

Enabling Data-Driven Instruction for Student Success



LaChrissha Jackson

Assistant Principal



Location:
Morrow, Georgia



Grades:
PreK-5



Number of students:
584



School characteristics:
Urban



Subjects:
IXL Math, IXL English Language
Arts, IXL Science, IXL Social Studies

An Easier Way to Individualize Instruction

Individualizing instruction for a classroom of students with diverse learning needs is always a challenge. IXL gives teachers at Tara Elementary School the data they need to make daily instructional decisions and a learning platform that is personalized for each student. The program saves many hours previously spent on data analysis and planning so they can spend more time working directly with students.

The Challenges

Located in an urban area on the outskirts of Atlanta, Tara Elementary is a Title I school serving a highly diverse student body. A majority of students come from low-income families, and roughly one-third are English Language Learners. Students come into the classroom with a range of learning needs and proficiency levels. Many students need extra support in reaching grade-level standards.

The district uses Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) as a benchmark, which generates a RIT score for each student to measure academic progress and identify areas of growth. However, with just three benchmark tests each year, MAP data is too delayed and infrequent to guide daily instructional decision-making. In addition, turning RIT scores into individualized instructional plans for a classroom of students was very time-consuming, creating two or three days of work for each teacher.

Assistant Principal LaChrissha Jackson was already familiar with IXL before joining the leadership team in 2023. As a parent, she saw first-hand how much IXL Math helped her middle- and high-school children, especially when they were learning virtually during the pandemic. As an Academic Coach, she implemented IXL in two prior schools during and after the pandemic. When she came to Tara Elementary, she realized that teachers could benefit from the real-time data and individualized instruction provided by IXL.

Teachers at Tara Elementary needed a better way to monitor student growth and make daily instructional decisions based on student data.

The Solution



Tara Elementary began using IXL for all subject areas in the second semester of the 2023-24 school year. It quickly became a key component of daily instruction across all grade levels. Students use it daily during small-group rotations in the school day and in their before- and after-school programs.

Teachers can enter RIT scores from MAP directly into IXL to automatically generate individualized study plans for each student—a process that only takes 20 minutes for the whole class. Students typically work on grade-level skills related to instructional content during the school day and on their individualized study plans before and after school. Teachers appreciate the detailed reports, which allow them to monitor progress and plan individual remediation, small-group activities, or whole-class instruction. Since IXL skills correlate to the state standards and textbook programs they use, it's easy for them to integrate IXL into their curricula.

Students benefit from the immediate feedback and individualized instruction built into IXL. They can work on a skill however long it takes to achieve mastery and get just-in-time remediation if they are struggling. LaChrissha says that they appreciate the personalization and the privacy inherent to the program: “No one else needs to know what I’m working on or how long it takes me to master it. IXL will explain it to me as many times as I need.” She creates weekly incentives for students, with tangible rewards like free time or ice cream, based on time spent in the program or the number of skills mastered.

Here’s how teachers at Tara Elementary are using IXL:

Teachers create individualized study plans for students in IXL based on their MAP benchmark scores.

Students work on individualized study plans in IXL during their 35-minute “Before the Bell” time at the beginning of the school day and the two-hour “After the Bell” after-school program. Students in grades 3-5 can take Chromebooks home to work on IXL for homework.

Teachers assign grade-level skills in IXL correlated to their weekly lessons, which students work on during small-group rotations. The reports allow teachers to plan small groups and adjust their instruction based on student learning needs.

School leaders use administrator reports to monitor progress for classrooms, grade levels, and student groups. This data is used to plan professional development and instructional coaching.

“IXL frees teachers from the ‘grunt work’ of data analysis and planning so they can spend more time instructing students. It used to take two or three days of work to create individualized learning plans for students. With IXL, it’s done for the whole class in 20 minutes.”

-LaChrissha Jackson, Assistant Principal, Tara Elementary School

The Results



While it's too early to have longitudinal results on state testing, teachers are already seeing gains in the classroom. Based on the progress they are seeing in IXL, teachers are expecting to see meaningful gains on the winter MAP. In the first two months of use in spring 2024, they saw the following progress:



Students in special education, in particular, showed notable growth, with many moving up grade bands.



Students showed greater stamina for end-of-year testing, thanks to practice sessions on IXL.



The program is saving hours of data analysis and planning time for busy teachers. With IXL, individualizing instruction based on data is fast and easy.

