

Fort Sam Houston Independent School District (ISD)—Texas

Meeting Kids Where They Are, When “Where They Are” Is on a Military Base

The Fort Sam Houston Independent School District (FSHISD) is located within a military installation in San Antonio, Texas. Although FSHISD is a public district, 100 percent of the student population are children of military personnel who are active in or retired from the army, air force, navy, marines, or coast guard.

CHALLENGE

Focusing on the “whole learner” in a district where high mobility rates and lengthy deployments are standard operating procedure

Military children face unique challenges: having active-duty parents means frequent moves, lengthy deployments, and sometimes having to cope with a parent’s injury. So, in addition to addressing achievement gaps, FSH educators endeavor to focus on the “whole learner,” paying special attention to the social and emotional well-being of this special population.

Dr. Roland Rios, director of technology for FSHISD explains, “We don’t get our kids for very long, especially those in elementary grades. They tend to stay two to three years and then move on—so there’s constant mobility.” With a transient population, it’s common to have students performing below, at, and above grade level. Teachers are constantly re-evaluating kids to see who may require targeted support to catch up, and who’s proficient and may be ready to move on to the next level. That’s where DreamBox comes in.

SOLUTION

Using DreamBox to help students fill knowledge gaps and reach their highest level of learning

FSHISD uses DreamBox as both an intervention tool for students who are struggling, and to support accelerated learning in students who are already performing at grade level and beyond. Instructional design coach Lynda Jacob explains, “We’re always looking for new ways to take our kids from high to higher.” So, in addition to closing gaps, educators also look for opportunities to extend learning for gifted and talented (GT) students.” Jacob continues, “We don’t want to limit anyone. We want to be able to keep everyone engaged and learning, and that’s one of the great things that DreamBox provides for us.”

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*— Lynda Jacob
Instructional Design Coach*



DreamBox automatically personalizes instruction from intervention through enrichment, delivering content and lessons that are appropriate to each student's level of learning readiness. Based on learners' strategies and independent thinking, DreamBox adapts in real time, constantly assessing progress and building on prior knowledge to provide personalized learning pathways that meet students right where they are.

"It's the only computer-based tool that I know of that really takes a learner beyond the average," says Jacob. "When kids can actually see evidence of their own success, they're more confident and more motivated to persevere with math. That's where DreamBox hits a grand slam in my book."

Rios, the director of technology, is also impressed with DreamBox's ability to engage learners, "It's visually appealing and fun, so kids are learning sometimes without knowing they're learning." Additionally, Rios says access to DreamBox's embedded professional development tool provides powerful and unexpected personalized learning opportunities for FSHISD teachers. "It's one thing to have a tool that shows teachers where kids are struggling, but DreamBox goes the extra mile with MyFlexPD™ by suggesting complementary learning activities, additional classroom tools, and new ways to deliver instruction."

RESULTS

Since implementing DreamBox, math achievement is on the rise

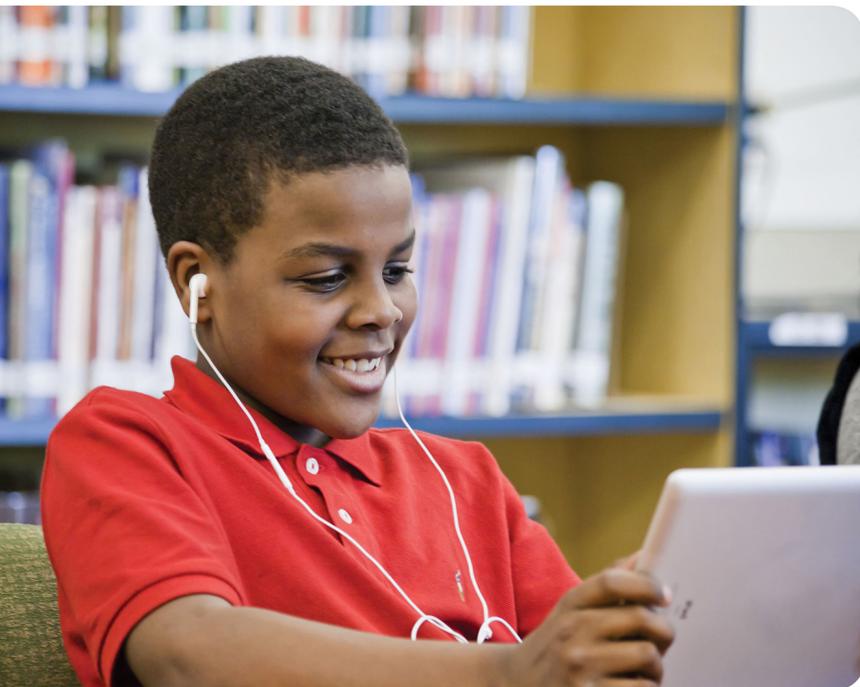
Since implementing DreamBox, Jacob says math achievement—especially among fourth and fifth grade students—is on the rise. The district uses the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) practice tests throughout the year to help measure growth and see how students are progressing, and help them prepare for the actual STAAR exam, conducted annually.

DREAMBOX® LEARNING IMPLEMENTATION

- Implemented district-wide
- Access to 1:1 devices
- Used in small groups and targeted instruction
- Functions as RTI tool

FORT SAM HOUSTON FAST FACTS

- District serves children of active and retired military personnel
- Two campuses comprise the district: Fort Sam Houston Elementary, and Robert G. Cole Middle School and High School
- Grades: PreK–12
- Enrollment: 1,546
- At Risk: 21%
- Economically Disadvantaged: 35.6%
- Special Education: 12%
- Gifted and Talented (GT): 5.5%
- English as a Second Language (ESL): 3.2%



For more information,
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