

Superkids creates eager readers

Achieving reading goals

Matthews Elementary principal Angie Hanlin attributes her students' rapid reading improvement during one school year to *The Superkids Reading Program*. "Our scores on our end-of-year spring benchmark were much higher than they had been in the past," she says.

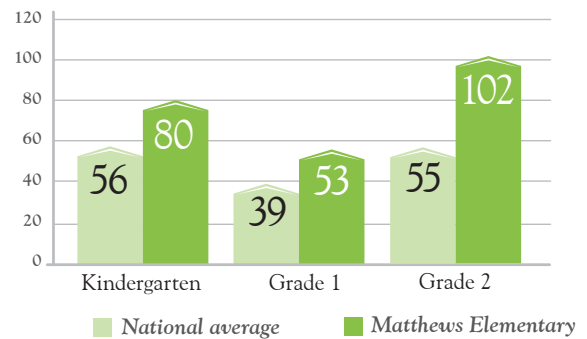
Superkids was adopted for all three grades, K–2, for the 2017–2018 school year, and teachers were thrilled at the results they found. In all three grades, students' reading growth (the increase in their scores on aimsweb™ Plus reading tests over three points during the school year) exceeded the national average—in grade 2, by nearly double.

Superkids teaches reading skills

Reading scores over the past few years for Matthews Elementary students did not reflect the students' potential. "Our reading scores were dipping," says Hanlin. "Our school went into a turnaround program, and in Missouri that makes us a Focus School." Because of that designation, Hanlin was able to tap into additional state funding for curricula and materials.

In one year, Matthews Elementary students' reading growth rate was higher than the national average in all three grades.

Points gained in reading, 2017–2018



Hanlin and her teachers worked with Schools Cubed to find a reading program that fit. "Our consultant, Pati Montgomery, worked with a school in Colorado that was very similar to us—not only our data but our demographics—and they were having great results with *Superkids*," she says. With those results in hand, Hanlin worked with her school board and superintendent to purchase *Superkids*.

Matthews Elementary, serving PreK–5 students in Matthews, Missouri

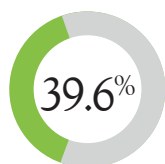
One of three public, rural elementary schools in Missouri's poorest county



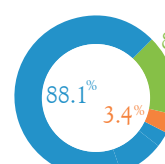
Students with an IEP



Students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch



County poverty rate of families with children



Ethnicity
Caucasian: 88.1%
Black: 8.5%
Hispanic: 3.4%

Kindergarten teacher Ashley Palmer watched students connect with the Superkids immediately, and she realized the program would meet her students' needs. "Our prior reading program focused more on character, setting, and event rather than actually teaching students phonics and how to read. Some phonics were tucked into our prior program, but it taught them a letter at a time, and they didn't learn any phonemic awareness," she explains. *Superkids* provides evidence-based structured literacy instruction, which focuses on the decoding skills her students need to succeed in reading.

“*Superkids was a program that actually taught them to read.*”

—Ashley Palmer, Kindergarten Teacher

"Vocabulary is a huge, huge issue in our area," explains Megan Myers, a kindergarten teacher. "Students arrive at school without a lot of oral vocabulary. *Superkids* does a wonderful job of introducing them to several new vocabulary words per character."

Students adore the Superkids

Student engagement with the characters motivates them to read. Because the students are so engaged, teachers watch them achieve reading success. Second-grade teacher Samantha Pullen initially expressed concerns over the program's rigor, especially because her students had not had *Superkids* in the prior year. She was surprised at what she saw. "The kids were excited about having the magazines and the chapter books. I mean, they were just so motivated, and they did it!" Pullen says.

Principal Hanlin agrees. "The students really surprised us with what they could do and how they adapted to the program. We raised the level of expectations, and they rose to it."

Differentiation is seamless with Superkids

Students at Matthews need support in reading, and teachers differentiate their instruction easily with *Superkids*. Pullen especially appreciates the online assessments that help her teach diagnostically. "The system sends three different sections of information directly to me, and then it's very easy to see what that student needed to work on more," she says.

"There are so many resources within the program that you really don't have to look for anything. Last year, I didn't have to pull any additional resources or really anything. Even for intervention," says Palmer.

"Many teachers struggle with differentiated instruction. But I think *Superkids'* Teacher's Guides do an excellent job of really breaking that down," says Hanlin. The school's intervention teacher uses the *Superkids Skill-Building Book* and Ten-Minute Tuck-Ins to help students increase their skills with characters they know and love.

The district also has a new focus on explicit instruction that *Superkids* supports. "Our teachers, I think, had a much better understanding of the steps to explicit instruction when they saw the questions that *Superkids* asks and the way those lessons were just automatically set up," Hanlin says. "I would not have believed it if a salesperson had said to me that this curriculum will make your teachers stronger. But it has." *Superkids'* systematic and cumulative instruction contributes to her teachers' success.

“*Superkids makes better, stronger teachers!*”

—Angie Hanlin, Principal

Superkids reaches into the county

The New Madrid County schools have three elementary schools; at the end of the first year of *Superkids* implementation, another elementary school in the district requested a meeting with principal Hanlin to talk about how Matthews found its reading program.

"Their kindergarten, first-, and second-grade teachers all came and observed our classrooms. And all of them voiced they could not believe the engagement factor through the entire two-hour reading block," Hanlin recalls.

Along with student excitement, however, teachers wanted evidence to determine whether *Superkids* was the right program for their school. "We met with them in our data room, and our data was on the wall, and they actually saw it," Hanlin explains. "Several teachers said, 'The numbers speak volumes.' They decided to go with *Superkids* based on those end-of-year spring scores."

"*Superkids* really permeates the school," Hanlin points out. "It's not something that you just leave at the end of the reading block. The teacher read alouds are all from *Superkids*. And then we worked *Superkids* into our intervention program. The program really does answer a lot of needs that a school district has for its students."