

Success Story



IDEA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Rio Grande Valley,
Austin, and
San Antonio, TX

Highlights

- IDEA chose SpringBoard because it is a complete pre-AP program for students grades 6–12 and, at the same time, it offered superb preparation for Texas assessments.
- IDEA schools use an integrated AP strategy and chose SpringBoard because it aligns with AP to ensure that all students can succeed in AP courses.
- Embedded professional learning provides teachers with the framework for collaborative classrooms and the program's backward design based on rigorous assessments (beginning with the end in mind) delivers the research-based best practices the network required for systemwide implementation.

Demographics

Subgroup	Percentage of Student Population
Students Qualifying for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	87%
Hispanic	90%

Supporting Rigor and High Expectations across a 36-School Network

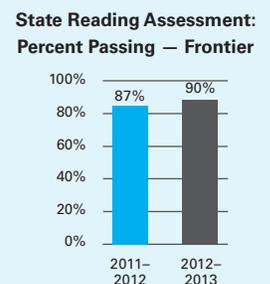
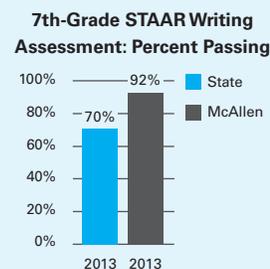
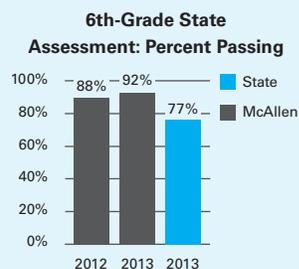
As a rapidly growing public charter school network, IDEA Public Schools focuses on high expectations for student success, to and through college. The network serves more than 20,000 students in three different Texas regions, the Rio Grande Valley, Austin, and San Antonio. This innovative group of schools chose SpringBoard® texts and resources to guide its many new teachers and those teachers who were new to pre-AP. Administrators also sought a program that would deliver high-quality, vertically aligned, common experiences for students.

All 18 schools in the IDEA network use SpringBoard as their core, day-to-day instruction for grades 6–10. For grades 11–12, SpringBoard units are often used in AP® classrooms. IDEA serves many students who struggle with the English language, so these students receive tutoring and interventions to help them prepare for the next day's instruction or for follow up to the current day's lessons.

THE RESULTS

IDEA Charter School Network ELA Curriculum Manager Michael Gragert notes that "Our state assessment data are great indicators of student success with SpringBoard." Schools throughout the IDEA network are posting significant achievement gains:

- In year 1 of SpringBoard, English I and English II students scored 4 percent above state averages on the STAAR test.
- In year 3, English I and English II students scored 11 percent above state averages, with many classrooms turning in scores above 90 percent passing on a highly rigorous test.
- Sixty-six percent of all of the SpringBoard English teachers met the network's goals of 90 percent of students passing and 30 percent passing at the highest-performance level.
- IDEA McAllen College Prep and Frontier College Prep post impressive gains.
- During the 2012–13 school year, 92 percent of McAllen's sixth-grade students passed the state assessment (compared to 77 percent statewide), up from 88 percent the previous year.
- Ninety-two percent of McAllen's seventh-grade students passed the STAAR writing assessment, compared to a 70 percent state average.
- Ninety percent of all middle school students at Frontier passed the state reading assessment, a gain of 3 percent over the previous year.



Leadership Reflections on SpringBoard® Professional Learning and Curriculum Design from IDEA

Michael Gragert, curriculum manager, shared his perspectives about why the SpringBoard program has been successful throughout the 36-school IDEA network.

Highly Effective Teachers Deliver Initial Institutes

Gragert noted, “The most successful strategy we used was having a cadre of highly effective teachers deliver the beginning-of-year Initial Teacher Institute directly from our Train-the-Trainer collaborations. It was a game changer for us ... highly effective teachers training their colleagues on our curriculum and basically saying to the new-to-IDEA teachers, ‘... this curriculum is effective and, if you plan and deliver the lessons well, your students will achieve!’”

Curriculum Design Directly Impacts Outcomes

When asked about the longer-term results that IDEA students are achieving, Gragert reported, “Because SpringBoard is a vertical program, we have begun to see our AP® scores improve. Last year, our AP Language and Composition students saw an increase of 3 percent of students earning a 3 or higher, but what is more incredible is that 3 of our AP Language and Composition teachers set new campus records for the number of students earning a 3 or higher. For the eighth year in a row, we have sent 100 percent of our students to college or university upon graduating from IDEA Public Schools. Our average college entrance exam scores hit a new high last year, allowing more students to enter into Tier 1 or Tier 2 universities and colleges of their choice.”

Delivering Quality Instruction and Opportunity to Every Learner

College readiness is a priority for IDEA and SpringBoard supports that goal, explains Gragert, “I think the greatest benefit is that SpringBoard guides both teachers and students through pre-AP instruction. The lessons and teacher steps SHOW us what good, high-quality, and research-based pre-AP instruction looks like. In turn, this provides students with a consistent, college-preparatory educational experience, regardless of ZIP code, campus, or state region.”

Reasons for Choosing SpringBoard

- IDEA’s academic achievement goals are ambitious, calling for 90 percent of all students to pass the STAAR assessment and 30 percent of all students to earn the highest-performance level.
- IDEA’s goal is for 35 percent of all students to graduate as AP Scholars and the network chose SpringBoard as a critical tool for reaching that goal.
- IDEA operates with a culture of high expectations and SpringBoard transforms those expectations into curriculum and instructional reality in the classroom. Increased expectations have delivered increases in student achievement.

What Students Are Saying About SpringBoard:

“I can’t believe I was able to read that ...”

“I just read some Shakespeare and I’m only in eighth grade.”

IDEA Educators Discuss SpringBoard

“The students connect their learning, are more engaged, and are excited about their own education. In fact, many of our students stay hours after school working on embedded assessments, and many of our teachers report seeing joy in the classrooms again.”



Michael Gragert

ELA Curriculum Manager
IDEA Public Charter
School Network

SPOTLIGHT ON COLLABORATION

Effective Use of SpringBoard Pedagogy, Strategies, and Professional Learning Builds the Foundation for Success

IDEA’s professional development for SpringBoard focuses on teacher collaboration and building skills and knowledge through effective, consistent use of the program’s Teacher’s Editions for every level. Often, exemplar teachers deliver lessons to colleagues so that everyone has a full understanding of both teachers’ and students’ experiences. The district holds webinars twice each month for teachers in each grade level. Webinar content “unpacks” an upcoming lesson in detail to aid in planning teacher actions and to articulate expected student outcomes, including the experiences of deep reading, writing, and thinking.

As a priority, IDEA’s partnership with SpringBoard focused on building capacity so the network could assure successful SpringBoard implementations and outcomes over many years in the most effective, affordable way possible. SpringBoard’s “Train-the-Trainer” professional learning programs are designed to address program continuity and expansion, and to help each SpringBoard teacher transform teaching practices in order to achieve continuously improving student outcomes.



For information, visit collegeboard.org/springboard or call 877-999-7723.