

### Addressing Students' Individual Learning Needs

Langston Hughes Academy (LHA) in Louisiana, an elementary school part of the FirstLine Schools network, welcomes a wide variety of students each year. Preparing lesson plans for a mix of students with different ability levels and educational needs is a priority for LHA's teachers. In a subject like math, where one concept builds on another, it becomes difficult to fill in the gaps and differentiate curriculum to address their individual needs.

"Even the kids who struggle, don't all struggle in the same way," explains Emily Hunyadi, Primary School Assistant Principal at LHA. "We needed a way to support every student, regardless of skill level."

### Personalized Math Instruction Meets Students at Their Skill Level

Hunyadi and her team looked for tools that could supplement traditional classroom instruction and keep students of all skill levels engaged and learning at a pace that's right for them.

Besides providing small group instruction and teacher-led intervention, they looked for technology to help fill the remaining gaps. They settled on ST Math®—a visual instructional program. "ST Math is individualized: kids could work at their own pace and it kept them engaged," says Hunyadi, "ST Math was challenging at the beginning, but that's what kept the students interested."

A kindergarten teacher at LHA, Alex Jubb, says the biggest change she's seen since using ST Math is student engagement and an increase in independence. Where at first students found the ST Math puzzles challenging—especially because the program has no verbal instructions, they quickly became hooked on the thrill of figuring concepts out on their own.



Over two-thirds of students meet MAP Growth goals with ST Math

She also found the program helpful in reaching all of her students at once: "ST Math was critical because I could give kids content at multiple levels in a way I couldn't do by myself." Working with her co-teacher, Jubb often splits her class into two groups, providing targeted instruction based on the needs of her students.

Paul Hastings, a third grade teacher, has seen enthusiasm for problem solving grow in his classroom. "I encourage students who are stuck on the same problems to work through them together and to not give up when they get frustrated," says Hastings. "It's great seeing their faces light up when they finally get it."

# Langston Hughes Academy

LOUISIANA



## School Facts

School Grade Levels: PK-8  
School Enrollment: 820  
District Type: Charter  
Number of Schools in District: 5



## Demographic Breakdown

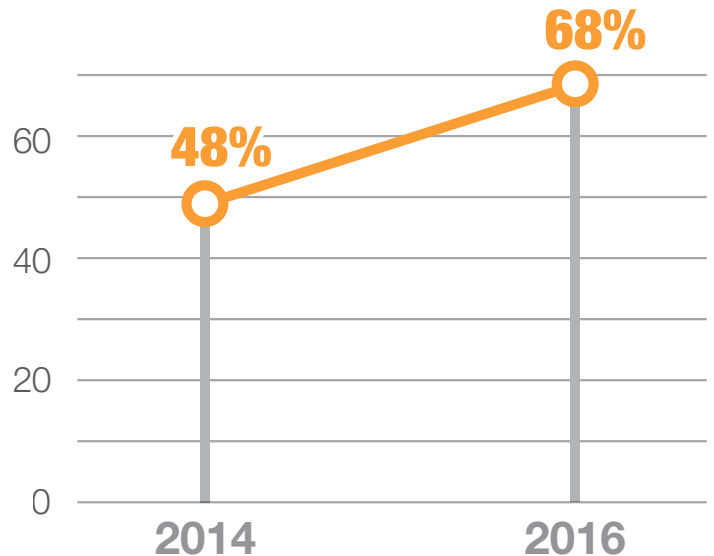
African American: 98.6%  
Hispanic: 1.2%  
Caucasian: 0.2%



## ST Math Implementation

Grades using ST Math: K-5  
Type of ST Math instruction:  
Computer lab, in-class instruction

## Percent of Students Met MAP\* Goals



\*NWEA's MAP Growth assessment measures student performance at the start and end of the year by setting personalized goals for each student

# 20% Growth in Two Years

## Closing the Achievement Gap with Increased Perseverance

Since introducing ST Math to supplement their math curriculum, educators at LHA have seen an increase in perseverance among their students, and not just in math.

"Kids have evened out in their ability to approach new problems and work through them—even if they're not performing on the same level," says Jubb. "Their independence has increased in all subjects."

This new persistence is reflected in LHA's recent test scores. One of the assessments students take is NWEA's MAP Growth assessment which measures their performance at the beginning of the school year and sets individual end of school year goals for each student. In the 2016-2017 school year, 68% of LHA's students met their growth goals—a significant improvement over 48.5% just two years ago.

Alex Jubb, whose classroom was a standout with 93% of her students meeting their MAP Growth goals in 2017, attributes part of her students' success to implementing ST Math with fidelity. "We started on ST Math four weeks into the school year. It was a key part of class since the beginning and has really helped my students get the most from the program."

"One of my students would cry and struggle during ST Math time when we started," says Jubb. "And by the end of the year she would still occasionally get upset, but she exceeded her MAP goals and grew so much in independence. It made me see that even kids who struggle are still learning and improving."