



The Dallas Independent School District (ISD) High-Quality Tutoring Program was initiated in 2021 to comply with Texas House Bill (HB) 4545, and later HB 1416 in 2023, which mandate accelerated instruction for students who do not meet grade-level expectations on standardized assessments. During the first three school-years of implementation, tutoring instruction was provided by both vendors and Dallas ISD teachers. In 2025-26, all tutoring services were provided by district staff (n = 2,596). Students eligible for tutoring can be exempt if a) they meet proficiency standards on a retest assessment, b) they are assigned to a teacher with a Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) proficiency designation in the subject in which tutoring is needed, c) their parent opts them out of receiving tutoring, or d) they are receiving tutoring in two other subjects.

Key Findings

Implementation

- Total required tutoring completion reached 82.1 percent (5.3% year-over-year increase from 78.0% in 2024-25).
- 122 of 230 campuses (53%) completed all required tutoring (82.8% growth from 29% last year).
- Completion hours beat targets from October-January but dropped below target starting in February.

Stakeholders' Perceptions

- **Tutors:** Most tutors rated tutoring as effective in supporting student achievement (82%), driving short-term growth (89%), identifying strengths/weaknesses (86%), and elevating confidence (85%). Primary barriers included low student motivation, attendance, low program priority, and transportation issues.
- **Students:** Students reported strong overall satisfaction (72%), praising tutor encouragement (82%) and program usefulness (80%), with 68 percent feeling better prepared for upcoming STAAR/EOC exams. However, nearly half reported obstacles, including fatigue/hunger (28%), difficult coursework (27%), repetitive lessons (23%), and distracting environments (21%).
- **Parents/Guardians:** 80 percent of families viewed tutoring as beneficial (49% seeing clear progress and 31% finding it helpful with room for growth). Despite half facing no obstacles, main challenges centered on communication gaps regarding student coursework (21%) and transportation logistics (15%).

Student Outcomes

i-Ready

- Across Reading and Math, assignment to a TIA teacher was the most effective strategy, followed by tutoring, both outperforming non-participations.
 - Typical growth targets: Reading - TIA (55%), tutoring (51%), non-participants (47%); Math - TIA (54%), tutoring (44%), non-participants (40%).
 - Advancing students who were 2+ levels below at BOY by at least one full grade: Reading - TIA (55%), tutoring (47%), non-participants (41%); Math: TIA (68%), tutoring (58%), non-participants (48%).
- In Elementary School, TIA assignment and tutoring drove the largest Reading gains, while TIA assignment outperformed all groups in Math.
 - Typical growth targets: Reading - TIA (57%), tutoring (55%), non-participants (42%); Math - TIA (61%), tutoring (52%), non-participants (53%).
 - Advancing students who were 2+ levels below at BOY by at least one full grade: Reading - TIA (66%), tutoring (61%), non-participants (41%); Math - TIA (78%), tutoring (75%), non-participants (74%).
- Middle school gains were more moderate, though TIA assignment still consistently led across all comparison groups.
 - Typical growth targets: Reading - TIA (54%), tutoring (49%), non-participants (47%); Math - TIA (46%), tutoring (38%), non-participants (38%).
 - Advancing students who were 2+ levels below at BOY by at least one full grade: Reading - TIA (50%), tutoring (43%), non-participants (41%); Math - TIA (57%), tutoring (47%), non-participants (45%).

State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR)

- Overall, TIA assignment served as the stronger strategy across Elementary and Middle School—outperforming tutored students and non-participants at the *Approaches+* standard in Elementary Reading (by +6.9 and +6.1 percentage points, respectively), Elementary Math (by +13.0 and +5.1 points), and Middle School Math (by +8.1 and +4.9 points), while Middle School Reading showed minimal variation (34.3% TIA, 33.2% tutored, 34.2% non-participants).



- When accounting for dosage, 15 to 29 hours of tutoring drove the highest gains at the *Approaches+* level—outperforming TIA assignment and non-participation in Elementary Reading (+7.6 and +13.7 points, respectively), Middle School Reading (+17.7 and +17.8 points), Elementary Math (+5.3 and +10.4 points), and Middle School Math (+2.7 and +7.6 points).
- Overall, high schoolers receiving tutoring achieved the largest performance gains at the *Approaches+* level across all EOC exams—outperforming TIA assignment and non-participation in English I (by +6.8 and +5.5 percentage points, respectively), English II (by +11.0 and +5.9 points), and Algebra I (by +10.9 and +18.0 points).

Recommendations

• Tailor Academic Strategies by Grade Level and Sustaining the Optimal Tutoring Dosage Year-Round

To maximize student growth and comply with state mandates, the district should strategically align its academic interventions by grade level while ensuring Elementary and Middle School students reach the evidence-based optimal threshold of 15 to 29 tutoring hours. District evaluation data demonstrates that while assignment to a Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) teacher serves as the single most effective baseline strategy in lower grades, tutoring becomes equally or more effective once younger students hit that 15-to-29-hour threshold. In High Schools, overall tutoring consistently drives the largest gains across all EOC exams, making tutoring pipelines an essential priority at that level. To reliably hit the 15-to-29-hour target in Elementary and Middle Schools without overwhelming campuses, the district should prioritize consistent, year-long weekly tutoring rather than compressing sessions into a late-spring rush before testing. Research confirms that year-long programs deliver vastly superior long-term academic gains, whereas attempting to backload required hours into the final weeks of the school year creates scheduling bottlenecks, tutor shortages, and severe student burnout.

• Enhance Student Engagement and Attendance Through Integrated Scheduling and Accelerated Learning

To overcome student participation and motivation barriers, the district should, when possible, embed tutoring directly into the regular school day within advisory or intervention blocks, prioritizing classroom-aligned acceleration. Research indicates that in-school scheduling—rather than after-school programming—eliminates transportation hurdles and student fatigue, while aligning weekly tutoring modules with current classroom units keeps instruction engaging and relevant. Additionally, incorporating non-academic incentives, light snacks, and goal-setting routines will help sustain student motivation, minimize classroom distractions, and prevent attendance drop-offs throughout the program. Finally, continuing to align with legislative mandates and evidence-based standards—such as hiring professional tutors, maintaining small group sizes (1:4), and ensuring consistent tutor-student pairings—will strengthen mentorship and sustain a supportive, high-impact learning environment.

• Strengthen Communication and Family Understanding of Program Purpose

To address key barriers identified by parents, guardians, and tutors—specifically coursework communication gaps, the general perception that tutoring was not needed, and logistical challenges like transportation and scheduling friction—the district should implement a suite of targeted operational and family-facing strategies. Clearly articulating the core rationale and goals of the program ensures that families across this districtwide initiative understand its true value, closing the potential disconnect between home and school. Establishing regular student progress updates and transparent coursework tracking ensures parents always know what skills their child is practicing and how to reinforce them at home. Additionally, framing messaging around personalized acceleration and STAAR readiness—rather than viewing the program as remediation or punishment—helps families recognize the immediate academic purpose and benefits of participation. Research consistently demonstrates that when families are actively informed, aligned with the program's purpose, and logistically supported, student attendance, motivation, and overall academic outcomes improve significantly.