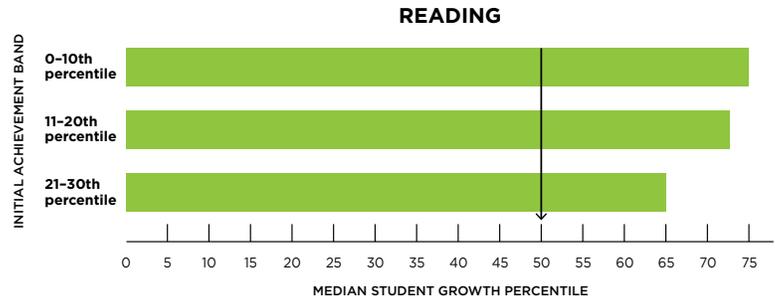# Smart data use sparks growth, closes gaps

Using the right assessments for your district is key to tackling achievement gaps. Bay District Schools knows this firsthand. After changing their approach to assessment, they helped struggling students experience phenomenal—and clearly demonstrable—growth.

After implementing MAP® Growth™, Bay students at the lower end of the achievement spectrum (below the 30th percentile) across all grade levels grew well beyond what's considered normal. A typical median growth percentile for any group of students is the 50th percentile. In spring 2018 the median score for this group of Bay students ranged from 64th–70th percentile in math and 64th–75th percentile in reading.

READING

In Florida, showing that kind of growth is particularly important for meeting state expectations.

"We needed a tool to monitor progress that was also aligned to our newly adopted standards and the Florida Standards Assessments (FSA). MAP Growth meets the need for us," says Bill Husfelt, Superintendent. By using MAP Growth data to understand student performance and improve their Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), teachers are able to pinpoint instruction and identify which intervention materials to use with students. These efforts have played a critical role in improving outcomes for low achievers.

Having a reliable measure also makes a huge difference. "We experienced a lot of frustration," says Camilla Hudson, Coordinator for Assessment and Accountability. "Our previous assessment would show us that students were prepared for the FSA when in actuality they were non-proficient."

In addition to using data for remediation, MAP Growth enables teachers to differentiate instruction to support all learners—including their top-performing students who require more challenging material. "Instead of having to cull through data and create our own reports, MAP Growth breaks it down for teachers. It shows right where a student is and what they need next," says Linda Pitts, Instructional Specialist for K–12 English Language Arts and Literacy. This makes it easy for teachers to create instructional groups, monitor student progress, and maximize opportunities for each student.

"MAP Growth really identified the gaps where teachers need to focus [instruction] and provided them with next steps," says Linda. "That's usually very intensive and can take multiple measures of diagnostic data to find that… so that is very beneficial."

In order to improve outcomes for all students, though, Bay District is now turning their attention to high achievers. "The kids are doing what we ask them to do, but what we're putting in front of them is not aligned to the standard the way that it needs to be," says Linda. "And the data report from NWEA® really highlighted that [for us]." By using MAP Growth data to review their instructional practices, Bay District aims to help high achievers see the same type of growth.

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