



During the 2020 pandemic America's schools needed to immediately transition from in-person learning to virtual. SIIA's Ed Tech members products help schools across the country bridge the gap keeping students, teachers and schools engaged and learning. Here are their stories.

Amplify.

HIGH-QUALITY FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS, INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS, AND TUTORING





BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND THE NEED FOR AN INNOVATIVE REMOTE LEARNING SOLUTION

Like so many districts across the country during the COVID pandemic, Baltimore City Public Schools (City Schools) and their students struggled with lost instructional time resulting in lower academic achievement. According to [EdWeek](#), a recent census survey found: “52% of all parents of K-12 students enrolled in public or private schools reported that their children spent less time on all learning activities than they had before the pandemic.”

On top of the academic challenges, City Schools’ students experienced social-emotional stresses due to less peer-to-peer and adult interaction. Amplify, a pioneer in K-12 digital learning, partnered with City schools to provide high-quality curriculum, assessment, and tutoring solutions to meet academic and social-emotional challenges brought on by the pandemic.

The Executive Director of Teaching and Learning in City Schools understood what they were looking for and why they picked Amplify’s solution, “Our students have been working extremely hard over this past year, but we realize that virtual/hybrid learning is challenging for students. Our goal is to ensure all students receive the support they need to be successful. Knowing our prioritization around the science of reading and the importance of foundational skills, we wanted a high-quality tutoring program to support the grade-level instruction students receive. Our partnership with Amplify allowed us to customize a tutoring program to not only support our students but also to align with our continued focus on instruction and priorities.”

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND mCLASS

City Schools identified existing tools used throughout Baltimore to address the issues exacerbated by the pandemic by expanding its use of mCLASS DIBELS 8th Edition. mCLASS is widely considered the gold-standard formative assessment and instructional suite for early literacy that helps every child learn to read confidently. City Schools also used Amplify Reading, a highly engaging digital supplemental reading solution that provides personalized and targeted support for K-8 students. They added remote tutoring using mCLASS Intervention to 28 participating schools. During remote tutoring, the same Amplify tutor meets with a small group of students, typically including 3-5 students with similar early reading needs, three times per week for 30 minutes each session.





Tutors anchor their lessons in Amplify's mCLASS Intervention program. The mCLASS Intervention lessons are based on the mCLASS DIBELS data targeting specific skills students are working on to improve. Classroom teachers can easily access the tutor's assessment data and lesson plans.

The program addressed students' academic needs, supported their social-emotional needs and helped them build consistent relationships with caring adults and peers. In addition to providing high-quality tutoring, the program benefited by focusing on small groups, hiring local and diverse tutors, and ensuring student access to the same tutors for multiple weeks. Students identified with their tutors which helped nurture educational equity. Tutors reported how some students said they did not want the session to end, while others noted how students became supportive of each other through the interaction. The solution has been successful academically as well — students who attended most of the tutoring sessions were more likely to make outsized gains and narrow their skills gap compared to students who were not a part of the program. This achievement was evident in the data just after a few short months of tutoring between November and January.

SUPPORTING TEACHERS

Amplify provided orientation webinars for all school leaders and classroom teachers at the beginning of the tutoring engagement. These were designed to provide an overview of the program to all educators involved by sharing the roles and responsibilities of the Amplify Point of Contact and classroom teachers.

Additionally, the orientations provided logistical information such as identifying tutoring times that work in the school schedule and guidance for schools to identify students to participate in the Program.

Amplify has created systems and structures for communication at the teacher, school and district levels. Teachers, school and district leaders have full access to all insights from lessons taught by the tutor. School leaders also receive weekly attendance reports, lessons taught the previous week and notes for the teacher. Mid-year webinars provide an opportunity to analyze project-level student achievement data, attendance data and share best practices across the project.





Amplify also has established a teacher site for tutoring, which includes access to an email and phone support team. Finally, a dedicated Program Manager collaborated closely with the school point of contact via email and phone to ensure the program is successful.

LOOKING AHEAD

Given our experience with City Schools and a current research review, we've distilled the following set of best practices for a tutoring program:

Amplify's partnership with BCPS provided support at the student, tutor, teacher and leadership level to facilitate a tutoring program focusing on students' academic and social emotional needs. As Amplify continues to provide tutoring services, a few key focus areas in making sure that it is successful are:

- **Curriculum** - the program should be anchored in a high-quality core or intervention materials that align with classroom instruction
- **Assessment** - high-quality, validated assessments will help determine students most in need of tutoring, as well as the specific skills needing additional attention. Additionally, tutoring programs should use assessments to monitor progress along the way and adjust instruction as needed.
- **Scheduling** - the program should be high-dosage (at least three times per week), instituted in a small group (3-5 students), provided during the school day, and use the same tutor with each group to build a strong relationship.
- **Tutors** - the tutors themselves should be diverse and reflective of the student population, given high-quality onboarding, given time to collaborate, and have ongoing coaching and professional development throughout the year, including observation/feedback cycles from a coach.
- **District support plan** - building a high-quality tutoring program also involves building out the support scaffolding surrounding it. This should involve a point of contact at the school, teacher professional development and communication between teachers and tutors.

www://amplify.com

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