

# Igniting Early Literacy Success

Through Evidence-Based Practices

THE EVOLVING STORY OF BEACON ELEMENTARY



## BACKGROUND

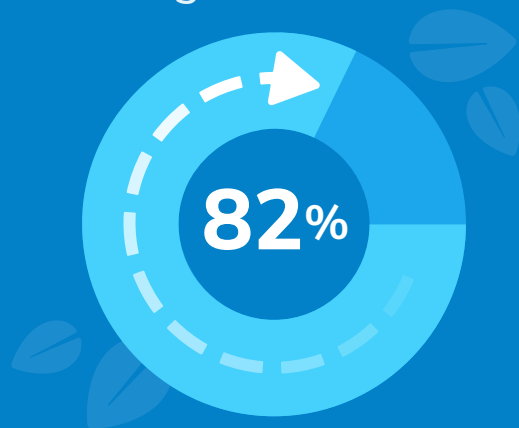
A Vision for Evidence-Based Reading  
Instruction: Over 12 Years in The Making

September 2023



**Beacon Elementary School, located in Montesano, Washington,** serves children from Preschool through Grade 2. The school is part of the Montesano School District, which aims to provide high-quality instruction where every student, regardless of race, class, language, or ability, can succeed. Beacon Elementary School had long recognized the need for an effective and thorough early literacy approach that would make a lasting impact on its students and families.

In the fall of 2022 only **25%** of children were reading at grade level in kindergarten.



After implementing Sprig Reading, **75%** of students were reading at-grade level by the winter, and **82%** by the end of the school year.

After years of searching for an effective solution, Stephanie Klinger, Montesano School District's current Director of Teaching and Learning came into contact with Sprig Learning's renowned early literacy scientist and author, Dr. Janet N Mort.

Beacon Elementary School recognized the importance of professional development in early literacy and the impact it could have on students' overall success. With the availability of ESSER<sup>1</sup> (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief) funding during the COVID-19 pandemic, the school seized the opportunity to invest in professional development and prioritize early literacy. It was an opportune time to build capacity and support the district's youngest learners with a new approach to reading to instruction, rooted in the latest early literacy science and research.

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<sup>1</sup>ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief) is a federal program providing financial assistance to schools affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. It supports initiatives for a safe learning environment, addressing learning gaps, and enhancing educational resources.

# Challenge

## Need for a Comprehensive Literacy Approach That Involves Ongoing Formative Assessment

The decision to implement a new comprehensive literacy approach at Beacon Elementary stemmed from the recognition that there was an opportunity to enhance the assessment and instruction of the foundational reading skills.

Barb Page, Beacon Elementary School's Principal, played a crucial role prior to implementing the approach. She engaged in intentional conversations with teachers, discussing the work being done in the classroom to boost early literacy, and planning strategies to target specific areas for improvement.

There was a needs assessment conducted, which revealed the necessity for a new evidence-based reading framework that focuses on the foundational reading skills. Furthermore, there was a need to formatively track and monitor student progress regularly throughout the school year.



Additionally, monitoring individual students' progress throughout the school year and identifying areas for intervention posed difficulties for teachers in all grade levels.



# Implementation

## Implementing a Progress Monitoring Tool to Expand Instructional Depth and Improve Assessment Consistency

*Sprig Reading: Powered by Joyful Literacy* was introduced in Beacon Elementary School in the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year. The implementation of this approach was spearheaded by the collaborative efforts of the school's principal, teachers, and district administrators.

Teachers at Beacon Elementary School embraced the use of *Sprig Reading* as the main tool for implementing an evidence-based early literacy resource and progress monitoring tool that would enhance the school's existing curriculum. *Sprig Reading* was used by kindergarten teachers to assess, track and monitor the foundational reading skills, providing a comprehensive view of student progress.

Jacelle, a kindergarten teacher with 15 years of teaching experience had this to say about the implementation of the resource, "I had a student who came in not knowing a single letter, she did not even know the letters in her name, she didn't even know what letters were.

Now she knows all the 24 letters and sounds, and is blending sounds, words and sentences!"

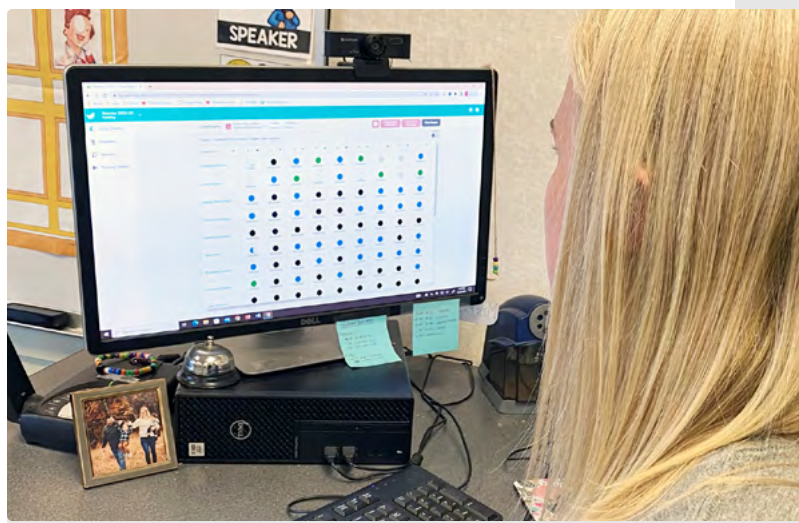


Very similar stories are echoed by Kim and Cyndi, with over 5 decades of teaching experience between them. When they conducted a kindergarten blitz, a feature of *Sprig Reading* that involves a dynamic and playful strategy to target essential literacy skills and close specific skill gaps in a few weeks, vast leaps in improvements were made, very similar to what Jacelle described for her student.

Teachers found *Sprig Reading* easy to use and appreciated having “all the necessary information in one place.” Individualized instruction for students and differentiated learning for groups, became more accessible, enabling teachers to address specific reading skill gaps effectively. Cyndi reflected on the intuitive circle chart assessment strategy of *Sprig Reading*, stating that “revisiting specific skills such as learning vowels has been really good, kids with half circles did not convince me they knew the concept, so I was able to intervene at the right time.”

***I had a student who came in not knowing a single letter ... now she knows all the 24 letters and sounds, and is blending sounds, words and sentences!***

Teachers unanimously appreciated *Sprig Reading*'s data dashboard, which presented a comprehensive list of foundational reading skills and provided a breakdown of sub skills and strategies for assessing students. *Sprig Reading*'s circle charts facilitated continuous assessment, enabling teachers to guide their daily instruction.

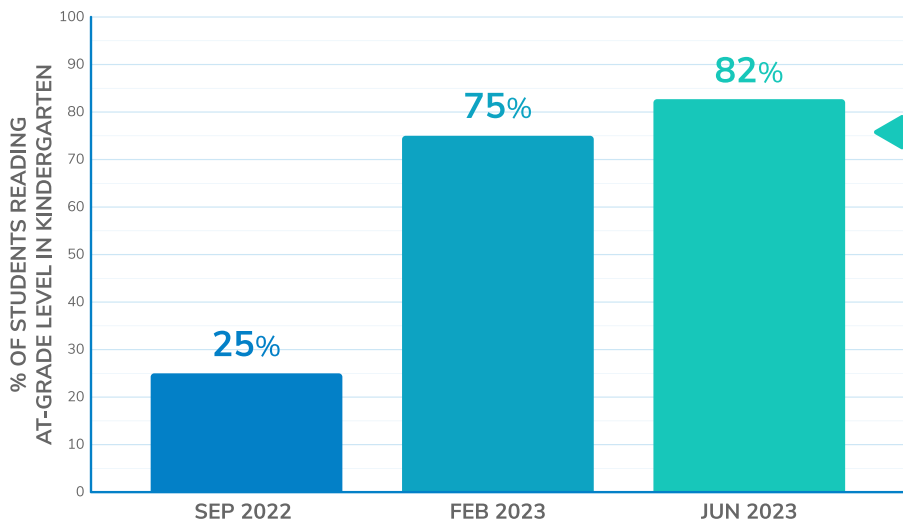


Additionally, using the data to set up practice centers and peer tutoring emerged as vital elements of the instructional approach, offering students engaging multi-sensory activities. *Sprig Reading*'s usability and accountability fostered the increased implementation of these activities, making them a regular part of the teaching routine.

Melissa, another experienced kindergarten teacher, mentioned the utility of being able to see what reading skills were missed, or what skills were not retained, at the beginning of the year, so teachers could understand what interventions were needed to get their students reading at-grade level. To this effect, she commended the date stamp feature of *Sprig Reading*, which lets teachers see the exact date when a student was assessed for a particular skill.

# Outcome

## New Practices Lead to Incredible Learning Gains



SOURCE: i-Ready Assessment, 2022-23

Students showed significant growth in their reading throughout the school year.

The implementation of this new evidence-based comprehensive literacy resource, *Sprig Reading*, yielded remarkable results at Beacon Elementary School in just one year! Teachers reported a shift in conversations surrounding foundational literacy skills, with a greater emphasis on collaboration and instructional planning.

The use of *Sprig Reading* facilitated daily and weekly tracking of student progress, allowing teachers to immediately identify areas for intervention, track and monitor reading skills, group students into practice centers, and tailor instruction accordingly.

Students showed significant growth in their reading skills throughout the implementation period. Using an independent assessment tool (*i-Ready*<sup>2</sup>), reading levels for kindergarten students at Beacon Elementary were measured in the fall of 2022 and only 25% of children were reading at grade level. After implementing *Sprig Reading*, this number increased to 75% of students reading at-grade level by the winter, and 82% by the end of the school year! This marked a significant and exceptional improvement in just one year.

Apart from the gains in reading levels, teachers also noted improved student engagement, confidence, and a more positive attitude towards reading. The approach helped identify struggling readers and provided individualized instruction to address their specific needs. Teachers found the integration of *Sprig Reading* with the existing curriculum to be complementary and effective in fulfilling any gaps in the curriculum.

The logo for Sprig Reading features the word "sprigreading" in a lowercase, rounded font. "sprig" is in a vibrant green color, and "reading" is in a teal color. A small green leaf icon is positioned above the letter "i" in "reading".

powered by **Joyful Literacy**

Sprig Reading enables teachers to  
assess their students, track progress  
and boost literacy success.

[learn more](#)

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<sup>2</sup>*i-Ready* Assessment is a widely trusted tool for early literacy evaluation, endorsed by the National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII). It offers a comprehensive assessment program, delivering precise data for screening, progress monitoring, and benchmark assessments.

# Conclusion

## Great Payoff for Hard Work With The Best Yet to Come

With the introduction of *Sprig Reading*, Beacon Elementary School has realized a significant impact on early literacy instruction and student outcomes. Teachers have become more intentional and organized in their instructional planning, resulting in 82% of students reading at-grade level by the end of kindergarten.

Beacon Elementary School continues to prioritize early literacy and aims to further refine and expand its implementation of *Sprig Reading*. The positive results observed thus far indicate a promising future for students and families at Beacon Elementary, as they develop strong foundational reading skills and achieve greater academic success. The school looks forward to building upon its current achievements and fostering a culture of continuous improvement in early learning.

Looking ahead, Beacon Elementary is excited to expand the benefits of *Sprig Reading* to their pre-kindergarten classes for the upcoming school year. With *Sprig Reading* being introduced at an earlier stage, these young learners will have the opportunity to develop foundational reading skills earlier in their learning journey, and achieve even greater success in the coming years.

The story of Beacon Elementary School serves as a testament to the power of innovative and evidence-based approaches to reading instruction and the profound impact on student achievement.



# You too can try Sprig Reading!

Sprig Reading is an evidence-based literacy tool designed for Pre-K to 3 teachers and literacy specialists who are looking to optimize existing early literacy through the continuous assessment and progress monitoring of the foundational reading skills.

## [Explore Subscription and Trial Options](#)

Learn more [www.spriglearning.com](http://www.spriglearning.com)

Email [letstalk@spriglearning.com](mailto:letstalk@spriglearning.com)

Call **1-613-212-2225**

Sprig Learning is dedicated to holistic and evidence-based early literacy education. Our mission is to equip every student, educator, and parent with the essential tools to build a strong foundation for lifelong learning. Our education technology fosters genuine connections between schools and communities, enhances instructional and assessment effectiveness, and supports differentiated learning for diverse classrooms of early learners.

Learn more [www.monteschools.org/beacon-elementary](http://www.monteschools.org/beacon-elementary)

Call **1-360-249-4528**

Building a cooperative partnership with parents to guide and support children's social, emotional, and academic learning is the foundation of our mission at Beacon Elementary School. We believe every child has an unlimited capacity to learn when provided high quality instruction in a safe, caring, and respectful environment. We will work to develop curiosity, creativity, and a growth mindset in children so they are invested in their own learning and are willing to persevere through challenging tasks as they grow into responsible productive citizens.