



Personalized Learning Drives Student Achievement in Tennessee



“One of the driving goals for the department’s work is supporting districts and schools to meet the unique needs of each and every Tennessee student. This pilot is an opportunity for Tennessee teachers to explore tools that can help them individualize their instruction, something that is particularly challenging in high school.”

Kathleen Airhart
Deputy Education Commissioner

An Ambitious Statewide Personalized Learning Vision

In 2015, the Tennessee Department of Education convened a Personalized Learning Task Force to propose statewide pilots to support teachers to implement blended learning environments in their classrooms. The Task Force chose Algebra I and Integrated Math I classrooms for the pilot. They began looking for partner organizations who could help them test their hypothesis that a blended learning environment would...



Support teachers in differentiating instruction



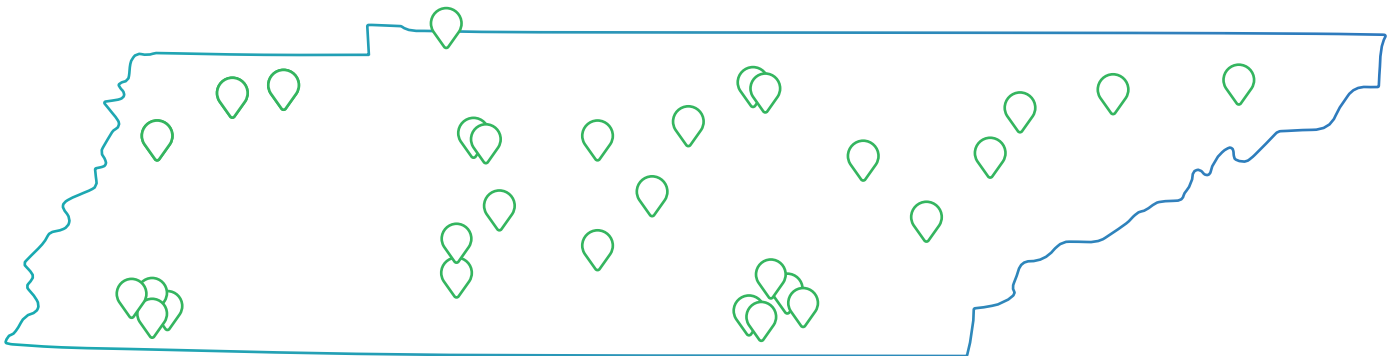
Impact student proficiency levels



Increase student ownership of their learning around their practice

From Teacher Coaching to Student Impact

The department recognized that personalized coaching would help teachers, as blended learning represented a paradigm shift away from traditional pedagogical approaches. BetterLesson coaches supported teachers with one-on-one coaching sessions every other week via video conference sessions. The model provided teachers with the structure and tools to try blended learning strategies, measure student growth, and reflect on the impact the strategies were having.



Fifty teachers across 21 school districts participated in the pilot during the 2016-17 school year. The department gathered data to measure the correlation between the pilot and changes in student growth, student ownership, and teaching practices. In addition to quantitative data, teachers participated in surveys, interviews, focus groups, and formal and informal classroom observations conducted by department staff.



Results

BetterLesson coaching makes a positive impact in classrooms.

Increased Number of Teachers Differentiating Instruction



30%

OF TEACHERS
reported using blended learning
to differentiate once per week
at the end of the first
semester of coaching

55%

OF TEACHERS
reported using blended learning
to differentiate once per week
at the end of the second
semester of coaching

87%

OF TEACHERS
agreed or strongly agreed that
BetterLesson coaches identified
practical strategies that support
differentiated instruction

Teachers and Administrators Reflect on the Impact of Coaching

At the end of the 2016-17 school year, teachers reported that coaching had positively impacted student outcomes in their classroom and allowed them to strengthen their practice as educators.

Administrators could see distinct changes in teacher practice, specifically an increase in the use of technology to differentiate instruction for students. Department officials noted the pilot provided “evidence that technology can support teachers in delivering personalized instruction by leveraging data and quickly diagnosing student needs.”

*“I feel that if I did not have this PD,
I would not have reached as many
students that I have this year.”*

Justin Lee

Morristown-Hamblen High School East,
Hamblen County Schools

*“My students became more reflective.
They started to learn how to evaluate
themselves and their peers. The students
learned how to work together in groups
so the work would be more productive.”*

Lynnette Cottrell

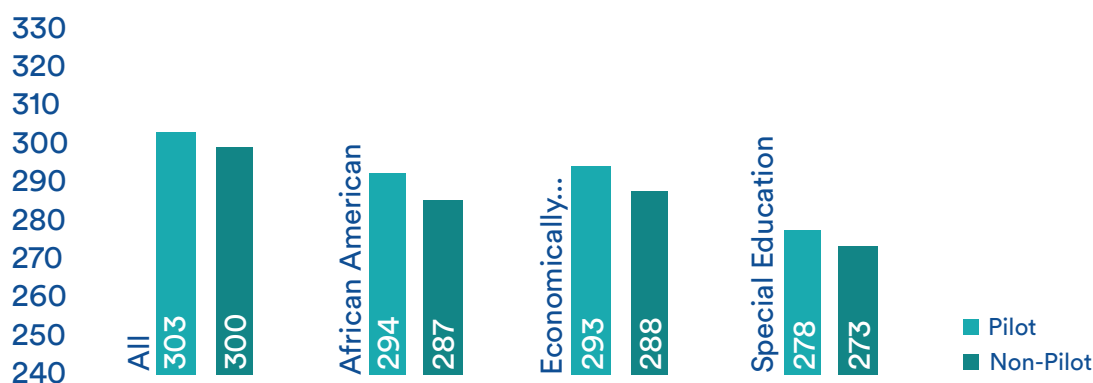
Heritage High School,
Blount County Schools



Student Achievement

End-of-course (EOC) exam scores for pilot and non-pilot students revealed a positive relationship between blended learning environments and increased student test scores. For students in the pilot, the mean EOC assessment scale score was around three points higher than scores of students who were not in the pilot. **Most significant** were the score differences for **African American** students, **economically disadvantaged** students, and **students with disabilities**.

EOC Scores for Pilot and Non-Pilot Participants



2016-17 Blended Learning Pilot Report, Tennessee Department of Education, April 2018

Student Ownership

As Tennessee Algebra I and Math I teachers incorporated more blended learning strategies into their classrooms, they reported an increase in student self-reflection. Technology allowed teachers to provide more timely feedback to their students, which led to a strong correlation between their frequency using blended learning technology and how often they had students self-reflect.

“He supports my ideas and encourages me to try new things while giving me suggestions for ways to best implement new practices or make changes to my current ones. He’s supportive and reminds me that things don’t always work, but we can use every experience in the classroom as a learning opportunity for the students and ourselves as teachers.”

Jeran Tenpenny

Cannon County High School, Cannon County Schools

The Tennessee DOE’s official report on the pilot found a statistically significant positive impact on student achievement for all students.

