

# STRONG evidence to support ESSA



The Center for Research and Reform in Education at Johns Hopkins University found DreamBox Reading to have STRONG evidence to support ESSA.

## About evidence for ESSA

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed into law in 2015. ESSA is the primary law governing K – 12 education, replacing the No Child Left Behind Act from 2002.

Significant changes with ESSA include a focus on identifying and using evidence-based programs for the classroom. The Evidence for ESSA website was founded to help educators sort through the many educational programs available. The easy-to-use website, created by leading researchers at Johns Hopkins University, helps educators identify evidence-based programs that support the new ESSA standards.

**“The study found that students who engaged in DreamBox Reading showed significantly greater improvements in reading proficiency than did control students who received other types of targeted reading instruction... The results of this study qualify DreamBox Reading for the ESSA ‘STRONG’ category.”**

Evidence for ESSA,  
Johns Hopkins University

| ESSA Rating | No. Studies | No. Students | Average Effect Size |
|-------------|-------------|--------------|---------------------|
| STRONG      | 1           | 426          | +0.11               |

**Program Description**  
Reading Plus is a web-based literacy program for grades 3-12. It includes a valid and reliable assessment and is designed to strengthen reading comprehension, vocabulary, efficiency, and motivation. The program combines personalized practice and adaptive instruction, and offers students choice and control over their program experience. Reading Plus is designed to develop critical reading skills needed for deep, meaningful understanding of complex texts.

**Program Outcomes**  
Reading Plus was evaluated in a randomized study that involved six elementary schools in an urban district in the northeastern United States. The study found that students who engaged in Reading Plus showed significantly greater improvements in reading proficiency than did control students who received other types of targeted reading instruction. Specifically, Reading Plus students made significantly larger improvements in reading achievement (effect size = +0.11), as measured by the Group Reading Assessment Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE). These results qualify Reading Plus for the ESSA “Strong” category.

**Staffing Requirements**

## STRONG evidence for DreamBox Reading

DreamBox Reading was reviewed by the team at Evidence for ESSA in 2019. It was evaluated in a randomized controlled trial examining the impact of the program on the reading proficiency development of 426 4th- and 5th-grade students in a northeastern U.S. urban school district.

[evidenceforessa.org/programs/reading/reading-plus](https://evidenceforessa.org/programs/reading/reading-plus)

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