

New Mexico's Literacy Assessment System for Early Years

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Assessment, Research, Evaluation, and Accountability

Presentation for the Legislative Education Study Committee

Purposes of Assessments

Instruction

- Understand what students know
- Identify unfinished learning
- Differentiate support

Intervention

- Identify students at risk
- Trigger targeted interventions
- Monitor progress over time

Accountability

- Measure statewide achievement
- Meet state and federal requirements
- Inform policy decisions

Improvement

- Evaluate programs
- Allocate resources
- Support school improvement

Complementary Assessments

Amira interim assessments and NM-MSSA are complementary assessments.

Amira identifies early literacy needs for **intervention**, monitors growth, and guides **instruction** throughout the school year; grades Kindergarten-2.

NM-MSSA measures mastery of New Mexico's grade-level standards for summative statewide reporting and **accountability**; grades 3-8

Year-over-year Amira and NM-MSSA data informs area of systems **improvement**.

PED Early Literacy Administration Policy

Interim Assessments, Screening, and Personalized Tutoring

☐ Required for all K–2 students

- BOY / MOY / EOY Benchmark Assessments
- 1st grade dyslexia screener at BOY
- Amira Tutor: 30 minutes per week

Purpose: Benchmark assessments measure student progress at key points during the year, while weekly Amira Tutor provides personalized practice to strengthen foundational reading skills.

Progress Monitoring

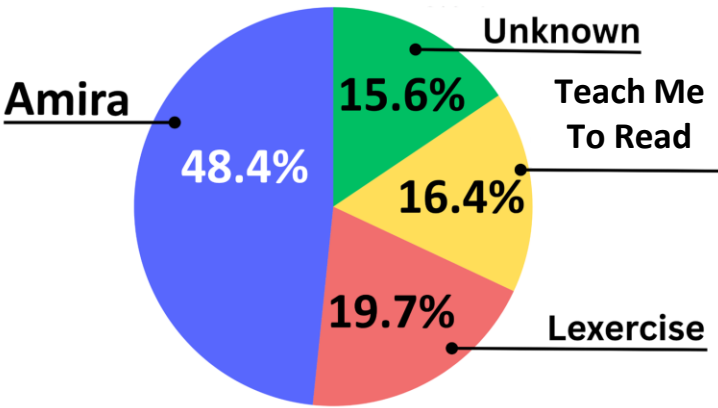
☐ Required Monthly for Struggling Readers

Students at Performance Levels 1, 2, and 3 on the Amira ISIP must be monitored monthly.

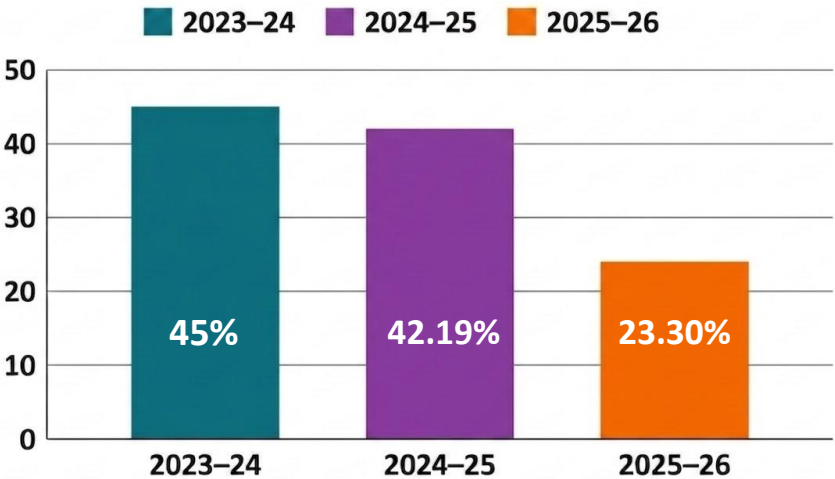
Purpose: Allows educators to pinpoint support areas and intervene early between the checkpoints.

1st Grade Dyslexia Screening

Distribution of Screeners Utilized



Three Year Dyslexia Screener Comparison Data



Normalized Screening Rates

Among the first-grade students screened with **Amira**, **16.7%** were flagged as exhibiting characteristics associated with dyslexia. This rate is closer to national prevalence estimates than previous statewide screening results.

Rough **national estimates indicate 10–20%** of students are flagged for being at risk of dyslexia annually.

Accommodations

- ❑ A paper form of Amira is available upon request as an accommodation.
 - The paper form still requires students to verbalize on a specific subtest.
- ❑ *Amira for Non-Verbal* students is available upon request as an accommodation
 - A non-verbal version using responsive (keyboard based) inputs; vocal responses are not necessary.
- ❑ The Assessment Bureau and the Amira team have collaborated with OSE to refine the accommodations documentation for the 2026–27 school year.

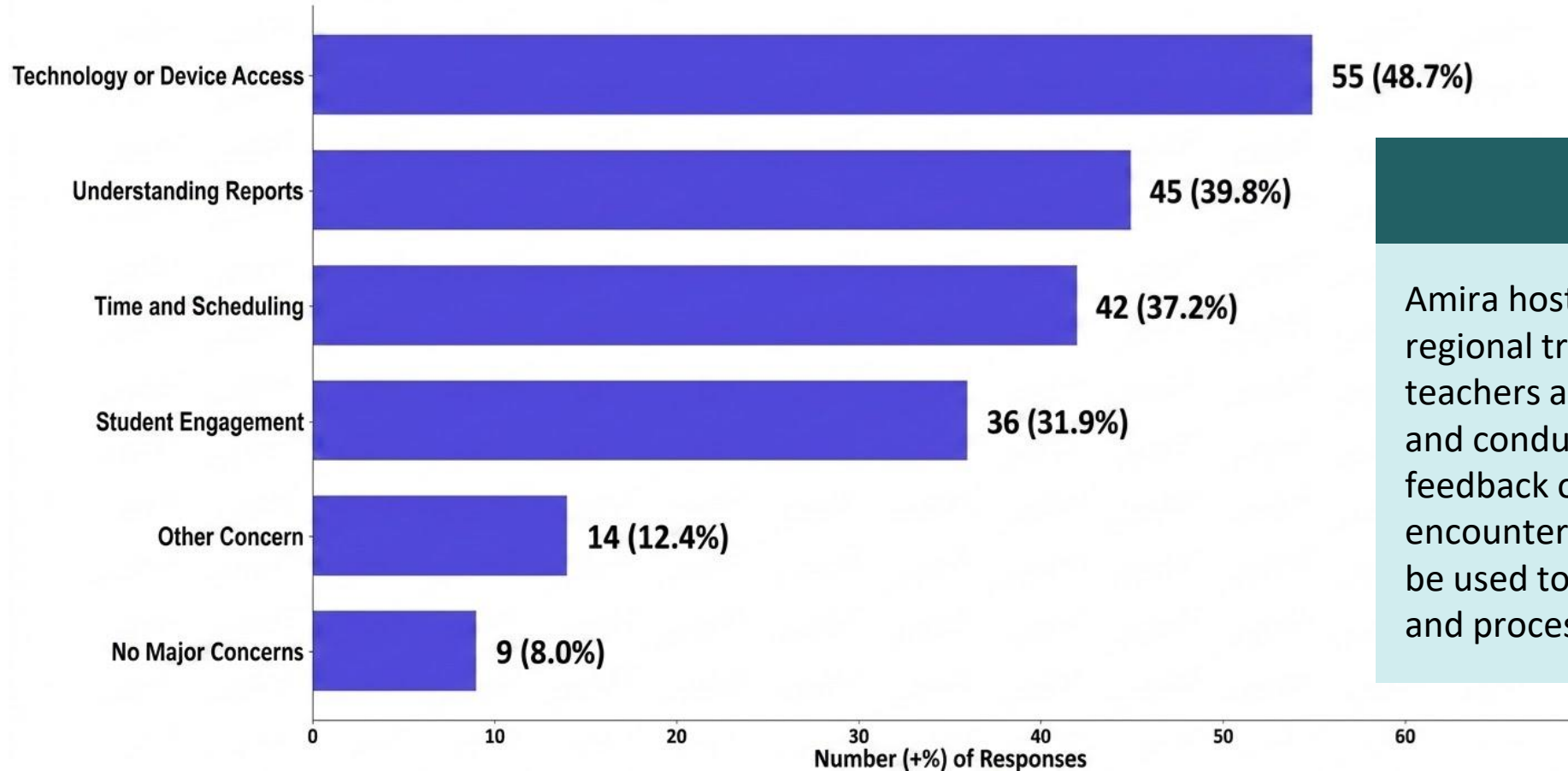
Amira Administration

- ❑ **Student Growth and Confidence:** Educators consistently observe increased reading fluency, confidence, and engagement among students, noting that the program provides a supportive, low-pressure environment for daily practice.
- ❑ **Instructional Impact:** Teachers utilize Amira to identify learning gaps, facilitate individualized instruction, and support students in transferring skills learned during tutoring to other classroom activities.
- ❑ **Data Utilization:** Staff report gaining a better understanding of assessment reports and data interpretation, which helps them track student progress, inform intervention strategies, and facilitate meaningful parent conferences.
- ❑ **Training and Implementation:** Positive feedback was shared regarding recent professional development, with teachers feeling more confident in navigating program resources and addressing technical challenges to improve the student experience.

Amira Feedback Collection

“What challenges have you encountered when using Amira in your classroom?”

113 responses, multiple selections possible



Amira Survey

Amira hosted a middle-of-year (MOY) regional training for New Mexico teachers and school administrators and conducted a survey to gather feedback on the challenges they encountered. The survey results will be used to enhance Amira's system and processes.

2025–26 Results

Represent a New Baseline

Grade	Istation 2023–24 EOY	Istation 2024–25 EOY	Amira 2025–26 Preliminary EOY
Kindergarten	37%	50%	TBD
1st Grade	31%	34%	TBD
2nd Grade	36%	38%	TBD
Overall K-2	35%	40%	TBD

- The 2025–26 school year establishes a new statewide baseline because New Mexico has transitioned from the ISIP reading assessment to the Amira Reading Measure (ARM), which captures Oral Reading Fluency as part of early literacy skills, providing a more comprehensive picture of students’ literacy abilities.

Amira uses updated / post-pandemic national norms, while ISIP used pre-pandemic norms. The 2025–26 school year becomes the **first year of valid ARM-only data**, establishing a clean baseline for future growth, reporting, and accountability.

Key Takeaways

- ❑ **Assessments given through the year serves instruction.** The purpose is to improve literacy outcomes, not simply to test students.
- ❑ **Early identification matters.** Identifying reading difficulties in kindergarten through second grade gives schools the opportunity to intervene before students fall significantly behind.
- ❑ **Different assessments serve different purposes.** Amira supports instruction and intervention, while NM-MSSA provides statewide accountability beginning in grade 3.
- ❑ **The transition to Amira establishes a new statewide baseline.** Comparisons to previous years should be made cautiously because the assessment system changed.
- ❑ **PED is focused on continuous improvement.** The department is monitoring implementation, collecting educator feedback, refining guidance, and working with districts to strengthen early literacy instruction.

Appendix

[White Paper - Amira Technology for Students with Diverse Speech](#)

[Learning Labs - Robustness of Amira's Reading Error Detection](#)

[Amira Data Privacy](#)

Task details for early literacy are customized for each grade level.
Explained [here](#).

Perspectives from Teachers and Administrators



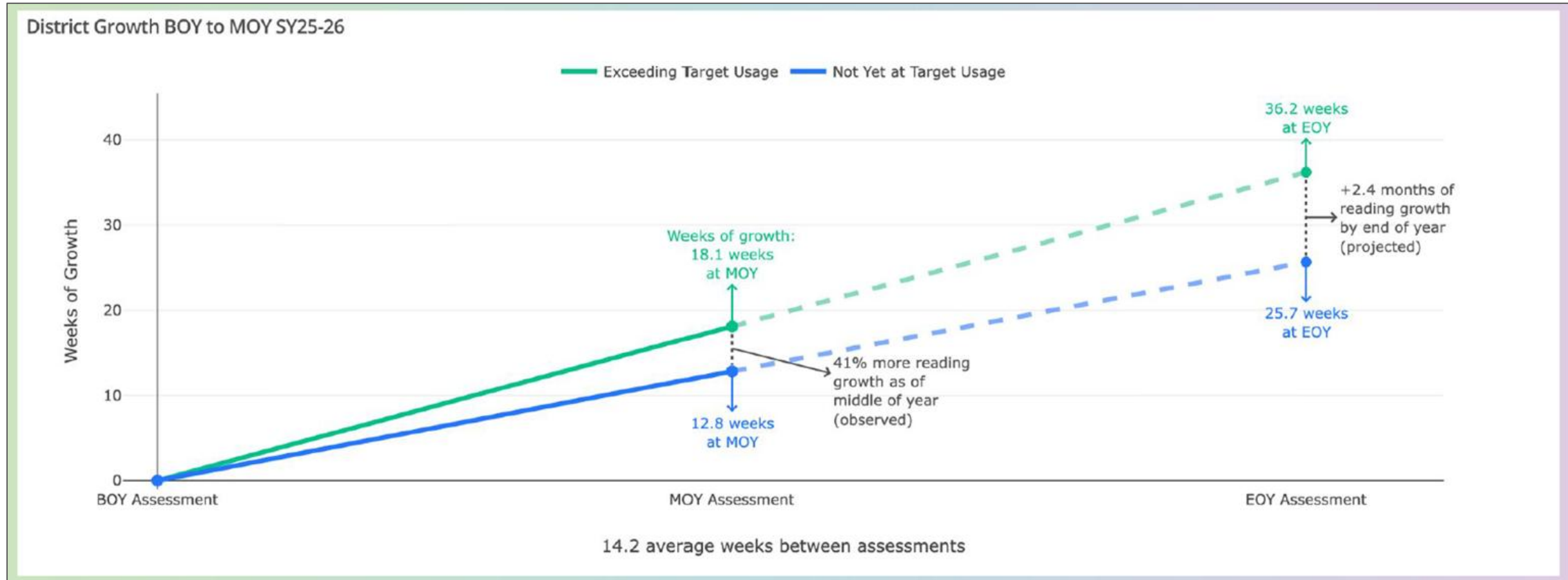
Listen to New Mexico Classroom Teachers [here](#).

Efficacy $\cong$ Results

The positive perceptions from school and district staff regarding the use of Amira are congruent with:

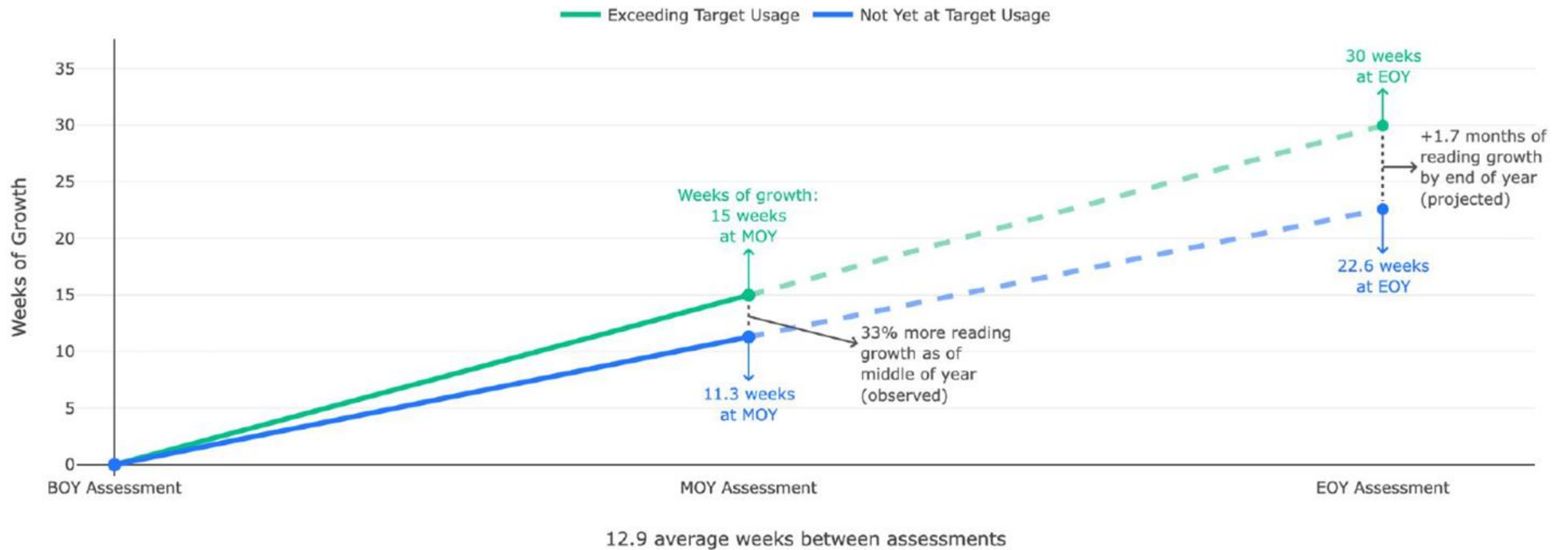
- Meeting the state requirements for 30-minute weekly tutoring for all students to the extent possible
- Higher gains from BOY to MOY

30 Minutes Per Week Tutoring Impact: Northeast District



30 Minutes Per Week Tutoring Impact: Bernalillo Public Schools

District Growth BOY to MOY SY25-26



30 Minutes Per Week Tutoring Impact: Silver Consolidated Schools



For More Information

For Questions

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