COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Spring 2026 Case Study Reports: Impact on Student Learning

Executive Summary

This report presents findings from semi-structured interviews with eight program completers from Auburn University at Montgomery's (AUM) School of Education, conducted during the Spring 2026 semester. The interviews were designed to document and assess the impact of AUM's program completers on student learning outcomes, in alignment with the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) Standard 4, which focuses on program impact.

The eight participants represent a cross-section of AUM's preparation programs—including Elementary Education (both bachelor's and master's levels), Early Childhood Education, Collaborative/Special Education, and Physical Education—and are employed across multiple school systems in central Alabama, including Montgomery Public Schools, Elmore County, Autauga County, and Chilton County. Participants teach students ranging from kindergarten through 12th grade, including students with disabilities, English language learners, and students in gifted and magnet programs.

Across all eight interviews, four overarching themes emerged as evidence of program completers' positive impact on student learning:

- Systematic, multi-layered assessment practices that provide actionable data at the individual and class level
- Data-informed instructional decision-making, including targeted interventions, small-group differentiation, and real-time adjustments
- Student-centered communication of growth data to parents, students themselves, and administrative stakeholders
- Reflective professional practice, including collaboration with colleagues and purposeful use of technology and AI tools

Quantitative evidence shared during interviews demonstrates measurable student growth directly attributable to the instructional practices of these completers. These results reflect not simply individual teacher effort, but a systematic, data-driven approach to instruction that is deeply rooted in the preparation received at AUM.

Participants uniformly cited the quality and accessibility of AUM faculty, the value of hands-on clinical experiences, and the rigor of assessment coursework as the most impactful elements of their preparation. The most consistent programmatic recommendation across interviews was the expansion of explicit classroom management instruction and additional field experience with diverse age groups—findings that will inform ongoing program improvement efforts.

Introduction and Purpose

Methodology

Individual online or phone interviews are scheduled and conducted by the Assistant Dean of Assessment and Accreditation at the convenience of the respondent. Interviews lasted approximately 25 minutes each and followed the same interview protocol, approved and revised by the members of the Assessment Committee in Fall 2025, covering topics of impact on student learning and AUM preparation and continued support. Once interviews are completed, transcripts are generated via artificial intelligence, usually MS Teams, and archived.

Use of AI (Anthropic): The initial drafting of text for this report was generated by Claude/Anthropic AI (claude.ai). From the initial Spring 2025 report to the Fall 2025 and Spring 2026 reports, notable changes in format included a shift from seeking themes per question to a broader organization by overarching themes that emerged across questions. The initial AI-generated report was reformatted for consistency and revised to align with the objectives of CAEP Standard 4.

Citation: Anthropic. (2024). Claude (Draft retrieved on April 27, 2026 version) [Large language model]. https://claude.ai

Analysis: Transcripts were analyzed using thematic coding to identify patterns in assessment practices, instructional decision-making, evidence of student impact, and program preparation effectiveness.

Participant Demographics

This group represents a purposefully diverse sample across program level (BS and MAEd), grade bands (early childhood through secondary), content areas (elementary, special education, and physical education), and school contexts (public district, charter, and magnet schools). Several participants are enrolled in continuing graduate study at AUM, which itself serves as an indicator of program satisfaction and ongoing commitment to professional growth. The participants are all recent program completers who graduated from AUM in May 2023 through December 2025

Table: Interview Participant Demographics and Key Data Highlights

#	Program	School Context	Grade/Content	Key Data Highlight
1	Elem MAEd (Alt)	Montgomery Public School Magnet/IB	Gr. 5, All Subjects	88% reading growth; 17%→43% grade level in math by mid-year
2	Elem MAEd (Alt)	Montgomery Public School Elementary	Gr. 1, All Subjects	i-Ready tiered grouping; ELL accommodations; 6+ years experience
3	Elem MAEd (Alt)	Elmore County MS	Gr. 5, Math	Collaborative data teams; STAR + IXL diagnostics; ACAP practice data
4	Elem BS	Montgomery Public School Intermediate	Gr. 4, All Subjects	i-Ready growth from Gr. 1→3 level; AI-generated growth charts
5	Early Childhood MAEd	Autauga County	Gr. 2, All Subjects	Student from kinder to 1st grade i-Ready level; ORF: 36→86 wpm
6	Collab/Sp. Ed. MAEd	Montgomery Public School Charter K–3	Resource & Self-Contained	Magic School AI for IEP-differentiated assessments; daily Tier 3 groups
7	Collab/Sp. Ed.	Elmore County MS	Gr. 5–6, Collab.	IXL skill-specific data; grade-level scaffolding; returning for MAEd
8	Physical Ed. BS	Chilton County HS	Gr. 7–12, PE	Fitness rubrics; skill checklists; semester-over-semester growth data

Assessment Practices and Data Literacy

A central finding across all eight interviews is that AUM program completers employ sophisticated, multi-layered assessment systems. These completers do not rely on a single measure of student performance; instead, they triangulate data from multiple sources—formative, summative, and technology-based diagnostic systems—to build comprehensive, student-centered understanding of learning.

Formative Assessment in Practice

All eight participants described active, ongoing formative assessment as the backbone of their instructional decision-making. These practices ranged from simple visual checks to structured classroom systems that give students agency in monitoring their own progress.

One elementary educator described a color-coded self-assessment flip chart used daily in her classroom:

> *"I have something called a self-assessment flip chart where the students can just flip that chart to red, yellow, and green. Green if they got it while they're working independently, yellow if they think they almost got it, and red if they need help. So with that flip chart, I can visually see to start checking on my students."*

The same teacher described a complementary exit ticket routine used after every lesson: "I give all of my students an exit ticket and I can quickly identify who still needs help and I don't have to let them struggle through those assignments." These practices reflect the real-time feedback loops essential to responsive teaching.

A first-grade teacher working with early learners identified observation and exit tickets as especially powerful given her students' developmental needs and diverse learning profiles:

> *"The exit ticket that I use—I use maybe one or two questions, true or false, something just quick and simple to get to the point to see if they are really grasping what I'm teaching."*

She further elaborated that her formative data helped her serve students with a wide range of needs: "I have visual learners, I have some students that are ELL students… I use a lot of pictures in my classroom to help with understanding."

A second-grade teacher demonstrated remarkable specificity in her formative assessment repertoire, including anecdotal notes, Google spreadsheets, standards mastery assessments in i-Ready, exit tickets, and daily observational data: "I probably do more than some of the other teachers—a lot of anecdotal notes. I'm always writing stuff down."

The physical education completer adapted formative assessment practices to a non-traditional setting, using skill checklists, rubrics, direct observation, and short verbal check-ins after each unit:

> *"After each unit, I ask them: What could we improve on today? How could we do better? What example will help you the most? They give me feedback and things like that."*

Diagnostic and Summative Assessment Systems

In addition to teacher-developed formative tools, participants used a variety of technology-based diagnostic and summative systems. The i-Ready platform was referenced by five of the eight completers, with each describing a sophisticated understanding of the platform's multiple functions—including adaptive diagnostics, learning paths, standards mastery assessments, and growth monitoring.

One elementary teacher explained the way i-Ready structures intervention planning:

> *"i-Ready is a blessing, because they give them a pretest at the beginning of school. You could go in there, pull up their scores, see what domain they're struggling in, and it has can-do steps and next steps—everything listed for you, what the students are struggling in and what you can do to help them."*

A second-grade teacher highlighted the longitudinal power of the system: "i-Ready in itself sets a goal for them—this is the typical growth we'll see—and it'll also give a stretch growth, which is where if they really, really worked hard, they could meet that." She also noted its value for students without prior records: "I have a lot of English learners here… I had some that were military that moved from out of state, so I had no data whatsoever. That first diagnostic is kind of the only thing I'm getting."

Other systems mentioned across interviews included STAR, IXL (used in Elmore County for grades 5–8), Spire (a reading intervention system), Progress Learning, and the Alabama ACAP (both the summative end-of-year assessment and practice versions). The Brigance Assessment was used by the collaborative special education teacher to establish baseline data for students on IEPs.

The fifth-grade math teacher in Elmore County described an intentional district-wide data system using STAR as a mandatory diagnostic three times per year, combined with IXL as a bridge between diagnostic findings and daily skill development:

> *"While they're in that IXL arena, it is utilizing their diagnostic to help bridge those gaps of those standards that they may have missed or haven't grasped just yet."*

Establishing Baseline Data and Setting Growth Targets

All participants described systematic processes for establishing baseline data at the beginning of the school year, which they then used to set individualized growth targets and form instructional groups. This practice reflects a core competency in assessment literacy that is foundational to data-driven teaching.

The fifth-grade elementary teacher described how her pre-year i-Ready data shaped her instructional approach before she even met her students: "That data kind of gives me an introduction of the students in my classroom before I actually get to know each and every last one of them."

A fourth-grade teacher described using i-Ready diagnostics to track growth at three time points—beginning, middle, and end of year—and shared a compelling example of growth: “Some students this year actually started off on like a first-grade level, and now they’re on third-grade level, so we had definitely had some growth there.”

The fifth-grade math teacher described a particularly structured data culture within her school, including collaborative data checks after every assessment:

> *"We actually do data checks after every assessment that we do, whether it’s a regular unit test, chapter test, or quarter test. We like to build mastery points for the next standard, because math is a prerequisite subject. If I see maybe 57% of my students mastered a concept, I know I now have a target where I probably want to get to at least 75%."*

The collaborative special education teacher, working without access to district technology platforms, developed her own structured system for tracking student progress using word banks, problem sets, and weekly mastery checks:

> *"Each week, I would give them a set of probably 5 to 10 words or math problems. If they made 100%, we move on. Then I test them on the new words and the words they already learned. Each week, I mark whether they made 100%, if they miss 4 out of 5 or 3 out of 5—it lets me know whether I need to reteach or continue forward."*

III. Data-Informed Instructional Decision-Making

The ability to analyze assessment data and translate it into targeted instructional adjustments is perhaps the most critical skill for a practicing teacher. AUM program completers demonstrate this ability consistently and at a high level. Each of the eight participants described specific, evidence-based modifications to their instruction—modifications that led to documented student growth.

Targeted Small-Group and Tiered Interventions

All participants referenced some form of small-group, differentiated, or tiered instruction as a primary response to data indicating unmet learning outcomes. These structures ranged from informal pull-aside groups to structured Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention programs.

The early childhood educator in Autauga County described a multi-student intervention case that illustrates the depth of instructional responsiveness among these completers. She described identifying a student whose phonics challenges were

linked to an undiagnosed speech delay, coordinating speech services, and then placing the student in a daily Tier 3 reading intervention group using the Phonics First program:

> *"We put her on a Tier 3 reading intervention plan, so I meet with her every single day. We do the phonics first program—going over letter sounds over and over, using different methods like magic sand that they write the letters in. Her i-Ready in the middle of the year went up—it was out of kindergarten and then it went to a first-grade level."*

The same educator described a second student who was reading fluently but not comprehending—a pattern she identified through oral reading fluency data:

> *"She's not decoding things rapidly like adults do after we learn to read. She's still learning to read, not reading to learn yet. I started sending home extra fluency passages and working with her in my phonics first group. She most recently read 86 words per minute; the benchmark was 84."*

The fourth-grade teacher described how she used exit ticket data to organize instructional groups by error type:

> *"I sit and as I'm grading them, I categorize them based off the same mistakes. If this student added wrong and this student set the model up wrong, I categorize it based off of that so I can see where the mistakes are and what's the common misconception. Then I group them accordingly and make my adjustments."*

The first-grade teacher emphasized the role of accommodations and modifications in her tiered approach: "For my ELL students, instead of giving them 10 questions on the worksheet or test, I'll give them 5 or eliminate some answer choices. I don't just do it for my EL students. I do it for my students in Tier 3 level that really needs that extra help."

Whole-Class Instructional Adjustments

Beyond individual and small-group interventions, participants described making class-wide instructional adjustments in response to patterns they identified across their student data. These adjustments reflect a mature understanding of assessment as a cyclical, instructionally embedded process rather than a terminal evaluation event.

The fifth-grade math teacher provided an especially sophisticated example of this practice, describing how data from ACAP practice tests revealed a persistent misconception about fraction operations. Rather than viewing this as a closed unit topic, she continued to return to it across subsequent standards:

> *"Although we were done with the fraction unit, there were still moments where I would pull students in to reteach the fraction unit because fractions were still being utilized in other strategies, in other standards. Now we may be calculating the volume of a figure and the volume may be measured in fractional lengths. You still need to know how to multiply fractions because we're using it with a different standard."*

The fifth-grade teacher at a Montgomery magnet school described using i-Ready growth data to adjust her teaching approach at both the standard and student level: "No class is a one size fits all. Each year, the instruction changes—the style of instruction changes—based off that data."

The collaborative special educator described adjusting the modality of instruction based on student response: "Sometimes it's still kind of hard for them to catch on, so I model things out. If we're working on words, I put them into sentences and act it out… with math problems, we use manipulatives."

Collaboration with Colleagues and Instructional Teams

Several participants described collaborative data practices that extend beyond individual classrooms—a hallmark of high-functioning professional learning communities. The fifth-grade math teacher articulated this most fully, describing regular collaborative data analysis meetings with grade-level colleagues:

> *"We come together as a fifth-grade math team and we compare our data across the full fifth grade so that all of us are on one accord. If I need to go back and reteach something: how did you do it? Your data seems to be higher than mine. So what did you do? What strategies did you use? Or: I have this assessment that I've created, I'm sharing it with my colleagues."*

The collaborative special educator described a similar cross-role consultation process: "If I feel like I've done all that I can as a special ed teacher, I will go to the general ed teacher and try to collaborate. Hey, what are you doing with this student that's keeping them progressing inside the classroom? And if we can't come up with an answer, then I go to my coordinator or principal."

Technology and AI as Instructional Support Tools

Several participants described purposeful, educationally appropriate use of technology and generative AI tools to support their instructional practice. Their descriptions reveal a careful, pedagogically grounded approach to these tools rather than reliance or misuse.

The fifth-grade magnet school teacher described using ChatGPT specifically to improve instructional communication for students: “If I notice the students are not getting it, I can ask ChatGPT: Help me explain this or break it down in terms of a fifth-grader. It does a really good job at giving me simpler terms.”

The fifth-grade math teacher used ChatGPT to generate visual data representations and brainstorm instructional strategies: “Here’s my data—can you help me create a chart? Or: here’s my data, can you give me some tips on other strategies? I’ve already tried A, B, and C and they didn’t work, so can you give me D, E, and beyond?”

The fourth-grade teacher similarly used AI to generate skill-by-skill growth charts for collaborative data meetings, noting that creating such visualizations manually would have been prohibitively time-consuming.

The collaborative special educator described being trained in the Magic School AI platform, which she used to generate differentiated assessments, quizzes, and materials tailored to the specific IEP goals and grade-level needs of her non-verbal students:

> *"I type in what we’re working on, give the grade level, but I also state that my student is on the IEP, on the kindergarten level, even though they may be in second or third grade. They’re non-verbal. Include pictures. And it gives me a test or quiz or worksheet based on what I’m teaching."*

IV. Evidence of Student Learning and Growth

When asked directly how they would demonstrate their impact on student learning to a parent or administrator, all eight program completers responded with concrete, data-grounded answers. None described relying on subjective impressions or anecdote alone. Their responses reveal teachers who understand that teaching effectiveness must be documented, visible, and evidenced.

Quantitative Evidence of Growth

The most striking evidence of student impact came from the fifth-grade teacher in Montgomery Public Schools, who shared detailed quantitative data from her first year in the classroom. She described using i-Ready diagnostic results—color-coded for parent accessibility—to track growth across three data points:

> *"I started off with 17% of my students on grade level in math. 63% were one grade level below, and I had 13% two or three grade levels below. By the middle of the school year, by December, I had 43% of my students on grade level and about 34% mid-or-below, and I had no students two or three grade levels below."*

She went on to share reading growth data with equal specificity: “For reading, my students have shown 88% growth from the beginning of the school year, and we’re at 53% growth for math from the beginning of the school year. For me, that is a win.” This completer’s data-fluency and commitment to tracking growth by standard, by student, and by cohort reflects a level of instructional accountability that goes well beyond what is typically expected of a first-year teacher.

The early childhood teacher in Autauga County shared similarly specific data on individual students. One student moved from a kindergarten reading level to a first-grade reading level by mid-year as a result of targeted Tier 3 intervention. Another student’s oral reading fluency grew from below benchmark (36–40 words per minute) to above benchmark (86 wpm, with a benchmark of 84).

The fourth-grade teacher in Montgomery noted that i-Ready allowed her to track individual trajectories over time: “Some students this year actually started off on like a first-grade level, and now they’re on third-grade level.”

Work Samples and Documentation as Evidence

Several participants described using physical work samples as a complement to digital data, particularly as evidence to share with parents. The fourth-grade teacher described her system for demonstrating growth through artifact-based documentation:

> *"I would pull physical evidence—starting off, this was what the student scored or this was the student’s level based off the diagnostic—and then at the end of the year, this is where they scored. As well as work samples, so they can physically see the growth in their responses, or the methods and strategies they use from the beginning of the year to the end of the year."*

The collaborative education teacher in Elmore County described maintaining a detailed progress notebook for each student: “We take notes in special education… we can track the student’s progress, whether it’s behavior, participation, what they’re understanding or not understanding. We keep track over the years.”

Student Voice as Evidence of Impact

One of the most compelling responses regarding evidence of student learning came from the collaborative special educator, who described a fundamentally student-centered approach to demonstrating growth:

> *"I would say: let’s ask that student questions that they didn’t know at the beginning of the year, and let’s see if they can answer them now versus the beginning till present time. They will let you know if that student has made some type of progress."*

She went on to describe a real-time illustration of this principle: “I had one of my students in a meeting. The coordinator asked her a question and she didn’t respond to her. But because I’m her teacher and I know her, she responds to me. And I said, ‘That’s how you know.’ Sometimes people look at students and think, because they’re not responding to them, they haven’t learned anything—but yes.”

The fifth-grade math teacher described a particularly moving example of student impact during a job-interview lesson she taught to sixth graders she had never met, in a different state:

> *"One of the students looked at me and said, ‘Even though this was introduced to us last year, I never heard it taught that way, and it just makes so much sense.’ This kid doesn’t know me, I don’t know him, and he’s also an English language learner. It was very exciting to get that compliment."*

These responses demonstrate a deep commitment to the visibility and verification of student learning, rooted in the evidence-based assessment practices these completers developed during their preparation at AUM.

Communicating Growth to Stakeholders

Across all eight interviews, participants described thoughtful, ongoing communication systems for sharing student data with parents, guardians, and administrators. These systems ranged from formal conferences to informal phone calls, and from printed i-Ready reports to student-led data presentations.

The most innovative stakeholder communication model was described by the fifth-grade magnet school teacher, who implemented a student-led data meeting in which students maintained their own data binders and presented their results to their parents:

> *"The students keep up with a data binder, so I teach the students how to read and understand their own data. The parents were able to come in and the students were able to have that conversation with the parents about what their own data means, what areas do they need to grow in, and what areas are they performing well in. It helps boost student confidence and gives them student agency."*

The first-grade teacher described a similarly thoughtful approach to parent communication, printing i-Ready reports for conferences and pairing them with progress monitoring documentation:

> *"I print off their assessment scores on i-Ready and I have documentation of progress monitoring so they can see the growth—not just the scores, but showing them that their student is growing where they need to be. Because some of my parents, when I send some of that stuff home, they are confused. So we do data meetings with our parents to explain the student scores and what we could do to improve."*

The collaborative special educator in Montgomery described going beyond formal reporting periods with weekly parent phone calls: “I personally like to use phone calls first so I can interact with the parents, let them know who I am, what I’m working on with their student, whether they’re making progress… I even send quick messages to parents and pictures to let them know: this is what we’re working on this week.”

The physical education teacher, though working in a content area that often lacks robust parent communication infrastructure, described being able to pull her fitness test and rubric data for any parent or administrator who questioned her students’ growth: “I could pull the records—my spreadsheets or my fitness rubric—and show them. She started off here and now she’s double what she used to do in August.”

V. Perceptions of AUM Preparation

The final segment of each interview asked participants to reflect on the quality and impact of their preparation at AUM. Questions addressed perceived strengths, recommendations for improvement, and ongoing ways the university could serve

its alumni. The responses in this section are particularly valuable for program improvement planning and provide honest, practitioner-grounded feedback directly tied to classroom readiness.

Greatest Strengths of AUM Preparation

The most universally cited strength across all eight interviews was the quality, accessibility, and personal investment of AUM faculty. Participants described professors who knew them by name, reached out proactively when they were absent or struggling, and remained available long after graduation. This relational quality of the program was described repeatedly as both motivating and professionally formative.

> *"I'm not being just a number or a body in the classroom. At AUM, I had a sense of belonging. My professors knew me. They addressed me by my name."*

One participant described a pivotal moment when a faculty member called her personally when she missed class, describing it as the day that "changed my view"—a reminder that belonging and accountability are inseparably linked in effective learning environments. Another described her professors as people who remained available by phone or text even after graduation: "I can contact my professors any day and it's always: if you need anything, you let me know."

Multiple participants specifically cited the measurement and evaluation coursework as foundational to their classroom readiness. One early childhood teacher cited her measurement class as directly connected to her strong performance on the data analysis section of the edTPA:

> *"I really got to analyze data and look for patterns, and it helped me so much. When I did my edTPA Task 3, that was the one I actually got a 4 on—I scored the highest on that section because I felt very, very prepared."*

Field experiences and clinical placements were cited by nearly every participant as among the most valuable elements of their preparation. The physical education teacher described how her university coursework transformed her from someone with severe presentation anxiety to a confident instructor: "When I started at AUM, I was super scared to get in front of people… the more classes I took, the more we had to stand up there and teach in front of people. It just really eased my mind."

The fourth-grade teacher noted that her practicum and internship were conducted in the very school where she now teaches full-time: “I was interning at the school that I’m working at now… My principal says all the time how I operate like I’ve been teaching for years, and it’s not even my first year.”

The first-grade teacher, who had six years of teaching experience before pursuing her master’s degree at AUM, offered perhaps the most pointed affirmation of the program’s impact:

> *"After coming to AUM and graduating from my master’s degree, I feel more efficient in my profession. I feel like I know a lot more. I feel capable. I feel more confident. I’ve learned so much."*

The special education teacher praised the IEP-specific coursework as immediately applicable to her professional practice: “The IEP class was so important to me—to actually be teaching and going through it at the same time, having that class and actually working in special education and having to do IEPs. It went hand in hand.”

Recommendations for Program Improvement

While participants expressed overwhelmingly positive views of their AUM preparation, several offered constructive recommendations that align with patterns observed across previous case studies. These recommendations are presented here as themes rather than attributed to specific individuals.

The most common recommendation, raised by three of the eight participants, was a desire for more explicit instruction and practice in classroom management. Participants acknowledged that classroom management is, to some degree, context-dependent and must be developed experientially, but expressed a desire for more tangible strategies and frameworks:

> *"Classroom management is honestly one of those things where everybody has a different system and you kind of have to find your niche. But I feel like any little tips somewhere in the curriculum—a little bit—would have been truly, truly helpful. That was one of the main things I struggled with at the beginning of the year."*

A second consistent recommendation was for expanded and more varied field experiences, particularly with age groups or settings outside the typical placement. The physical education teacher recommended more time with younger students (K–3), noting the significant classroom management differences between elementary and secondary physical education. The collaborative educator suggested more time in self-contained special education classrooms, which was not a primary placement setting in her program:

> *"The only field experience that I really didn't get to do was in a self-contained classroom. I was in a standard special education or resource room or pushing into classrooms—those were all very helpful—but I did not really get to work in a self-contained classroom."*

A third recommendation was for more structured alumni networking and resource-sharing opportunities. Multiple participants expressed a desire to connect with AUM graduates currently in the classroom—to ask questions, share materials, and access a professional community of practice. One participant noted that while she knew her professors would welcome her outreach, she sometimes felt hesitant to "bother" them:

> *"I guess just if there is even someone that we can go to—someone who also went to AUM that's been graduated for a while—that I can get ideas from or maybe get opinions from."*

VI. Cross-Cutting Themes and Discussion

A synthesis of the eight interviews reveals four cross-cutting themes that characterize the instructional identity of AUM program completers and speak directly to CAEP Standard 4 indicators of program completer impact.

Theme 1: Assessment as a Continuous, Living Practice

Across every interview, participants described assessment not as a periodic event but as an ongoing, woven-into-the-day practice that informs everything from seating arrangements to lesson pacing to parent communications. The completers in this study use assessment data to build relationships with students, to set shared goals, to design instruction, and to hold themselves professionally accountable. This stance—assessment as a professional responsibility and an ethical commitment to students—is precisely what CAEP seeks to document in its impact standards.

The philosophy was perhaps most eloquently expressed by one participant, who paraphrased a favorite quote to articulate her relationship to data: "The data will talk to you if you will listen."

Theme 2: Student-Centered Equity in Practice

Every participant in this study demonstrated, through their specific instructional examples, a commitment to meeting students where they are—regardless of disability status, language background, grade-level proficiency, or prior educational experience. Students with IEPs received daily individualized intervention. English language learners were provided

accommodated materials, visual supports, and modified assessments. Students performing multiple grade levels below their peers were not written off but placed on tiered intervention tracks with individualized growth targets.

This commitment to equity in practice represents one of the deepest forms of program impact: it is evidence that AUM's preparation has equipped completers not just with technical skills but with a professional identity that centers every student's right to grow.

Theme 3: Reflective Professionalism and Collaborative Learning

AUM completers in this study consistently described themselves as collaborative, reflective professionals—not isolated practitioners. They seek out colleagues when their own strategies are not working. They participate in and even lead data teams. They reach out to mentors, coaches, and former professors when they encounter challenges. Multiple participants have returned to AUM for advanced degrees, which reflects a commitment to ongoing learning that the program itself has cultivated.

Three of the eight participants are currently enrolled in graduate programs at AUM, which is among the most powerful indicators of program satisfaction and alumni engagement possible.

Theme 4: Faculty Relationships as a Transformational Program Element

While faculty relationships are not a traditional CAEP outcome measure, the data from these interviews strongly suggest that the quality of student-faculty relationships at AUM is itself a driver of program completer effectiveness. Participants described being known, supported, and cared for by their professors in ways that directly shaped their sense of efficacy and their professional identity. These experiences of belonging and mentorship appear to have modeled the very relational teaching practices that these completers are now bringing into their own classrooms.

VII. Conclusions

The findings from this Spring 2026 case study provide compelling, practitioner-grounded evidence that AUM program completers are making a meaningful, measurable, and sustained impact on student learning across a range of grade levels, content areas, and school contexts. The eight participants in this study collectively demonstrate mastery of the data-driven assessment and instructional practices that AUM's programs are designed to cultivate.

Key conclusions include:

- Program completers employ sophisticated, multi-layered assessment systems aligned with best practices in formative and summative assessment, data analysis, and standards-based instruction.
- Completers demonstrate measurable student learning outcomes, including documented growth at the individual and class level, from beginning to end of the instructional year.
- Completers communicate student progress effectively to parents, students, administrators, and professional colleagues, using both data and human-centered strategies.
- Completers cite AUM coursework—particularly in measurement, evaluation, and special education—as directly applicable to their classroom practice.
- Faculty relationships and clinical experience are the most consistently valued elements of AUM preparation.

The evidence presented in this report demonstrates that AUM's School of Education is meeting its mission to prepare effective, data-literate, equity-focused educators who make a lasting difference in the lives of P-12 students throughout Alabama and beyond.

Appendix A: Interview Protocol

The following questions were used as the basis for all eight semi-structured interviews. Interviewers used follow-up prompts to elicit specific examples and elaboration where appropriate.

Assessment Domain

- Describe the types of formative and summative assessments you use to track student growth. How do you determine which assessment is most appropriate for different learning objectives?
- Walk through your process for establishing baseline data at the beginning of the year and how you use that to set appropriate growth targets.
- Provide a specific example of instructional adjustments or modifications you made due to evidence of student learning outcomes that were not being met.

Data Analysis and Communication Domain

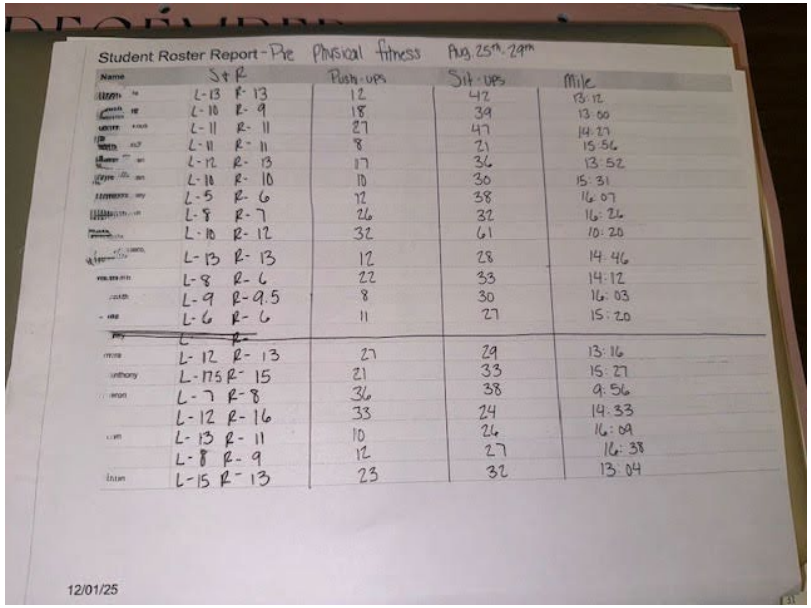
- How do you analyze assessment data to identify patterns in student learning?
- What assessment technology-based systems do you use, and how do you use the data from those systems to inform teaching and communicate with stakeholders?
- Do you use generative AI to support you in tracking or reporting learning and growth of students? If so, explain.
- If a parent or principal asked at the end of the year how you know your teaching made an impact, what would you say?

Program Preparation Domain

- What do you consider to be the greatest strengths of your AUM education?
- What recommendations would you make so that AUM can better prepare future candidates?
- What can AUM faculty and staff do to serve you now in your current career and professional growth?

Appendix B: Data Samples of Growth

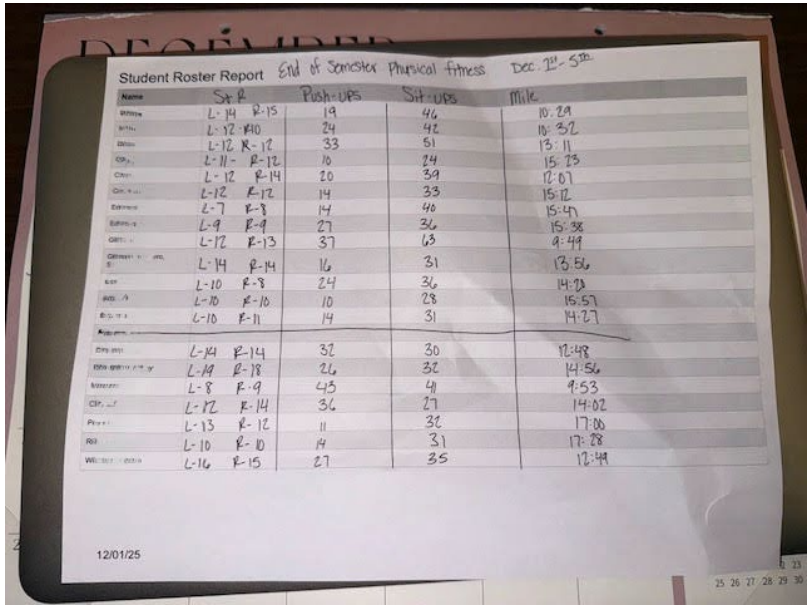
Images: Pre and Post Growth in Physical Fitness Skills (Physical Education)



Student Roster Report - Pre Physical fitness Aug. 25th-29th

Name	S + R	Push-UPS	Sit-UPS	Mile
	L-13 R-13	12	42	13:12
	L-10 R-9	18	39	13:00
	L-11 R-11	27	47	14:27
	L-11 R-11	8	21	15:56
	L-12 R-13	17	36	13:52
	L-10 R-10	10	30	15:31
	L-5 R-6	12	38	16:07
	L-8 R-7	26	32	16:26
	L-10 R-12	32	61	10:20
	L-13 R-13	12	28	14:46
	L-8 R-6	22	33	14:12
	L-9 R-9.5	8	30	16:03
	L-6 R-6	11	27	15:20
	L- R-			
	L-12 R-13	27	29	13:16
	L-11.5 R-15	21	33	15:27
	L-7 R-8	36	38	9:56
	L-12 R-16	33	24	14:33
	L-13 R-11	10	26	16:09
	L-8 R-9	12	27	16:38
	L-15 R-13	23	32	13:04

12/01/25

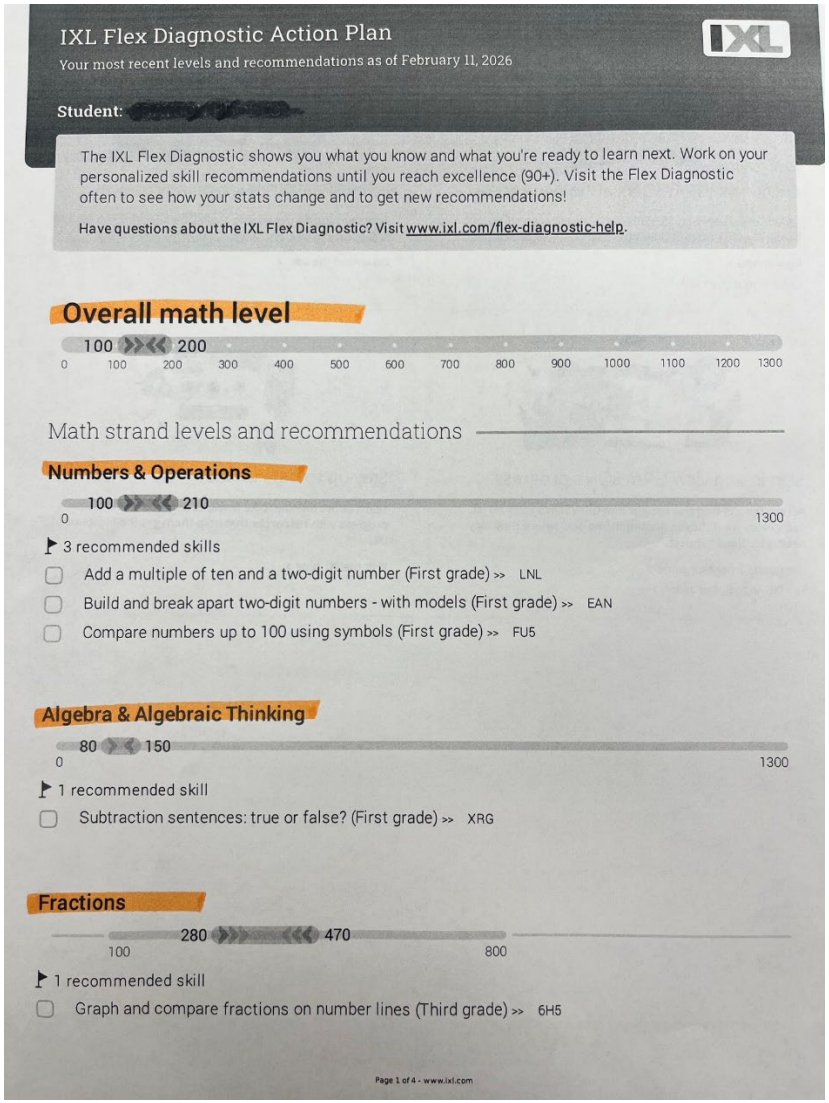


Student Roster Report End of Semester Physical fitness Dec. 2nd-5th

Name	S + R	Push-UPS	Sit-UPS	Mile
	L-14 R-15	19	46	10:29
	L-12 R-10	24	42	15:32
	L-12 R-12	33	51	13:11
	L-11- R-12	10	24	15:23
	L-12 R-14	20	39	12:07
	L-12 R-12	14	33	15:12
	L-7 R-8	14	40	15:47
	L-9 R-9	27	36	15:38
	L-12 R-13	37	63	9:49
	L-14 R-14	16	31	13:56
	L-10 R-8	24	36	14:21
	L-10 R-10	10	28	15:57
	L-10 R-11	14	31	14:27
	L-14 R-14	32	30	12:48
	L-14 R-18	26	32	14:56
	L-8 R-9	43	41	9:53
	L-12 R-14	36	27	14:02
	L-13 R-12	11	32	17:00
	L-10 R-10	14	31	17:28
	L-16 R-15	27	35	12:49

12/01/25

Image: IXL Improvement Evidence Math Skills (Collaborative Education)



IXL Flex Diagnostic Action Plan

Your most recent levels and recommendations as of February 11, 2026

Student: [redacted]

The IXL Flex Diagnostic shows you what you know and what you're ready to learn next. Work on your personalized skill recommendations until you reach excellence (90+). Visit the Flex Diagnostic often to see how your stats change and to get new recommendations!

Have questions about the IXL Flex Diagnostic? Visit www.ixl.com/flex-diagnostic-help.

Overall math level

100 >> << 200

0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1000 1100 1200 1300

Math strand levels and recommendations

Numbers & Operations

100 >> << 210

0 1300

3 recommended skills

- Add a multiple of ten and a two-digit number (First grade) >> LNL
- Build and break apart two-digit numbers - with models (First grade) >> EAN
- Compare numbers up to 100 using symbols (First grade) >> FU5

Algebra & Algebraic Thinking

80 << 150

0 1300

1 recommended skill

- Subtraction sentences: true or false? (First grade) >> XRG

Fractions

280 >> << 470

100 800

1 recommended skill

- Graph and compare fractions on number lines (Third grade) >> 6H5

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Image: Phonics First Improvement (Early Childhood Education)

Brainspring: Phonics First (Layer One) - Assessment Data for Tier III Reading Intervention Group										
	Red Words				Phonetic Words				Pseudowords	
	Reading		Spelling		Reading		Spelling		Reading	
Name	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
Student A	90	93	77	80	100	80	77	87	87	87
Student B	97	100	50	80	77	93	33	70	17	57
Student C	100	100	70	77	97	97	90	73	70	87
Student D	93	100	83	93	100	93	83	80	77	77
Student E	100	100	67	97	80	97	83	90	57	87

Key
Score improved
Scored stayed the same
Score declined

***Note**: Pre-tests were given in September/October. Post-tests were given in December/January.

Image: i-Ready English Language Learner Literacy Growth (Early Childhood Education)

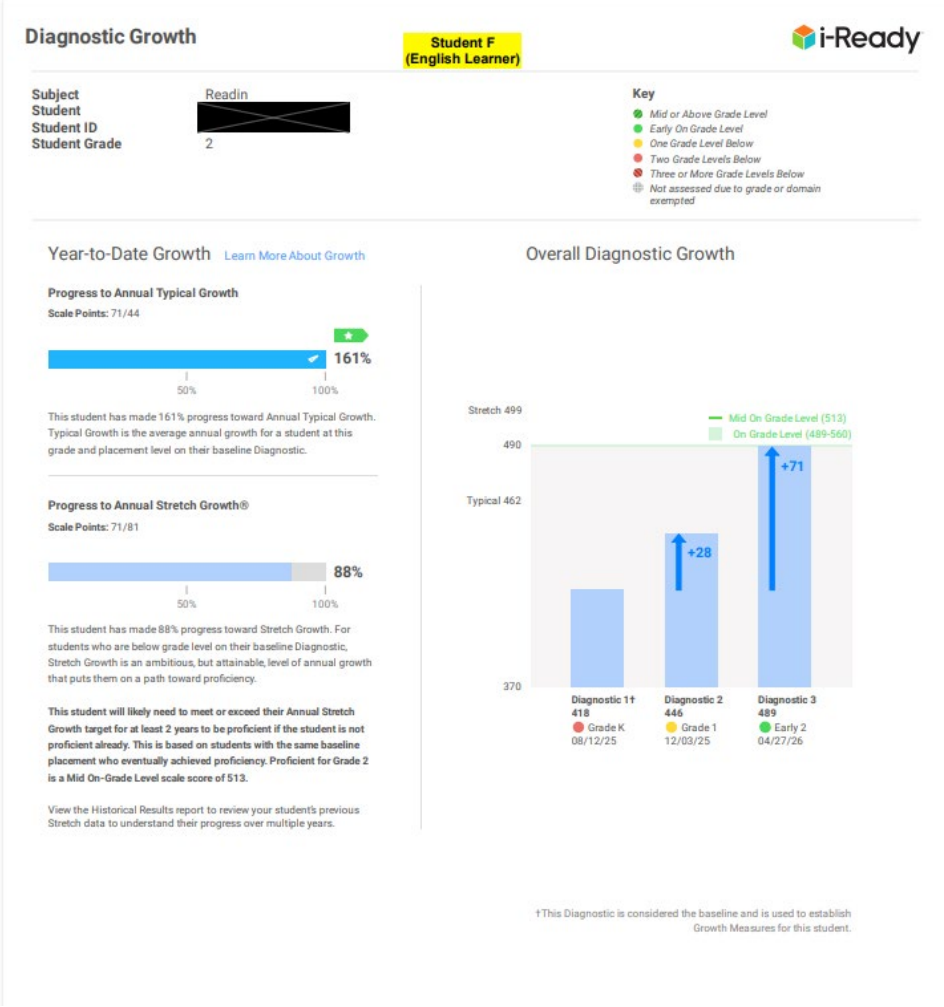
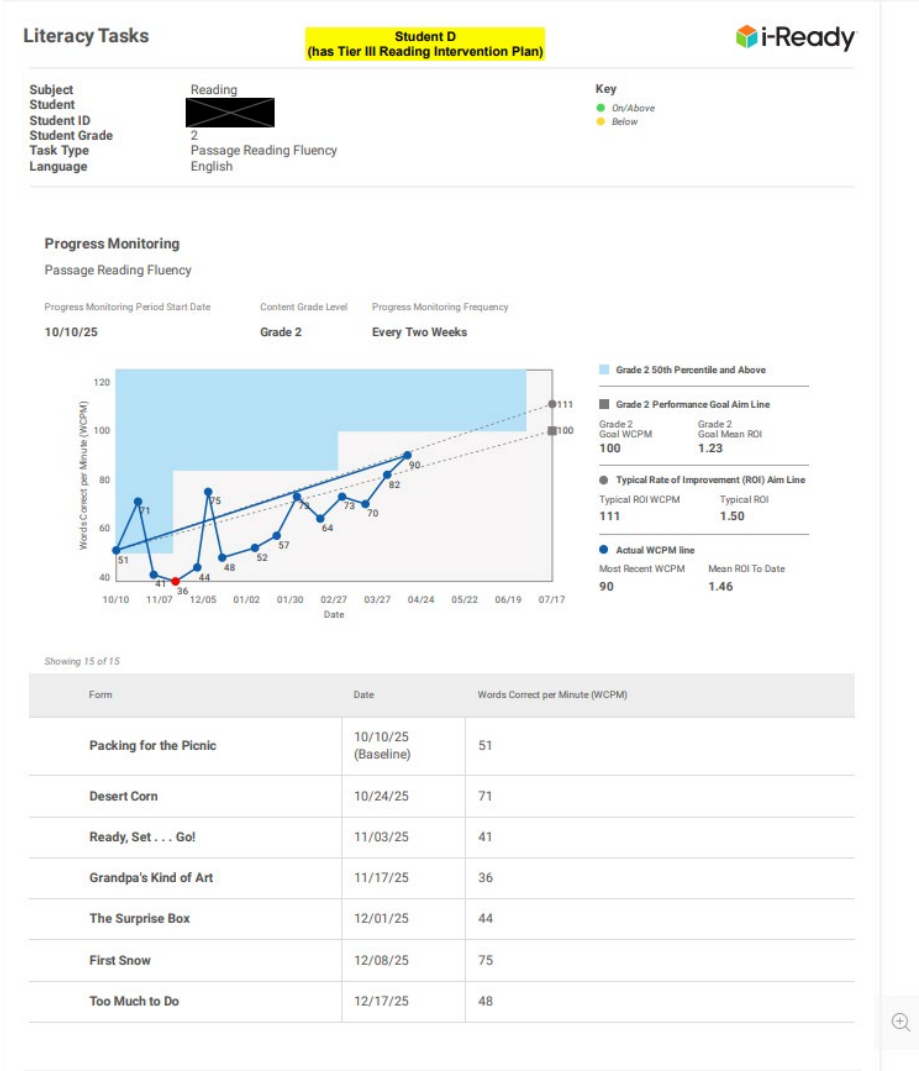


Image: i-Ready Literacy Growth Progress Monitoring (Early Childhood Education)



Literacy Tasks

Student D
(has Tier III Reading Intervention Plan)

i-Ready

Subject	Reading
Student	[redacted]
Student ID	
Student Grade	2
Task Type	Passage Reading Fluency
Language	English

Key
- On/Above
- Below

Progress Monitoring

Passage Reading Fluency

Progress Monitoring Period Start Date	Content Grade Level	Progress Monitoring Frequency
10/10/25	Grade 2	Every Two Weeks

Grade 2 50th Percentile and Above

Grade 2 Performance Goal Aim Line

Grade 2 Goal WCPM	Grade 2 Goal Mean ROI
100	1.23

Typical Rate of Improvement (ROI) Aim Line

Typical ROI WCPM	Typical ROI
111	1.50

Actual WCPM line

Most Recent WCPM	Mean ROI To Date
90	1.46

Showing 15 of 15

Form	Date	Words Correct per Minute (WCPM)
Packing for the Picnic	10/10/25 (Baseline)	51
Desert Corn	10/24/25	71
Ready, Set . . . Go!	11/03/25	41
Grandpa's Kind of Art	11/17/25	36
The Surprise Box	12/01/25	44
First Snow	12/08/25	75
Too Much to Do	12/17/25	48