

Joshua ISD Extends a Long History of Literacy Gains with Game-changing *SRA Reading Mastery Transformations*

Joshua Independent School District (ISD) is a fast-growing district in Joshua, Texas. Currently the third largest district in Johnson County, it serves a socioeconomically and culturally diverse student population. The district's minority enrollment is 50% and nearly 41% of students are eligible to participate in the federal free and reduce-price meal plan.

The school district has an A rating from the Texas Education Agency (TEA), and was an early adopter of the *SRA Reading Mastery Transformations*® curriculum—a research-proven K–5 ELA program based on the Direct Instruction approach that provides fully specified lessons for phonics, decoding, fluency, comprehension, spelling and other critical reading skills.

In a recent interview, three district leaders elaborated on their positive experience with various *Reading Mastery* editions over the years. “We began with *Reading Mastery Classic* in the early 2000s,” said Chief Academic and Technology Officer Jo Lynn Augsburger. “Then we moved on to *Reading Mastery Signature Edition* and that was in place for quite some time. So, when we saw that the new *Reading Mastery Transformations* had come out, we were excited to start using that as our K–1 core instruction program in August of 2021.”

DISTRICT INFORMATION



Name:

Joshua Independent
School District

Location:

Joshua, Texas

Grade:

Pre-K–12

The Challenge

All three district leaders emphasized that *Reading Mastery Transformations* couldn't have been implemented at a better time.

Executive Director of Elementary Curriculum and Instruction Angie Padgett said, “You know how it is when you’ve used something for so long, you sometimes become too comfortable with it. To get out of that comfort zone, it’s always good to make a few changes and refresh your approach. Plus, we were intrigued by all the enhancements this latest edition had to offer, including a faster pace. **In Texas, the state expectation is that all students should be reading at grade level or above by the end of third grade—and the accelerated approach of *Reading Mastery Transformations* aligned with this goal perfectly.”**

Julie Hampton, Executive Director of Instructional Technology and Data Services, added that Joshua ISD was also looking to expand its focus on online assessment and data reporting. “We just wanted to make everything even easier and more efficient for our teachers,” she said. “And by having all-digital materials, they can now access what they need at any time and from anywhere.”

The Solution

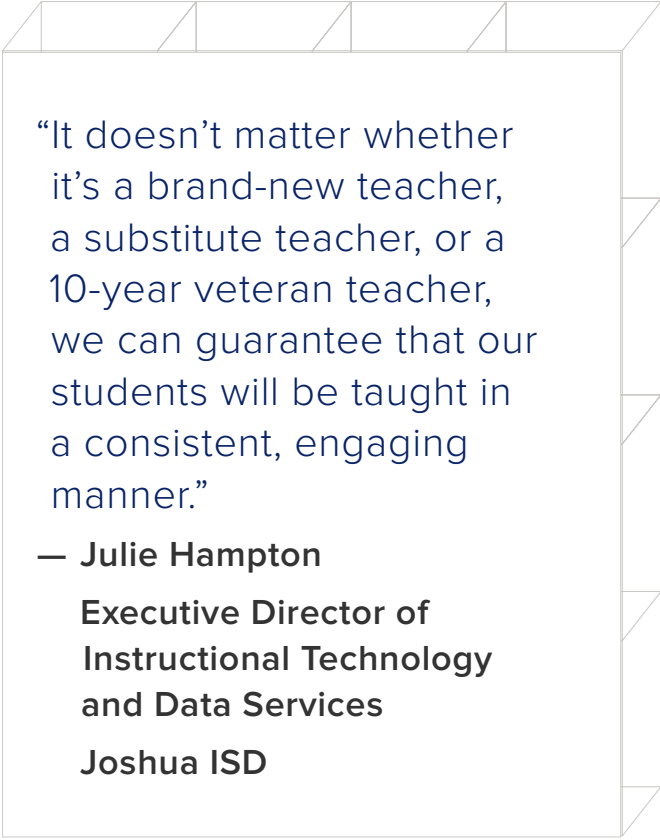
With its accelerated pace and convenient digital access, *Reading Mastery Transformations* offered the reinvigorated ELA program Joshua ISD was looking for.

“You really can’t mess this program up if you’re doing it with fidelity,” said Padgett. “And even though it’s based on a faster pace, there’s still a heavy emphasis on reviewing content

and frequently checking in with each student, so you know they’ll never be left behind. We always have the flexibility to move them to a group where the pacing is a bit slower if needed.”

Augsburger elaborated on the benefit of the program’s fluidity and just-in-time remediations. “If a student isn’t saying the sound or the blend correctly, we’re able to quickly fix this,” she said. “We can keep working with them on a particular skill until they’ve mastered it, and then we can move on.”

Hampton pointed out that yet another advantage of *Reading Mastery Transformations* is the equity in reading instruction that results from the structured, scripted lessons. “It doesn’t matter whether it’s a brand-new teacher, a substitute teacher, or a 10-year veteran teacher, we can guarantee that our students will be taught in a consistent, engaging manner.”



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**Executive Director of
Instructional Technology
and Data Services
Joshua ISD**

The Results

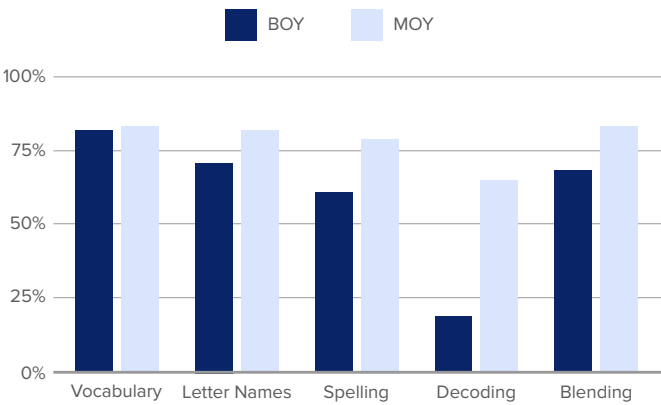
An impressive number of benchmarks have been reached since Joshua ISD began using *Reading Mastery Transformations*. “Both *Signature* and *Transformations* have 160 lessons,” said Padgett. “But the difference is that lesson 80 in *Transformations* is equal to lesson 160 in the *Signature* edition. So the time it takes to reach mastery has been cut in half.”

The district leaders reiterated that for those students who may find the faster pace challenging, there’s still plenty of flexibility for them to repeat more lessons, more frequently. Conversely, if there are students who are reading grade levels ahead, they can accommodate them too and get them through the lessons even quicker. “It’s just such a great balance of interventions and extensions, all in one program,” Padgett said.

The district’s assessment scores speak for themselves. For kindergarten students, Joshua ISD uses the Texas Kindergarten Entry Assessment (TX-KEA), a benchmark that measures progress at the beginning, middle and end of the academic year. The target goal was that 70 percent of kindergarten students would score “on track” or better on the TX-KEA Literary Diagnostic by June of 2024. Joshua ISD surpassed that goal by 16 percent, with **86 percent of students scoring on track or better.**

This first chart provides a deeper look into Joshua ISD’s TX-KEA results, depicting student progress during the 2023–2024 school year using *Reading Mastery Transformations*. The most significant percentage gains appear in the Spelling, Decoding, and Blending categories.

Kindergarten TX-KEA



According to the district leaders, third grade is when they really see the payoff of using *Reading Mastery Transformations*, because this is the first year they take a state assessment. “Everything we do getting up to that point is hugely important,” said Padgett. “So in that way, it’s much like the Super Bowl.”

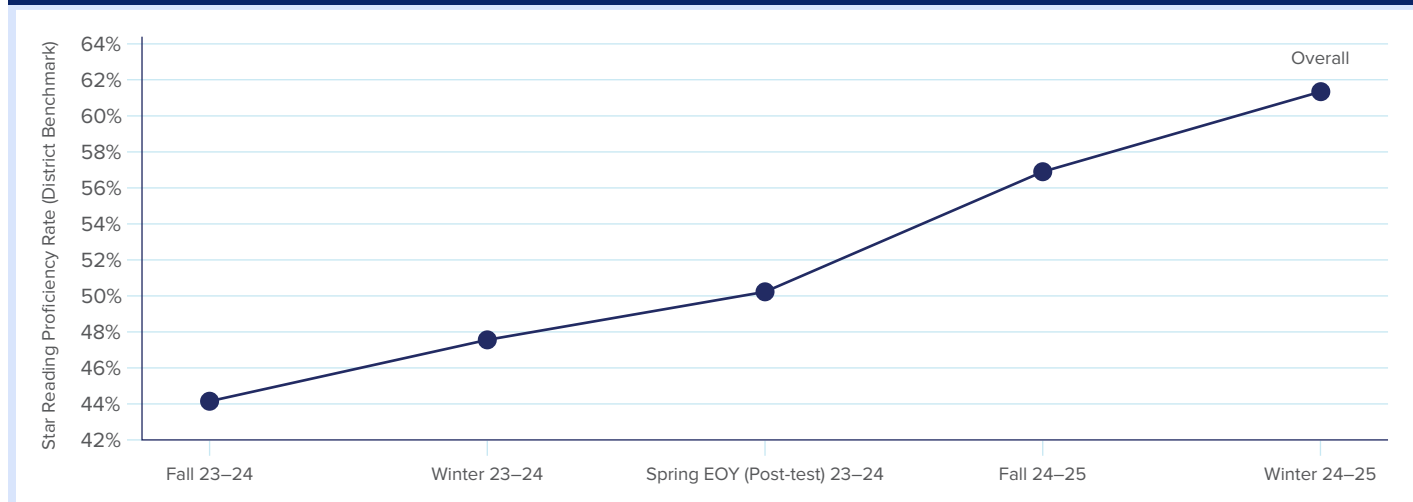
The Historical Data chart below illustrates the significant gains Joshua ISD third graders have made on the state assessment—**going from 77 percent meeting or exceeding expectations in 2021 (post-Covid) to 86 percent in 2024.**

Historical Data For JISD 3rd Grade Reading

2019	2021	2022	2023	2024
83%	77% Post Covid	82%	85%	86%

“Our teachers who come to us from other districts are just blown away by *Reading Mastery Transformations*,” Hampton said. “Instead of a guided program they have to figure out on their own, they love having a scripted program that takes the guesswork out of teaching.”

Star Reading Proficiency Rate (District Benchmark)



Data gathered from the Star Reading Assessment by Renaissance® (STAR) offers further proof of the effectiveness of *Reading Mastery Transformations* for first grade through fifth grade, as indicated in the chart's upward trend. By the winter of the 2024–2025 academic year, 61 percent of students were at or above the district proficiency rate benchmark—an increase of 17 percent from the fall of 2023–2024.

Moving Forward

Augsburger said their school district has been very fortunate to benefit from the consistency of using a form of *Reading Mastery* for so many years, giving them the advantage of continuity that helps ensure successful implementation and instruction.

Padgett added that it goes well beyond transformative instruction for the students. “It’s very important that we’re always supportive of our teachers, because they truly do hold the reading hands of our students.”

“We’re very proud of our A rating from TEA, because it shows the priority we place on achieving our vision of being a model of educational excellence,” said Augsburger. “That’s why, as curriculum directors, we choose the best programs to help us get there. *Reading Mastery Transformations* really is the program that works best for us. It’s highly effective for our students...and that’s not going to change.”



To learn more about our program, visit:
mheducation.com/rmt-success

