Includes ESSA Evidence, Independent Research, and Results for Diverse Students

i-Ready Efficacy Research Summary

Curriculum Associates Research Brief | April 2021

Introduction

i-Ready Personalized Instruction (*i-Ready*) provides tailored online instruction that is purposefully designed for the differentiated classroom. Using the rich data from the *i-Ready Diagnostic* (Diagnostic), *i-Ready* meets learners where they are on their learning journey, helps them to problem solve, and keeps them motivated to continue their progress. The *i-Ready* Efficacy Research Summary describes *i-Ready*'s evidence base, providing a snapshot of study design characteristics as well as key impact results for more than 10 studies that collectively address the most common questions we receive on the impact of *i-Ready* instruction.

- Is *i-Ready* effective at improving the reading and mathematics achievement for students in Grades K–8?
- Is there research on *i-Ready* that meets the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) evidence standards?
- Does research on the impact of *i-Ready* show positive and statistically significant results?
- Does *i-Ready* impact students' state summative test performance?
- Is there research on how *i-Ready* improves academic achievement for students of color, English Learners (ELs), students with disabilities, and students with socioeconomic disadvantages?
- Can *i-Ready* help my students with unfinished learning?
- Is there research on *i-Ready* that was conducted by independent researchers?

ESSA Evidence

ESSA defines four evidence levels. These levels are defined by the rigor of the study design, where Level 1 has the most rigorous design standards and Level 4 has the least rigorous design standards. The following research on *i-Ready* will designate which ESSA evidence level is met.

	Evidence Level	Type of Study
Level 1	**Strong Evidence**	A well-designed and implemented **experimental or randomized control trial (RCT) study** An RCT requires special effort and data collection, including the random identification of students to receive (or not receive) the intervention. An RCT presents unique logistical and technical challenges.
Level 2	**Moderate Evidence**	At least one **quasi-experimental study** A quasi-experimental study can be performed using available data or data specifically collected for the study. This type of study is common in educational research and often uses data from prior years. It requires some method of "matching" to ensure the students in the treatment and control groups are as similar as possible.
Level 3	**Promising Evidence**	At least one **correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias** A correlational study is usually performed using available data, and these are common in educational research. These studies do not allow for causal inferences (i.e., one cannot say the intervention "caused" learning to happen; it can only say there is a "relationship" between the intervention and changes in learning).
Level 4	**Demonstrates a Rationale**	**Relevant research or evaluation** showing that the product will likely improve student outcomes; still needs other support that it has a favorable effect A relevant research study or evaluation gives districts the ability to adopt new, promising approaches not yet supported by high-quality efficacy research.

To learn more about ESSA evidence, read our summary on ESSA and Evidence Claims.

Key Findings

i-Ready is backed by the most practical and applicable efficacy research in education. *i-Ready Personalized Instruction*—the system of personalized lessons designed to fill students' knowledge gaps and help every student reach grade-level proficiency—has been studied by numerous third-party and independent organizations, as well as Curriculum Associates' own Research team, in partnership with educators throughout the country.

The growing body of efficacy research includes the following:

1. **Rigorous research studies meeting ESSA Level 2 evidence standards—including studies on students with unfinished learning—showing positive and statistically significant gains** for students who used *i-Ready* above that of their control group counterparts in both reading and mathematics on multiple outcome measures.

2. **Studies demonstrating improvement on state tests**, including several independent studies—conducted without guidance or funding by Curriculum Associates—found that *i-Ready* students outperformed their peers, making **positive and statistically significant gains** on the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) as well as the state tests in Florida and Utah.

3. **Multiple small- and large-scale studies**, including those conducted **by independent and third-party researchers**, have shown that *i-Ready* has a positive impact in both reading and mathematics on students who are **striving learners**, **ELs, students with disabilities**, and **students with socioeconomic disadvantages** as well as disaggregated results for **students who are Black and Latino**.

Efficacy Research Summary

The following section summarizes more than 10 studies demonstrating the positive impact of *i-Ready Personalized Instruction* on students' reading and mathematics achievement in a variety of contexts and settings. For more information on these studies, *i-Ready*'s research, and our authors and advisors, please visit **CurriculumAssociates.com/i-Ready-Research**.

Efficacy Research Summary Table

Study Name Author (Year)	Study Population				Description/Methodology					
	Subject		Grades		Meets ESSA		Large Sample Size *(N = 350 or More Students)*	Positive, Statistically Significant Results *for Some or All Grades*	Independent or Third-Party Author††	Disaggregated Results*
	Reading	Math	K–5	6–8	Level 2 (Moderate)	Level 3 (Promising)				
i-Ready										
1 **The Impact of *i-Ready Personalized Instruction* on Students' Reading and Mathematics Achievement** Curriculum Associates (2020)	●	●	●	●		●	●	●		●
2 **An Impact Evaluation of *i-Ready Instruction* Using 2018–2019 Data** Swain et al. (2020a–h)	●	●	●	●	●			●	●††	●
3 **An Impact Evaluation of *i-Ready Instruction* for Striving Learners Using 2018–2019 Data** Randal et al. (2020a–b)	●	●	●		●		●	●	●††	●
4 **An Impact Evaluation of *i-Ready Diagnostic and Instruction* Implementation for Reading at Grades K–2** Dvorak et al. (2019a)	●		●		●		●	●	●††	
5 ***i-Ready* in 7th Grade Math Classes: A Mixed Methods Case Study** Marple et al. (2019)		●		●	●†		●	●	●	
6 **Utah STEM Action Center Multiyear Studies** Brasiel & Martin (2015); Snyder et al. (2016); Utah Education Policy Center (2017; 2018; 2019)		●	●	●	●†		●	●	●	
7 **Utah's Early Intervention Reading Software Program Report** Evaluation and Training Institute (2019)	●		●		●†		●	●	●	

*Disaggregated results may be for students with disabilities, ELs, students with socioeconomic disadvantages, and students of color.

†Study includes characteristics for meeting ESSA Level 2 (Moderate) evidence. However, because the authors did not specify which ESSA evidence level the study meets in the report, nor has it been reviewed by an independent clearinghouse such as the What Works Clearinghouse, educators should review the full research report in order to determine if it meets their own interpretations for ESSA evidence.

††Third-party studies are defined as those that were conducted by external research organizations that were contracted by Curriculum Associates to independently perform the research to industry-recognized standards. Studies by independent authors (without ††) were conducted and funded entirely independently of Curriculum Associates.

Efficacy Research Summary Table, Cont'd.

Study Name Author (Year)	Study Population				Description/Methodology					
	Subject		Grades		Meets ESSA		Large Sample Size *(N = 350 or More Students)*	Positive, Statistically Significant Results *for Some or All Grades*	Independent or Third-Party Author††	Disaggregated Results*
	Reading	Math	K–5	6–8	Level 2 (Moderate)	Level 3 (Promising)				
***i-Ready*, Cont'd.**										
8 **What Is the Impact on Growth in Language Arts and Mathematics Skills for Special Needs Students When the *i-Ready* Program Is Implemented?** Forsman (2018)	●	●		●		●		●	●	●**
9 **A Causal Comparative Analysis of a Computer Adaptive Mathematics Program Using Multilevel Propensity Score Matching** Seabolt (2018)		●	●		●†		●	●	●	
***Ready*® *Mathematics* Blended Core**										
10 **An Impact Evaluation of the Blended Core Mathematics Program for Elementary Grades** Swain et al. (2019)		●	●		●		●	●	●††	
***Ready* Blended Supplemental**										
11 **An Impact Evaluation of Supplemental Blended Implementation for Mathematics at Grades 6–8** Dvorak et al. (2019b)		●		●	●		●	●	●††	
12 **An Impact Evaluation of Supplemental Blended Implementation for Reading at Grades K–2** Dvorak et al. (2019c)	●		●		●		●	●	●††	

*Specific student groups include students with disabilities, ELs, and students with socioeconomic disadvantages.

**Reported for students with disabilities only.

†Study includes characteristics for meeting ESSA Level 2 (Moderate) evidence. However, because the authors did not specify which ESSA evidence level the study meets in the report, nor has it been reviewed by an independent clearinghouse such as the What Works Clearinghouse, educators should review the full research report in order to determine if it meets their own interpretations for ESSA evidence.

††Third-party studies are defined as those that were conducted by external research organizations that were contracted by Curriculum Associates to independently perform the research to industry-recognized standards. Studies by independent authors (without ††) were conducted and funded entirely independently of Curriculum Associates.

Efficacy Research Study Summaries

Each efficacy study highlighted within the table on pages 4–5 is summarized below. Those interested in further details are encouraged to review the original research studies, which are accessible at **CurriculumAssociates.com/i-Ready-Research**.

1 The Impact of *i-Ready Personalized Instruction* on Students' Reading and Mathematics Achievement

AUTHOR(S):
Curriculum Associates, 2020

EVALUATION SCHOOL YEAR:
2017–2018

PRODUCT:
i-Ready

GRADE(S):
K–8

ESSA LEVEL 3

Curriculum Associates analyzed data from more than one million students who took the *i-Ready Diagnostic* in the 2017–2018 school year. In both reading and mathematics, students who used *i-Ready* for an average of 45 minutes or more per subject per week for at least 18 weeks experienced greater learning gains compared to students who did not, when controlling for prior achievement. This study also examined differences among student groups. Students with disabilities, ELs, and students with socioeconomic disadvantages who used *i-Ready* all saw greater growth than students from the same demographic groups who did not have access to the program. The significance of the findings and the rigorous study design provide support for *i-Ready* as a program that meets the criteria for ESSA Level 3.

2 An Impact Evaluation of *i-Ready Instruction* Using 2018–2019 Data

AUTHOR(S):
HumRRO and Century Analytics

EVALUATION SCHOOL YEAR:
2018–2019

PRODUCT:
i-Ready

GRADE(S):
K–8

ESSA LEVEL 2†

The Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO) and Century Analytics, two third-party research firms, partnered together in order to examine the impact of *i-Ready* during the 2018–2019 school year. Using a quasi-experimental design with propensity score matching designed to meet ESSA Level 2 criteria, HumRRO and Century Analytics examined the impact of *i-Ready* on the reading and mathematics achievement of students in Grades K–8. Using hierarchical linear modeling, HumRRO found that students in all grades and subjects using *i-Ready* experienced statistically significantly higher spring scores than students not using *i-Ready*. In addition, the study authors found that these positive results generally held for students who are Black and Latino, ELs, students with disabilities, and students with socioeconomic disadvantages.

3 An Impact Evaluation of *i-Ready Instruction* for Striving Learners Using 2018–2019 Data

AUTHOR(S):
HumRRO

EVALUATION SCHOOL YEAR:
2018–2019

PRODUCT:
i-Ready

GRADE(S):
2–5

ESSA LEVEL 2†

HumRRO conducted this study that evaluated the impact of *i-Ready* on striving learners' reading and mathematics achievement during the 2018–2019 school year, including results disaggregated by students performing below the 20th percentile and students who are Black and Latino. The study used a quasi-experimental design that meets ESSA Level 2 requirements, and defined striving students as those students who performed at least Two Grade Levels Below their chronological grade on the fall Diagnostic. The researchers found that striving students who used *i-Ready* made statistically significantly stronger improvements in reading and mathematics compared to students in the control group who did not use *i-Ready*. These results indicate that *i-Ready* is an effective instruction for students who start the year with unfinished learning and may be used as part of an academic intervention program for striving learners.

†Study includes characteristics for meeting ESSA Level 2 (Moderate) evidence. However, because the authors did not specify which ESSA evidence level the study meets in the report, nor has it been reviewed by an independent clearinghouse such as the What Works Clearinghouse, educators should review the full research report in order to determine if it meets their own interpretations for ESSA evidence.

4 An Impact Evaluation of *i-Ready Diagnostic and Instruction* Implementation for Reading at Grades K–2: Final Report

AUTHOR(S):
HumRRO

EVALUATION SCHOOL YEAR:
2016–2017

PRODUCT:
i-Ready

GRADE(S):
K–2

ESSA LEVEL 2†

Utilizing a quasi-experimental study designed to meet ESSA Level 2 criteria, HumRRO examined the effect of *i-Ready* for Reading for early elementary students in Grades K–2 during the 2016–2017 school year. Analyses using propensity score matching and hierarchical linear modeling found that schoolwide implementation of *i-Ready* for Reading in Grades K–2 resulted in increased student achievement compared to schools using only the *i-Ready Diagnostic*.

5 *i-Ready* in 7th Grade Math Classes: A Mixed Methods Case Study

AUTHOR(S):
WestEd and iHub

EVALUATION SCHOOL YEAR:
2017–2018

PRODUCT:
i-Ready

GRADE(S):
7

ESSA LEVEL 2†

Conducted by WestEd in partnership with the Silicon Valley Education Foundation's STEM Innovation Hub (iHub) team and supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, this independently funded quasi-experimental study that meets ESSA Level 2 criteria found that Grade 7 students who spent a minimum of 45 minutes a week or more on *i-Ready* for Mathematics during the 2017–2018 school year demonstrated a significant improvement in their scores on the SBA over students who did not. Specifically, utilizing data from more than 1,700 students, WestEd found that students using *i-Ready* for more than 45 minutes tended to score 24 points higher than similar students who used *i-Ready* for less than 45 minutes. Students with 45 minutes or more in *i-Ready* also experienced greater growth toward the next achievement level on the SBA.

6 Utah STEM Action Center Multiyear Studies

AUTHOR(S):
Utah STEM Action Center

EVALUATION SCHOOL YEARS:
2014–2015; through 2018–2019

PRODUCT:
i-Ready

GRADE(S):
K–8

ESSA LEVELS 2† & 3

The Utah STEM Action Center conducted a multiyear evaluation of multiple providers of online instructional technology for mathematics for the K–12 Mathematics Personalized Learning Software Grant Pilot Program, including *i-Ready*. For school years 2014–2015 through 2018–2019, the Utah STEM Action Center published annual reports regarding the implementation and effectiveness of these technologies. (Note that the study design varied by evaluation school year.) Using multiple methodologies, such as linear and logistic regression, these reports showed that *i-Ready* was consistently one of the top mathematics solutions among the vendors evaluated. The most recent evaluation with student-level Student Assessment of Growth and Excellence (SAGE) outcomes available from spring 2018 found that use of *i-Ready* was associated with increased likelihood of proficiency on the SAGE test, and students who used *i-Ready* with greater frequency demonstrated higher student-growth percentiles than students who used *i-Ready* with lower frequency. We will update this summary with the SAGE results from the 2018–2019 study once available.

†Study includes characteristics for meeting ESSA Level 2 (Moderate) evidence. However, because the authors did not specify which ESSA evidence level the study meets in the report, nor has it been reviewed by an independent clearinghouse such as the What Works Clearinghouse, educators should review the full research report in order to determine if it meets their own interpretations for ESSA evidence.

7 Utah's Early Intervention Reading Software Program Report

AUTHOR(S):
Evaluation and Training Institute

EVALUATION SCHOOL YEAR:
2018–2019

PRODUCT:
i-Ready

GRADE(S):
K–3

ESSA LEVEL 2†

On behalf of the Utah State Board of Education, the Evaluation and Training Institute conducted an evaluation on Utah's Early Intervention Software Program (EISP) for Reading during the 2018–2019 school year. The EISP was implemented in 88 local education agencies that had the option of selecting one of four adaptive, computer-based literacy software programs—including *i-Ready* for Reading—for use with all students in Grades K–1 and struggling readers in Grades 2–3. The evaluators found that *i-Ready* had a positive and statistically significant impact on literacy achievement (as measured by the Acadience Reading composite scores) for students in Grades K, 1, and 3. Of the four vendors, *i-Ready* had some of the largest effect sizes (i.e., effect size = .33 for Grade K, effect size = .32 for Grade 1, and effect size = .25 for Grade 3). This study meets ESSA Level 2 criteria.

8 What Is the Impact on Growth in Language Arts and Mathematics Skills for Special Needs Students When the *i-Ready* Program Is Implemented?

AUTHOR(S):
Forsman

EVALUATION SCHOOL YEAR:
2016–2017

PRODUCT:
i-Ready

GRADE(S):
6–8

ESSA LEVEL 3

This dissertation examined the use of *i-Ready* as an effective intervention strategy for students with disabilities in reading and mathematics during the 2016–2017 school year. Sixty-six students were identified as students with disabilities in the following categories: Emotionally Disabled, Intellectual Disability, Multiple Disabilities, Language/Speech Impaired, Specific Learning Disabled in one or all subjects, Autism, and Other Health Impaired. Using multiple independent sample t-tests and the *i-Ready Diagnostic* as the outcome measure, these analyses found that students in inclusion classrooms (in which students with and without disabilities learn together) scored statistically significantly higher in the spring than the fall in reading and mathematics. Resource students (i.e., students with disabilities who received specialized instruction outside of the general education classroom) also experienced statistically significantly greater scores in the spring compared to the fall in reading. This study meets ESSA Level 3 criteria.

9 A Causal Comparative Analysis of a Computer Adaptive Mathematics Program Using Multilevel Propensity Score Matching

AUTHOR(S):
Seabolt

EVALUATION SCHOOL YEAR:
2016–2017

PRODUCT:
i-Ready

GRADE(S):
5

ESSA LEVEL 2†

This dissertation examined the effectiveness of *i-Ready* for Mathematics for Grade 5 students in a school district in central Florida during the 2016–2017 school year. Leveraging multilevel propensity score matching, students using *i-Ready* with fidelity (i.e., a minimum of 45 minutes per week for at least 25 weeks) were matched to students who did not use *i-Ready* with fidelity. Impact analyses conducted with multilevel models demonstrated that students using *i-Ready* with fidelity experienced greater mathematics score gains on the Florida Standards Assessments compared to those who did not use *i-Ready* with fidelity. This study meets ESSA Level 2 criteria.

†Study includes characteristics for meeting ESSA Level 2 (Moderate) evidence. However, because the authors did not specify which ESSA evidence level the study meets in the report, nor has it been reviewed by an independent clearinghouse such as the What Works Clearinghouse, educators should review the full research report in order to determine if it meets their own interpretations for ESSA evidence.

10 An Impact Evaluation of the Blended Core Mathematics Program for Elementary Grades

AUTHOR(S):
HumRRO

EVALUATION SCHOOL YEAR:
2017–2018

PRODUCT:
Ready Mathematics Blended Core
(includes *i-Ready*)

GRADE(S):
K–5

ESSA LEVEL 2†

HumRRO conducted a study using data from the 2017–2018 school year of more than 21,000 students to understand the impact of the *Ready Mathematics* Blended Core Curriculum (*i-Ready Diagnostic*, *i-Ready*, and *Ready Mathematics* used as core instruction) on mathematics achievement for students in Grades K–5. The quasi-experimental study, leveraging hierarchical linear modeling and propensity score matching, meets ESSA Level 2 criteria. HumRRO's findings support that participation in *Ready Mathematics* Blended Core Curriculum resulted in higher student-level achievement in mathematics, as measured by the *i-Ready Diagnostic*, compared to a control group of students using only the *i-Ready Diagnostic*. For students with comparable starting points, the mean mathematics achievement for the *Ready Mathematics* Blended Core Curriculum group was statistically significantly higher in all Grades K–5. Moreover, the effect sizes provided additional support that students in *Ready Mathematics* Blended Core Curriculum schools benefited from their school's adoption and implementation of the *Ready Mathematics* Blended Core Curriculum.

11 An Impact Evaluation of Supplemental Blended Implementation for Mathematics at Grades 6–8

AUTHOR(S):
HumRRO

EVALUATION SCHOOL YEAR:
2016–2017

PRODUCT:
Ready Mathematics Blended Core
(includes *i-Ready*)

GRADE(S):
6–8

ESSA LEVEL 2†

HumRRO conducted a quasi-experimental study designed to meet ESSA Level 2 criteria to examine whether the use of the Supplemental Blended Program in Mathematics (*i-Ready Diagnostic*, *i-Ready*, and *Ready Mathematics* used as a supplement to the core instruction) resulted in higher student achievement than use of only the *i-Ready Diagnostic*. Utilizing propensity score matching and hierarchical linear modeling, HumRRO examined data from the 2016–2017 school year and found that school-level implementation of the Supplemental Blended Program in Mathematics for Grades 6–8 resulted in increased student achievement compared to schools using only the *i-Ready Diagnostic*.

12 An Impact Evaluation of Supplemental Blended Implementation for Reading at Grades K–2

AUTHOR(S):
HumRRO

EVALUATION SCHOOL YEAR:
2016–2017

PRODUCT:
Ready Blended Supplemental
(includes *i-Ready*)

GRADE(S):
K–2

ESSA LEVEL 2†

HumRRO conducted a quasi-experimental study designed to meet ESSA Level 2 criteria to examine the Supplemental Blended Program in Reading (*i-Ready Diagnostic*, *i-Ready*, and *Ready Reading* used as a supplement to the core instruction) for early elementary students in Grades K–2 during the 2016–2017 school year. Analyses using propensity score matching and hierarchical linear modeling found that school-level implementation of the Supplemental Blended Program in Reading for Grades K–2 resulted in increased student achievement compared to schools using only the *i-Ready Diagnostic*.

†Study includes characteristics for meeting ESSA Level 2 (Moderate) evidence. However, because the authors did not specify which ESSA evidence level the study meets in the report, nor has it been reviewed by an independent clearinghouse such as the What Works Clearinghouse, educators should review the full research report in order to determine if it meets their own interpretations for ESSA evidence.

For more information, please visit **CurriculumAssociates.com/i-Ready-Research** to read the full research reports.

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i-Ready

Built to address the rigor of the new standards, *i-Ready* helps students make real gains. *i-Ready* collects a broad spectrum of rich data on student abilities that identifies areas where a student is struggling, measures growth across a student's career, supports teacher-led differentiated instruction, and provides a personalized instructional path within a single online solution.

To learn more about evidence on the impact of *i-Ready*, please visit CurriculumAssociates.com/Research.

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