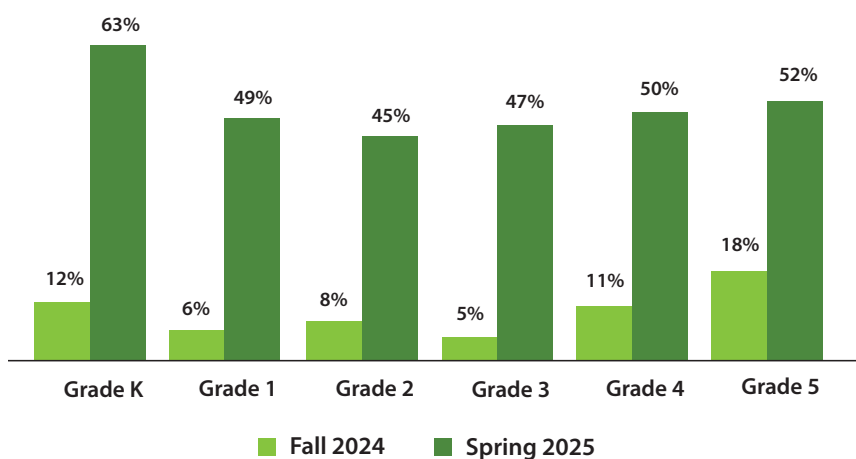




# District Drives Core Math Transformation through Coaching

Supported by *i-Ready Classroom Mathematics* and Coaching by *i-Ready*, West Orange Public Schools intentionally redesigned math instruction across the district.

West Orange Public Schools: Students Scoring Mid or Above Grade Level on the *i-Ready* Assessment



In the second year of implementing *i-Ready Classroom Mathematics* and the first year of Coaching by *i-Ready*, West Orange Public Schools saw substantial growth in the percentage of Grades K–5 students performing mid or above grade level.

## Aligning with New Standards and a Changing Student Body

When New Jersey expanded its Student Learning Standards for Mathematics in 2023, leaders in West Orange Public Schools saw a pivotal moment to reflect and reset.

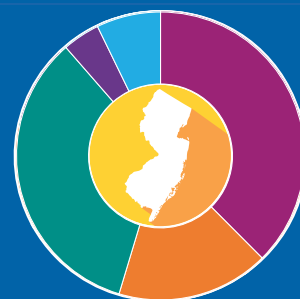
Student achievement had begun to plateau under a previous program. At the same time, the student population was changing. Leaders needed to ensure their core instruction, and the daily practices that supported it, aligned with both the new standards and the needs of all students.

That reflection marked the start of West Orange’s journey with *i-Ready Classroom Mathematics* and Coaching by *i-Ready*—an intentional shift that would reshape instruction across the district.

[Source](#)

West Orange  
Public Schools  
West Orange, New Jersey

6,950 Grades Pre-K–12  
Students<sup>1</sup>



Asian Black Hispanic  
Other White

7%  
Multilingual  
Learners

20.5%  
Students with  
Disabilities

37.9%  
Students with  
Socioeconomic  
Disadvantages

“When I was first introduced to Coaching by *i-Ready*, I knew it was going to be really important. Teachers need to learn from each other. Being able to enter into a classroom, watch a colleague, and then debrief in a safe space, that’s magic.”

— Darlene Berg, Supervisor of K–5 Mathematics

## A Thoughtful, Deliberate Decision

Before implementing *i-Ready Classroom Mathematics* across Grades K–8, West Orange leaders launched a thorough review process with K–8 committees that included teachers, principals, parents, and district administrators.

In classrooms across the district, teachers piloted materials, traced learning progressions, and discussed what high-quality math instruction should look like.

“It was a lot. It took the better part of the year to do that,” said Supervisor of K–5 Mathematics Darlene Berg.

The extended process wasn’t about checking boxes, but building ownership.

By the time the committee voted to adopt *i-Ready Classroom Mathematics* for the 2023–2024 school year, teachers had already begun to envision how it would strengthen their classrooms.

## A Curriculum Where Everything Is “Baked In”

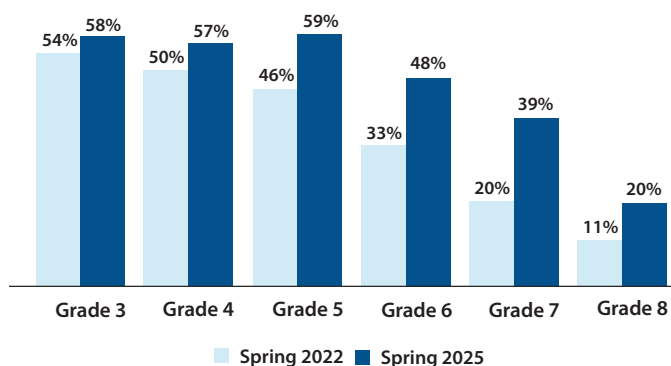
*i-Ready Classroom Mathematics* stood out for how intentionally it incorporated the Standards for Mathematical Practice into daily instruction.

“The strong integration within *i-Ready Classroom Mathematics* really spoke to us. Math procedures are embedded in the routines, in the teacher moves, and in the student moves. They’re endemic to the program.”

— Darlene Berg, Supervisor of K–5 Mathematics

Lessons were sequenced to build conceptual understanding over time, with structured opportunities for students to reason, model, and justify their thinking.

West Orange Public Schools: Students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Mathematics on the NJSLA



Since spring 2022, West Orange students have increased mathematics proficiency on the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments (NJSLA) by an average of 11 percentage points. Grades 5–7 saw especially strong results, with gains ranging from 13 to 19 percentage points.

This was furthered by the Try–Discuss–Connect framework, which made mathematical discourse a daily expectation rather than an occasional strategy.

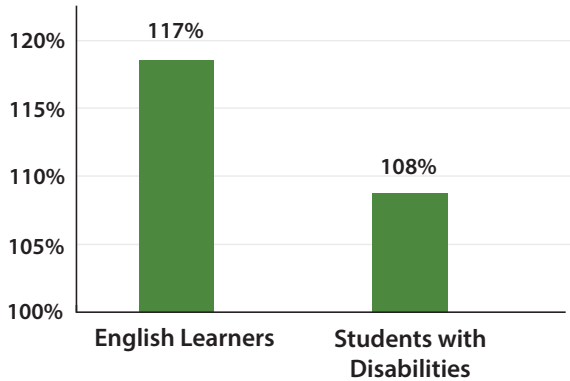
“All the best practices and standards for mathematical processes are built around math discourse,” Berg said. “We needed a program that responded to it.”

## Supporting Teachers through Professional Learning

From the beginning, West Orange designed its implementation to prioritize teacher confidence.

In the spring prior to implementation, educators participated in full-day professional learning (PL) sessions, with teachers of special education receiving sessions tailored to their roles.

Spring 2025 *i-Ready* Median Percent Typical Annual Growth: Grades K–5 English Learners and Students with Disabilities—Mathematics



In 2024–2025, West Orange English learners in Grades K–5 grew 17 percentage points and students with disabilities grew eight points above the *i-Ready* annual Typical Growth goal (represented here as 100 percent on the vertical axis), showing sustained progress in math achievement.

*i-Ready* Typical Growth provides insight into how a student is growing compared to average student growth at the same grade and baseline placement level. Exceeding Typical Growth brings students closer to grade-level proficiency and beyond.

Berg was there, joining every PL session alongside her teachers. “I tell them, we’re going to give ourselves grace,” she said. “We’re learning this together.”

## Coaching as the Turning Point

In year two, West Orange introduced Coaching by *i-Ready*, a structured, job-embedded coaching model designed to connect classroom practice, student data, and professional learning.

Through observation cycles, collaborative lesson planning, and reflective debriefs, teachers examined how instructional moves influenced student thinking. Coaches helped educators analyze *i-Ready* assessment insights and translate data into targeted classroom action, supporting the needs of diverse learners.

In just the first year, the district achieved measurable results. From fall 2024 to spring 2025, the percentage of Grades K–5 students performing mid or above grade level increased across every grade.

English learners achieved 117 percent of annual Typical Growth, and students with disabilities achieved 108 percent, exceeding expected growth benchmarks in mathematics.

“The workshops that have been provided to our teachers have been exemplary,” Berg said. “The PL team members have truly been educational partners as well as thought partners in collaborating with our district to understand our needs.”

Because the PL team members were former educators, teachers felt understood and supported.

“When our teachers ask questions, they’re met with clear, concise information and guidance on transferring the information from the workshops to the classroom,” Berg said.

By prioritizing teacher confidence and clarity before and during implementation, the district reduced resistance and built shared expectations.

“You’re either doing professional learning *with* teachers or *to* teachers. With Coaching by *i-Ready*, we’re doing it **with** them.”

— Darlene Berg, Supervisor of K–5 Mathematics

## A Safe Space to Learn

Coaching was non-evaluative and grounded in trust, creating a safe space for honest professional reflection.

In one debrief, a veteran teacher with nearly 40 years of experience sat quietly before sharing her realization: “I’m doing too much. I’m not giving my students enough space to think.”

“That moment took the oxygen out of the room,” Berg said.

## Sustaining the Shift

Today, math classrooms across West Orange reflect the district's intentional choices.

Students explain their reasoning, build on one another's ideas, and engage more deeply with mathematical concepts.

Teachers use data fluidly and collaborate regularly to refine practice.

The district continues to expand coaching supports, particularly for multilingual learners and students with disabilities, ensuring that instructional shifts reach every classroom.

In West Orange, curriculum created alignment, coaching strengthened practice, and steady leadership and districtwide commitment made the change sustainable.



Explore how *i-Ready Classroom Mathematics* can spark discourse in your classrooms.



Our Certified Coaches are former instructional coaches, administrators, principals, curriculum coordinators, and counselors.

Learn how Coaching by *i-Ready* can support your teachers and students.