunction with MetaMetrics®, the LevelSet assessment identifies the precise Lexile reading level at which each student can comprehend nonfiction text. LevelSet was administered at the beginning (pre-test Lexile) and end (final Lexile) of the pilot implementation. Pre- and

post-surveys were used to record student and teacher attitudes and skills, as well as student engagement. Digital Promise also conducted classroom observations, interviews, and collected Achieve3000 platform usage data.

RESULTS

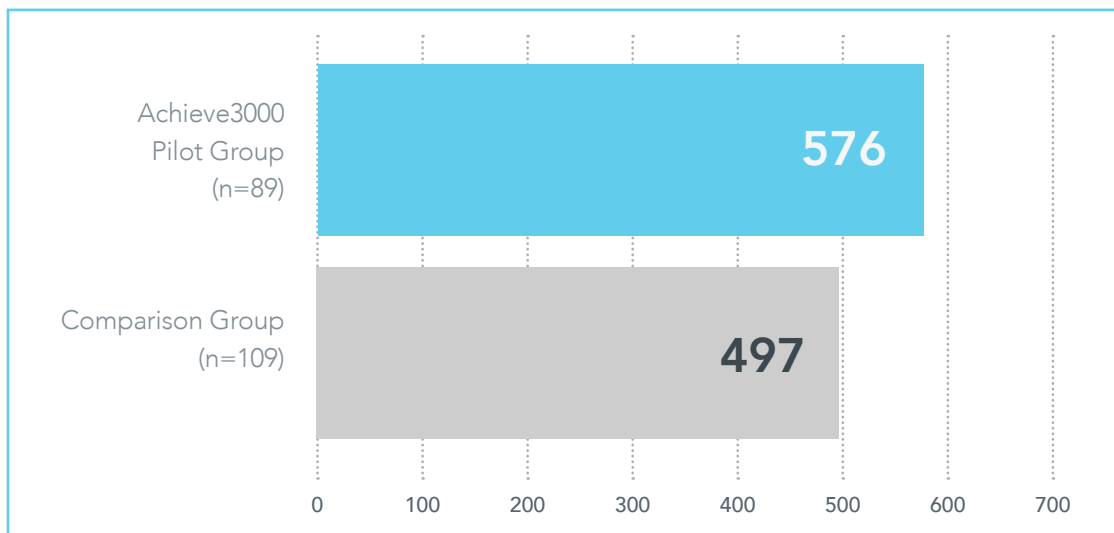
Quantitative Results: Student Impact

Digital Promise compared the final Lexile scores of fifth-grade students in the pilot group to the final Lexile scores of fifth-grade students in the comparison group. Controlling for differences in pre-test Lexile scores between both groups, Digital Promise found that the adjusted mean final Lexile score was 576L for the pilot group and 497L for

the comparison group, a statistically significant 79-point difference. Overall, students in the pilot showed 2.5 times the average Lexile reading score growth of the students in the comparison group who did not use Achieve3000 at all.

RESULTS (cont.)

CAJON VALLEY USD ADJUSTED MEAN FINAL LEXILE SCORES



Qualitative Results: Student and Teacher Satisfaction Surveys and Teacher Focus Groups

In the surveys collected by Digital Promise, all responding pilot group teachers indicated that Achieve3000 was easy to use and helped to improve their students' English skills. Specifically, teachers reported a perceived increase in students' ability to read, write, and speak English. All teachers indicated that they would recommend Achieve3000 to a colleague. Furthermore, pilot participants reported that Achieve3000 engaged and motivated their students. In an open-ended survey question, nearly one-quarter of responding pilot group students said they liked Achieve3000 because it helped them learn or improve their English skills and nearly one-fifth reported that they enjoyed the interesting and diverse content. Additionally, more than half of the students reported that they used Achieve3000 outside of school.

Limitations

Digital Promise indicated that students in the pilot group were likely to have become more familiar with the Achieve3000 platform during the course of the school year than students in the comparison schools.

This difference in exposure to the tool used for measuring student growth could potentially reduce the strength of the analysis conclusions.

CONCLUSION

Overall, Cajon Valley USD students who piloted Achieve3000 obtained 2.5 times the Lexile growth of students in the comparison group on average, and the difference in means was statistically significant. Furthermore, teachers reported a perceived increase in student engagement and in students' ability to read, write, and speak English. Student surveys

revealed high rates of engagement and satisfaction with the platform. More than half of the students reported using Achieve3000 outside of school. All teachers reported that it was easy for teachers and students to use. Both teachers and students indicated that they would like to continue using Achieve3000.

"It's very enjoyable and fun. I would love to do it next year." – Student

"The fact that it's all individualized Lexile levels has been amazing to me. . . . I'd like to keep using it next year." – Teacher