

New Worlds Reading Initiative

2024–2025 Annual Enrollment Report



NEW WORLDS READING OVERVIEW

WHAT

New Worlds Reading is Florida's free at-home literacy program to help eligible¹ Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) through 5th grade children in Florida bolster literacy skills, build reading confidence, and foster a lifelong love of reading. The University of Florida [Lastinger Center for Learning](#) is the state-appointed administrator of New Worlds Reading.

HOW

By offering:

- A free book each month (October through June) tailored to the child's interests.
- Resources and activities carefully designed for families to use together to nurture children's literacy skills and increase caregivers' confidence and capacity.
- Caregiver workshops and community literacy events to engage with children and families.
- Professional learning opportunities for educators.




WHY

By helping children become strong, confident readers, New Worlds Reading helps lay the foundation for future success, contributing to improving long-term opportunities for academic achievement, employment, health, and overall well-being. Over the past three years, Florida's Grade 3 FAST ELA Reading PM3 results have shown a steady and positive trend. In 2023, 51% of third-grade students scored at or above Achievement Level 3. This increased to 55% in 2024, and further to 57% in 2025, indicating year-over-year improvement in reading proficiency. Data also suggest that, from 2024 to 2025, the percentage of students scoring at Level 3 or above increased across nearly all student subgroups². Taken together, these trends signal that the state is moving in the right direction and highlight an important opportunity to provide targeted support for students who are not yet meeting grade-level expectations—particularly through New Worlds Reading, which can help Florida's striving readers strengthen their literacy skills.

¹ To be eligible, kids must be VPK – 5th graders who are not yet meeting grade-level expectations in reading in Florida VPK programs, public schools, and charter schools.

² Brown, L. (2025). Florida Department of Education (FDOE) Literacy Update [PowerPoint slides].

| | Since Program Creation in October 2021 ³ | In the 2024–2025 School Year |
|---|--|---------------------------------|
|  Students served statewide | 470,000+ | 306,000+ |
|  Households served statewide | 400,000+ | 260,000+ |
|  Books shipped | 11M+ | 4M+ |

"It's wonderful because my daughter gets excited every time she receives a new book! It is also great because they are free and the books have a lot of information that my daughter gets to learn new things from."

– Colleen G.

IMPACT ON HOME LITERACY PRACTICES⁴

90% of children are more confident in reading or looking at books.

88% of caregivers are more confident in reading/looking at books with their children.

90% of children read or look at books more often.

88% of caregivers spend more time reading/looking at books with their children.



"My son gets so excited every month to get his books. He's expanded on what he likes to read by trying new books he would have never given a chance before. We have actually recommended your website to a lot of our friends."

– Steph S.


³ Numbers as of 7/7/2025.

⁴ According to survey data collected from 21,404 New Worlds Reading families between June–July 2025.

IMPACT ON STUDENT READING ACHIEVEMENT


END-OF-YEAR COMPARISON: Enrolled students **scored up to 15% higher**⁵ reading assessment scores than their eligible non-enrolled peers in the final Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) progress monitoring (PM) window of the school year, with greater differences among English Language Learner (ELL) students:

| | Regardless of ELL status | ELL students only |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------|
| VPK–Grade 1 (125,232 students) | +5% | +8% |
| Grades 1–2 ⁶ (156,194 students) | +4% | +12% |
| Grades 3–5 (395,840 students) | +5% | +15% |

 **How to read this table:** For example, “+15%” (the last value) means that enrolled ELL students in grades 3–5 scored 15% higher than eligible non-enrolled ELL students on the final reading assessment.

LONGITUDINAL GROWTH ANALYSIS: Enrolled students made **significant gains of up to 62% growth rates**⁶ in reading assessment scores during the school year:

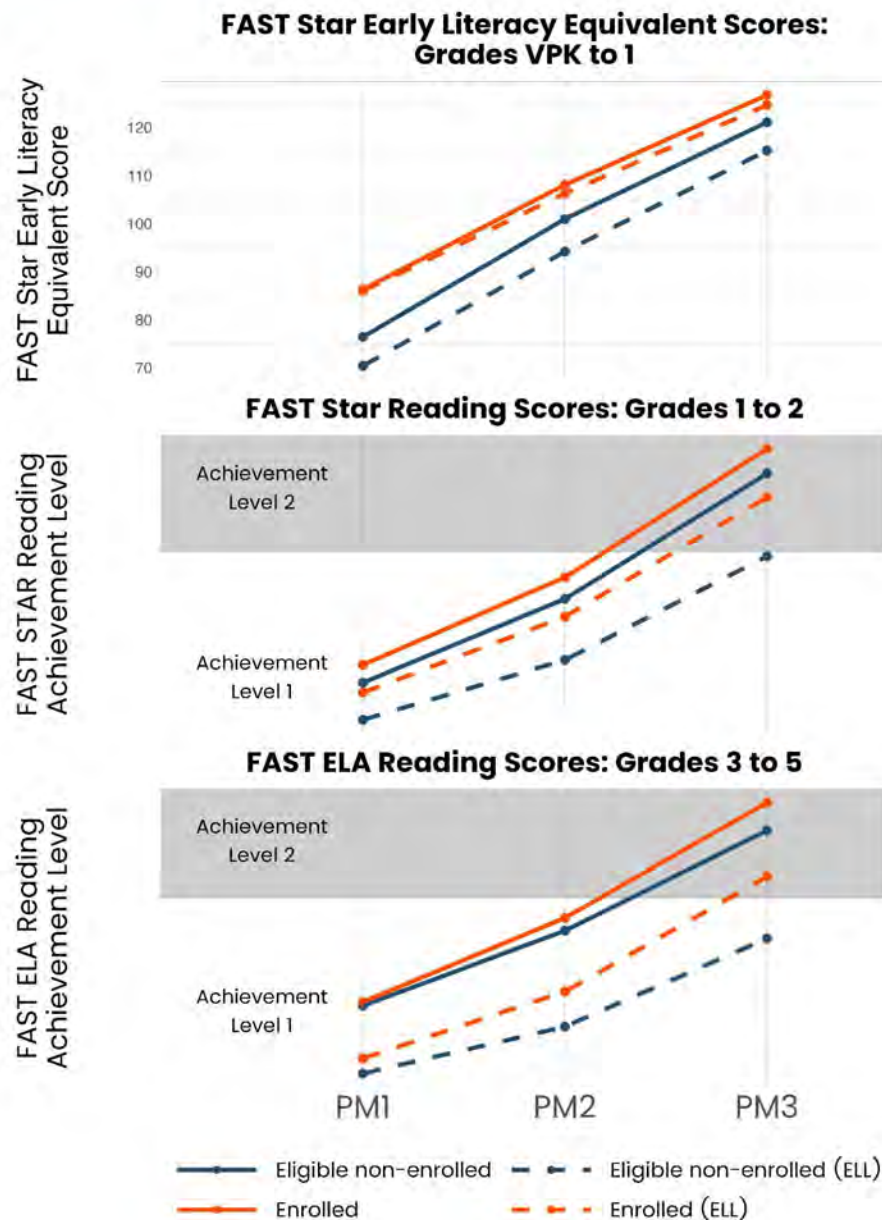
| | Regardless of ELL status | ELL students only |
|--------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| VPK–Grade 1 | 47% | 45% |
| Grades 1–2 | 55% | 54% |
| Grades 3–5 | 57% | 62% |

 **How to read this table:** For instance, “47%” (the first growth rate) means that enrolled students in VPK–Grade 1 improved their reading assessment scores by 47% from August 2024 to May 2025.

⁵ Calculated from marginal means of multilevel models assessing FAST achievement levels (Grades 1–5) and FAST equivalent scores (VPK–Grade 1) while accounting for student demographics (e.g., sex, race/ethnicity, school) and district differences across PM1, PM2, and PM3.

⁶ In Florida, all VPK students and the majority of Kindergarten students take the FAST Star Early Literacy assessment, and the majority of 1st and 2nd grade students take the FAST Star Reading assessment in PM3. However, this is not always the case, and therefore, there is a slight overlap in grade bands and assessments.

YEAR-TO-YEAR ANALYSIS: In **2023–2024**, enrolled students started behind their eligible non-enrolled peers in reading assessment scores but **grew faster, narrowing the gap** by 69%⁷. In **2024–2025**, they began scoring **on par or ahead** of their peers and **finished the year ahead**⁸.



⁷ Full report available at <https://www.fldoe.org/file/7539/NWRIYear3Annual2324.pdf>.

⁸ Full results from the statistical analyses on student reading growth available at <http://bit.ly/2025AnnualReportAppendix>.

FAMILY SATISFACTION⁹

94

Net Promoter
Score (NPS)¹⁰

98%

Satisfaction
Rate¹¹

99%

User-friendliness
Satisfaction¹²

"It's a fantastic way to add more reading into my child's life. It's quality resources provided by a quality organization and it's all so awesome!"

– Ana M.

PARTNER SATISFACTION

87%

Satisfaction rate from school
district and Early Learning
Coalition partners¹³

85%

Satisfaction rate
from regional
partners¹⁴

"Our district's experience with the New Worlds Reading Initiative has been overwhelmingly positive, particularly due to the exceptional support provided by the UF Lastinger Center team. Their guidance and responsiveness have helped us implement the program with fidelity and reach more families effectively."

– Point of Contact at Gulf District Schools

"The rating is based on the professionalism, resourcefulness, flexibility, communication, and accountability. The teamwork has been nothing short of phenomenal."

– Point of Contact at Principle Life Family Resource Center, Inc.

⁹ According to survey data collected from 21,404 New Worlds Reading families between June–July 2025.

¹⁰ The Net Promoter Score ranges from –100 to 100; NPS above 0 is good, 50+ is excellent, and 70+ is exceptional.

¹¹ Percentage of respondents who rated their experience with New Worlds Reading as 8 or higher on a scale ranging from zero (not at all satisfied) to 10 (extremely satisfied).

¹² Respondents who rated New Worlds Reading's user-friendliness as good, excellent, or best imaginable.

¹³ Points of contact from 62 Florida districts and 5 Early Learning Coalitions responded to a feedback survey between May–June 2025.

¹⁴ Eleven New Worlds Reading regional partners responded to a feedback survey between May–June 2025.

NEW WORLDS READING LITERACY MICRO-CREDENTIALS AND TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

During 2024–2025, the University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning partnered with the Florida Department of Education to develop and implement two professional learning programs designed to provide impactful professional learning to instructional personnel across Florida. Alone or in combination, educators who participate in the New Worlds Reading Literacy Micro-Credentials¹⁵ or Teacher Professional Learning¹⁶ acquire and strengthen skills to support Florida students to become proficient readers.

🎓 NEW WORLDS READING LITERACY MICRO-CREDENTIALS

- **12,018** Literacy Micro-Credentials were awarded.
- **574** educators who completed a Literacy Micro-Credential also went on to complete the Literacy Matrix coursework required to earn the Florida Reading Endorsement.
- Educators made an average of **43%** growth from pre- to post-assessment with an unweighted average effect size of $d = 2.06$.

👩‍🏫 NEW WORLDS READING TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

- **702** educators from **61** counties participated in professional learning.
- The percentage of educators reporting “High” or “Very High” understanding of key reading theories was over **5x higher** after attending professional learning.



“This was helpful because it gave clear guidelines for identifying which phase of reading a student is in and what to focus on to support them.”

– New Worlds Reading Teacher Professional Learning Participant

¹⁵ Created in partnership with the Florida Department of Education, the Literacy Micro-Credentials are a hybrid model of online modules, instructor-supported online courses, and job-embedded practicums to improve literacy instruction, and thereby literacy skills, of Florida students.

¹⁶ Created in partnership with the Florida Department of Education and launched in the summer of 2023, New Worlds Reading Teacher Professional Learning is a face-to-face facilitator-led professional learning institute designed to improve literacy instruction, and thereby literacy skills, of Florida students.

▶▶ LOOKING AHEAD

As we conclude Year 4 of the New Worlds Reading Initiative, we remain committed to making a measurable impact as we continue to scale the program and support literacy development for Florida's children, families, and educators. Looking ahead to Year 5, we are excited to launch additional initiatives that will further strengthen our enrollment efforts and deepen engagement across the state.



"This program has offered wonderful books and activities to help my child learn to read and excel."

– Elizabeth T.

"It's an amazing program that provides resources for parents as well as fun new adventures for kids."

– Samantha M.

The University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning improves the quality of teaching, learning, and childcare. We research, develop, and scale educational innovations for adults and children that put all learners on trajectories for lifelong success. Serving more than one million students and 50,000 educators annually, the Lastinger Center has made significant strides for real, scalable solutions in collaboration with educators in Florida, around the nation, and around the world.

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APPENDIX 1: FAST STAR EARLY LITERACY IN VPK–GRADE 1 MULTILEVEL MODEL RESULTS

FAST Star Early Literacy VPK–Grade 1 Multilevel Model Random Effect Summary

| Random Effects | Name | Variance | Std. Dev. |
|------------------------------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| FLEID ¹ :District | Intercept | 260.843 | 16.151 |
| District | Intercept | 11.561 | 3.400 |
| Residual | | 315.279 | 17.756 |

Colons represent nested random intercept (FLEID nested within districts).

FAST Star Early Literacy VPK–Grade 1 Multilevel Model Fixed Effect Summary

| Fixed Effects | Estimate | Std. Error | z-value | p-value |
|------------------------|----------|------------|---------|---------|
| (Intercept) | 97.667 | 0.509 | 191.951 | <0.001 |
| Grade K | -10.300 | 0.278 | -37.042 | <0.001 |
| VPK | -35.263 | 0.689 | -51.179 | <0.001 |
| PM2 | 25.191 | 0.084 | 299.688 | <0.001 |
| PM3 | 44.448 | 0.084 | 527.577 | <0.001 |
| Enrolled | 4.147 | 0.273 | 15.191 | <0.001 |
| ELL_yes | -12.124 | 0.185 | -65.699 | <0.001 |
| PM2 * Enrolled | -1.983 | 0.284 | -6.987 | <0.001 |
| PM3 * Enrolled | -2.292 | 0.284 | -8.059 | <0.001 |
| PM2 * ELL_yes | -1.377 | 0.176 | -7.822 | <0.001 |
| PM3 * ELL_yes | 0.351 | 0.177 | 1.987 | 0.047 |
| Enrolled * ELL_yes | 11.439 | 1.013 | 11.289 | <0.001 |
| PM2:Enrolled * ELL_yes | -1.558 | 1.059 | -1.472 | 0.141 |
| PM3:Enrolled * ELL_yes | -3.807 | 1.071 | -3.553 | <0.001 |

Asterisks denote interaction effects.

¹ FLEID stands for Florida Education Identifier.

APPENDIX 2: FAST STAR READING IN GRADES 1–2 MULTILEVEL MODEL RESULTS

FAST Star Reading Grades 1–2 Multilevel Model Random Effect Summary

| Random Effects | Name | Variance | Std. Dev. |
|----------------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| FLEID:District | Intercept | 0.675 | 0.821 |
| District | Intercept | 0.029 | 0.170 |
| Residual | | 0.348 | 0.590 |

Colons represent nested random intercept (FLEID nested within districts).

FAST Star Reading Grades 1–2 Multilevel Model Fixed Effect Summary

| Fixed Effects | Estimate | Std. Error | z-value | p-value |
|--------------------------|----------|------------|---------|---------|
| (Intercept) | 1.637 | 0.022 | 75.927 | <0.001 |
| Grade 2 | -0.116 | 0.006 | -19.430 | <0.001 |
| Sex M | -0.018 | 0.004 | -4.070 | <0.001 |
| Sex Unknown | 0.158 | 0.023 | 6.952 | <0.001 |
| PM2 | 0.426 | 0.003 | 157.396 | <0.001 |
| PM3 | 1.008 | 0.003 | 371.654 | <0.001 |
| Enrolled | 0.032 | 0.008 | 4.215 | <0.001 |
| ELL_yes | -0.294 | 0.007 | -44.416 | <0.001 |
| PM2 * Enrolled | -0.032 | 0.006 | -5.100 | <0.001 |
| PM3 * Enrolled | -0.071 | 0.006 | -11.213 | <0.001 |
| PM2 * ELL_yes | -0.189 | 0.005 | -35.687 | <0.001 |
| PM3 * ELL_yes | -0.361 | 0.005 | -67.969 | <0.001 |
| Enrolled * ELL_yes | 0.076 | 0.017 | 4.461 | <0.001 |
| PM2 * Enrolled * ELL_yes | 0.095 | 0.014 | 6.734 | <0.001 |
| PM3 * Enrolled * ELL_yes | 0.197 | 0.014 | 13.921 | <0.001 |

Asterisks denote interaction effects.

APPENDIX 3: FAST ELA READING IN GRADES 3–5 MULTILEVEL MODEL RESULTS

FAST ELA Reading Grades 3–5 Multilevel Model Random Effect Summary

| Random Effects | Name | Variance | Std. Dev. |
|----------------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| FLEID:District | Intercept | 0.649 | 0.805 |
| District | Intercept | 0.047 | 0.216 |
| Residual | | 0.370 | 0.608 |

Colons represent nested random intercept (FLEID nested within districts).

FAST ELA Reading Grades 3–5 Multilevel Model Fixed Effect Summary

| Fixed Effects | Estimate | Std. Error | z-value | p-value |
|------------------------|----------|------------|---------|---------|
| (Intercept) | 1.759 | 0.026 | 67.696 | <0.001 |
| Grade 4 | 0.085 | 0.003 | 24.559 | <0.001 |
| Grade 5 | 0.145 | 0.003 | 42.674 | <0.001 |
| Sex M | -0.028 | 0.003 | -9.986 | <0.001 |
| Enrolled | -0.034 | 0.004 | -8.097 | <0.001 |
| PM2 | 0.455 | 0.002 | 256.283 | <0.001 |
| PM3 | 0.948 | 0.002 | 528.243 | <0.001 |
| ELL_yes | -0.650 | 0.010 | -67.851 | <0.001 |
| Enrolled * PM2 | -0.008 | 0.004 | -2.125 | 0.034 |
| Enrolled * PM3 | 0.007 | 0.004 | 1.805 | 0.071 |
| Eligible * PM1:ELL_yes | 0.053 | 0.010 | 5.045 | <0.001 |
| Enrolled * PM1:ELL_yes | 0.153 | 0.009 | 17.890 | <0.001 |
| Eligible * PM2:ELL_yes | -0.195 | 0.010 | -18.639 | <0.001 |
| Enrolled * PM2:ELL_yes | 0.000 | 0.009 | 0.014 | 0.989 |
| Eligible * PM3:ELL_yes | -0.300 | 0.010 | -28.614 | <0.001 |

Asterisks denote interaction effects.