



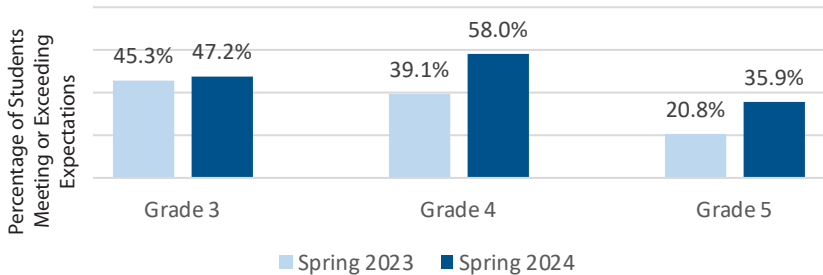
Increase in SC Ready Scores Fueled by Unified Professional Learning and *i-Ready Classroom Mathematics*

“We implemented a common curriculum, common assessments, and professional learning communities (PLCs) across all schools, so ECSD can truly operate as a school system rather than a system of schools.”

—Kevin O’Gorman, Superintendent



Percentage of Merriwether Elementary Students Who Met or Exceeded Expectations on the SC Ready for Mathematics²



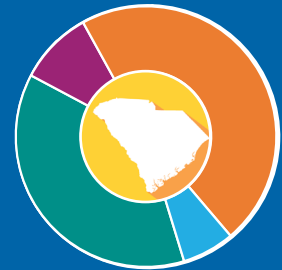
With robust professional learning, educator support, and the *i-Ready Classroom Mathematics* curriculum implemented in ECSD, Merriwether Elementary School achieved remarkable growth in just one year. From spring 2023 to spring 2024, the percentage of students scoring at Meets or Exceeds Expectations on the SC Ready summative assessment rose by nearly two points for Grade 3, an astounding 19 points for Grade 4, and an impressive 15 points for Grade 5—a 12-percentage point increase overall.

Building Connections and Strengthening the School System Community

When Kevin O’Gorman came to rural Edgefield County in 2019 to take on a new role as superintendent, he was struck by the strong sense of community and the kindness of the people. Charged with improving the district’s academic standing, O’Gorman knew he wanted to build on this strength to transform “a system of schools” into a true school system reflective of Edgefield’s special culture.

Edgefield County School District (ECSD), South Carolina

Grades Pre-K–12 Breakdown
3,147 Students¹



White African American
Hispanic Other

4.4%
English Learners

49.7%
Students with Socioeconomic Disadvantages

“When you’re trying to reach a goal, you need to have a singular focus and everything we did related to *i-Ready* was focused on addressing our math instruction. From our PLCs to classroom observations and curriculum development teams, we were dedicated to math improvement. The effort was also teacher driven and adaptive within the structure of the implementation plan, which was tailored specifically for our district and our school.”

—Sara-Beth Brown, Principal, Merriwether Elementary School

¹USNews.com/Education/K12/South-Carolina/Districts/Edgefield-01-103384

²Ed.SC.Gov/Data/Test-Scores/State-Assessments/SC-Ready/2024

For years, each school operated largely independently, without districtwide professional learning, curriculum, or assessment. This impeded the administration in identifying and mitigating obstacles to academic growth. As a result, the district's performance was lagging, especially in mathematics.

When teachers thrive, students thrive. O’Gorman and Stephanie Wallace, director of curriculum and instruction, implemented districtwide systems to help ECSD operate efficiently and effectively while retaining that cherished small-town identity and supporting teachers every step of the way.

Their plan included *i-Ready Classroom Mathematics*, *i-Ready Diagnostic*, and *i-Ready Personalized Instruction*. These programs are designed to work together to provide ongoing assessment of learning, high-impact strategies to foster a discourse-based classroom, and a research-based, multiple-day lesson structure that solidifies understanding and helps teachers reach every student.

“It was a large investment out of the gate for constant support from Curriculum Associates—and Emily—but well worth it because it built capacity at so many levels. The frequency of visits helped to establish strong relationships, and Emily has become ‘part of the family.’”

—Stephanie Wallace, Palmetto State Literacy Association’s 2023 Administrator of the Year

“We inspected what we expected.” ECSD’s unified, thoughtfully executed plan empowered teachers within and across schools with actionable data to hone instruction, proven tools to engage students with grade-level mathematics content, a supportive network of peers, and professional learning to guide implementation best practices.

Ongoing assessment and regular check-ins ensure school and district administrators are nimble in inspecting what they are expecting, making refinements as needed. The result? Growth like Merriwether Elementary’s, where students achieved a remarkable 12-percentage point increase year over year in meeting or exceeding expectations on the 2024 SC Ready in Mathematics.

The team is excited about the progress ECSD is making and what the future holds. “Education is both a science and an art,” says Wallace. “Last year was very much science. Now, in year two, our teams are more confident and the art can come in.”

“The number one thing that brings about change is feedback. Don’t make assumptions. Define what success looks like for each role—teacher, principal, coach. Set high expectations and provide the support for your teams to reach them, never taking your foot off the gas. We owe that to our teachers and to our students.”

—Dr. Kevin O’Gorman, Superintendent

To implement the plan with coherence and fidelity, leadership knew it was essential for the instructional coaching team to work across the entire school system. An important collaborator was Curriculum Associates’ Professional Learning Consultant, Emily Vanderlip.

“The partnership with Emily, alongside our instructional coaching team, made a huge difference. We’ve been able to establish the right support for teachers so they—and their students—can thrive,” Wallace explains.



Perfect Scores for Grades K–8

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