Uplift Education:
A Strong District Vision for High-Impact Tutoring

SERVING			MODEL
5 Schools	620 Students	Texas	Partnering with a Provider

Pre-existing District Characteristics that Supported High-Impact Tutoring:

- Rigorous benchmark and state assessments in place
- A focus on Social-Emotional Learning
- A focus on close relationships within the classroom

Impact:

- In the Grade 3 Literacy tutoring program, 96% of students reached their projected achievement goal.
- In the Grade 4-7 Reading and Math tutoring program, 65% of the students reached their projected achievement goal.

## Setting Data-Driven Goals and Engaging Expert Guidance

Uplift Education, an open-enrollment charter network serving 23,000 PK-12 students in North Texas, established clear, data-driven objectives to formulate a compelling vision for its program's impact. By collaborating with the National Student Support Accelerator and the Southern Education Foundation, Uplift gained valuable insights into research-based high-impact tutoring practices and effective strategies for Outcomes-Based Contracts respectively. Leveraging historical student and district data, Uplift defined specific goals regarding students served, attendance, dosage, student-to-tutor ratios, and seamless integration within the school day. Moreover, Uplift articulated a vision for a tutoring provider that emphasizes innovation in response to the insights gathered from this data. To support this vision, Uplift laid out clear metrics for success for both individual students and district implementation. Additionally, workshops with key stakeholders were scheduled in advance that aimed at fostering collaboration and driving these innovations forward.

For NSSA recommendations and resources see Section 2.2 Setting Data-Driven Goals and 2.3 Selecting a Tutoring Approach.

Presenting the Request for Proposals

After developing a clear vision for an ideal high-impact tutoring provider, Uplift Education created a Request for Proposals (RFP) to assist in selecting two high-impact tutoring partners to serve in different contexts. A virtual pre-proposal conference allowed the district to outline key elements while enabling providers to evaluate their ability to deliver them. The presentation was designed to attract providers capable of meeting the specified outcomes by emphasizing Uplift's planned tutoring program design, such as their innovative plan for data response to achieve desired outcomes. During the conference, the district presented a preliminary tutoring calendar, schedule, minimum number of served students, attendance requirements, and historical data that captured the focus and change envisioned. The session facilitated open communication and fostered relationships between the organization and potential providers, ensuring a shared understanding of values and the requested evidence-based practices. After the session, answers and questions were answered publicly to address misconceptions and details regarding innovation and logistics as soon as possible. This upfront engagement proved beneficial by assisting the providers in recognizing their ability or inability to meet the outlined commitments before the interview stage, ultimately saving time and streamlining the selection process. Uplift Education ultimately hired OnYourMark Education, a tutoring provider that has now received the NSSA Tutoring Program Design Badge, to conduct tutoring sessions.

For NSSA recommendations and resources see Section 4: Partnering with a Provider.
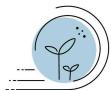
Selecting Students

The selection of students for tutoring was guided by specific criteria outlined for early childhood and grade levels 3-8. For the district's youngest learners, students identified as significantly below benchmark on the DIBELS assessments were prioritized for tutoring. For grades 3-8, students who did not meet grade-level readiness benchmarks as measured by state assessments were prioritized for virtual tutoring. Beyond these prioritized students, a process was established in collaboration with the tutoring provider to select students based on other data performance measures. Individual schools were given ownership of selecting students for tutoring. The selection process was strongly influenced by state legislation, specifically House Bill 1416 which mandated that every student failing to meet benchmarks receive a total of 30 hours of tutoring focused on math and reading.

For NSSA recommendations and resources see Section 6.2 Selecting Students.

Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement is vital for the success of a high-impact tutoring program, allowing teams to swiftly identify and address challenges as they arise. Mid-year adjustments driven by data analysis played a key role in enhancing Uplift's program effectiveness. Throughout the year, the academic programming and school leadership teams engaged in in-depth discussions focused on establishing measurable outcomes for progress monitoring. One significant change included the decision to switch curricula, to ensure that the program met the necessary rigor and content requirements for the literacy framework. Additionally, when a vendor encountered difficulties in providing accurate attendance reports, it underscored the importance of developing a comprehensive data map. This map served to clarify assessment timelines, designate responsible parties for analysis, and evaluate the reliability of assessments. These proactive changes were essential for refining reporting systems and strengthening data-driven analyses, ultimately contributing to the program's overall improvement.

For NSSA recommendations and resources see Section 6.5 Building in Continuous Improvement.

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