How Prodigy helped more Texas students succeed

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The challenge

Like educators in schools across the United States, math teachers in the Texas school system are under pressure to help students achieve positive scores on statewide assessments. While every school wants to accelerate student math proficiency, administrators at five Texas school districts faced unique obstacles. And although each school had a different story, those administrators shared many key questions when considering tools to reinforce their math curricula. What solution could legitimately:

- **Boost learning outcomes** for students of all economic backgrounds from 1st to 8th Grade?
- **Succeed on a limited budget**, with financial constraints restricting most options?
- **Engage students**, with disengagement being the number one complaint from teachers?
- **Meet the needs** of a diverse student population with a wide range of proficiency levels?

The solution

The districts’ students now use Prodigy — a free, adaptive math game loved by millions of students around the world. Fully aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum, teachers assign in-game content to help students build prerequisite skills and address problem areas. Because it runs quickly and easily on all internet browsers and devices, teachers are able to get started in less than five minutes.

Improving results together!

Prodigy Game and five Texas school districts increased pass rates, lowered fail rates, and accelerated math proficiency.
How it works

To boost math results, teachers use Prodigy to:

- **Pinpoint** students’ problem areas and use adaptive learning to customize content and reinforce instruction
- **Engage** entire classrooms and incorporate the math curriculum within a fun video game environment that appeals to students
- **Adjust** questions to support in-class lessons and to review material on a student-by-student basis
- **Obtain** live data and reports on questions answered, play time in and out of class, and in-game plans and assignments

Across the five Texas school districts in question,\(^1\) we observed test results in 171 schools — comparing those that used Prodigy with those that did not.\(^2\)

The results

- Schools enrolled in Prodigy both **performed better** and **enjoyed greater** improvements on STAAR test results than inactive schools.
- Schools enrolled in Prodigy saw an average increase of **12.39** points on scores in the STAAR exams — **double the improvement** seen in schools where no students used the game.
- In schools enrolled in Prodigy, the percentage of students who reached the *Approaches* benchmark was roughly **75% greater** than the improvement seen in inactive schools.
- In schools enrolled in Prodigy, the percentage of students who reached the *Masters* benchmark was roughly **40% greater** than the improvement seen in inactive school.

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Prodigy helped engage kids and increase scores because it gave them confidence.

*Brenda Lynch*
*Math Instructional Specialist, New Caney ISD*

Our kids are so engaged with Prodigy. They love it. They really want to participate and really want to learn more. To me, as a math coordinator, that speaks volumes.

*Kristi Richter*
*Math Coordinator, Cypress-Fairbanks ISD*

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The school districts analyzed are: Cypress-Fairbanks ISD, Beaumont ISD, Tomball ISD, Grand Prairie ISD and Midland ISD.

To compare changes in these 171 schools’ test scores, we contrasted the results of the 51 schools that did not use Prodigy with those of the 119 schools where at least 20% of the student population used Prodigy.

Note: This case study shares some observations where playing Prodigy seemed to correlate with students’ math performance. While not a randomized trial, these observations may suggest some patterns of interest.

**Average change in STAAR scores (2016 vs 2017)**

An average improvement of 12.39 points on scores in the STAAR exams — **double the improvement** seen in schools that did not use Prodigy.

**Average change in % of students reaching “Approaches” (2016 vs 2017)**

A 2.67% improvement in the percentage of students who reached the Approaches benchmark — **about 75% better** than the 1.21% seen in inactive schools.

**Average change in % of students reaching “Masters” (2016 vs 2017)**

A 4.11% improvement in the percentage of students who reached the Masters benchmark — **about 40% better** than the 2.76% seen in inactive schools.

1. The school districts analyzed are: Cypress-Fairbanks ISD, Beaumont ISD, Tomball ISD, Grand Prairie ISD and Midland ISD.

2. To compare changes in these 171 schools’ test scores, we contrasted the results of the 51 schools that did not use Prodigy with those of the 119 schools where at least 20% of the student population used Prodigy.