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JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

MEMORANDUM

To: Members
Joint Committee on Finance

From: Senator Howard Marklein
Representative Mark Born

Date: October 16, 2023

Re: DPI Report to JFC

Attached is a report on the Online Early Learning Pilot Program from the Department of Public Instruction, pursuant to 2019 Wisconsin Act 170, Section 4.

This report is being provided for your information only. No action by the Committee is required. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Attachments

HM:MB;jm



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
Public Instruction

Jill K. Underly, PhD, State Superintendent

October 16, 2023

Delivered electronically

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Greetings:

The Department of Public Instruction submits this report on the Online Early Learning Pilot Program, as required by 2019 Act 170, Section 4.

If you have any questions regarding this document, please contact Erin Fath, Director of the Policy, Budget, and Research team, at Erin.Fath@dpi.wi.gov.

Sincerely,

Jill K. Underly, PhD
State Superintendent

JKU: pb
Enclosures

OCT 16 2023
J. Finance

2019 Wisconsin Act 170 Online Early Learning Pilot Report

October 10, 2023

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

2019 Wisconsin Act 170 Online Early Learning Pilot Report

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Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

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October 2023
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

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Background: Waterford Upstart in Wisconsin

On March 3, 2020, Governor Tony Evers signed legislation that created an online early education pilot program in Wisconsin (2019 Wisconsin Act 170). Under Act 170, the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is required to award a three-year contract to a non-profit service provider to administer the program to low-income children (those who meet the eligibility criteria for a free or reduced price lunch) who reside in three urban and three rural school districts that have reading achievement gaps, as selected by DPI. Act 170 defines an “online early learning program” as a program that satisfies all of the following criteria:

1. “The program provides computer-based instruction to children on a home computer connected by the Internet to a centralized file storage facility.”
2. “The program is designed to improve a child’s transition to five-year-old kindergarten.”
3. “The program contains content in reading, math, and science.”
4. “The program is aligned with nationally recognized early learning standards.”
5. “At no cost to low-income families participating in the program, the program provides access to a computer or Internet service, or both, in the homes of low-income families participating in the program that do not have a computer or Internet service access in their home.”
6. “The program includes a parental engagement and involvement component that includes interaction with a learning coach provided by the program.”
7. “The program includes an evaluation component that measures a child’s growth over the course of the program.”
8. “The program is administered by a service provider in at least two other states.”

The legislation also required the nonprofit service provider selected for the program to provide \$500,000 in matching funds during the three-year term of the contract.

In July 2020, DPI approved the grant application from Waterford.org to administer the online early education pilot program and selected the following school districts for the program: Green Bay Area Public School District, Lac du Flambeau No. 1 School District, Milwaukee Public Schools, North Crawford School District, Racine Unified School District, and Siren School District.

In April 2022 the online early learning pilot program was modified, by 2021 Wisconsin Act 215, to include school districts beyond the initial six identified, after giving first preference

to eligible children within the initial districts. Under Act 215, children still needed to meet the income eligibility criteria for a free or reduced-price lunch as a condition of participating in the program.

Summary of Data

The below information represents a three-year summary of data reported via the annual Waterford Upstart reports that were required under Wisconsin 2019 Act 170. The reports were missing key data elements needed to interpret and evaluate the results. As a result, the Department of Public Instruction was unable to develop an informed opinion as to the effectiveness of the Upstart program. Additional information can be found in the Detailed Data Summary section of this report. Annual reports submitted by Waterford have been included as an appendix.

Number of Eligible Children who Registered to Participate in the Program	
Year	Registrations
2020-2021	172
2021-2022	305
2022-2023	634
Total	1,111

Number of Eligible Children who Participated in the Program			
Year	Registrations	Participants*	Percent of Registrants Participating
2020-2021	172	92	54
2021-2022	305	Not Reported	Not Reported
2022-2023	634	330	52
Total	1,111	Incomplete Data	Incomplete Data

* A participant was defined by Waterford as a child who logged on to the software for one minute or longer.

Low-Income Families Requesting/Receiving a Computer or Home Internet		
Year	Computers Provided	Internet Provided
2020-2021	90	20
2021-2022	249	70
2022-2023	324	67
Total	663	157

Frequency with Which Participating Children Used the Instructional Software		
Year	Average Minutes	Percent of Fidelity Target*
2020-2021	1,413	59
2021-2022	1,750	73
2022-2023	975	41

* Average minutes as a percentage of the target time to achieve program fidelity (i.e., 75 minutes per week for 32 weeks).

Performance on Kindergarten Readiness Assessments*			
Year	Average Posttest Score	Posttest Grade Equivalent [†]	Percent at Kindergarten Beginning or Higher
2020-2021	2636	Kindergarten Intermediate	83
2021-2022	2495	Kindergarten Intermediate	82
2022-2023	2703	Kindergarten Advanced	89

* Kindergarten readiness was assessed using the Waterford Assessment of Core Skills (WACS).

† Each WACS score aligns to a qualitative grade-equivalent label. The labels associated with kindergarten readiness are Kindergarten Beginning (2001-2333), Kindergarten Intermediate (2334-2666), and Kindergarten Advanced (2667-3000).

Percentage of Caregivers who Believe the Program Helped Prepare Their Child for Kindergarten		
Year	Number of Survey Responses	Percent Agree*
2020-2021	18	72
2021-2022	Not Reported	89
2022-2023	56	90

* The percentage of survey respondents answering, “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” to the statement: “The program helped prepare my child for kindergarten.”

Detailed Data Summary

Data Reported to DPI

Waterford submitted annual reports to DPI in 2021, 2022 and 2023. Included in these reports were: a) the total number of Upstart registrations and the number of registrations disaggregated by municipality and select demographic characteristics (e.g., race/ethnicity); b) participant usage of the application, in average minutes; c) selected results from the satisfaction survey administered to parents and guardians; d) the average score participants received on the final (i.e., posttest) administration of the Waterford Assessment of Core Skills (WACS); and e) the average score difference (i.e., posttest - pretest) on the WACS disaggregated by select demographic characteristics.

Annual reports from Waterford were missing key elements needed to interpret the presented results and develop an informed opinion as to the effectiveness of the Upstart program:

- There was not consistent reporting of the number of children who completed the program (information provided was the number of children registered for the program).
- Results for the feedback survey were provided as the percentage of respondents who agreed with an item stem. However, because the annual reports did not include information needed to calculate response rates (e.g., the number of caregivers/guardians who had access to the survey), the extent to which the reported results were representative of the population of parents with children in the program could not be meaningfully assessed.

Other important contextual data elements that were missing included: detailed information on application usage, including the number of children whose usage met or exceeded the fidelity criteria established by Waterford in their funding application; the number of students with matched pretest and posttest scores; and data on potential confounding factors, including whether participants were also enrolled in a public pre-kindergarten program.

Given these limitations, Waterford was provided a list of additional data points to report in July 2023. Waterford worked to modify their Year 3 annual report to incorporate these new data points. As a result, the amended Year 3 report provides the most detailed information on many of the required data reporting elements, including the frequency with which children used the instructional software and participant performance on kindergarten readiness assessments.

Number of Children who Registered to Participate in the Program

After recruitment, parents complete an online registration process to enroll their children in Waterford Upstart. A total of 1,111 children registered for the program over the course of the pilot, with the number of registrations increasing each year:

Program Registrations by Pilot Year	
Year	Registrations
2020-2021	172
2021-2022	305
2022-2023	634
Total	1,111

Children from 108 distinct municipalities were registered, with the majority (54%) located in Milwaukee, Racine, or Green Bay. Slightly over 60% of those registered were children of color, with African American and Latino children representing 40% of the total number of registrants.

Number of Children who Participated in the Program

In their reporting, Waterford defined a program participant as any child that used the software for longer than one minute. Ninety-two children met this criteria in Year 1 and 330 children met this criteria in Year 3. The number of children who used the curriculum was not reported for Year 2. However, if extrapolated using a participation rate of 52.4% (i.e., the overall participation rate from Years 1 and 3), it is estimated that 160 children participated in Year 2 and a total of 582 used the Upstart software for at least one minute across the three pilot years:

Program Participation by Pilot Year			
Year	Registrations	Participants	Percent of Registrants Participating
2020-2021	172	92	54
2021-2022	305	Not Reported	Not Reported
2022-2023	634	330	52
Total	1,111	Incomplete Data	Incomplete Data

It is unclear how Waterford determined the definition of participation as logging on for one minute or more for a program where the established target to achieve fidelity to the instructional model is 2,400 minutes (i.e., 75 minutes per week for 32 weeks). It is notable

that, even with this definition, the number of participants served by the program across the three pilot years did not meet the targets put forth in the contract application (i.e., 500 families served per year).

Low-Income Families Receiving Computers or Home Internet Service

Over the three-year pilot, all low-income families that requested a computer received one. All low-income families that requested home Internet service received it. In total, the Waterford Upstart program distributed 663 computers and provided Internet service to 157 low-income families:

Number of Computers and Home Internet Provided by Pilot Year		
Year	Computers	Internet
2020-2021	90	20
2021-2022	249	70
2022-2023	324	67
Total	663	157

Frequency with which Participating Children Used the Instructional Software

Frequency of software use was reported to DPI as the average number of minutes participants used the software during the reporting year. The average usage reported for Year 1 was 59% of that needed to reach fidelity. In Year 2, the average usage was higher, at 73% of the 2,400 minute fidelity target. The average number of minutes participants used the software was lowest during Year 3, with children receiving 41% of the instruction needed to achieve fidelity, on average. During this last year of the program, four children (1.2%) used the software to fidelity while an additional nine (2.7%) approached fidelity.ⁱ Information on the variability in usage among program participants was not provided for Years 1 and 2. As a result, the number of children who met or approached fidelity targets for these years is unknown.

Waterford Upstart Usage by Pilot Year		
Year	Average Minutes	Percent of Fidelity Target*
2020-2021	1,413	59
2021-2022	1,750	73
2022-2023	975	41

* Average minutes as a percentage of the target time to achieve program fidelity (i.e., 75 minutes per week for 32 weeks).

Performance on Kindergarten Readiness Assessments

In the Waterford Upstart project, kindergarten readiness is assessed using the Waterford Assessment of Core Skills (WACS), an adaptive test delivered online to program participants. Each WACS score aligns to a qualitative grade-equivalent label (e.g., Preschool Advanced; Kindergarten Intermediate; First Grade Advanced). The assessment is completed twice, once before students begin the curriculum (pretest) and again at the end of each academic/project year (posttest).

Results reported annually included the average WACS score on the posttest administration, the grade-equivalent label for this score, and the percentage of students with posttest scores at or above the Kindergarten Beginning label:

Waterford Assessment of Core Skills Results by Pilot Year			
Year	Average Posttest Score	Posttest Grade Equivalent*	Percent at Kindergarten Beginning or Higher
2020-2021	2636 (n = 30)	Kindergarten Intermediate	83
2021-2022	2495 (n = Not Reported)	Kindergarten Intermediate	82
2022-2023	2703 (n = 146)	Kindergarten Advanced	89

* Each WACS score aligns to a qualitative grade-equivalent label. The labels associated with kindergarten readiness are Kindergarten Beginning (2001-2333), Kindergarten Intermediate (2334-2666), and Kindergarten Advanced (2667-3000).

The extent to which these reported posttest results reflect an improvement in kindergarten readiness from pretest is unknown. Although the initial Year 1 report included several charts with pretest to posttest gains plotted, it was noted that because the pretest was not administered in a controlled testing environment, the graphed pretest scores had been adjusted down to better approximate scores children of the same-age receive when the pretest is given in a proctored environment. The rationale for the adjustment was that, when the pretest assessment is administered in a non-controlled environment, average scores are artificially inflated since children may receive help from their parents or guardians.ⁱⁱ The pretest performance of children in Year 3 was, on average, already at the Kindergarten Intermediate level, lending some credence to this claim. However, the posttest assessment is also administered in a non-controlled environment, and the assumption that fewer students request help after being exposed to the Upstart curriculum is, as of

this writing, unsubstantiated.ⁱⁱⁱ Due to this, as well as insufficient documentation of the statistical adjustment procedure, results comparing pretest to posttest performance were uninterpretable.

Parental Feedback

An online survey was administered to solicit feedback from the parents and guardians of Waterford Upstart participants. The survey results are anonymous and all guardians who add one or more children to their online program account receive an invitation to participate. Feedback from this survey has been consistently positive across the program years, with over two-thirds of responses indicating agreement towards each each positively valenced item (e.g., The program helped prepare ME to help my child in school next year; my child for kindergarten; A representative gave me what I needed to effectively support my child).

Across pilot years, positivity towards the program was considerably higher in Years 2 and 3. For example, in Year 1, 72% of respondents answered, “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” when presented with the statement: “The program helped prepare my child for kindergarten.” In Years 2 and 3, this percentage was 17 and 18 points higher, respectively.

While the feedback was positive, extent to which responses represent the population of Wisconsin caregivers with children in the program could not be meaningfully assessed using the information provided in the annual reports. Non-response bias as a result of administering the survey at the end of the academic year is the primary concern. This schedule, as opposed to one where the survey is available throughout the year and invitations are triggered by an interval of inactivity, is likely to draw responses predominantly from parents with children who are currently actively engaged in the curriculum, a group that, it stands to reason, may view the program in a more positive light compared to parents whose children disengaged at some point earlier in the year.

While concerns about non-response bias can be mitigated by a high response rate, in Year 3, only 56 out of 484 families completed the survey, a response rate of only 12%. In Year 1, only the number of completed surveys (18) was reported. The Year 2 report did not include the number of completed surveys or the achieved response rate.

ⁱ “Approaching” fidelity was defined by Waterford in their Year 3 report as meeting 80% of the fidelity to instruction model, or an average of 60 minutes per week for 32 weeks.

ⁱⁱ The pretest performance of children in Year 3 was, on average, already at the Kindergarten Intermediate level, supporting the idea that children administered the pretest WASC at home receive assistance.

ⁱⁱⁱ Waterford has indicated they are currently engaged in a research project designed to provide evidence for this claim.

References

“2021 Wisconsin Act 215.” 2021. Accessed October 3, 2023.

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2021/related/acts/215.pdf>

“2019 Wisconsin Act 170.” 2019. Accessed October 3, 2023.

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2019/related/acts/170.pdf>

Waterford.org. 2023a. “Waterford Upstart Wisconsin Program Final Report – SY 2022-2023.” Waterford.org.

———. 2023b. “Waterford Upstart SY 2022-2023 Program – Wisconsin Program – Final Report.”

———. 2022. “2021-2022 Wisconsin Waterford Upstart Pilot Program – Final Outcomes.”

———. 2021. “Wisconsin 2020-2021 School Year – Summary of Final Outcomes.”

Appendix A: Annual Reports Submitted to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI)

This appendix contains the following documents submitted to DPI by Waterford.org:

- “Wisconsin 2020-2021 School Year – Summary of Final Outcomes”. This annual report covered the first Waterford Upstart pilot year. Submitted November 2021.
- “2021-2022 Wisconsin Waterford Upstart Pilot Program – Final Outcomes.” This annual report covered the second Waterford Upstart pilot year. Submitted June 2022.
- “Waterford Upstart SY 2022-2023 Program – Wisconsin Program – Final Report.” This annual report covered the third Waterford Upstart pilot year. Submitted August 2023.
- “Waterford Upstart Wisconsin Program Final Report – SY 2022-2023.” This report revised the 2022-2023 annual report to include additional reporting elements requested by the DPI. Submitted September 2023.

Wisconsin 2020-2021 School Year – Summary of Final Outcomes

Wisconsin Online Early Learning Pilot Program: On March 3, 2020, **Governor Tony Evers signed legislation that created an online early education pilot program in Wisconsin** ([2019 Wisconsin Act 170](#)). Under the legislation, an “online early learning program” means a program that satisfies all of the following criteria:

- The program provides computer-based instruction to children on a home computer connected by the Internet to a centralized file storage facility.
- The program is designed to improve a child's transition to 5-year-old kindergarten.
- The program contains content in reading, math, and science.
- The program is aligned with nationally recognized early learning standards.
- At no cost to low-income families participating in the program, the program provides access to a computer or Internet service, or both, in the homes of low-income families participating in the program that do not have a computer or Internet service access in their home.
- The program includes a parental engagement and involvement component that includes interaction with a learning coach provided by the program.
- The program includes an evaluation component that measures a child's growth over the course of the program.
- The program is being administered by a service provider in at least 2 other states.

Under the program, the **Department of Public Instruction (DPI) awards a three-year contract to a nonprofit service provider to administer the program to low-income children** that reside in three urban and three rural school districts that have reading achievement gaps, as selected by DPI.

The legislation also **requires the nonprofit service provider selected for the program to provide \$500,000 in matching funds** during the three-year term of the contract.

On October 2, 2020, **DPI approved the grant application from Waterford.org** to administer the online early education pilot program and selected the following school districts for the program: **Green Bay Area Public School District, Lac du Flambeau No. 1 School District, Milwaukee Public Schools, North Crawford School District, Racine Unified School District, and Siren School District.**

About Waterford Upstart: Waterford Upstart is an **in-home kindergarten readiness program** that was **created by the Utah State Legislature in 2009**. The program is implemented by Waterford.org and helps children develop the cognitive and social-emotional skills they need for school success.

- Preschool-age children use **Waterford Upstart in the home for 15-20 minutes a day**, five days a week. The usage model falls **well within the American Academy of Pediatricians (AAP) recommendation of no more than one hour of screen time per day for 4-year-old children.**
- Children receive a **personalized curriculum in reading, math and science** with an emphasis on reading.
- **Each family receives coaching to ensure strong parental engagement.** Waterford Upstart empowers parents in the education of their young children through a parent engagement curriculum developed over the program’s 11 years of experience working with families. While the curriculum is in English, **families are supported in English and Spanish, with translation services offered for additional languages**, as needed.
- **Social-emotional learning** is modeled in the curriculum and developed by parents through off-line activities.
- **Computers and Internet service are provided** as part of the program if the home does not have them.

2020-2021 Wisconsin Upstart Program: Waterford Upstart is aligned to Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards; Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework; CASEL Social and Emotional Learning Competencies; and endorsed by the Council of Administrators of Special Education.

- Approximately 170 preschool-age children registered for the **2020-2021 Wisconsin Upstart Program**.
- Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, all family trainings and initial student assessments were implemented virtually.

Registrations by Municipality

Municipality	Count
Caledonia	1
Franksville	2
Frederic	1
Gay Mills	2
Grantsburg	1

Municipality	Count
Green Bay	8
Jackson	1
Lac du Flambeau	6
Milwaukee	36
Mount Pleasant	2

Municipality	Count
Racine	85
River Hills	1
Siren	8
Soldiers Grove	8
Spoooner	1

Municipality	Count
Trego	1
Wauzeka	1
Webster	6
Total	171

Demographic information for registrants follows:

Registrations	Count	Percent
Total Registrations	171	100%
≤200% Federal Poverty Level	168	98.25%
≤100% Federal Poverty Level	114	66.67%

Ethnicity/Race	Count	Percent
African American	58	33.92%
Asian	2	1.17%
Caucasian	59	34.50%
Hispanic	32	18.71%
Native American/Alaskan Native	10	5.85%
Other	11	6.43%

Equipment Distributed

Equipment Provided	Count	Percent
Received Computer	90	52.63%
Received Internet Service	20	11.70%

Average Weekly Usage: Wisconsin Upstart participants' average **reading usage** on a weekly basis was **49 minutes** compared to the usage criterion of 75 minutes per week. The average total usage of the Early Reading Program (ERP) was **1413 minutes**, with the goal of reaching 1500 minutes to demonstrate Kindergarten-readiness.

Math and Science usage is optional. Wisconsin Upstart participants' average total usage of the Early Math and Science (EMS) program was **756 minutes**.

WACS Grade Equivalent Difficulty Ranges: The following table provides **question difficulty ranges for the Waterford Assessment of Core Skills (WACS) by grade level**. Each grade level is divided into thirds: Kindergarten Beginning, Kindergarten Intermediate, and Kindergarten Advanced.

Grade	Beginning	Intermediate	Advanced
Preschool	1001 - 1333	1334 - 1666	1667 - 2000
Kindergarten	2001 - 2333	2334 - 2666	2667 - 3000
First	3001 - 3333	3334 - 3666	3667 - 4000
Second	4001 - 4333	4334 - 4666	4667 - 5000

* *Note: Waterford.org was not able to proctor in-person assessments because of COVID-19; accordingly, start of program results were adjusted based on previously proctored Upstart participants.*

Average final scores for children that completed WACS showed the following **notable outcomes**:

- **Children’s outcomes averaged at the “Kindergarten Intermediate” level** (with an average final WACS score of 2635.50), where most children score towards the midway point of the Kindergarten year, only 3 points below the “Kindergarten Advanced” level.
- **83.33% of children scored at “Kindergarten Beginning” or above**, demonstrating strong school readiness outcomes.

WACS Scores for Wisconsin

Measured Skill	Final WACS Score	Grade Equivalent of Final WACS Score
Letter Recognition	1945	Pre-K Advanced
Letter Sound	2431	Kindergarten Intermediate
Initial Sound	2604	Kindergarten Intermediate
Blending	2493	Kindergarten Intermediate
Listening Comprehension	2263	Kindergarten Beginning
Non Words	3281	1st Grade Beginning
Sight Words	3263	1st Grade Beginning
Real Words	3673	1st Grade Advanced
Reading Comprehension	4015	2nd Grade Beginning
Vocabulary	3126	1st Grade Beginning

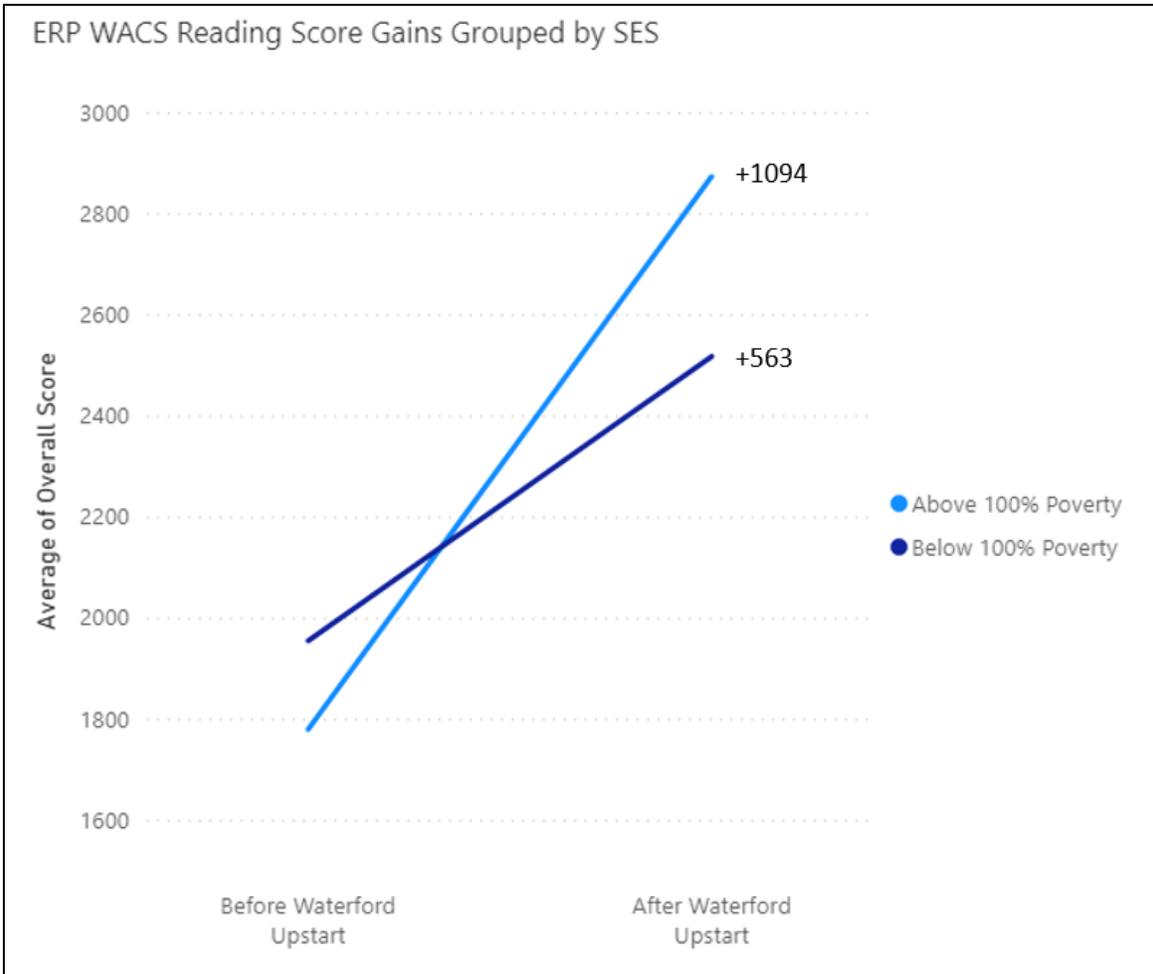
* *Note that “Kindergarten Beginning” is highest possible achievement level for the “Letter Recognition” skill.*

The following are highlights from the results.



WACS reading score gains grouped by reported ethnicity/race show Caucasian children finishing within the Kindergarten Advanced level and all other children in the program finishing within the Kindergarten Intermediate level.

Ethnicity	Average Final WACS Score	Grade Equivalent of Average Final WACS Score
Caucasian	2898.38	Kindergarten Advanced
Other	2434.47	Kindergarten Intermediate



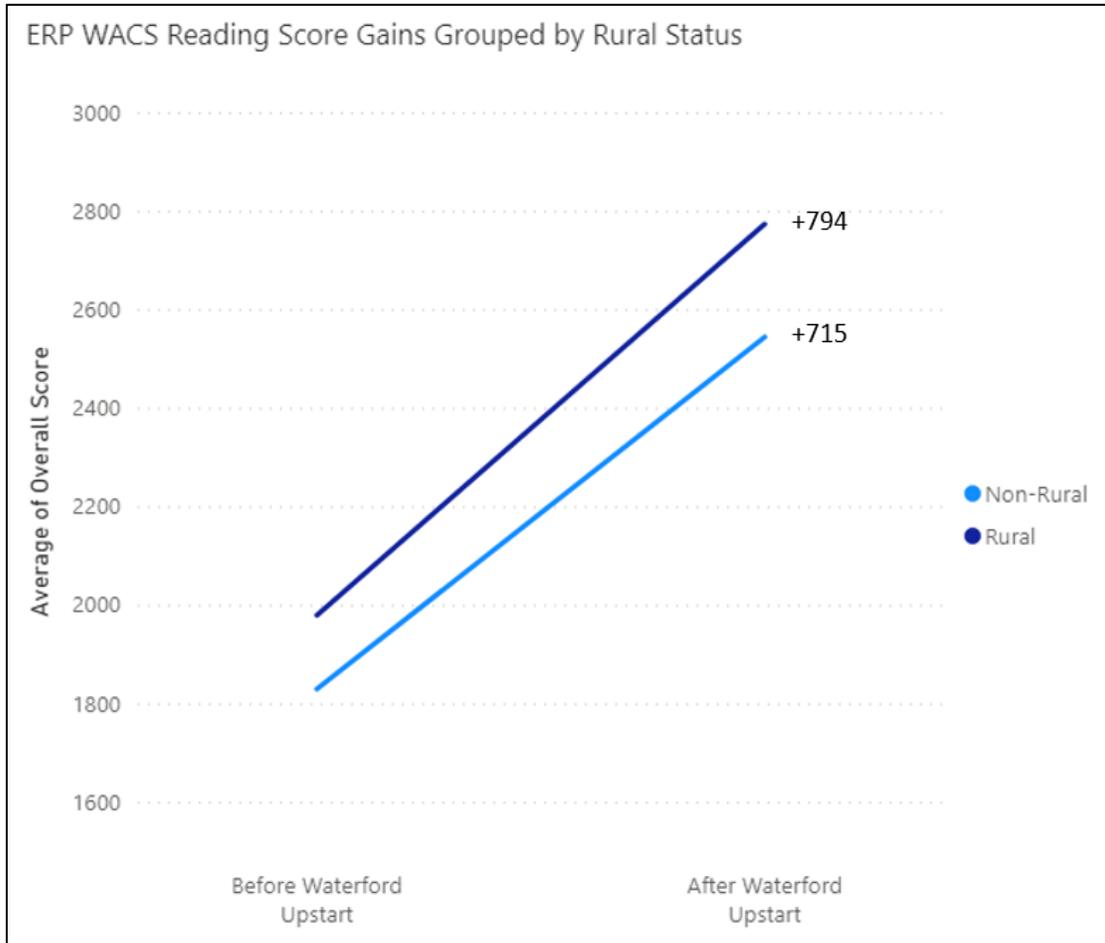
WACS reading score gains grouped by reported socio-economic status show children above 100% of the federal poverty guidelines finishing within the Kindergarten Advanced level, and children below 100% of the federal poverty guidelines within the Kindergarten Intermediate level.

Socioeconomic Status	Average Final WACS Score	Grade Equivalent of Average Final WACS Score
Above 100% of Poverty	2872.80	Kindergarten Advanced
Below 100% of Poverty	2516.85	Kindergarten Intermediate



WACS reading score gains grouped by reported gender show girls finishing at the Kindergarten Advanced level and boys finishing at the Kindergarten Intermediate level.

Gender	Average Final WACS Score	Grade Equivalent of Average Final WACS Score
Female	2677.00	Kindergarten Advanced
Male	2599.19	Kindergarten Intermediate

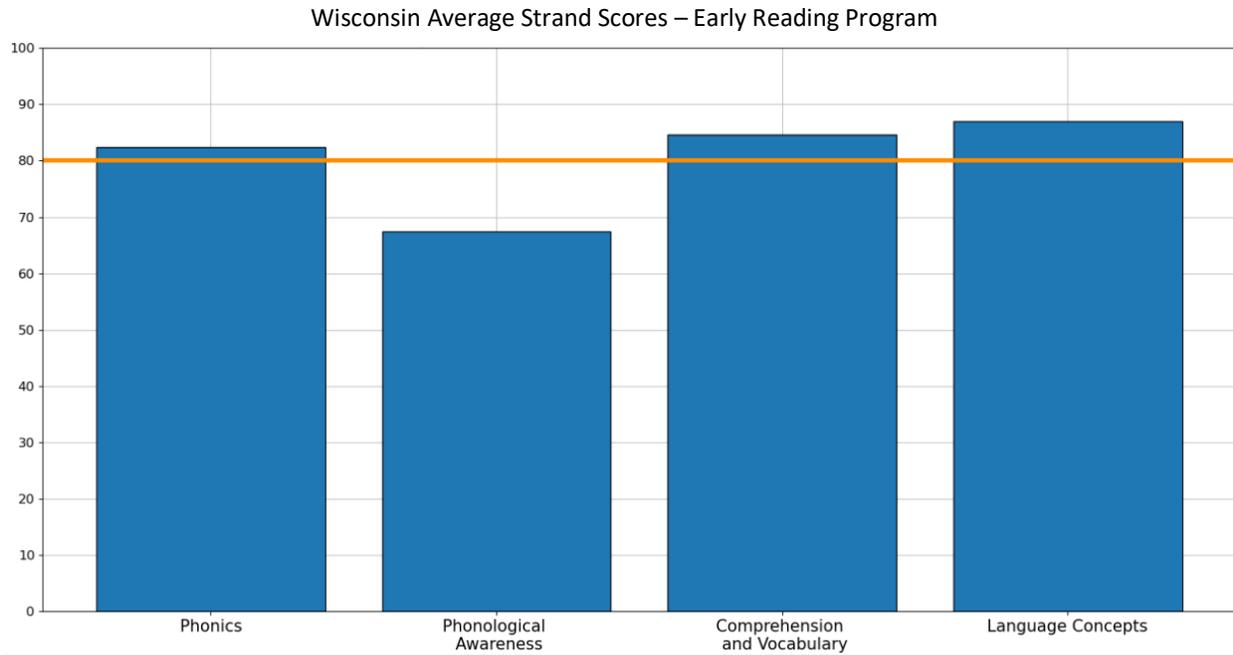


WACS reading score gains grouped by rural status show rural children finishing at the Kindergarten Advanced level and non-rural children finishing at the Kindergarten Intermediate level.

Rural Status	Average Final WACS Score	Grade Equivalent of Average Final WACS Score
Non-Rural	2543.83	Kindergarten Intermediate
Rural	2773.00	Kindergarten Advanced

Strand Scores: Reading strand scores are scores for subskills as a percentage of 100. A score of 80 or higher within the Waterford Early Reading Program represents mastery, which is the goal of the cognitively based Waterford Upstart program. The sequencer, within the software, individualizes instruction to provide remediation until a child achieves mastery.

The following figure shows the average score, organized by strand, for all students who scored on a given strand for reading. The orange line represents the expected average score, 80. After participating in the Wisconsin Upstart pilot, the average score for three of the four reading strands was above 80.

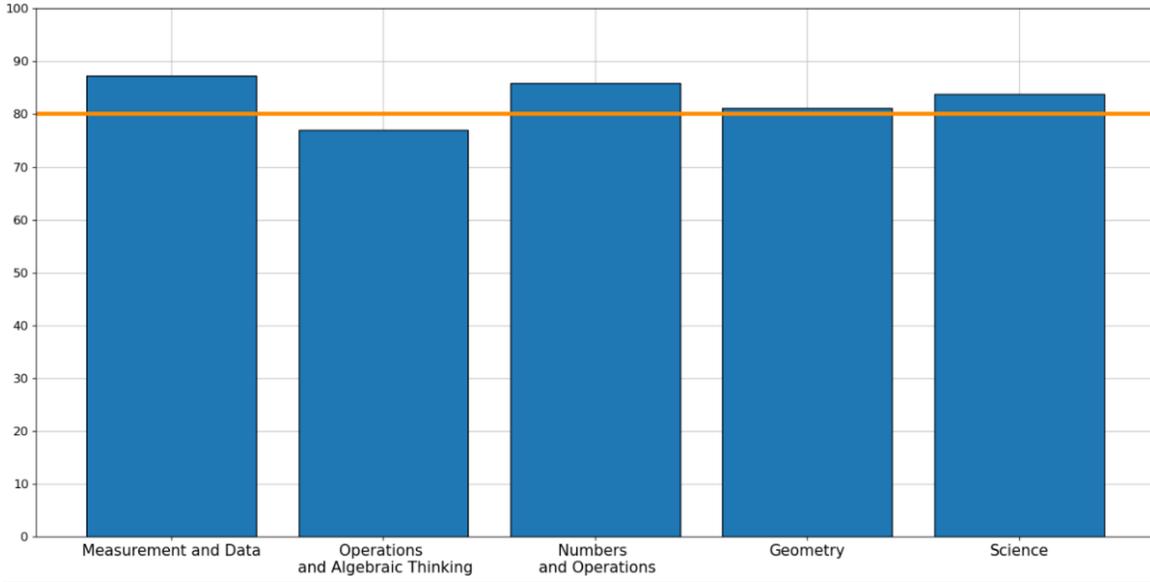


** Note: Phonological awareness is an individual’s understanding of the sound structure of words (e.g., what rhymes with cat?). As such, it is a difficult skill to learn, aligned closely to age, with significant growth seen even in month variations. While Waterford Upstart helps students work on this skill through the curriculum and offline family activities, there is generally lower performance on this skill strand.*

Math and Science Program Outcomes: Math and science strand scores are scores for subskills as a percentage of 100. A score of 80 or higher within the Waterford Early Math and Science Program represents mastery, which is the goal of the cognitively based Upstart program. The sequencer, within the software, individualizes instruction to provide remediation until a child achieves mastery.

The following figure shows the average score, organized by strand, for all students who scored on a given strand for math and science. The orange line represents the expected average score, 80. After participating in the Wisconsin Upstart pilot, the average score for four of the five math/science strands was above 80.

Wisconsin Average Strand Scores – Early Math and Science Program



70.79% of students had an overall math and science score of 80 or higher; the average overall score was 83.90 after completing the Wisconsin Upstart program.

Parent Satisfaction: Parents/guardians participating in the Wisconsin Upstart implementation completed a comprehensive survey to provide feedback related to their, and their child’s, experience in the program.

% Agree	Survey Question
72% YES	The program helped prepare my child for kindergarten.
89% YES	I feel confident that I can help my child transition from PreK to kindergarten.
89% YES	I like that the program expects our family to create a daily routine for using it.
78% YES	The program helped prepare ME to help my child in school next year.
78% YES	The program helped me realize the importance of participating in my child's learning.
72% YES	The program made me feel equipped to engage with my child's teacher next year.
89% YES	When using the program, my child experienced higher quality experiences, compared to other apps or TV programs.
83% YES	The program was engaging to my child.
67% YES	My child is now better able to work independently.
86% YES	A representative gave me what I needed to effectively support my child.
86% YES	A representative helped solve the issues I had.
100% YES	A representative was friendly and polite when we communicated.
100% YES	A representative was knowledgeable about the program and software.
94% YES	In general, did your child enjoy using the program?
94% YES	Do you think the program was age appropriate?
88% YES	Do you feel the weekly usage requirements were appropriate?

Answer	Survey Question
8.22	On a scale of 0 to 10, how likely are you to recommend Waterford Upstart to a friend or colleague?
8.39	On a scale of 0 to 10, overall how satisfied are you with your and your child’s experience using the Waterford Upstart program?

2021-2022 Wisconsin Waterford Upstart Pilot Program – Final Outcomes
June 2022

Wisconsin Online Early Learning Pilot Program: On March 3, 2020, **Governor Tony Evers signed legislation that created an online early education pilot program in Wisconsin (2019 Wisconsin Act 170)**. Under the legislation, an “online early learning program” means a program that satisfies all of the following criteria:

- The program provides computer-based instruction to children on a home computer connected by the Internet to a centralized file storage facility.
- The program is designed to improve a child's transition to 5-year-old kindergarten.
- The program contains content in reading, math, and science.
- The program is aligned with nationally recognized early learning standards.
- At no cost to low-income families participating in the program, the program provides access to a computer or Internet service, or both, in the homes of low-income families participating in the program that do not have a computer or Internet service access in their home.
- The program includes a parental engagement and involvement component that includes interaction with a learning coach provided by the program.
- The program includes an evaluation component that measures a child's growth over the course of the program.
- The program is being administered by a service provider in at least 2 other states.

Under the program, the **Department of Public Instruction (DPI) awards a three-year contract to a nonprofit service provider to administer the program to low-income children** that reside in three urban and three rural school districts that have reading achievement gaps, as selected by DPI.

- The legislation also **requires the nonprofit service provider selected for the program to provide \$500,000 in matching funds** during the three-year term of the contract.

On October 2, 2020, **DPI approved the grant application from Waterford.org** to administer the online early education pilot program and selected the following school districts for the program:

- Green Bay Area Public School District
- Milwaukee Public Schools
- Racine Unified School District
- Lac du Flambeau No. 1 School District
- North Crawford School District
- Siren School District

About Waterford Upstart: Waterford Upstart is an **in-home kindergarten readiness program** that was **created by the Utah State Legislature in 2009**. The program is implemented by Waterford.org and helps children develop the cognitive and social-emotional skills they need for school success.

- Preschool-age children use **Waterford Upstart in the home for 15-20 minutes a day**, five days a week. The usage model falls **well within the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommendation of no more than one hour of screen time per day for 4-year-old children**.
- Children receive a **personalized curriculum in reading, math and science** with an emphasis on reading.
- **Each family receives coaching to ensure strong parental engagement**. Waterford Upstart empowers parents in the education of their young children through a parent engagement curriculum developed over the program's 12 years of experience working with families. While the curriculum is in English, **families are supported in English and Spanish, with translation services offered for additional languages**, as needed.
- **Social-emotional learning** is modeled in the curriculum and developed by parents through off-line activities.
- **Computers and Internet service are provided** as part of the program if the home does not have them.

Evidence of Effectiveness: Upstart’s evidence of effectiveness has been thoroughly vetted in the most rigorous contexts and was a critical factor in recent **federal Education, Innovation and Research (EIR) Expansion Grant** and **TED Audacious Project** awards.

- The program meets **What Works Clearinghouse standings without reservations** and **ESSA Tier 1 Strong Evidence** standards.
- Upstart’s **third-party randomized controlled trial (RCT) study for the U.S. Department of Education produced significant and sizable positive effect sizes:** 0.42 standard deviations of improvement in literacy for the reading group relative to the math group, and 0.38 in math for the math group relative to the reading group.
- Similarly, over **eleven years of external evaluations** in Utah show Upstart children achieve 2X-3X the learning of non-Upstart children and those **learning gains are maintained through the 4th grade.**

2021-2022 Wisconsin Upstart Program: Waterford Upstart is **aligned to Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards** and Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework; meets WIDA standards for language development; is a Certified Autism Resource; and is endorsed by the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE).

- Approximately **300 preschool-age children** registered for the **2021-2022 Wisconsin Upstart Pilot Program.**

Registrations and Demographic Information

Municipality	Count
Allenton	1
Cudahy	1
Danbury	1
Frederic	1
Gays Mills	3
Green Bay	48
Lac Du Flambeau	12
Mequon	1
Milwaukee	171
Minocqua	1
Mt Pleasant	1

Municipality	Count
Ponce	1
Racine	53
Siren	2
Soldiers Grove	1
South Milwaukee	1
Sturtevant	1
Wauwatosa	1
Webster	2
West Allis	1
Woodruff	1
TOTAL	305

Ethnicity/Race	Count	Percent
African-American	120	39.34%
Latino/a	88	28.85%
Caucasian	38	12.46%
Native American/Alaskan Native	21	6.89%
Decline to answer	16	5.25%
Other	15	4.92%
Asian	7	2.30%
Technology Provided	Count	Percent
Total Registrations	305	100.00%
Received Computer	249	81.63%
Received Internet Service	70	22.95%

Average Curriculum Usage: The **average total reading usage** for participants was **1,749.85minutes** over the course of the program.

Assessment: The **Waterford Assessment of Core Skills (WACS)** is a **computerized adaptive test of early literacy for students in Pre-Kindergarten through second grade** with initial content validity established against state and national standards. To establish concurrent validity and predictive validity, **student performance on WACS was compared to performance on five commonly-used standardized tests** also measuring early reading skills, **including DIBELS** (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), **IRI** (Idaho Reading Indicator), **ITBS** (Iowa Tests of Basic Skills), **SAT 10** (Stanford Achievement Test Series), and **TPRI** (Texas Primary Reading Inventory).

WACS Grade Equivalent Difficulty Ranges: The following table provides **question difficulty ranges for the Waterford Assessment of Core Skills (WACS) by grade level.** Each grade level is divided into thirds: Kindergarten Beginning, Kindergarten Intermediate, and Kindergarten Advanced.

Grade	Beginning	Intermediate	Advanced
Preschool	1001 - 1333	1334 - 1666	1667 - 2000
Kindergarten	2001 - 2333	2334 - 2666	2667 - 3000
First	3001 - 3333	3334 - 3666	3667 - 4000
Second	4001 - 4333	4334 - 4666	4667 - 5000

Reading Program Outcomes: Average final scores for children that completed WACS showed the following **notable outcomes:**

- **Children’s outcomes averaged at the “Kindergarten Intermediate” level** (with an average final WACS score of **2495.39**) where most children score midway through the Kindergarten year.
- **81.48% of children scored at “Kindergarten Beginning” or above**, demonstrating strong school readiness outcomes.

The following table provides results on assessed skills and shows average final **WACS subtest scores and their grade equivalents** for the program.

Measured Skill	Average Final WACS Score	Grade Equivalent of Average Final WACS Score
Letter Recognition	2034	Kindergarten Beginning*
Letter Sound	2447	Kindergarten Intermediate
Initial Sound	2534	Kindergarten Intermediate
Blending	2404	Kindergarten Intermediate
Listening Comprehension	1906	Preschool Advanced
Non Words	3088	1 st Grade Beginning
Sight Words	3225	1 st Grade Beginning
Real Words	3222	1 st Grade Beginning
Reading Comprehension	3822	1 st Grade Advanced
Vocabulary	2919	Kindergarten Advanced

* Note that “Kindergarten Beginning” is highest possible achievement level for the “Letter Recognition” skill.

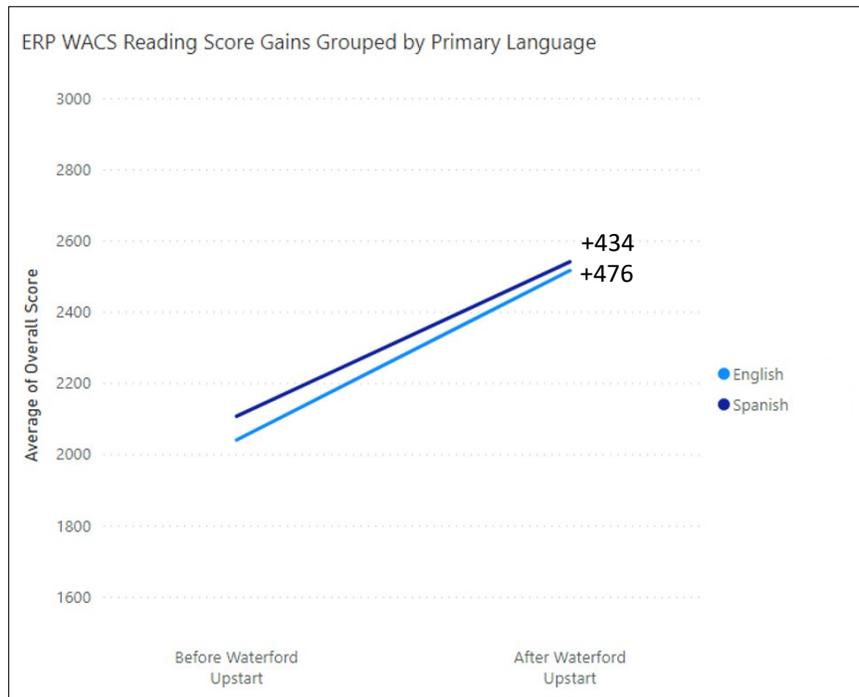
The following graphs show **WACS reading score gains grouped by reported demographic information** for the 2021-2022 Wisconsin Upstart Pilot Program. The numbers within the graph indicate point score gains from pretest to posttest.



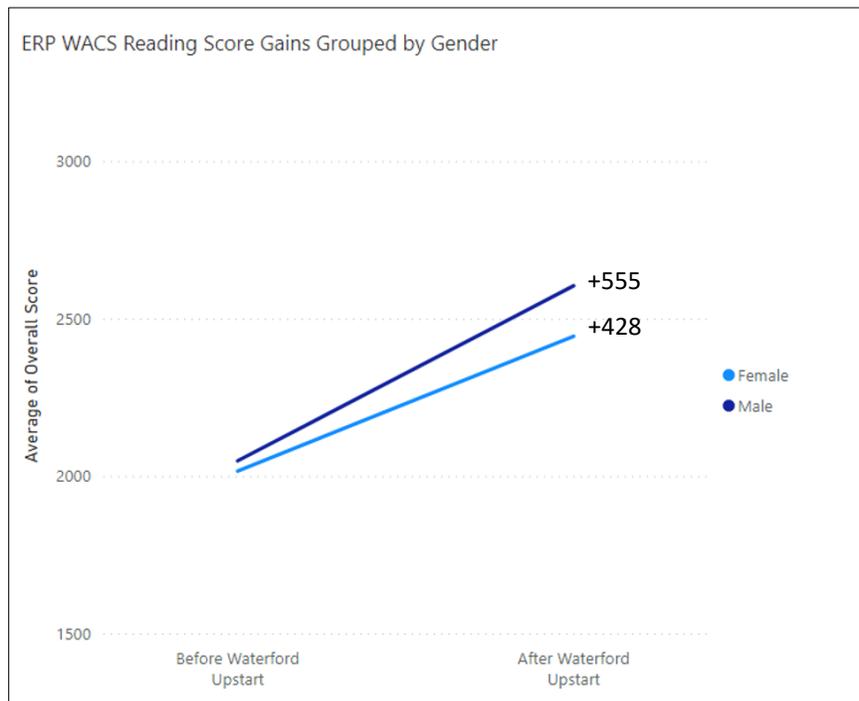
Ethnicity/Race	Percent of Cohort	Average Final WACS Score	Grade Equivalent of Final WACS Score
African-American	39.34%	2486.65	Kindergarten Intermediate
Latino/a	28.85%	2634.42	Kindergarten Intermediate
Other	31.81%	2356.89	Kindergarten Intermediate



Socio-economic status (SES)	Percent of Cohort	Average Final WACS Score	Grade Equivalent of Final WACS Score
≤100% Federal Poverty Level	69.96%	2440.91	Kindergarten Intermediate
>100% Federal Poverty Level	37.03%	2588.00	Kindergarten Intermediate



Primary Language	Percent of Cohort	Average Final WACS Score	Grade Equivalent of Final WACS Score
English	80.00%	2515.80	Kindergarten Intermediate
Spanish	20.00%	2540.30	Kindergarten Intermediate



Gender	Percent of Cohort	Average Final WACS Score	Grade Equivalent of Final WACS Score
Male	50.98%	2604.08	Kindergarten Intermediate
Female	49.02%	2443.92	Kindergarten Intermediate

Parent Satisfaction: Parents/guardians participating in the program completed a comprehensive survey to provide feedback related to their, and their child's, experience in the program.

Survey Responses

% Agree	Respondents' experiences with the Waterford Upstart program
89% YES	I like that the program expects our family to create a daily routine for using it.
89% YES	The program helped prepare my child for kindergarten.
100% YES	The program helped prepare ME to help my child in school next year.
89% YES	The program helped me realize the importance of participating in my child's learning.
95% YES	The program made me feel equipped to engage with my child's teacher next year.
89% YES	I feel confident that I can help my child transition from PreK to kindergarten.
95% YES	When using the program, my child experienced higher quality experiences, compared to other apps or TV programs.
100% YES	The program was engaging to my child.
84% YES	My child is now better able to work independently.

% Agree	Respondents' experiences with Waterford Upstart representatives
100% YES	A representative gave me what I needed to effectively support my child.
100% YES	A representative helped solve the issues I had.
100% YES	A representative was friendly and polite when we communicated.
100% YES	A representative was knowledgeable about the program and software.

% Agree	Respondents' evaluation of the Waterford Upstart program
100% YES	Reading Program: In general, did your child enjoy using the program?

% Agree	Respondents' experiences with the Waterford Upstart program
100% YES	Reading Program: Do you think the program was age appropriate?
95% YES	Reading Program: Do you feel the weekly usage requirements were appropriate?
100% YES	Math and Science Program: In general, did your child enjoy using the program?
100% YES	Math and Science Program: Do you think the program was age appropriate?
92% YES	Math and Science Program: Do you feel the weekly usage requirements were appropriate?

Average Response	Respondents' satisfaction with the Waterford Upstart program
9.84	On a scale of 0 to 10, how likely are you to recommend Waterford Upstart to a friend or colleague?
9.53	On a scale of 0 to 10, overall, how satisfied are you with your and your child's experience using the Waterford Upstart program?

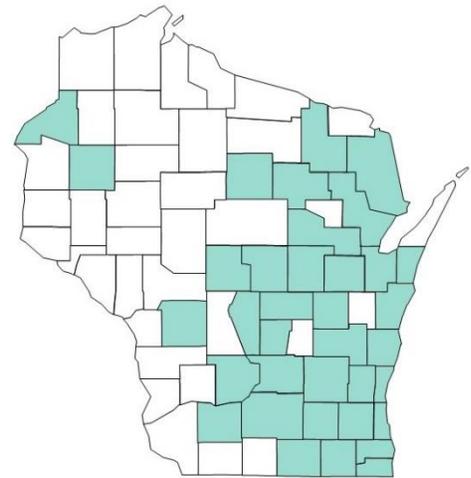
Additional Comments

- *The program was great keeping him engaged with learning. I think the program is right for my child. I wish they would have a program available for my elementary children too. Because I do have a child who is struggling in school in elementary years.*
- *Our family coach was the gold standard of what a mentor/ representative should be. Throughout the process she's been accessible, encouraging, and a pleasantly kind spirit.*
- *I really enjoyed watching him learn, it was his first time for everything including drawing.*
- *All in all, I loved our Upstart journey with my first born, it has put us into a routine I will miss, but can't wait to begin in two years when my other daughter will be in PreK going to Kindergarten.*
- *The program is very useful and helpful for my child.*
- *My son had a wonderful time learning and the software was very engaging that he enjoyed learning. I liked to see him excited to do his work whether it was learning the power words or adding small sums. He liked when I gave him positive affirmations that he is doing well with the program.*
- *I love this program, he loved this program, I am thinking he is a bit delayed on his ability to pick things up. Hopefully he comes around.*
- *Bring it to Racine schools!*
- *Every child should be able to have access to this program.*

Waterford Upstart SY 2022-2023 Program WISCONSIN PROGRAM – FINAL REPORT

Introduction

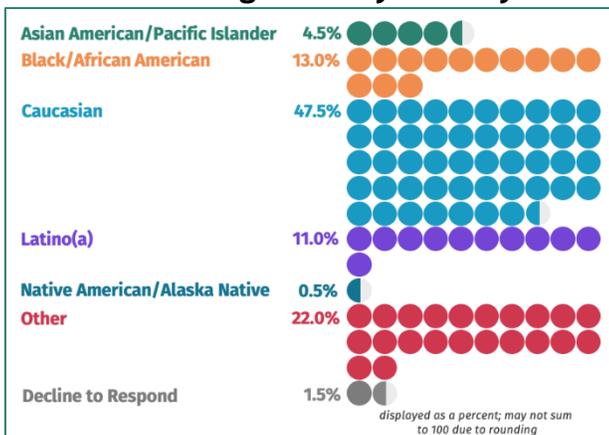
On March 3, 2020 Governor Tony Evers signed legislation that created an online early education pilot program in Wisconsin (2019 Wisconsin Act 170). Under the program, the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) awards a three-year contract to a non-profit service provider to administer the program to children in households with incomes below 185% of the Federal Poverty Level. This report details outcomes for those children served by funding from the State of Wisconsin.



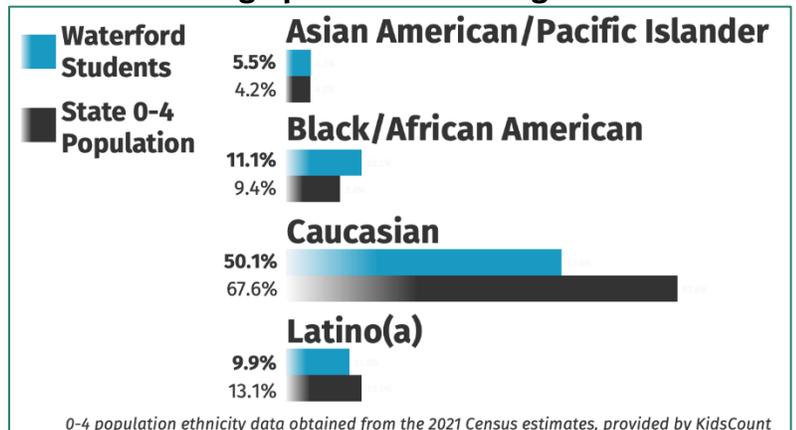
Statewide Reach



Children Registered by Ethnicity



Ethnicity of Registered Children Compared with State Demographics of Children Ages 0-4



Measuring Program Outcomes

To measure learning success and skills gained in reading with Waterford Upstart, students take an assessment at the beginning and end of the program. The Waterford Assessment of Core Skills (WACS)¹ is a computer-adaptive test of early literacy designed for pre-kindergarten to second grade students.

The following table provides question difficulty ranges for WACS by grade level. Each grade level is divided into thirds: e.g., Kindergarten Beginning, Kindergarten Intermediate, and Kindergarten Advanced.

Grade	Beginning	Intermediate	Advanced
Preschool	1001 - 1333	1334 - 1666	1667 - 2000
Kindergarten	2001 - 2333	2334 - 2666	2667 - 3000
First	3001 - 3333	3334 - 3666	3667 - 4000
Second	4001 - 4333	4334 - 4666	4667 - 5000

Program Results – Reading

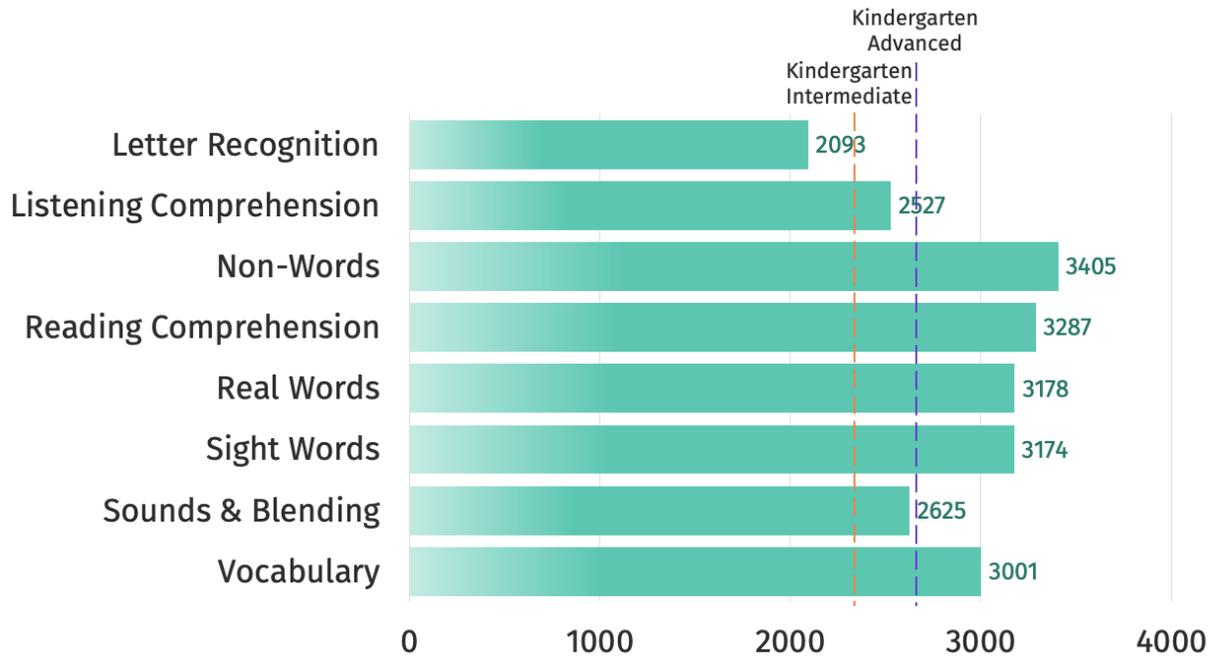
- Children’s outcomes averaged at the “Kindergarten Advanced” level (with an average final WACS score of 2703), where most children would be expected to score near the end of the Kindergarten year. Children registered for the Waterford Upstart program were four-years-old, showing that on average children who were part of the Wisconsin 2022-2023 Waterford Upstart program achieved a literacy readiness level of one full academic year beyond what would ordinarily be expected for children of that age.
- 89% of children scored at the “Kindergarten Beginning” level or above, demonstrating strong school readiness outcomes.

The following graph provides children’s results for assessed discrete literacy skills. The graph shows the average final WACS subtest scores and where those scores fall within their grade equivalents for the program.² For example, the children who had the opportunity to use the Waterford Upstart program in the 2022-2023 school year achieved a “Kindergarten Advanced” level or higher in non-words, reading comprehension, real words, sight words, and vocabulary.

¹ To establish initial content validity, student performance on WACS was compared to performance to performance on five similar standardized tests that measure early reading skills, including DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), IRI (Idaho Reading Indicator), ITBS (Iowa Test of Basic Skills), SAT 10 (Stanford Achievement Test Series), and TPRI (Texas Primary Reading Inventory). These results also established concurrent and predictive validity.

² “Kindergarten Beginning” is the highest possible achievement level for the “Letter Recognition” skill. Additionally, WACS is an adaptive test and not all children reach all advanced skills in the testing. Scores and grade equivalents are for the children who reach the individual skills.

Average Final Reading Score by Assessed Skill



Geographic Reach

Registrations by County

County	Count
Adams	3
Barron	1
Brown	66
Burnett	4
Columbia	1
Dane	7
Dodge	2
Fond du Lac	3
Forest	1
Iowa	2

County	Count
Jefferson	3
Kenosha	1
Kewaunee	1
Langlade	1
Lincoln	1
Manitowoc	1
Marathon	4
Marinette	9
Marquette	1
Milwaukee	225

County	Count
Monroe	2
Oconto	16
Outagamie	28
Ozaukee	46
Portage	28
Racine	31
Rock	17
Sauk	1
Shawano	5

County	Count
Sheboygan	6
Walworth	2
Washington	99
Waukesha	10
Waupaca	1
Waushara	1
Winnebago	3
Wood	1
TOTAL	634

Registrations by Municipality

City	Count
Abrams	1
Antigo	1
Appleton	1
Arena	2

City	Count
Greendale	2
Greenleaf	2
Gresham	1
Hales Corners	1

City	Count
Middleton	1
Milton	9
Milwaukee	138
Monona	2

City	Count
Sheboygan	2
Siren	3
Slinger	2
Sobieski	11

Beloit	1	Hancock	1	Muskego	1	Stevens Point	16
Bonduel	3	Hartford	2	New Berlin	1	Sturtevant	3
Brookfield	2	Hillpoint	1	Oak Creek	2	Sullivan	1
Brown Deer	1	Horicon	1	Oconomowoc	2	Waldo	1
Cedarburg	4	Jackson	17	Oconto Falls	2	Waterford	1
Crandon	1	Janesville	7	Oneida	24	Watertown	2
Cudahy	59	Junction City	5	Oshkosh	2	Waukesha	1
Custer	1	Kenosha	1	Pewaukee	2	Waupaca	1
DePere	10	Kewaskum	1	Plover	8	Wausau	2
Eagle	1	Kiel	1	Plymouth	1	Webster	1
Fond Du Lac	3	Krakov	1	Port Washington	2	West Allis	1
Franklin	8	Lake Geneva	1	Portage	1	West Bend	76
Franksville	1	Little Suamico	1	Pulaski	19	Westfield	1
Friendship	2	Luxemburg	1	Racine	26	Whitewater	1
Germantown	1	Madison	4	Random Lake	2	Wisconsin Dells	1
Gillett	1	Marinette	9	Rice Lake	1	Wisconsin Rapids	1
Gleason	1	Mayville	1	Saint Francis	13	Wrightstown	1
Grafton	39	Menasha	1	Schofield	2	TOTAL	634
Green Bay	34	Mequon	1	Seymour	3		

About Waterford Upstart

Waterford Upstart is a configurable kindergarten readiness program that helps preschool age children develop the cognitive and mindset skills they need for school success. In Wisconsin, Waterford Upstart was delivered fully in the home, leveraging adaptive software and providing tailored coaching to support families as their child's first teacher.

Proven Technology

- Personalized curriculum in reading, math, and science, and models mindset skills
- Success in 15 to 30 minutes a day, five days a week
- Includes a computer or tablet device and internet service as needed (Participants in Wisconsin who needed devices received Dell laptops.)

Family Engagement

- Coaching and offline resources to ensure strong parent/guardian engagement and student success
- Family services supported in English and Spanish, with interpretation services available in additional languages, as needed

Waterford Upstart in Wisconsin

2019 Wisconsin Act 170 defines an “online early learning program” as a program that satisfies all of the following criteria:

- a. “The program provides computer-based instruction to children on a home computer connected by the Internet to a centralized file storage facility.”
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- e. “At no cost to low-income families participating in the program, the program provides access to a computer or Internet service, or both, in the homes of low-income families participating in the program that do not have a computer or Internet service access in their home.”
- f. “The program includes a parental engagement and involvement component that includes interaction with a learning coach provided by the program.”
- g. “The program includes an evaluation component that measures a child’s growth over the course of the program.”
- h. “The program is administered by a service provider in at least two other states.”

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction approved a grant application from Waterford.org to administer the online early education pilot program on October 2, 2020.

Waterford Upstart is aligned to the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards and Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework; meets WIDA standards for language development; is a Certified Autism Resources; and is endorsed by the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE).

Thank You

Waterford.org would like to thank the State of Wisconsin for its commitment to supporting universal literacy. Waterford Upstart was provided in the State of Wisconsin for the 2022-2023 school year with funding approved by the Wisconsin Legislature and granted by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

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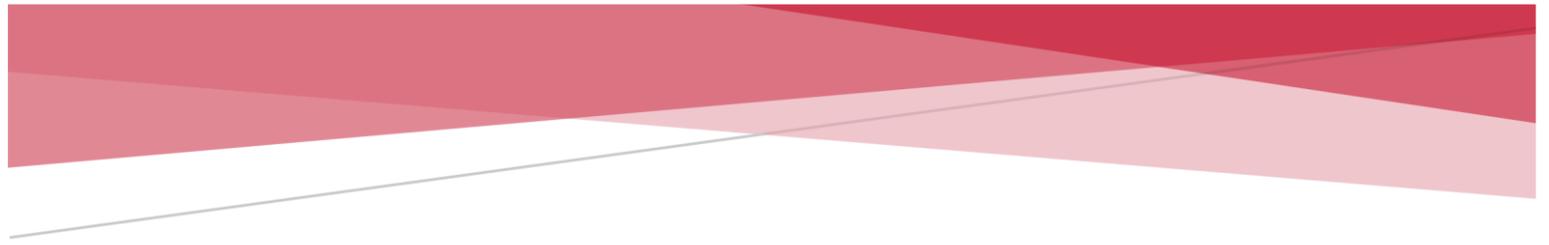
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WATERFORD UPSTART

Wisconsin Program Final Report – SY2022-2023

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- Personalized curriculum in reading, math, and science, which also models mindset skills
- 15 to 30 minutes a day, five days a week
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Family Engagement

- Coaching and offline resources to ensure strong parent/guardian engagement and student success
- Family services supported in English and Spanish, with interpretation services available in additional languages, as needed

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The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction approved a grant application from Waterford.org to administer the online early education pilot program on October 2, 2020.

Application & Enrollment

A total of 634 Wisconsin pre-school-age children registered to participate in the Waterford Upstart program during the 2022-2023 school year. Of these, 330 (52%) children used the software for at least one (1) minute, meaning they were considered program participants. Tables 1 and 2 provide details of registrants’ and participants’ ethnicity, respectively. Tables 3 and 4 provide details of registrants’ and participants’ gender, respectively. Tables 5 and 6 provide details of registrants’ and participants’ enrollment in other preschool, respectively.

Table 1: Registrant Demographics by Child’s Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Count	Percent
African American	83	13.09%
Asian	27	4.26%
Caucasian	302	47.63%
Latino/a	70	11.04%
Native American/Alaska Native	4	0.63%
Pacific Islander	1	0.16%
Other Ethnicity	139	21.92%
Decline to Answer	8	1.26%
TOTAL	634	

Table 2: Participant Demographics by Child's Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Count	Percent of Registered in Group	Percent of Participants
African American	46	55.42%	13.94%
Asian	12	44.44%	3.64%
Caucasian	169	55.96%	51.21%
Latino/a	35	50.00%	10.61%
Native American/Alaska Native	1	25.00%	0.30%
Pacific Islander	1	100.00%	0.30%
Other Ethnicity	61	43.88%	18.48%
Decline to Answer	5	62.50%	1.52%
TOTAL	330	52.04%	

Table 3: Registrant Demographics by Child's Gender

Gender	Count	Percent
Female	290	45.74%
Male	344	54.26%
TOTAL	634	

Table 4: Participant Demographics by Child's Gender

Gender	Count	Percent of Registered in Group	Percent of Participants
Female	151	52.07%	45.76%
Male	179	52.03%	54.24%
TOTAL	330	52.04%	

Table 5: Registrant Demographics by Child's Enrollment in Other Preschool

Other Preschool	Count	Percent
Public	101	15.93%
Private	11	1.74%
None	522	82.33%
TOTAL	634	

Table 6: Participant Demographics by Child’s Enrollment in Other Preschool

Other Preschool	Count	Percent of Registered in Group	Percent of Participants
Public	65	64.36%	19.70%
Private	8	72.73%	2.42%
None	257	49.23%	77.88%
TOTAL	330	52.04%	

Resources Provided

In order to be eligible to participate in Waterford Upstart, families had to have household incomes below 185% of the Federal Poverty Level. In total, all 643 registered children lived in households that met this requirement. The 330 children who began using the software also met this requirement.

As all families were considered low-income, all families requesting a computer were eligible to receive one. In total, 324 families (52.5%) requested and received a computer. Children in 243 of these families (75% of those receiving computers) began using the software.

As with computers, all families requesting internet were eligible to receive it. In total, 67 families (10.6%) requested and received internet. Children in 51 of these families (76% of those receiving internet) began using the software. In total, only two of the families requesting internet did not also request a computer.

Waterford Upstart Coaching

After registration, Waterford coaches begin attempts to contact families with a Welcome Call. Coaches make no fewer than six (6) attempts (approximately one attempt per week) to contact a family by phone to conduct a Welcome Call. After the third attempt, Coaches begin to also send text messages, emails, and physical postcards in order to get in touch with the family and schedule a Welcome Call. If the child has not started engaging with the software after six (6) attempts *each* to reach a family by phone, text message, and email, and a postcard has been sent, Coaches reduce the frequency of attempts to once every three (3) to four (4) weeks, but at no point cease attempting to contact a family completely. If a child has started engaging with the software, Coaches continue weekly attempts to contact non-responsive families.

Once the Welcome Call is complete, coaches make regular contact with families throughout the program via phone, email, and text message, engaging in the method(s) preferred by a given family. Families are also able to initiate contact by calling in or scheduling a call. Through this contact, a coach engages with the caregiver to review the child’s progress, encouraging the caregiver to be a part of their child’s learning experience and allowing the caregiver to engage in their child’s learning and set appropriate goals for their child. Waterford has found that when the caregiver is engaged and sets goals, the child understands the importance of learning and is more likely to use the software and persevere throughout the program.

Coaches build rapport with their families so that they can help caregivers overcome obstacles, such as low motivation to use the program, particularly following holidays. Coaches can also help troubleshoot technology issues or put a caregiver into contact with an IT specialist.

Fidelity to Instruction Model

Waterford Upstart is designed to be used for 15 minutes a day, 5 days a week, or on average 75 minutes per week. It is considered acceptable if a child achieves this goal 80% of the time, or average use of 60 minutes per week. Children had software access from September 6, 2022, to July 30, 2023, after a parent/guardian completed the asynchronous program orientation. However, usage was only required and monitored from September 6, 2022, to May 28, 2023; fidelity to the instruction model is only considered during this period.

During the course of the program, 4 (1.2%) children achieved 75 minutes or more of usage during each of 32 weeks; 9 (2.7%) children achieved 60 minutes or more of usage during each of 32 weeks. Fourteen (4.2%) children achieved an average weekly usage of 75 minutes or more during the course of the program and 28 (8.9%) children achieved an average weekly usage of 60 minutes or more during the course of the program. If we look specifically at average weekly usage for each individual child from the week they began usage, 55 (16.7%) children achieved an average weekly usage of 75 minutes or more and 101 (30.6%) children achieved an average weekly usage of 60 minutes or more. Finally, looking specifically at average weekly usage during the weeks an individual child logged on, 72 (21.8%) children achieved average weekly usage of 75 minutes or more and 127 (38.5%) children achieved average weekly usage of 60 minutes or more. Tables 7 and 8 present this information, showing fidelity¹ to the usage model at 100% and 80%. Figure 1 shows average usage in a given week for all children who used the software during that week.

On average, children used the software for a total of 975 minutes through the course of the program.

¹ “Fidelity” here is defined as achieving an average weekly use of at least 75 minutes during each of 32 weeks of the program. Note that only 99 children were registered early enough to have the potential to participate at all during 32 program weeks.

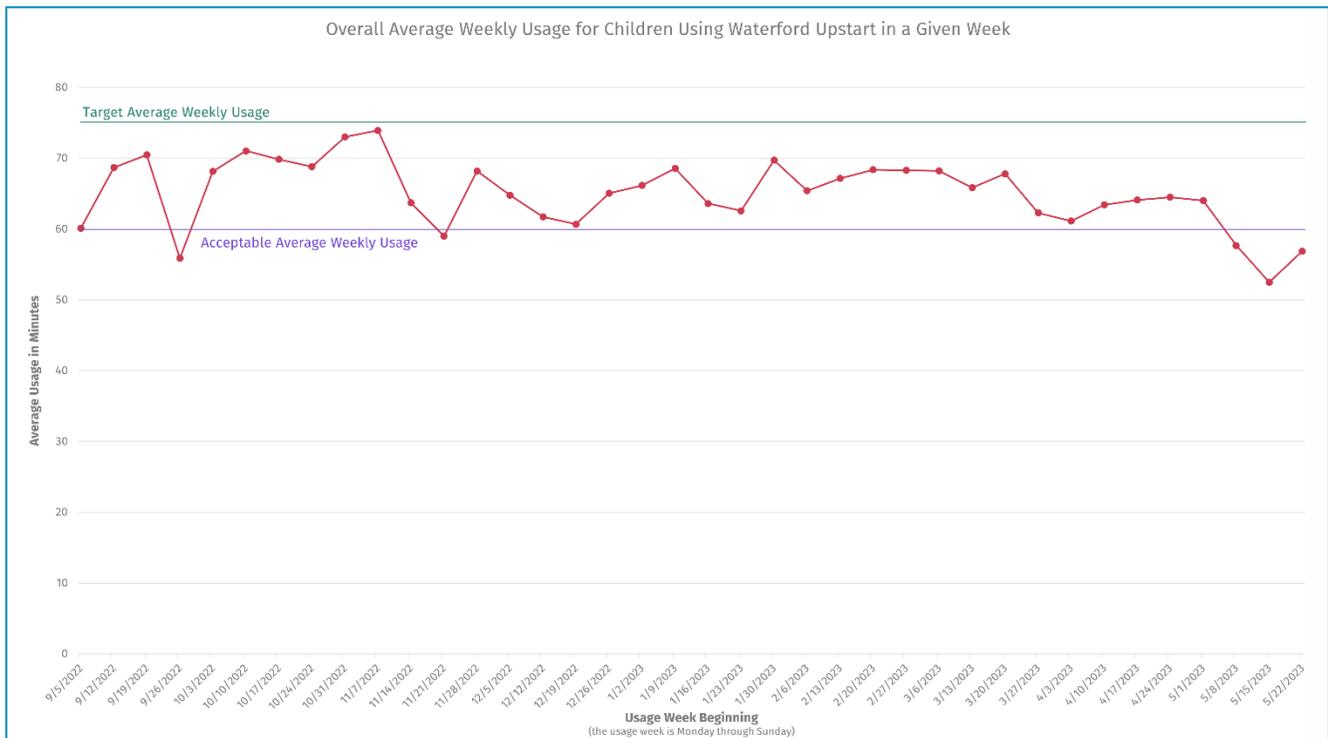
Table 7: 100% Fidelity to Instruction Model (75 minutes of usage per week)

Usage Detail ²	Count	Percent
≥ 75 minutes of usage in each of 32 weeks	4	1.2%
Average weekly usage ≥ 75 minutes during the course of the program	14	4.2%
Average weekly usage ≥ 75 minutes from each child’s start of usage	55	16.7%
Average weekly usage ≥ 75 minutes during weeks used	72	21.8%

Table 8: 80% Fidelity to Instruction Model (60 minutes of usage per week)

Usage Detail ³	Count	Percent
≥ 60 minutes of usage in each of 32 weeks	9	2.7%
Average weekly usage ≥ 60 minutes during the course of the program	28	8.9%
Average weekly usage ≥ 60 minutes from each child’s start of usage	101	30.6%
Average weekly usage ≥ 60 minutes during weeks used	127	38.5%

Figure 1: Overall Average Weekly Usage for Children Participating in a Given Week



Kindergarten Readiness

To measure learning success and skills gained in reading with Waterford Upstart, students take an assessment at the beginning and end of the program. The Waterford Assessment of

² These are fully overlapping categories.

³ *ibid*

Core Skills (WACS)⁴ is a computer-adaptive test of early literacy designed for pre-kindergarten to second grade students.

The following table provides question difficulty ranges for WACS by grade level. Each grade level is divided into thirds: e.g., Kindergarten Beginning, Kindergarten Intermediate, and Kindergarten Advanced.

Grade	Beginning	Intermediate	Advanced
Preschool	1001 - 1333	1334 - 1666	1667 - 2000
Kindergarten	2001 - 2333	2334 - 2666	2667 - 3000
First	3001 - 3333	3334 - 3666	3667 - 4000
Second	4001 - 4333	4334 - 4666	4667 - 5000

In total, 147 children (44.5% of participants) took both the pre-test and the post-test. Table 9 shows comparison data for children with pre- and post-test scores versus children with pre-test scores only.

Table 9: Comparison Data for Children with Pre- and Post-Test Scores Versus Children with Pre-Test Scores Only

Group	Count	# (%) ≥ 75 minutes of usage in each of 32 weeks	Average Total Minutes of Usage	Average Unadjusted Pre-Test Score
Completed Pre-Test and Post-Test	146	4 (2.7%)	1,569	2,495
Completed Pre-Test Only	161	0 (0%)	519	2,513
TOTAL	307	4 (1.3%)	1,044	2,504

Children completing both the pre-test and post-test had an average unadjusted pre-test score of 2,495 and an average post-test score of 2,703; average growth was 208 points⁵. Of those completing the post-test, 130 (88.4% of those completing the post-test) had a post-test score at the K Beginning level or above.

Children enrolled in public pre-kindergarten programs completing both the pre-test and post-test had an average unadjusted pre-test score of 2,494 and an average post-test score of 2,760; average growth was 266 points.

⁴ To establish initial content validity, student performance on WACS was compared to performance to performance on five similar standardized tests that measure early reading skills, including DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), IRI (Idaho Reading Indicator), ITBS (Iowa Test of Basic Skills), SAT 10 (Stanford Achievement Test Series), and TPRI (Texas Primary Reading Inventory). These results also established concurrent and predictive validity.

⁵ We believe that pre-test scores may skew high as a result of a non-controlled testing environment. In other words, we believe that some parents/guardians may help their children during the pre-test, resulting in some very high scores that impact the average. We also believe that, at post-test, it is likely that fewer children request help resulting in truer post-test scores. Waterford is currently engaged in a research study designed to test this hypothesis.

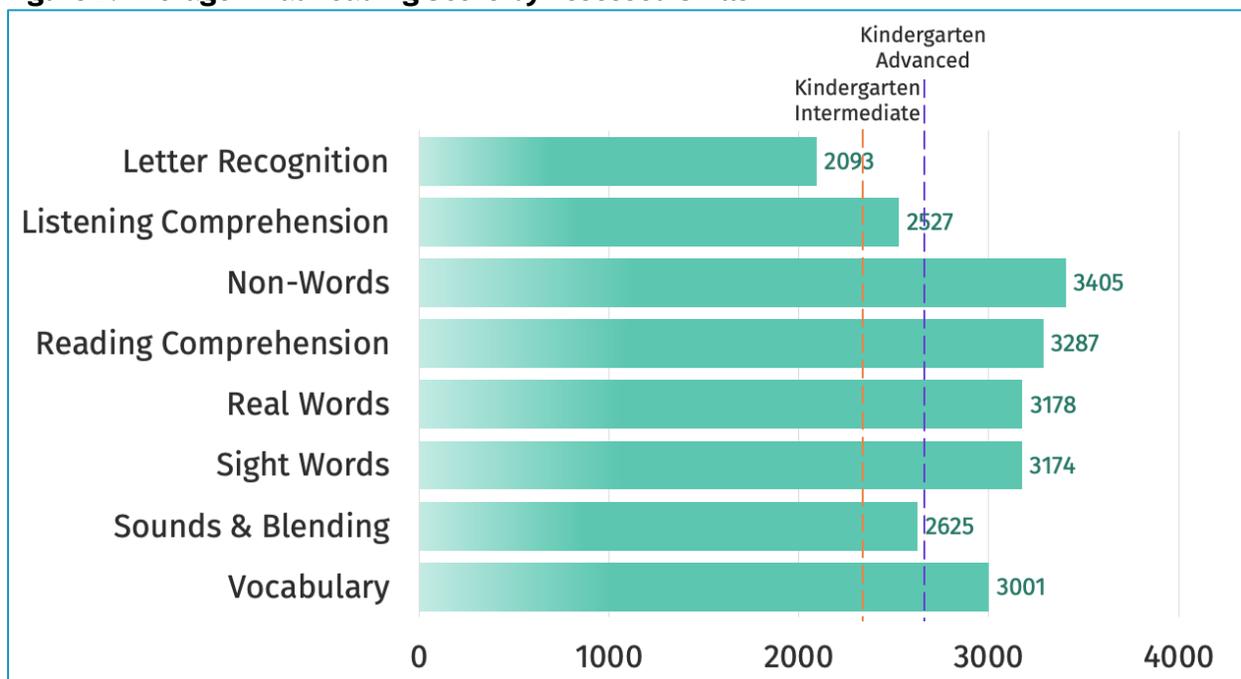
Children who pre-tested at the preschool level showed the most significant gains from pre-test to post-test. Table 10 shows pre- and post-test scores for only those children who pre-tested at the preschool level.

Table 10: Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores for Children Pre-Testing at the Preschool Level

Group	Count	Average Score	Grade Level Equivalent
Pre-Test	59	1849	Pre-Kindergarten Advanced
Post-Test	31	2504	Kindergarten Intermediate

Figure 2 shows children’s post-test results for assessed discrete literacy skills. The graph shows the average final WACS subtest scores and where those scores fall within their grade equivalents for the program.⁶ For example, the children who had the opportunity to use the Waterford Upstart program in the 2022-2023 school year achieved a “Kindergarten Advanced” level or higher in non-words, reading comprehension, real words, sight words, and vocabulary.

Figure 2: Average Final Reading Score by Assessed Skills



⁶ “Kindergarten Beginning” is the highest possible achievement level for the “Letter Recognition” skill. Additionally, WACS is an adaptive test and not all children reach all advanced skills in the testing. Scores and grade equivalents are for the children who reach the individual skills.

Caregiver Feedback

All families who added their child to their program account (known as “claiming the Upstart ID”) during the 2022-2023 school year were given the opportunity to complete an anonymous program survey and provide additional feedback related to their and their child’s experience in the program, with a total of 484 families invited to participate. 56 (12%) families returned the survey. Responses for each survey item related to program satisfaction appear below. The survey instrument in English is available at Appendix A. While responses to additional questions appearing in the full survey are for research and program improvement purposes only, responses to all questions are available at Appendix B.

The survey was available for families to complete in Spanish and responses submitted in Spanish have been included in the data below.

Response Rate Data

Overall Survey Responses

Response Status	Count	Percent
Submitted a Response to the Survey	56	12%
Did Not Submit a Response to the Survey	428	88%
TOTAL	484	

The following tables only include potential respondents with a child who had at least one minute of software usage and did not opt out of receiving emails from Waterford.

Overall Survey Responses by Child’s Average Total Minutes of Usage

Response Status	Count	Average Total Usage
Submitted a Response to the Survey	50	1,626
Did Not Submit a Response to the Survey	259	862
TOTAL	309	986

Overall Survey Responses by Child’s Average Pre-Test Score

Response Status	Count	Average Pre-Test
Submitted a Response to the Survey	50	2,414
Did Not Submit a Response to the Survey	257	2,475
TOTAL	307	2,464

Overall Survey Responses by Child’s Average Pre- to Post-Test Growth

Response Status	Count	Average Growth
Submitted a Response to the Survey	41	383
Did Not Submit a Response to the Survey	105	150
TOTAL	146	216

Overall Survey Responses by Child’s Usage Fidelity (at least 75 weekly minutes for at least 32 weeks)

Response Status	Usage Fidelity Status	Count	Percent
Submitted a Response to the Survey	Met Usage Fidelity	1	2%
	Did Not Meet Usage Fidelity	49	98%
Did Not Submit a Response to the Survey	Met Usage Fidelity	3	1%
	Did Not Meet Usage Fidelity	256	99%

Respondents' Experiences with the Waterford Upstart Program

The following tables indicate the count and percentage of how parents and caretakers who responded on questions or statements regarding the Waterford Upstart program, out of all respondents. *Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.*

In general, how do you feel about your ability to support your child's learning? (Survey Question #8)

Response	Count	Percent
very confident	41	75%
somewhat confident	13	24%
not very confident	1	2%
don't know	0	0%
TOTAL	55	100%

In general, how do you feel about your ability to support your child's learning in kindergarten? (Survey Question #9)

Response	Count	Percent
very confident	37	67%
somewhat confident	16	29%
not very confident	2	4%
don't know	0	0%
TOTAL	55	100%

I like that the program expects our family to create a daily routine for using it. (Survey Question #22)

Response	Count	Percent
strongly agree	21	42%
agree	24	48%
neither agree nor disagree	5	10%
disagree	0	0%
strongly disagree	0	0%
TOTAL	50	100%

The program helped prepare my child for kindergarten. (Survey Question #22)

Response	Count	Percent
strongly agree	33	66%
agree	12	24%
neither agree nor disagree	4	8%
disagree	1	2%
strongly disagree	0	0%
TOTAL	50	100%

The program helped prepare ME to help my child in school next year. (Survey Question #22)

Response	Count	Percent
strongly agree	23	46%
agree	19	38%
neither agree nor disagree	7	14%
disagree	1	2%
strongly disagree	0	0%
TOTAL	50	100%

The program helped me realize the importance of participating in my child's learning. (Survey Question #22)

Response	Count	Percent
strongly agree	24	48%
agree	21	42%
neither agree nor disagree	5	10%
disagree	0	0%
strongly disagree	0	0%
TOTAL	50	100%

The program made me feel equipped to engage with my child's teacher next year. (Survey Question #22)

Response	Count	Percent
strongly agree	17	34%
agree	22	43%
neither agree nor disagree	9	18%
disagree	1	2%
strongly disagree	1	2%
TOTAL	50	100%

I feel confident that I can help my child transition from PreK to kindergarten. (Survey Question #22)

Response	Count	Percent
strongly agree	29	58%
agree	16	32%
neither agree nor disagree	5	10%

disagree	0	0%
strongly disagree	0	0%
TOTAL	50	100%

When using the program, my child experienced higher quality experiences, compared to other apps or TV programs. (Survey Question #22)

Response	Count	Percent
strongly agree	30	60%
agree	11	22%
neither agree nor disagree	8	16%
disagree	1	3%
strongly disagree	0	0%
TOTAL	50	100%

The program was engaging to my child. (Survey Question #22)

Response	Count	Percent
strongly agree	19	38%
agree	24	48%
neither agree nor disagree	3	6%
disagree	1	2%
strongly disagree	3	6%
TOTAL	50	100%

My child is now better able to work independently. (Survey Question #22)

Response	Count	Percent
strongly agree	13	26%
agree	27	54%
neither agree nor disagree	7	14%
disagree	1	2%
strongly disagree	2	4%
TOTAL	50	100%

My child is now better able to follow our family rules and routines. (Survey Question #22)

Response	Count	Percent
strongly agree	10	20%
agree	21	42%
neither agree nor disagree	15	30%
disagree	2	4%
strongly disagree	2	4%
TOTAL	50	100%

Respondents' Experiences with Waterford Upstart Representatives

The following tables indicate the count and percentage of parents and caretakers who responded on statements regarding Waterford Upstart representatives, out of all respondents.

A representative gave me what I needed to effectively support my child. (Survey Question #31)

Response	Count	Percent
always	28	67%
mostly	9	21%
sometimes	4	10%
never	1	2%
not applicable	0	0%
TOTAL	42	100%

A representative helped solve the issues I had. (Survey Question #31)

Response	Count	Percent
always	27	64%
mostly	6	14%
sometimes	3	7%
never	0	0%
not applicable	6	14%
TOTAL	42	100%

A representative was friendly and polite when we communicated. (Survey Question #31)

Response	Count	Percent
always	37	88%
mostly	5	12%
sometimes	0	0%
never	0	0%
not applicable	0	0%
TOTAL	42	100%

A representative was knowledgeable about the program and software. (Survey Question #31)

Response	Count	Percent
always	37	88%
mostly	3	7%
sometimes	1	2%
never	0	0%
not applicable	1	2%
TOTAL	42	100%

Respondents' Evaluation of the Waterford Upstart Reading Program

The following tables indicate the count and percentage of parents and caretakers who responded on questions regarding the Waterford Upstart reading program, out of all respondents.

In general, did your child enjoy using the program? (Survey Question #33)

Response	Count	Percent
Yes	45	94%
No	3	6%
TOTAL	48	100%

Do you think the program was age appropriate? (Survey Question #33)

Response	Count	Percent
Yes	48	100%
No	0	0%
TOTAL	48	100%

Do you feel the weekly usage requirement was age appropriate? (Survey Question #33)

Response	Count	Percent
Yes	44	94%
No	3	6%
TOTAL	47	100%

Respondents' Evaluation of the Waterford Upstart Math/Science Program

The following tables indicate the count and percentage of parents and caretakers who responded on questions regarding their child's use of the Waterford Upstart math/science program, out of all respondents. *Note that use of the math/science software was not required for participants in Wisconsin.*

In general, did your child enjoy using the program? (Survey Question #33)

Response	Count	Percent
Yes	26	96%
No	1	4%
TOTAL	27	100%

Do you think the program was age appropriate? (Survey Question #33)

Response	Count	Percent
Yes	26	96%
No	1	4%
TOTAL	27	100%

Do you feel the weekly usage requirement was age appropriate? (Survey Question #33)

Response	Count	Percent
Yes	24	92%
No	2	8%
TOTAL	26	100%

Respondents' Satisfaction with the Waterford Upstart Program

The average response to the question, "On a scale of 0 to 10, how likely are you to recommend Waterford Upstart to a friend or colleague?" (Survey Question #34) was 8.96.

The average response to the question, "On a scale of 0 to 10, overall how satisfied are you with your and your child's experience using the Waterford Upstart program?" (Survey Question #34) was 8.86.

Respondents' Open-Ended Comments

Is there anything else you would like us to know about your or your child's experience with the Waterford Upstart program?

- A great program. Thank you.
- Could provide more knowledge about finding offline information
- Es un excelente programa mi hijo conversa con familia y amigos en Inglés como si el ya hubiera asistido a la escuela de inglés el es independiente, y se siente más seguro al hablar el inglés realmente a mi me encanto el programa muchas gracias.
- Fantastic program
- Good repetition of skills
- Had to reregister 3-4 times. Lost my child's attention very quickly. Child was not interested. Not a great interface.
- He enjoyed the experience
- I enjoyed helping my child experience a new learning system
- i just wish they would of accepted her back this year last year was ruff with covid hitting our family and a lot of personal things she didn't get to do school that much like she would this year
- It benefited my child overall. Thank you so much.
- It made learning fun for my son
- It was great! I have recommended it to more 4K teachers I know!
- Loved it and the representative that worked with us was Amazing and encouraging.
- Really wish it could be done on a tablet. We have one desktop computer and it is in the basement right next to the bedroom my husband slept in since we worked night shift. As a result we could not do the program during the day while my husband was

sleeping, we had to wait until the evening, which gets very busy for us and a lot of times we ran out of time to do it. If it was able to be done on a tablet we could have done it anywhere and guarantee he would have done it every day.

- Thank you!
- The application process lacked timeliness in responses and updates. The software itself was not easily navigated for parents.
- The games was very easy to use very understanding. The colors the numbers the patterns was all exciting to my kids because they thought they was actually playing a video game so it made it much more exciting to learn and also have fun
- The initial entrance assessment exam was extremely hard as was the final assessment. Expecting them to read multiple paragraphs after only being taught to read 3-5 word sentences was odd and my child didn't take much at all from the final assessment other than pure confusion.
- The program was very helpful in getting my child to learn and calm down when things were frustrating she has autism and that's a big struggle

Is there anything else you would like us to know about a Waterford Upstart representative?

- All the ones I talked to was great and very supportive.
- Honestly she was amazing. Best customer service I've ever received. She was encouraging, personable, and honestly a pure joy on the phone. I would have been her friend if it wasn't inappropriate. She's a 10/10
- My daughter's rep (Shiniqua) was amazing
- Que son muy amables
- She was awesome.
- She was great
- She was great loved getting to have her
- She was very nice
- She was Very responsive and encouraging.
- Thank you!
- They were awesome
- Very encouraging
- Very friendly, kind, and patient.
- Very good representative interaction
- Very polite easy going and understanding very in touch.

Appendix A: Waterford Upstart Survey Instrument

2023 Waterford Upstart End-of-Program Survey

Getting started!

Thank you for taking part in this survey about Waterford Upstart. The survey asks about your experiences and your opinions and generally takes less than 10 minutes to complete. We will use information from you and other Waterford Upstart parents to assess and improve our services.

Before you begin, please note the following:

1. All answers are completely confidential.
2. Only researchers studying Waterford Upstart will have access to individual surveys.
3. Responses will be combined from thousands of parents like yourself.
4. Answering the survey questions is completely voluntary, and you can skip any question you don't want to answer. We encourage you to participate so that your voice can be heard.

As you go through the survey please think about your child who was enrolled in Waterford Upstart for 2022-2023.

THANK YOU!

Participant Code: To start the survey, please enter your participant code. By entering this code, you are consenting to participate in this survey. []

Section 1

First, we have some questions about you.

1. How many adults age 18 and older live in your household, including yourself?
 - 1
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5
 - 6
 - 7
 - 8
 - More than 8
2. How many children age 17 and younger live in your household?
 - 1
 - 2

- 3
 - 4
 - 5
 - 6
 - 7
 - 8
 - More than 8
3. Are you male or female?
- male
 - female
 - decline to state
 - other, please specify []
4. What language is spoken most in your home?
- English
 - Spanish
 - Another language, please specify []
5. What is your highest level of education? Please answer with your **own** highest level of education.
- less than high school diploma or GED
 - high school diploma or GED
 - technical or vocational school certificate
 - some college or associate's degree
 - bachelor's degree
 - master's degree or higher, including professional degree such as JD or MD
6. What is your current marital status
- married
 - widowed
 - divorced
 - separated
 - living with a partner but not married
 - never married
7. What state do you live in?
[drop down select, including Washington DC and Other]
8. In general, how do you feel about your ability to support your child's learning?
- very confident
 - somewhat confident
 - not very confident
 - don't know
9. In general, how do you feel about your ability to support your child's learning in kindergarten?

- very confident
- somewhat confident
- not very confident
- don't know

Section 2

Your Waterford Upstart Child

10. Has your child who is now enrolled in Waterford Upstart attended or participated in any other preschool program? (select all that apply)
- yes, Head Start
 - yes, a private preschool or kindergarten that charges tuition
 - yes, a preschool program sponsored by a religious organization
 - yes, an online preschool program
 - yes, at a program not listed above; please specify the type of program []
 - yes, but don't know the type of preschool program
 - my child attended a daycare program with some reading or math lessons
 - no

These next questions ask about things that different children do at different ages. These things may or may not be true for your child and that's okay. Please think about what your child can do **now** when answering the following questions.

11. Can this child correctly recognize the letters of the alphabet?
- No, none of them
 - Yes, some of them
 - Yes, most of them
 - Yes, all of them
12. Can this child write his or her first name, even if some of the letters are backward?
- Yes
 - No
13. Can this child recognize the beginning sound of a word? For example, can this child tell you that the word "ball" starts with the "buh" sound?
- Yes
 - No
14. How often can this child explain things he or she has seen or done so that you get a very good idea of what happened?
- Never
 - Sometimes
 - About half the time
 - Usually
 - Always

15. How high can this child count?
- This child cannot count
 - Up to 5
 - Up to 10
 - Up to 20
 - Up to 50
 - Up to 100 or more
16. Can this child identify basic shapes such as a triangle, rectangle, circle, or square?
- No, none of them
 - Yes, some of them
 - Yes, most of them
 - Yes, all of them

The next questions ask about this child’s activities with family members in the past week or month.

17. About how many books does this child have of his or her own, including those shared with brothers or sisters?
Number of books []
18. How many times have you or someone in your family read to this child in the past week? Enter “0” if none.
[] times
19. About how many minutes on each of those times did you or someone in your family read to this child?
[] minutes
20. In the past week, how many times has anyone in your family done the following things with this child?
- | | Not at all | 1 or 2 times | 3 or more times |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Told this child a story (Do not include reading to him or her) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Taught this child letters, words, or numbers | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Sang songs with this child | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Worked on arts and crafts with this child | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
21. In the past week, how many days has your family eaten the evening meal together? Write “0” if none.
[] times

Section 3

The Waterford Upstart Program

22. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the Waterford Upstart program.

	Strong Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I like that the program expects our family to create a daily routine for using it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The program helped prepare my child for kindergarten.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The program helped prepare ME to help my child in school next year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The program helped me realize the importance participating in my child's learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The program made me feel equipped to engage with my child's teacher next year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel confident that I can help my child transition from PreK to kindergarten.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When using the program, my child experienced higher quality experiences, compared to other apps or TV programs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The program was engaging to my child.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My child is now better able to work independently.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My child is now better able to follow our family rules and routines.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

23. My expectations that the program would help prepare my child for kindergarten were...

- exceeded
- met
- not met
- not applicable – I had no expectations

if "exceeded"

In what ways did Waterford Upstart help prepare your child for kindergarten that you did not expect? []

if “not met”

How did the program not help you prepare to help your child in school next year? []

24. *if previous is “met”* My expectations that the program would help prepare ME to help my child in school next year...

- exceeded
- met
- not met
- not applicable – I had no expectations

If “exceeded” or “met”

How did the program help you prepare to help your child in school next year? (Please select all the apply)

- gave me new ideas about activities to do with my child that will help my child learn
- helped me better understand my child’s development
- helped me better understand and guide my child’s social-emotional development
- helped me understand the expectations kindergarten will have for my child’s learning
- made me more confident in my ability to advocate for my child, and their learning, in school next year
- other, please specify []

if “not met”

In what ways did Waterford Upstart help prepare your child for kindergarten that you did not expect? []

25. Is there anything else you would like us to know about your or your child’s experience with the Waterford Upstart program?

Section 4

The Waterford Upstart Representative

The next set of questions asks about interactions you may have had with a Waterford Upstart staff member about your child’s use of the program and involvement with the program. In the questions below, we are going to refer to this person as a “representative”.

26. Did you ever have contact with a Waterford Upstart representative about your child’s use of the program.

- yes
- no
- don’t remember

following questions appear if answer to previous is “yes”

27. Did the contact encourage you and your child to use the program more often?
- yes
 - no
 - don't remember
28. The amount of contact with a representative about my child's use of the program was...
- too much
 - about right
 - too little
 - don't remember
29. Did you ever initiate contact with a representative?
- yes
 - no
 - don't remember
30. Did you or a representative ever use text messaging to communicate? (Please select all that apply)
- yes, a representative sent me one or more text messages
 - yes, I sent a representative one or more text messages
 - no, I didn't know that I could use text messaging
 - no, I didn't want to use text messaging
 - don't remember

if “yes” response

Based on your experience, would you way text messaging is a good way of communicating with a representative?

- yes
- no

if “no” response

Would you have preferred to have the option to text with a representative?

- yes
- no

31. Please indicate whether the following statements about a representative are always, mostly, sometimes, or never true.

	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Never	Not Applicable
A representative gave me what I needed to effectively support my child.	<input type="radio"/>				
A representative helped solve the issues I had.	<input type="radio"/>				

A representative was friendly and polite when we communicated.

A representative was knowledgeable about the program and software.

32. Is there anything else you would like us to know about a Waterford Upstart representative? []

Section 5

The Waterford Upstart Program

33. What subject(s) did your child study in the program?
- Reading
 - Math/Science
 - Reading AND Math/Science

if “Reading” or “Reading AND Math/Science”

What did your child gain from participating in the Waterford Upstart program? Please order the following in terms of importance with 1 the most important, 2 the next most important, and so forth.

- learning to recognize letters
- learning to read
- becoming comfortable with routine
- developing a familiarity with technology

The Reading Program

	Yes	No
In general, did your child enjoy using the program?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you think the program was age appropriate?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel the weekly usage requirements were appropriate?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Did your child take part in Camp Consonant?

- yes
- no
- I don't know

if “yes”

Did participating in Camp Consonant help your child?

- yes
- somewhat

- no
- I don't know

if "Math/Science" or "Reading AND Math/Science"

What did your child gain from participating in the Waterford Upstart program? Please order the following in terms of importance with 1 the most important, 2 the next most important, and so forth.

- learning to recognize numbers
- learning basic math
- becoming comfortable with routine
- developing a familiarity with technology

The Math/Science Program

	Yes	No
In general, did your child enjoy using the program?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you think the program was age appropriate?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel the weekly usage requirements were appropriate?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

34. On a scale of 0 to 10, how likely are you to recommend Waterford Upstart to a friend or colleague?
no, definitely not = 0 - - - - - 10 = yes, definitely

35. On a scale of 0 to 10, how satisfied are you with your and your child's experience using the Waterford Upstart program?
vey dissatisfied = 0 - - - - - 10 = very satisfied

36. Do you have any comments or suggestions to improve Waterford Upstart, other than what you have already told us in this survey? If yes, please do so here: []

Appendix B: Responses to All Waterford Upstart Survey Items

2023 Waterford Upstart End-of-Program Survey Responses to All Items⁷

Section 1

First, we have some questions about you.

1. How many adults age 18 and older live in your household, including yourself?

Response	Count	Percent
1	8	15%
2	39	71%
3	5	9%
4	1	2%
5	1	2%
6	1	2%
7	0	0%
8	0	0%
More than 8	0	0%
TOTAL	55	100%

2. How many children age 17 and younger live in your household?

Response	Count	Percent
1	8	15%
2	25	47%
3	13	25%
4	3	6%
5	2	4%
6	2	4%
7	0	0%
8	0	0%
More than 8	0	0%
TOTAL	53	100%

⁷ Item responses, though presented in English, include those submitted in Spanish. However, open-ended responses appear in their original language of submission.

3. Are you male or female?

Response	Count	Percent
male	7	13%
female	48	87%
decline to state	0	%
other, please specify	0	%
TOTAL	55	100%

4. What language is spoken most in your home?

Response	Count	Percent
English	49	89%
Spanish	4	8%
Another language, please specify	2	4%
<i>specified language: Hmong</i>	1	2%
<i>specified language: Arabic</i>	1	2%
TOTAL	55	100%

5. What is your highest level of education? Please answer with your **own** highest level of education.

Response	Count	Percent
less than high school or GED	2	4%
high school diploma or GED	9	16%
technical or vocational school certificate	4	7%
some college or associate's degree	19	35%
bachelor's degree	8	15%
master's degree or higher, including professional degree such as JD or MD	12	22%
TOTAL	55	100%

6. What is your current marital status

Response	Count	Percent
married	41	75%
widowed	1	2%
divorced	3	5%
separated	0	0%
living with a partner but not married	4	7%
never married	6	11%
TOTAL	55	100%

7. What state do you live in?

Response	Count	Percent
Wisconsin	54	100%
TOTAL	54	100%

8. In general, how do you feel about your ability to support your child's learning?

Response	Count	Percent
very confident	41	75%
somewhat confident	13	24%
not very confident	1	2%
don't know	0	0%
TOTAL	55	100%

9. In general, how do you feel about your ability to support your child's learning in kindergarten?

Response	Count	Percent
very confident	37	67%
somewhat confident	16	29%
not very confident	2	4%
don't know	0	0%
TOTAL	55	100%

Section 2

Your Waterford Upstart Child

10. Has your child who is now enrolled in Waterford Upstart attended or participated in any other preschool program? (select all that apply)

Response	Count	Percent
yes, Head Start	18	33%
yes, a private preschool or kindergarten that charges tuition	5	9%
yes, a preschool program sponsored by a religious organization	2	4%
yes, an online preschool program	0	0%
yes, at a program not listed above; please specify the type of program	11	20%
yes, but don't know the type of preschool program	2	4%
<i>specified preschool: none</i>	2	4%
my child attended a daycare program with some reading or math lessons	6	11%
no	15	27%
TOTAL	55	100%

These next questions ask about things that different children do at different ages. These things may or may not be true for your child and that's okay. Please think about what your child can do **now** when answering the following questions.

11. Can this child correctly recognize the letters of the alphabet?

Response	Count	Percent
No, none of them	0	0%
Yes, some of them	10	19%
Yes, most of them	10	19%
Yes, all of them	32	62%
TOTAL	52	100%

12. Can this child write his or her first name, even if some of the letters are backward?

Response	Count	Percent
Yes	47	90%
No	5	10%
TOTAL	52	100%

13. Can this child recognize the beginning sound of a word? For example, can this child tell you that the word “ball” starts with the “buh” sound?

Response	Count	Percent
Yes	46	88%
No	6	12%
TOTAL	52	100%

14. How often can this child explain things he or she has seen or done so that you get a very good idea of what happened?

Response	Count	Percent
Never	1	2%
Sometimes	5	10%
About half the time	0	0%
Usually	19	37%
Always	27	52%
TOTAL	52	100%

15. How high can this child count?

Response	Count	Percent
This child cannot count	0	0%
Up to 5	1	2%
Up to 10	7	13%
Up to 20	18	35%
Up to 50	10	19%
Up to 100 or more	16	31%
TOTAL	52	100%

16. Can this child identify basic shapes such as a triangle, rectangle, circle, or square?

Response	Count	Percent
No, none of them	0	0%
Yes, some of them	11	21%
Yes, most of them	7	13%
Yes, all of them	34	65%
TOTAL	52	100%

The next questions ask about this child’s activities with family members in the past week or month.

17. About how many books does this child have of his or her own, including those shared with brothers or sisters?

Response	Count	Percent
1	1	2%
3	1	2%
8	1	2%
10	4	8%
11	2	4%
15	2	4%
20	3	6%
25	2	4%
30	5	10%

Response	Count	Percent
35	1	2%
50	7	14%
55	1	2%
60	1	2%
100	17	%
200	1	2%
300	1	2%
800	1	2%
TOTAL	51	100%

18. How many times have you or someone in your family read to this child in the past week? Enter "0" if none.

Response	Count	Percent
0	3	6%
1	2	4%
2	6	12%
3	12	23%
4	6	12%
5	8	15%

Response	Count	Percent
6	3	6%
7	9	17%
8	1	2%
9	1	2%
11	1	2%
TOTAL	52	100%

19. About how many minutes on each of those times did you or someone in your family read to this child?

Response	Count	Percent
6	1	2%
10	13	27%
15	13	27%
20	13	27%

Response	Count	Percent
30	5	10%
40	1	2%
60	1	2%
110	1	2%
TOTAL	48	100%

20. In the past week, how many times has anyone in your family done the following things with this child?

Told this child a story (Do not include reading to him or her)

Response	Count	Percent
Not at all	10	20%
1 or 2 times	27	52%
3 or more times	15	29%
TOTAL	52	100%

Taught this child letters, words, or numbers

Response	Count	Percent
Not at all	2	4%
1 or 2 times	30	58%
3 or more times	20	38%
TOTAL	52	100%

Sang songs with this child

Response	Count	Percent
Not at all	2	4%
1 or 2 times	20	38%
3 or more times	30	58%
TOTAL	52	100%

Worked on arts and crafts with this child

Response	Count	Percent
Not at all	10	20%
1 or 2 times	19	37%
3 or more times	23	44%
TOTAL	52	100%

21. In the past week, how many days has your family eaten the evening meal together? Write "0" if none.

Response	Count	Percent
2	4	8%
3	8	15%
4	8	15%
5	7	13%
6	6	12%
7	19	37%
TOTAL	52	100%

Section 3

The Waterford Upstart Program

22. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the Waterford Upstart program.

I like that the program expects our family to create a daily routine for using it.

Response	Count	Percent
strongly agree	21	42%
agree	24	48%
neither agree nor disagree	5	10%
disagree	0	0%
strongly disagree	0	0%
TOTAL	50	100%

The program helped prepare my child for kindergarten.

Response	Count	Percent
strongly agree	33	66%
agree	12	24%
neither agree nor disagree	4	8%
disagree	1	2%
strongly disagree	0	0%
TOTAL	50	100%

The program helped prepare ME to help my child in school next year.

Response	Count	Percent
strongly agree	23	46%
agree	19	38%
neither agree nor disagree	7	14%
disagree	1	2%
strongly disagree	0	0%
TOTAL	50	100%

The program helped me realize the importance of participating in my child's learning.

Response	Count	Percent
strongly agree	24	48%
agree	21	42%
neither agree nor disagree	5	10%
disagree	0	0%
strongly disagree	0	0%
TOTAL	50	100%

The program made me feel equipped to engage with my child’s teacher next year.

Response	Count	Percent
strongly agree	17	34%
agree	22	43%
neither agree nor disagree	9	18%
disagree	1	2%
strongly disagree	1	2%
TOTAL	50	100%

I feel confident that I can help my child transition from PreK to kindergarten.

Response	Count	Percent
strongly agree	29	58%
agree	16	32%
neither agree nor disagree	5	10%
disagree	0	0%
strongly disagree	0	0%
TOTAL	50	100%

When using the program, my child experienced higher quality experiences, compared to other apps or TV programs.

Response	Count	Percent
strongly agree	30	60%
agree	11	22%
neither agree nor disagree	8	16%
disagree	1	3%
strongly disagree	0	0%
TOTAL	50	100%

The program was engaging to my child.

Response	Count	Percent
strongly agree	19	38%
agree	24	48%
neither agree nor disagree	3	6%
disagree	1	2%
strongly disagree	3	6%
TOTAL	50	100%

My child is now better able to work independently.

Response	Count	Percent
strongly agree	13	26%
agree	27	54%
neither agree nor disagree	7	14%
disagree	1	2%
strongly disagree	2	4%
TOTAL	50	100%

My child is now better able to follow our family rules and routines.

Response	Count	Percent
strongly agree	10	20%
agree	21	42%
neither agree nor disagree	15	30%
disagree	2	4%
strongly disagree	2	4%
TOTAL	50	100%

23. My expectations that the program would help prepare my child for kindergarten were...

Response	Count	Percent
exceeded	23	46%
met	21	42%
not met	3	6%
not applicable – I had no expectations	3	6%
TOTAL	50	100%

if “exceeded”

In what ways did Waterford Upstart help prepare your child for kindergarten that you did not expect?

- Taught some concepts such as adding numbers to my child which he did quite exceptional with. I thought the learning plans were set up well to keep my child engaged.
- She started learning to read, which was very exciting! She just turned 5 today, so I feel she has a really good start for kindergarten. I had been worried that because she will be one of the youngest kids in her grade she might feel overwhelmed or out of her depth. I no longer feel that way. She is ready!
- Huge increase in vocabulary, letter sounds, and sight words.
- The staff was so friendly and the program kept her engaged.
- Teach focus and concentration
- I didn't think she would start reading many words already
- keeping her focused and engaged for the lessons
- Teach him independence and technology skills
- Building patience
- She learned a lot more about reading than I thought. I was anticipating with it ending after letter sounds

- I didn't expect her to learn how to problem solve and do work problem equations with such ease. Loved everything about these programs.
- Started the basic fundamentals to reading
- Fun games that helped with learning
- It helped her understand the alphabet
- Computer skills
- Great progression with learning with my child learning so much more that I expected. Its given him such a great start to the school year
- It helped her learn her letters and numbers
- Help my child learn count all the number and shape

if "not met"

How did the program not help you prepare to help your child in school next year?

- Gain some independence
- He only knows maybe 5 letters, including the 4 in his name. I was hoping he would have learned most letters by the end.
- Better games just overall the program is boring its not that interesting and images look old my child got bored before the 15 minutes was up frequently

24. *if previous is "met"* My expectations that the program would help prepare ME to help my child in school next year...

Response	Count	Percent
exceeded	12	24%
met	27	54%
not met	3	6%
not applicable – I had no expectations	8	8%
TOTAL	50	100%

if “exceeded” or “met”

How did the program help you prepare to help your child in school next year? (Please select all the apply)

Response	Count	Percent
gave me new ideas about activities to do with my child that will help my child learn	23	47%
helped me better understand my child’s development	32	65%
helped me better understand and guide my child’s social-emotional development	20	41%
helped me understand the expectations kindergarten will have for my child’s learning	24	49%
made me more confident in my ability to advocate for my child, and their learning, in school next year	16	39%
other, please specify	0	0%
TOTAL	49	100%

if “not met”

In what ways did Waterford Upstart help prepare your child for kindergarten that you did not expect?

- She didn't care for your program it was very dull.
- Nothing about the program stuck to keep him engage or wanting to do more
- We couldn't get into the program no matter how hard I tried.

25. Is there anything else you would like us to know about your or your child’s experience with the Waterford Upstart program?

- A great program. Thank you.
- Could provide more knowledge about finding offline information
- Es un excelente programa mi hijo conversa con familia y amigos en Inglés como si el ya hubiera asistido a la escuela de inglés el es independiente, y se siente más seguro al hablar el inglés realmente a mi me encanto el programa muchas gracias.
- Fantastic program
- Good repetition of skills
- Had to reregister 3-4 times. Lost my child's attention very quickly. Child was not interested. Not a great interface.
- He enjoyed the experience
- I enjoyed helping my child experience a new learning system
- i just wish they would of accepted her back this year last year was ruff with covid hitting our family and a lot of personal things she didn’t get to do school that much like she would this year

- It benefited my child overall. Thank you so much.
- It made learning fun for my son
- It was great! I have recommended it to more 4K teachers I know!
- Loved it and the representative that worked with us was Amazing and encouraging.
- Really wish it could be done on a tablet. We have one desktop computer and it is in the basement right next to the bedroom my husband slept in since we worked night shift. As a result we could not do the program during the day while my husband was sleeping, we had to wait until the evening, which gets very busy for us and a lot of times we ran out of time to do it. If it was able to be done on a tablet we could have done it anywhere and guarantee he would have done it every day.
- Thank you!
- The application process lacked timeliness in responses and updates. The software itself was not easily navigated for parents.
- The games was very easy to use very understanding. The colors the numbers the patterns was all exciting to my kids because they thought they was actually playing a video game so it made it much more exciting to learn and also have fun
- The initial entrance assessment exam was extremely hard as was the final assessment. Expecting them to read multiple paragraphs after only being taught to read 3-5 word sentences was odd and my child didn't take much at all from the final assessment other than pure confusion.
- The program was very helpful in getting my child to learn and calm down when things were frustrating she has autism and that's a big struggle

Section 4

The Waterford Upstart Representative

The next set of questions asks about interactions you may have had with a Waterford Upstart staff member about your child's use of the program and involvement with the program. In the questions below, we are going to refer to this person as a "representative".

26. Did you ever have contact with a Waterford Upstart representative about your child's use of the program.

Response	Count	Percent
yes	42	86%
no	5	10%
don't remember	2	4%
TOTAL	49	100%

following questions appear if answer to previous is "yes"

27. Did the contact encourage you and your child to use the program more often?

Response	Count	Percent
yes	33	79%
no	6	14%
don't remember	3	7%
TOTAL	42	100%

28. The amount of contact with a representative about my child's use of the program was...

Response	Count	Percent
too much	4	10%
about right	36	86%
too little	2	5%
don't remember	0	0%
TOTAL	42	100%

29. Did you ever initiate contact with a representative?

Response	Count	Percent
yes	21	50%
no	17	40%
don't remember	4	10%
TOTAL	42	100%

30. Did you or a representative ever use text messaging to communicate? (Please select all that apply)

Response	Count	Percent
yes, a representative sent me one or more text messages	24	57%
yes, I sent a representative one or more text messages	5	12%
no, I didn't know that I could use text messaging	11	26%
no, I didn't want to use text messaging	4	10%
don't remember	3	7%
TOTAL	42	100%

if "yes" response

Based on your experience, would you way text messaging is a good way of communicating with a representative?

Response	Count	Percent
yes	21	50%
no	1	40%
TOTAL	22	100%

if "no" response

Would you have preferred to have the option to text with a representative?

Response	Count	Percent
yes	21	50%
no	17	40%
TOTAL	42	100%

31. Please indicate whether the following statements about a representative are always, mostly, sometimes, or never true.

A representative gave me what I needed to effectively support my child.

Response	Count	Percent
always	28	67%
mostly	9	21%
sometimes	4	10%
never	1	2%
not applicable	0	0%
TOTAL	42	100%

A representative helped solve the issues I had.

Response	Count	Percent
always	27	64%
mostly	6	14%
sometimes	3	7%
never	0	0%
not applicable	6	14%
TOTAL	42	100%

A representative was friendly and polite when we communicated.

Response	Count	Percent
always	37	88%
mostly	5	12%
sometimes	0	0%
never	0	0%
not applicable	0	0%
TOTAL	42	100%

A representative was knowledgeable about the program and software.

Response	Count	Percent
always	37	88%
mostly	3	7%
sometimes	1	2%
never	0	0%
not applicable	1	2%
TOTAL	42	100%

32. Is there anything else you would like us to know about a Waterford Upstart representative?

- Very friendly, kind, and patient.
- she was very nice
- My daughter's rep (Shiniqual) was amazing
- she was great
- She was awesome.
- Honestly she was amazing. Best customer service I've ever received. She was encouraging, personable, and honestly a pure joy on the phone. I would have been her friend if it wasn't inappropriate. She's a 10/10
- Very good representative interaction
- All the ones I talked to were great and very supportive.
- She was great loved getting to have her
- Very polite easy going and understanding very in touch.
- Very encouraging
- They were awesome
- Thank you!
- She was Very responsive and encouraging.

Section 5

The Waterford Upstart Program

33. What subject(s) did your child study in the program?

Response	Count	Percent
Reading	21	44%
Math/Science	0	0%
Reading AND Math/Science	27	56%
TOTAL	48	100%

if "Reading" or "Reading AND Math/Science"

What did your child gain from participating in the Waterford Upstart program? Please order the following in terms of importance with 1 the most important, 2 the next most important, and so forth.

learning to recognize letters

Response	Count	Percent
1	28	61%
2	7	15%
3	5	11%
4	2	4%
5	1	2%
6	3	7%
TOTAL	46	100%

learning to read

Response	Count	Percent
1	7	16%
2	10	23%
3	9	21%
4	7	16%
5	7	16%
6	3	7%
TOTAL	43	100%

learning to recognize numbers

Response	Count	Percent
1	1	4%
2	10	40%
3	5	20%
4	4	16%
5	4	16%
6	1	4%
TOTAL	25	100%

learning basic math

Response	Count	Percent
1	1	4%
2	3	12%
3	7	28%
4	10	40%
5	0	0%
6	4	16%
TOTAL	25	100%

being comfortable with routine

Response	Count	Percent
1	5	11%
2	10	23%
3	7	16%
4	9	20%
5	8	18%
6	5	11%
TOTAL	44	100%

developing a familiarity with technology

Response	Count	Percent
1	3	7%
2	5	11%
3	13	30%
4	10	23%
5	3	7%
6	9	20%
TOTAL	44	100%

The Reading Program

In general, did your child enjoy using the program?

Response	Count	Percent
Yes	45	94%
No	3	6%
TOTAL	48	100%

Do you think the program was age appropriate?

Response	Count	Percent
Yes	48	100%
No	0	0%
TOTAL	48	100%

Do you feel the weekly usage requirement was age appropriate?

Response	Count	Percent
Yes	44	94%
No	3	6%
TOTAL	47	100%

Did your child take part in Camp Consonant?

Response	Count	Percent
Yes	3	6%
No	34	69%
I don't know	9	18%
TOTAL	46	100%

if "yes"

Did participating in Camp Consonant help your child?

Response	Count	Percent
Yes	2	66%
Somewhat	0	0%
No	1	33%
I don't know	0	0%
TOTAL	3	100%

if "Math/Science" or "Reading AND Math/Science"

What did your child gain from participating in the Waterford Upstart program? Please order the following in terms of importance with 1 the most important, 2 the next most important, and so forth.

Responses reported above

The Math/Science Program

In general, did your child enjoy using the program?

Response	Count	Percent
Yes	26	96%
No	1	4%
TOTAL	27	100%

Do you think the program was age appropriate?

Response	Count	Percent
Yes	26	96%
No	1	4%
TOTAL	27	100%

Do you feel the weekly usage requirement was age appropriate?

Response	Count	Percent
Yes	24	92%
No	2	8%
TOTAL	26	100%

34. On a scale of 0 to 10, how likely are you to recommend Waterford Upstart to a friend or colleague?

no, definitely not = 0 - - - - - 10 = yes, definitely

Response	Count	Percent
0	1	2%
1	0	0%
2	1	2%
3	0	0%
4	0	0%
5	5	10%

Response	Count	Percent
6	1	2%
7	2	4%
8	3	6%
9	7	14%
10	32	65%
TOTAL	49	100%

35. On a scale of 0 to 10, how satisfied are you with your and your child's experience using the Waterford Upstart program?

vey dissatisfied = 0 - - - - - 10 = very satisfied

Response	Count	Percent
0	1	2%
1	0	0%
2	1	2%
3	0	0%
4	1	2%
5	1	2%

Response	Count	Percent
6	2	4%
7	1	2%
8	3	6%
9	10	20%
10	29	59%
TOTAL	49	100%

36. Do you have any comments or suggestions to improve Waterford Upstart, other than what you have already told us in this survey? If yes, please do so here:

- I wish that you could abscess either learning plan in the order you wanted. My daughter never had patience to sit through the reading section and also do the math, so she hardly ever got to work with numbers. If we had the option to start with either one, I would have alternated the days for each area of study.
- More reading and sound
- No, just change the assessments to reflect what the kids were actually learning during the program. Some words were very advanced and the expectation to read paragraphs was silly after they barely can read beyond 5 word sentences. Otherwise it was amazing to see how much knowledge my child gained and I love how she uses her skills daily sounding out words trying to read. I feel she'll go into kindergarten very advanced educationally.
- We started late due to being wait listed due to income. It seemed to take a while to actually get started once we were approved.
- My son commented on the age of the program a lot. He was engaged but if it looked newer I think he would have enjoyed it more.
- Interface very dated.
- As an educator and parent, I respected the program greatly. My daughter solidified a lot of pre academic skills this past year.
- They should have a kindergarten program because a lot of the material is kindergarten too so it would be helpful to continue learning with the same format
- Some of the overall seeing where my child is at tests were frustrating for him, especially if he had not covered any of the material that the test was asking him.
- I feel like generally there should be more homework lessons sent out via mail for the children to study and feel more challenged.
- It got a bit tough during reading but overall pretty good
- Favor de ingresar la grafica de su avanze.