

Ellison Foundation Grant Reflection Paper

Jana Holterman - Southworth Elementary - 2025-2026

Amplify Boost

Why I applied:

I applied for the Ellison Foundation grant because my district, the Yelm School District, has had a quadruple levy failure. There was not going to be any extra money to purchase anything extra this past year.

What was the grant used for:

I use the grant that we received to purchase the computer program Amplify Boost for all first, second, and third graders to utilize. The Yelm School District has previously used the computer program Amplify Boost, but due to the levies not passing, there is no extra money to purchase this program anymore. The Amplify Boost computer program is a fantastic program that focuses on reading. The program adjusts to each student's individual needs and gives each student the extra practice exactly where they need it. I am not usually one to recommend more screen time for students, as I believe students already receive an enormous amount of screen time; however, the Amplify boost reading program is so fantastic, I do recommend it to my students' parents. I sent Home student logins for this program so students were able to utilize this program at home as well as at school. I know I utilize this program every single day. This program is very engaging, and students always ask if they can get on to Amplify Boost.

First, second, and 3rd grade teachers were able to meet with small groups of students while the other students were working independently on Amplify Boost. With the levy not passing, our class sizes are larger than they normally are. So when we were able to work with small groups within the classroom, that is just amazing—all the while knowing that students who are working on Amplify Boost are getting their Individual needs met as well.

How the project went:

By utilizing the Amplify Boost, all students made growth in their reading skills.

To assess each of the students' reading skills three times throughout the school year. Students are assessed using the DIBELS reading assessment. As the year progresses, student goals increase as well. Once students are assessed, it gives teachers information showing where each

student's skill level is at, whether they are red, which is below well below grade level, Yellow below grade level, green at grade level (benchmark), or blue above grade level.

First Grade DIBELS reading assessment results:

		Beginning of Year	Middle of Year	End of Year
Class Summary	Well Below Benchmark	42% 42 Students	39% 40 Students	29% 30 Students
103/103 Students Assessed	Below Benchmark	10% 10 Students	17% 17 Students	16% 16 Students
0 Not Assessed	At Benchmark	28% 28 Students	24% 24 Students	25% 26 Students
0 In Progress	Above Benchmark	19% 19 Students	21% 21 Students	30% 31 Students

Second Grade DIBELS reading assessment results:

		Beginning of Year	Middle of Year	End of Year
Class Summary	Well Below Benchmark	28% 25 Students	33% 30 Students	24% 22 Students
90/90 Students Assessed	Below Benchmark	21% 19 Students	11% 10 Students	16% 14 Students
0 Not Assessed	At Benchmark	25% 22 Students	28% 25 Students	36% 32 Students
0 In Progress	Above Benchmark	26% 23 Students	28% 25 Students	24% 22 Students

Third Grade DIBELS reading assessment results:

		Beginning of Year	Middle of Year	End of Year
Class Summary	Well Below Benchmark	37% 40 Students	41% 45 Students	38% 40 Students
106/111 Students Assessed	Below Benchmark	17% 18 Students	11% 12 Students	14% 15 Students
2 Not Assessed	At Benchmark	24% 26 Students	29% 32 Students	15% 16 Students
3 In Progress	Above Benchmark	21% 23 Students	19% 21 Students	33% 35 Students

As you analyze each grade level's reading results, you can see that there was great growth happening. It may not look like great growth to you; however, some students just miss moving

up to the next level by only a couple of points. And from where students started at the beginning of the year, compared to their skill level now, there was huge growth. All this growth was made possible thanks to Amplify boost. Thank you so much for giving us the opportunity to utilize the computer program Amplify Boost this school year.

Quotes:

“In summary, BOOST helps to fill holes with my students' reading levels, and allows them to move at their own pace. They were challenged if needed, which allowed for a higher average score because even the benchmark and advanced students benefited from the online program.”

3rd Grade Teacher

“I really enjoyed having Boost as an option for students to use when practicing their ELA skills. Boost was aligned with MClass, so practicing the MAZE before actual testing was extremely helpful. Boost was able to meet each student at their individual academic level and support their needs. I had several students improve their reading abilities with the use of Boost.”

2nd Grade Teacher

“Seeing the growth in their reading scores and in their everyday reading. Collectively, their engagement in Boost during reading intervention every day.”

1st Grade Teacher (not me)

“Boost reading app by Amplify has provided support for our struggling readers, helping them unlock the power of reading. All students in specific grades (1-2) had access to this app as part of the grant. This is a targeted reading program that supports readers where they are at and helps them grow their skills. This was highly valuable for use in a classroom to allow a teacher to have some kids working on this app on their Chromebook as the teacher was working with a small group of students working on reading skills. Boost Reading motivates each student and is based on the science of reading. Our recent levy losses and our cuts to funding (programs) and cuts to staffing have made it hard for teachers with large class sizes to work with students in small groups or individually when a student is struggling. Your grant allowed us to use Boost Reading to support our students by helping them gain valuable reading skills while allowing the teacher to work with other students, as the students using Boost were able to work independently.”

Charles Cook, Principal of Southworth Elementary