

Education Innovation and Research Program (EIR) Project Abstract

Applicant Name: Louisiana Department of Education

Project Title: Louisiana's Statewide High-Impact Tutoring Study: Testing Systematic Scaling Across Varied Contexts

Type of Grant Requested: (select one) Mid-Phase Expansion

Absolute Priorities the Project Addresses: (select all that apply)

Absolute Priority 1-- Field-Initiated Innovations: Promoting Evidence-Based Literacy

Competitive Preference Priorities the Project Addresses: (select all that apply)

Competitive Preference Priority 1— Returning Education to the States

Competitive Preference Priority 2— Education Choice (High-Impact Tutoring)

Total number of students to be served by the project: 4,500

Grade level(s) to be served by the project: 1-2

Definition of high-need students: Students performing below grade-level benchmarks on Louisiana's DIBELS literacy screener in a state where 72.5% are economically disadvantaged and 46% of K-6 schools are rural.

Brief description of project activities: Louisiana will implement Air Reading, a Science of Reading-aligned virtual tutoring program with WWC strong evidence, across 90 diverse schools through a three-arm cluster RCT comparing business-as-usual, one year of tutoring, and two years of tutoring. Johns Hopkins University will conduct independent evaluation measuring immediate impacts, persistence one and two years post-intervention, cost-effectiveness, implementation fidelity, and workforce models.

Summary of project objectives and expected outcomes: Demonstrate literacy gains (≥ 0.11 SD) with 80% fidelity; determine optimal dosage and persistence ($\geq 50\%$ of gains sustained); identify context-specific implementation conditions; and establish cost benchmarks enabling 50% of districts to develop continuation plans and 3-5 states to replicate.

Summary of how the project is innovative: Tests whether evidence-based tutoring maintains effectiveness when scaled across diverse contexts statewide (rural, urban, suburban, charter); experimentally compares one versus two years of tutoring with two-year post-intervention follow-up measuring persistence; evaluates systemic integration within state literacy infrastructure; and tests college-student workforce expansion models.

Other studies related to the proposed project: Air Reading Texas RCT (████████ & Storey, 2024) showed +0.12 SD overall and +0.20 SD Grade 1 gains meeting WWC standards; Air Reading Louisiana RCT (████████ & Storey, 2025) showed +0.31 SD with full-year implementation using state assessments.

Proposed implementation sites: Ninety competitively-selected Louisiana elementary schools spanning rural parishes (Concordia, Union, Iberia), urban districts (East Baton Rouge, Jefferson), suburban communities, and charter schools (Young Audiences Charter School), representing varied socioeconomic contexts and governance structures.

Organizations partnering with this project: Johns Hopkins University-CRRE (independent evaluator); Air Reading (tutoring implementation partner); Studyville Academic Workspace (curriculum alignment and community engagement); 90 Local Education Agencies and Public Charter Schools (site implementation); Louisiana Institutes of Higher Education (college-student tutor recruitment).