

## Research Results

# Waggle ELA and Waggle Math Grades 3–8 Teacher Survey

## Study Profile

**District:**

One Missouri School District

**Grades:**

Grades 3–8 Teachers

**Participants:**

17 Elementary & Middle School Teachers

**Evaluation Period:**

2020–2021 School Year

**ESSA Level:**

Tier 4 Demonstrates a Rationale

**Study Conducted by:**

JEM & R, LLC

**Study Design:**

Descriptive Survey Study

**Outcome Measure:**

Teacher Survey

## Executive Summary

In response to increased instructional demands and disruptions during the COVID-19 pandemic, schools sought flexible supplemental tools that could reinforce core instruction, support diverse learners, and promote productive learning behaviors across content areas. This descriptive survey study examined teacher perceptions of *Waggle* ELA and *Waggle* Math based on responses from 17 elementary and middle school teachers in Grades 3–8 during the 2020–2021 school year in one Missouri school district. Teachers consistently reported that *Waggle* supported student engagement, independent learning, and positive learning behaviors, while also helping students benefit from personalized practice

aligned to classroom instruction. In addition, teachers indicated that *Waggle* provided actionable data, differentiation support, and embedded assessments that informed instructional decision-making. Together, these findings offer ESSA Tier 4 (Demonstrates a Rationale) evidence, providing contextual insight into how educators experienced *Waggle* as a supportive supplemental tool in real-world classroom settings.

## The Challenge

As instructional demands grow in an increasingly digital and interconnected learning environment,

students in Grades 3–8 are expected to develop strong literacy and mathematics skills while also demonstrating persistence, independence, and engagement in their learning. At the same time, teachers face ongoing challenges providing personalized, targeted instruction that meets diverse student needs within limited instructional time—particularly in classrooms that include a wide range of readiness levels and learning profiles.

Disruptions to instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic further intensified these challenges, increasing the need for flexible supplemental solutions that can support both enrichment and remediation, maintain student engagement, and reinforce core instruction across content areas. In this context, schools increasingly seek instructional tools that not only support academic practice, but also promote productive learning behaviors such as sustained engagement, self-regulation, and independent work within real-world classroom settings.

## The Solution

*Waggle*® is a supplemental digital learning solution for Grades K–8 designed to deliver adaptive, personalized practice and instruction that helps students build foundational skills and progress toward grade-level expectations through differentiated, engaging, and targeted activities.

*Waggle* integrates ongoing formative assessment and adaptive technology to support productive struggle, scaffolded instruction, and real-time feedback. The program provides teachers with actionable data and flexible instructional tools to support differentiation and instructional decision-making, while offering students opportunities to work independently and at their own pace. As a result, *Waggle* is intended to support not only academic learning, but also the conditions for learning that teachers identify as critical to student success across Grades 3–8.

## *Waggle*

*Waggle* is a supplemental digital learning solution for Grades K–8 that provides adaptive, personalized practice and instruction across literacy and mathematics. Designed to support diverse learner needs, *Waggle* integrates ongoing formative assessment with targeted instructional supports to promote student engagement, persistence, and independent learning.

Across subject areas, *Waggle* leverages an intelligent adaptive engine that analyzes multiple academic and behavioral data points to deliver instruction and practice aligned to each student’s current level of understanding. The system continuously adjusts learning pathways based on student performance, providing embedded hints, feedback, and scaffolded supports intended to foster productive struggle, mastery, and confidence. Teachers are provided with real-time data and reporting tools that support instructional decision-making and differentiation.

*Waggle* offers teachers multiple options for assigning content in both ELA and math. Teachers may manually assign specific skills or learning goals to supplement core instruction, use assessment data to guide initial placement, or allow *Waggle* to automatically sequence instruction based on students’ progress through a research-based progression of skills and standards. Regardless of assignment method, *Waggle* dynamically adjusts content to keep students working within their zone of proximal development.

The program includes several types of interactive content used across literacy and mathematics, including Learning Goals, Skill Boosts, instructional lessons, and games. Learning Goals provide personalized practice across a series of skills and adjust in difficulty as students demonstrate understanding or require additional support. Skill Boosts offer brief, skill-focused assessments that provide teachers with immediate insight into student learning. Instructional lessons introduce or reinforce

concepts through guided instruction and application, while games provide opportunities for additional practice in an engaging format.

## The Study

### Research Questions

1. What are teachers' perceptions of *Waggle's* impact on students' academic skills, engagement, and positive learning behaviors?
2. What are teachers' perceptions of *Waggle's* instructional and assessment supports?

### Outcome Measure

Teacher surveys were administered midyear and at the end of the study to collect data on teachers' perceptions of *Waggle's* impact on students' academic skills, engagement, and positive learning behaviors.

### The District

The study was conducted in one Missouri school district comprising 22 schools and serving more than 14,000 students in a suburban community. The district had previously purchased *Waggle* and implemented the program during the 2020–2021 study year.

During the study year, the district student population was 70% White, 12% Black, 8% Hispanic, 2% Asian, 1% Native American or Alaska Native, and 7% Multiracial; 51% male and 49% female; 30% Free/Reduced-Price Lunch; 12% Special Education; and less than 1% English learners.

### Participants

Surveys were completed by a subset of district teachers (n = 17) from one elementary school and one middle school at the middle and end of the 2020–2021 school year. The district also participated in a *Waggle* ELA and *Waggle* Math quasi-experimental design (QED) study during the same school year. While many teachers in the district continued to

deliver instruction via remote or hybrid models during the COVID-19 pandemic, only teachers providing in-person instruction were included in the study. Findings from the *Waggle* ELA QED study and *Waggle* Math QED study are reported separately.

## Results

Results are organized by research question, including student impacts (perceived impacts on academic skills, student engagement, positive learning behaviors), program supports (instructional and assessment support), and overall program satisfaction.

### Student Impacts

#### Perceived Impact on Academic Skills

Survey results indicated strong and consistent agreement among teachers that *Waggle* positively influenced students' academic skills. Teachers reported unanimous agreement (100%) that *Waggle* lessons helped:

- Students build on previously learned skills
- Students strengthen understanding of concepts taught during core instruction
- Support intervention students in building stronger academic foundations
- Provide enrichment opportunities for advanced students

More than 80% of respondents also agreed or strongly agreed that *Waggle* contributed to improvements in academic performance and increased student confidence, indicating perceived academic benefits across student performance levels.

## Student Engagement

Teacher responses indicated unanimous agreement that *Waggle* positively affected student academic engagement. Specifically:

- 100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that *Waggle* positively affected student engagement
- More than 80% of teachers reported that students remained engaged while completing *Waggle* lessons
- More than 80% indicated that students spoke positively about *Waggle*

Open-ended survey responses further highlighted features such as avatars, points, games, immediate feedback, and auto-assigned personalized pathways as particularly motivating for students. Teachers also noted that *Waggle* supported engagement by allowing students to work independently and at their own pace, which was viewed as especially beneficial for students who were struggling or had missed instruction.

## Perceived Impact on Positive Learning Behaviors

Teachers also reported that *Waggle* supported positive learning behaviors. In particular:

- More than 85% of respondents indicated that *Waggle* positively influenced students' ability to engage in independent learning
- Over 70% of teachers reported positive impacts on growth mindset and productive perseverance
- At least 50% of respondents indicated positive effects on intrinsic motivation and student ownership of learning

These findings suggest that teachers perceived *Waggle* as supporting not only academic practice but also behaviors associated with persistence, self-regulation, and learning independence.

## Program Supports

### Instructional Support and Assessment Use

Teachers reported that *Waggle* provided meaningful instructional support:

- More than 85% of respondents agreed that *Waggle* helped them assess students' strengths and weaknesses
- More than 60% indicated that *Waggle* helped inform core instruction
- A majority agreed that *Waggle* supported differentiated instruction and alignment with local and state standards

Teachers also reported high satisfaction with *Waggle*'s embedded assessment tools and real-time data, which were viewed as useful for instructional decision-making.

### Support for Differentiation and Independent Practice

Teachers frequently reported that *Waggle* supported differentiation by allowing students to work at their own level and pace while reinforcing skills aligned to classroom instruction. Respondents noted that the program was particularly useful for supporting students who needed additional practice, missed instruction, or required flexible learning opportunities within whole-class settings.

### Overall Satisfaction and Program Recommendation

Teachers reported high overall satisfaction with *Waggle* as a supplemental instructional tool. All respondents (100%) indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with *Waggle* and would recommend the program to other teachers. High satisfaction ratings were reported for personalized skill practice, adaptive learning goals, and embedded assessment features, reflecting positive perceptions of the program's usability and instructional value.

## Ease of Use and Teacher Comfort

Survey responses indicated generally positive perceptions of *Waggle*'s ease of use for both teachers and students. A majority of respondents reported that students were able to navigate the platform independently and that managing assignments and monitoring progress was manageable. However, teachers also noted variability in how quickly they became comfortable using the platform, with some indicating that additional training and onboarding supports would have improved early implementation.

## Conclusion

Findings from teacher survey responses provide complementary evidence regarding the broader instructional and learning supports associated with *Waggle* ELA and *Waggle* Math in Grades 3–8. Across respondents, teachers consistently reported that *Waggle* positively contributed to students' academic engagement, independent learning behaviors, and development of positive learning behaviors. Teachers indicated that students remained engaged while using *Waggle*, worked productively and independently, and benefited from personalized practice and feedback aligned to classroom instruction.

Teachers also reported that *Waggle* supported their instructional practice by providing actionable data, facilitating differentiation, and reinforcing core instruction. High levels of satisfaction were reported across both *Waggle* ELA and *Waggle* Math implementations, with teachers frequently noting the value of adaptive learning goals, skill-based practice, and embedded assessments in meeting diverse student needs. While teachers identified areas for continued improvement—such as additional training and usability supports—the overall pattern of responses suggests that *Waggle* is viewed as a useful and supportive supplemental tool within authentic classroom contexts.

Taken together, these findings indicate that teachers perceived *Waggle* as supporting not only academic practice but also key conditions for learning, including engagement, persistence, and independent work habits. When considered alongside evidence of student achievement outcomes reported separately, teacher perceptions offer important contextual insight into how *Waggle* is experienced and implemented in Grades 3–8 classrooms, and how it may contribute to learning environments that support both academic growth and broader student development.

Learn more about *Waggle* at  
**[hmhco.com/Waggle](https://hmhco.com/Waggle)**