

APPENDIX NNN-11-27
May 21, 2012

An Evaluation of a Mondo Intervention in Kindergarten and First Grade

Prepared for Madison Metropolitan School District

In this report, Hanover provides an evaluation of a Mondo intervention. In order to describe the impact of this intervention on kindergarten and first grade text reading levels, we compared student performance at schools that participated in the Mondo intervention with student performance at non-participating schools. We further note additional factors which may help explain the limited effects we observed.

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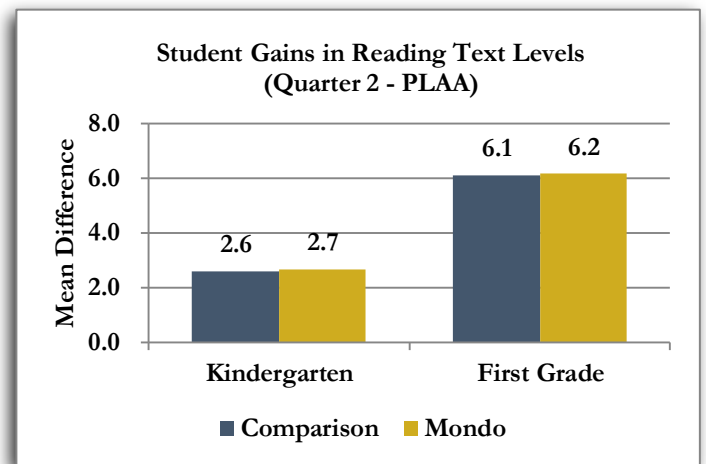
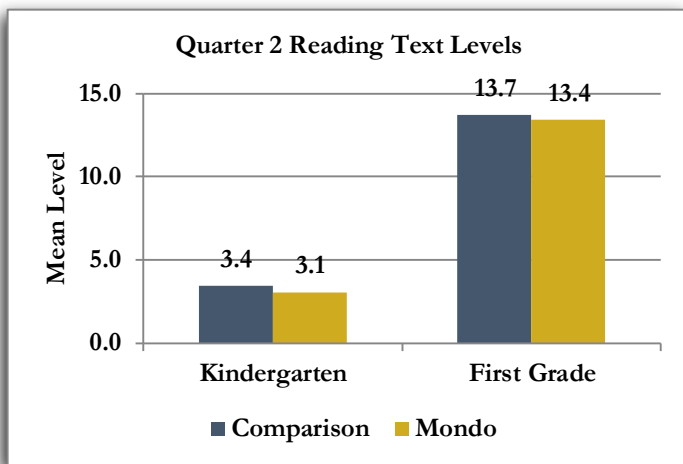
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Executive Summary

Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) has integrated a learning intervention created by Mondo Educational Publishing (Mondo) in order to support student learning in kindergarten and first grade classrooms at several schools. In this report, we explore the impact of this intervention on end-of-year text reading levels through 1) comparing student performance at the Mondo schools with performance at demographically similar comparison schools that do not offer the program, and 2) constructing regression models. In our analysis, we explored the following questions:

Question #1: Do students at schools with the Mondo intervention have higher Quarter 2 text reading levels or stronger gains in text reading levels in kindergarten and first grade than similar students at non-Mondo comparison schools?

Answer: We did not see any significant difference between the Quarter 2 levels or gains in text reading levels of students who participated in the Mondo intervention and non-participants.



Question #2: Does student participation in the Mondo intervention predict either Quarter 2 text reading levels or gains in text reading levels?

Answer: We did not find convincing evidence to suggest that participation in Mondo predicted subsequent student performance as described by either of these measures.

These results suggest that participation in the Mondo intervention does not have a significant impact on subsequent student text reading levels. There are, however, a number of limiting factors which may account for this lack of impact.

Introduction

In this introductory section, we provide background information that includes an overview of the dataset and limitations we uncovered. We conclude this section with a description of the methodology used in the analysis.

The Mondo Intervention at MMSD

A public school district located in Madison, Wisconsin, MMSD includes 32 elementary schools (grades K-5), 11 middle schools (6-8), four comprehensive high schools and one alternative high school. Serving over 24,000 students in 48 schools, MMSD also has early childhood programs and alternative programs at the secondary level (6-12).¹

Given that MMSD's mission is to “to assure that every student has the knowledge and skills needed for academic achievement and a successful life,” the district has incorporated one or more of the student learning interventions created by Mondo in select elementary schools.²

The Database

In order to quantitatively evaluate the effect of the Mondo intervention on end-of-year text reading levels, a database that included demographic information, Primary Language Arts Assessments (PLAA) data and Quarter 2 reading data was provided to Hanover by MMSD.³ A total of 778 students were present in the database, with approximately equal gender distribution (49.9 percent female, 50.1 percent male). There were 480 kindergarteners and 370 first graders present. White and Black / African American students were most commonly represented (N=296 and N=222, respectively). Approximately 58 percent of students were low income, 20 percent were English language learners (ELLs), and 10 percent qualified for special education services and/or had a documented disability.⁴

¹ Madison Metropolitan School District. *Introduction to the District*. <https://www.madison.k12.wi.us/mmsdfact>

² Madison Metropolitan School District. *Mission, Belief Statements, Parameters & Strategic Objectives*. <https://www.madison.k12.wi.us/mission.htm>

³ The database was titled: “Tim Upload Hanover.sav.”

⁴ For a complete description of the demographic composition of the database, please see Appendix A.

There were six schools present in the database. The Mondo intervention was present at three elementary schools: Mendota, Gompers and Thoreau. As is presented in the following figure, Falk, Huegel, and Crestwood served as comparison schools.

Figure 1: Elementary School Pairings

Pair Number	Mondo	Comparison School
Pair 1	Mendota	Falk
Pair 2	Gompers	Huegel
Pair 3	Thoreau	Crestwood

We considered two assessment measures of student reading text levels: 1) PLAA text reading levels from the fall of 2011 and 2) Quarter 2 text reading level scores from the spring of 2012.⁵ Descriptive statistics for each measure are presented by grade in the figure below:

**Figure 2: Descriptive Statistics
for PLAA and Quarter 2 Reading Level Assessments by Grade**

Grade	Assessment	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Kindergarten	PLAA	375	0	23	0.67	2.228
	Quarter 2	287	1	27	3.31	3.909
First Grade	PLAA	324	0	30	7.42	6.907
	Quarter 2	309	1	30	13.58	7.179

We did note the low standard deviation of the kindergarten PLAA scores. Because approximately 95 percent of these students scored either a 0 or a 1, this variable presented a limitation in predicting kindergarten Quarter 2 text reading levels.

There were 277 kindergarten students for whom both PLAA and Quarter 2 levels were available. This compares to 285 first graders with non-missing data points for each.

⁵ Upon the recommendation of MMSD, we considered only *KFallPLAATextReadingLevelScore* (Kindergarten PLAA text reading levels), *Gr1FallPLAATextReadingLevelScore* (1st grade, PLAA text reading levels), and *Q2201112TextReadingLevelScore* (Quarter 2 reading levels).

Assumptions

We made the following assumptions about the intervention and data described in this report:

1. PLAA and Quarter 2 text reading levels referred to the same measure of student learning and were gathered through the same instrument. Accordingly we calculated gains in student text reading levels by taking the simple difference between these two scores. For example, if a student scored a 1 on the PLAA and a 6 on Quarter 2, then the gain in student learning was reported as a 5.
2. The Mondo intervention was administered to all kindergarten and first grade students at Mondo-designated schools and that this was regardless of English proficiency, status as a special education student or disability.
3. PLAA and Quarter 2 scores were scaled. By this we mean that a score of 5 for a kindergartener and a score of 5 for a first grader referred to the same reading level.

Methodology

The first step in our analysis was to confirm that there were no statistically significant differences in the demographic composition of each school with the Mondo intervention and its corresponding comparison school. Using a series of independent samples t-tests, we did not find any statistically significant differences according to gender, ethnicity, grade, income, ELL, special education or disability.⁶ A table which contains the demographic cross-tabulations of each pairing is provided in Appendix B.

In addition to the Mondo intervention, the demographic factors described above were also considered to be possible predictors of Quarter 2 text reading levels. Accordingly, our next analytical step was to conduct another series of independent samples t-tests in order to test for statistically significant differences in PLAA or Quarter 2 reading levels according to membership in various demographic subgroups. By statistically significant, we mean that the result was unlikely to have occurred by chance.⁷ This work is described in the subsequent section of this report.

After these comparisons were described, we then moved on to describing the differences in PLAA and Quarter 2 levels according to participation in the Mondo intervention. In order to calculate potential differences in these assessment scores, we once again employed independent samples t-tests.

⁶ A complete list of the primary disabilities found in the dataset is provided in Appendix A.

⁷ Throughout this report, we employ a standard significance level of 95 percent.

Lastly, we explored the predictive power of participation in the Mondo intervention on Quarter 2 text reading levels. In order to do this, we built statistical models to examine the impact of the Mondo intervention. We also incorporated several demographic control groups into these generalized linear models.

Limitations

We have identified a number of factors which limited the depth and scope of this analysis. First, we were limited in our knowledge of which Mondo intervention was implemented or confirmation of exactly which kindergarten and first grade students received the intervention. Confirmation regarding the start date of the Mondo intervention and the degree of implementation across classes, grades and schools would also have added value to this work. A more complete description of the Quarter 2 assessment would have also allowed us to make more informed decisions regarding the potential interaction of Quarter 2 reading levels and demographic/interventional factors and learning outcomes.

Analysis of Literary Outcomes

Our first step in describing measures of literary outcomes was to examine the data for potential differences in assessment scores between the various demographic subgroups.

Text Reading Levels and Demographic Subgroups

In Figure 3, we present PLAA and Quarter 2 text reading levels by grade, gender, race/ethnicity and income. We noted that the following two sets of differences were statistically significant:

1. The mean score of white students was significantly higher than the mean score for Black / African American students in both grades, for both tests.
2. The mean score of students who were not identified as low income was significantly higher than the mean score for low income students in both grades, for both tests.

This indicates that the average white student scored better on both the PLAA and Quarter 2 levels than did the average black / African American student. Similarly, the average low income student had a lower score on both tests than did the average student who was not low income.

**Figure 3: Mean Text Reading Levels
by Assessment, Grade and Demographic Subgroups (1 of 2)**

Test	Grade	Gender		Race/Ethnicity					Low Income	
		Female	Male	Asian	Black / African American	Hispanic / Latino	Multiracial	White	Not Low Income	Low Income
PLAA	K	0.57	0.75	0.47	0.17	0.60	0.37	1.19	1.23	0.32
	1st	7.75	7.05	7.31	4.29	4.88	7.97	10.69	11.08	4.52
Quarter 2	K	3.24	3.38	3.50	1.67	2.38	3.58	4.61	4.78	2.03
	1st	13.89	13.25	14.43	10.02	10.94	13.28	17.56	17.53	10.36

* Difference found to be statistically significant at the $p < 0.05$ level using independent samples t-tests.

Figure 4 below presents a second set of comparisons of PLAA and Quarter 2 levels by English proficiencies, receipt of special education services, and primary disability.⁸ Using independent samples t-tests, we found no significant differences among kindergarteners. However, the following three sets of differences among first graders were found to be significant:

1. The mean score of native English speakers was higher than the mean score of ELL students.
2. The mean score of non-special education students was higher than the mean score of special education students.
3. The mean score of students not identified as disabled was higher than the mean score of those who were identified as disabled.

**Figure 4: Mean Text Reading Levels
by Assessment, Grade and Demographic Subgroups (1 of 2)**

Test	Grade	English Proficiency ⁹		Special Ed		Primary Disability	
		Eligible for ELL Services	Native English Speaker	Not Special Ed	Special Ed	Disabled ¹⁰	Not Disabled
PLAA	K	0.57	0.69	0.70	0.30	0.28	0.70
	1st	4.57	8.02	7.89	3.89	3.82	7.91
Quarter 2	K	2.82	3.44	3.36	2.65	2.55	3.37
	1st	10.47	14.36	14.07	9.23	9.23	14.07

* Difference found to be statistically significant at the $p < 0.05$ level using independent samples t-tests.

Among first graders and for both PLAA and Quarter 2 levels, native English speakers tended to score higher than ELL students, special education students scored lower than non-special education students, and students with without a documented primary disability scored higher than those with such documentation.

From this section of the analysis, we conclude that PLAA and/or Quarter 2 levels varied according to race/ethnicity, income, English proficiency, qualification for ELL services, and the presence of a documented primary disability. This background knowledge was useful in attempting to isolate the potential impact of participation in the Mondo intervention on reading as measured by Quarter 2 text reading levels.

⁸ A description of all primary disabilities present in the database is provided in Appendix D.

⁹ A third category of English proficiency, "Formerly ELL," was found in the dataset but is not included in this analysis as only one student received this designation.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Text Reading Levels and Participation in Mondo

We begin this segment of our discussion by describing variations in PLAA and Quarter 2 text reading levels according to grade and participation in the Mondo intervention. The figures below indicate that in both kindergarten and first grade, PLAA and Quarter 2 reading levels were lower for participants in the Mondo intervention. While these differences ranged from 0.37 points for kindergarten PLAA levels to 0.29 points for both kindergarten and first grade Quarter 2 reading levels, none were found to be statistically significant.

While students who participated in the Mondo intervention had lower pre-test and post-test reading scores than non-participants, we cannot rule out the possibility that these differences were due to chance alone.

Figure 5: Mean Text Reading Level Scores by Test, Grade and Participation in Mondo

Test	Grade	Comparison	Mondo	Total
PLAA	K	0.82	0.38	0.64
	1st	7.60	7.25	7.42
Quarter 2	K	3.43	3.05	3.28
	1st	13.71	13.42	13.58

Figure 6: PLAA Scores by Grade and Participation in Mondo

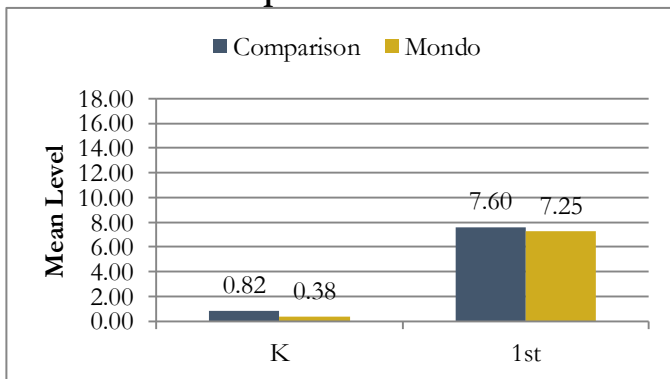
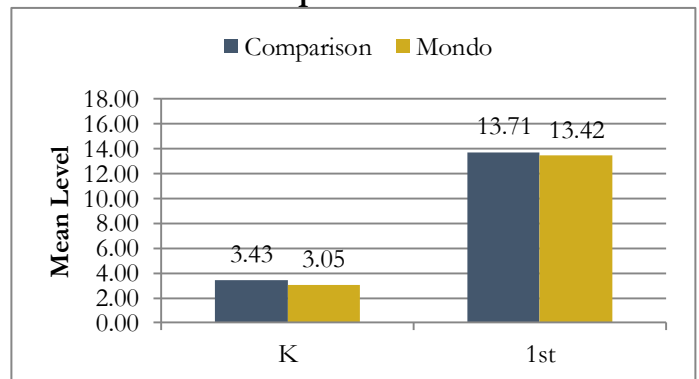
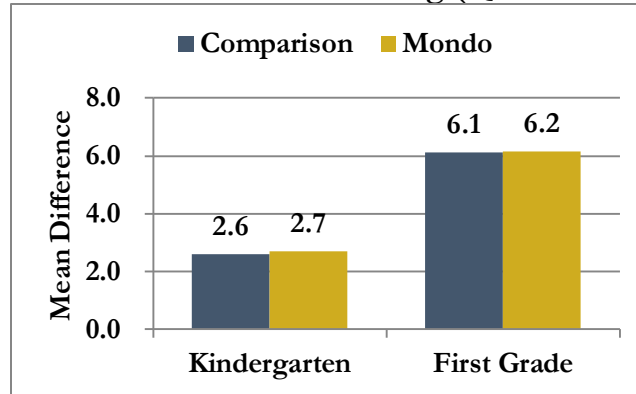


Figure 7: Quarter 2 Scores by Grade and Participation in Mondo



If we consider the difference in Quarter 2 and PLAA levels in order to describe student gains in reading throughout the year, we note that student gains within Mondo and comparison schools are virtually identical. This is to say that gains in student literacy, as measured by improvement in Quarter 2 levels over the PLAA baseline, were unaffected by participation in the Mondo intervention.

Figure 8: Student Gains in Reading (Quarter 2– PLAA)



Next, we analyzed the data for differences in PLAA and Quarter 2 reading scores within the three school pairings provided to us, and uncovered mixed findings. With the exception of first grade students in Pair 2, students who participated in the Mondo intervention had higher PLAA levels than non-participants. With respect to Quarter 2 levels, students who participated in the Mondo intervention outscored non-participants in three of the six grades within each pairing. Independent t-tests did not reveal any statistically significant differences within any school pairing between the mean scores of students who participated in the Mondo intervention and the scores of those who did not.

Figure 9: Mean Text Reading Level Scores by Test, Grade and School Pairing

Test	Grade	Pair 1		Pair 2		Pair 3	
		Comparison	Mondo	Comparison	Mondo	Comparison	Mondo
PLAA	K	0.56	0.38	0.79	0.10	1.09	0.83
	1st	7.02	6.51	5.88	7.50	9.85	7.89
2 nd Quarter	K	3.27	2.56	2.84	3.37	4.17	3.47
	1st	12.13	12.90	12.22	13.67	16.20	13.78

Figure 10: PLAA Text Reading Levels by Grade and School Pairing

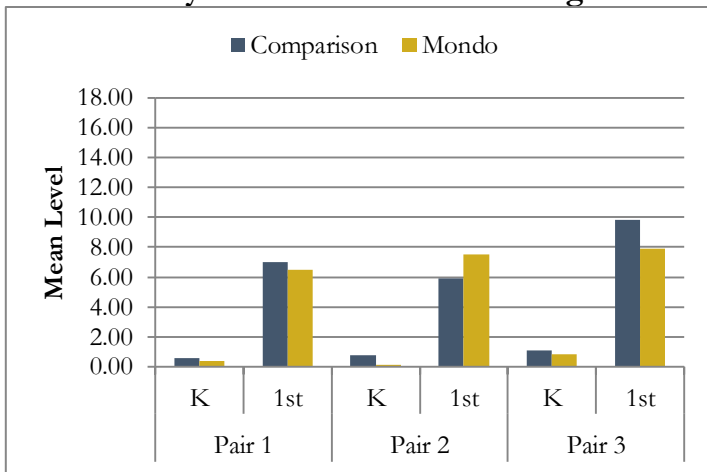
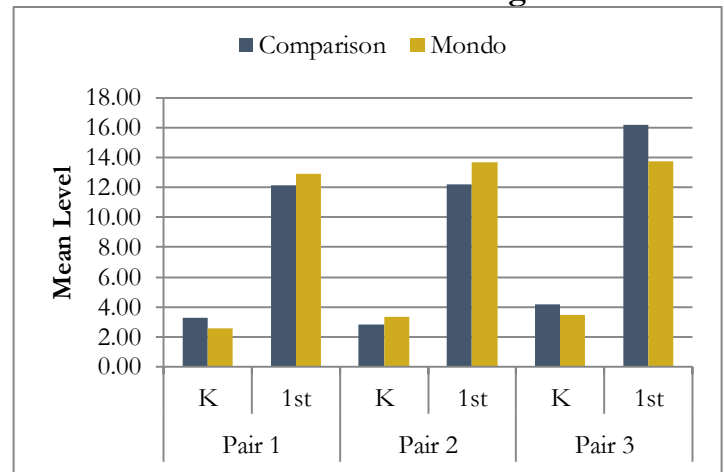


Figure 11: Quarter 2 Text Reading Levels by Grade and School Pairing



Accordingly, we cannot rule out the possibility that differences in mean text reading levels according to grade and school pairing were due to chance alone.

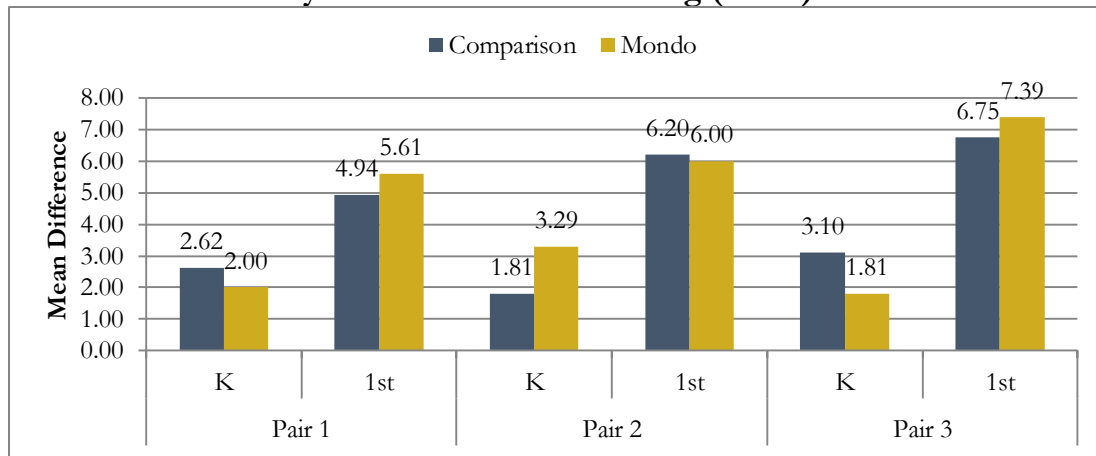
If we consider the difference in Quarter 2 and PLAA levels according to Mondo participation, grade and school pairing, we note a mixed message. Students who participated in Mondo had higher gains in Pair 1 (first grade), in Pair 2 (kindergarten), and in Pair 3 (first grade). Otherwise, students in the comparison schools experienced higher gains.

Figure 12: Student Gains in Reading (Quarter 2– PLAA) by Grade and School Pairing (1 of 2)¹¹

Grade	Pair 1		Pair 2		Pair 3	
	Comparison	Mondo	Comparison	Mondo	Comparison	Mondo
K	2.62	2.00	1.81	3.29	3.10	1.81
1st	4.94	5.61	6.20	6.00	6.75	7.39

¹¹ Note that N>40 for all subcategories.

Figure 13: Student Gains in Reading (Quarter 2– PLAA) by Grade and School Pairing (2 of 2)¹²



This suggests that no clear differences in student text reading levels were present with respect to participation in the Mondo intervention.

Predictive Power of Participation in Mondo on Text Reading Levels

In this last section, we present two sets of generalized linear regression models. In both models, we calculated the Likelihood Ratio Chi-Square (D) in order to assess goodness of the model's fit.¹³ The first set describes the predictive role of the Mondo program and Quarter 2 text reading levels. The second set in turn describes the predictive role of Mondo on student gains as calculated by the difference in PLAA and Quarter 2 levels.

As may be seen in the figures that follow, the level of significance did not reach below 95 percent for any of these regression models. This means that we did not find any evidence that participation in the Mondo intervention predicted Quarter 2 reading levels.

Figure 14: Predictive Role of Mondo Intervention on Q2 Text Reading Levels by Grade

Grade	Likelihood Ratio	Significance
Kindergarten	0.659	0.417
First Grade	0.123	0.726
All Students	0.044	0.834

¹² Ibid.

¹³ $D = 2 \sum f \cdot \ln \left(\frac{f}{f_i} \right)$, where f is the observed frequency and f_i is the expected frequency.

Figure 14: Predictive Role of Mondo Intervention on Q2 Text Reading Levels by Grade and School Pairing

Grade	Pair 1		Pair 2		Pair 3	
	Likelihood Ratio	Sig.	Likelihood Ratio	Sig.	Likelihood Ratio	Sig.
Kindergarten	0.921	0.337	0.471	0.493	0.661	0.416
First Grade	0.347	0.556	1.392	0.238	2.379	0.123

Lastly, as may be seen in the figures that follow, we found mixed results regarding the level of significance reaching below 95 percent in this last set of regression models. When considered in aggregate, we did not observe any significant effect of the Mondo intervention on gains in student learning. However, for two of the three pairs of schools (Pair 2 and Pair 3), we did observe a significant effect of the Mondo intervention on student gains in text reading levels. In addition, within the third pair of schools, participation in the Mondo intervention also was predictive of student gains in third grade. Within the first school pairing, there was no evidence that participation in Mondo predicted student learning.

Figure 16: Predictive Role of Mondo Intervention on Gains in Text Reading Levels (Q2-PLAA by Grade) by Grade

Grade	Likelihood Ratio	Significance
Kindergarten	0.026	0.872
First Grade	0.792	0.374
All Students	2.764	0.096

Figure 17: Predictive Role of Mondo Intervention on Gains in Text Reading Levels (Q2-PLAA by Grade) by Grade and School Pairing

Grade	Pair 1		Pair 2		Pair 3	
	Likelihood Ratio	Sig.	Likelihood Ratio	Sig.	Likelihood Ratio	Sig.
Kindergarten	1.049	0.306	6.487	0.011	4.898	0.025
First Grade	2.013	0.156	0.207	0.649	4.898	0.027

* Difference found to be statistically significant at the $p < 0.05$ level using independent samples t-tests.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we did not observe convincing evidence for a measurable impact of the Mondo intervention on Quarter 2 text reading levels or on gains in text reading levels. As noted in the limitations section above, these results should be used with caution in evaluating the success of the Mondo intervention.

Appendix A: Primary Student Disabilities Present in the Dataset

Disability	N	%
Autism	10	1.3%
Cognitive Disability	1	.1%
Emotional / Behavior Disability	7	.9%
Hearing Impairment	1	.1%
Learning Disability	1	.1%
Other Health Impairment	11	1.4%
Significant Developmental Delay	15	1.9%
Speech Language	36	4.6%
No Disability	696	89.5%
Total	778	100.0%

Appendix B: Demographic Composition of the Database

Demographic Category		N	%
Gender	Female	388	49.9%
	Male	390	50.1%
	Total	778	100%
Race/ Ethnicity	Asian	36	4.6%
	Black / African American	222	28.5%
	Hispanic / Latino	145	18.6%
	Multiracial	79	10.2%
	White	296	38.0%
	Total	778	100%
Grade	First	370	47.6%
	Kindergarten	408	52.4%
	Total	778	100%
Low Income	Not Low Income	327	42.0%
	Low Income	451	58.0%
	Total	778	100%
English Proficiency	Eligible for ELL	155	19.9%
	Formerly ELL	1	0.1%
	Native English	622	79.9%
	Total	777	100%
Special Ed	Not Special Ed	700	90.0%
	Special Ed	78	10.0%
	Total	778	100%
Primary Disability	Disability	78	10.1%
	No Disability	696	89.9%
	Total	774	100%

Appendix C: Demographic Composition of School Pairings¹⁴

Demographic Category		Pair 1				Pair 2				Pair 3			
		Comparison		Mondo		Comparison		Mondo		Comparison		Mondo	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender	Female	54	46.6%	70	49.6%	70	47.6%	43	51.2%	73	51.0%	78	53.1%
	Male	62	53.4%	71	50.4%	77	52.4%	41	48.8%	70	49.0%	69	46.9%
	Total	116	100%	141	100%	147	100%	84	100%	143	100%	147	100%
Race/Ethnicity	Asian	8	6.9%	1	.7%	9	6.1%	7	8.3%	7	4.9%	4	2.7%
	Black / Afr. American	47	40.5%	69	48.9%	31	21.1%	14	16.7%	34	23.8%	27	18.4%
	Hispanic / Latino	22	19.0%	13	9.2%	39	26.5%	14	16.7%	28	19.6%	29	19.7%
	Multiracial	15	12.9%	21	14.9%	9	6.1%	9	10.7%	12	8.4%	13	8.8%
	White	24	20.7%	37	26.2%	59	40.1%	40	47.6%	62	43.4%	74	50.3%
	Total	116	100%	141	100%	147	100%	84	100%	143	100%	147	100%
Grade	First	57	49.1%	67	47.5%	53	36.1%	44	52.4%	70	49.0%	79	53.7%
	Kindergarten	59	50.9%	74	52.5%	94	63.9%	40	47.6%	73	51.0%	68	46.3%
	Total	116	100%	141	100%	147	100%	84	100%	143	100%	147	100%
Low Income	Not Low Income	31	26.7%	30	21.3%	73	49.7%	37	44.0%	75	52.4%	81	55.1%
	Low Income	85	73.3%	111	78.7%	74	50.3%	47	56.0%	68	47.6%	66	44.9%
	Total	116	100%	141	100%	147	100%	84	100%	143	100%	147	100%
English Proficiency	Eligible for ELL	20	17.2%	11	7.8%	38	25.9%	18	21.4%	35	24.5%	33	22.4%
	Native English	96	82.8%	130	92.2%	108	73.5%	66	78.6%	108	75.5%	114	77.6%
	Total	116	100%	141	100%	147	100%	84	100%	143	100%	147	100%
Special Ed	Not Special Ed	102	87.9%	125	88.7%	132	89.8%	73	86.9%	131	91.6%	137	93.2%
	Special Ed	14	12.1%	16	11.3%	15	10.2%	11	13.1%	12	8.4%	10	6.8%
	Total	116	100%	141	100%	147	100%	84	100%	143	100%	147	100%
Primary Disability	Disability	14	12.1%	16	11.4%	15	10.2%	11	13.3%	12	8.5%	10	6.8%
	No Disability	102	87.9%	124	88.6%	132	89.8%	72	86.7%	130	91.5%	136	93.2%
	Total	116	100%	140	100%	147	100%	83	100%	142	100%	146	100%

¹⁴ Independent samples t-test were conducted to describe the statistical significance of the difference in the demographic constitution of each pairing. No differences with a $p > 0$ were detected.

Appendix D: Demographic Composition and Participation in Mondo

Demographic Category		No Mondo		Received Mondo	
		N	%	N	%
Gender	Female	197	48.5%	191	51.3%
	Male	209	51.5%	181	48.7%
	Total	406	100%	372	100%
Race/ Ethnicity	Asian	24	5.9%	12	3.2%
	Black / African American	112	27.6%	110	29.6%
	Hispanic / Latino*	89	21.9%	56	15.1%
	Multiracial	36	8.9%	43	11.6%
	White	145	35.7%	151	40.6%
	Total	406	100%	372	100%
Grade	First	180	44.3%	190	51.1%
	Kindergarten	226	55.7%	182	48.9%
	Total	406	100%	372	100%
Low Income	Not Low Income	179	44.1%	148	39.8%
	Low Income	227	55.9%	224	60.2%
	Total	406	100%	372	100%
English Proficiency	Eligible for ELL*	93	22.9%	62	16.7%
	Native English*	312	76.8%	310	83.3%
	Total	406	100%	372	100%
Special Ed	Not Special Ed	365	89.9%	335	90.1%
	Special Ed	41	10.1%	37	9.9%
	Total	406	100%	372	100%
Primary Disability	Disability	41	10.1%	37	10.0%
	No Disability	364	89.9%	332	90.0%
	Total	405	100%	369	100%

* Difference found to be statistically significant at the $p < 0.05$ level using independent samples t-tests.

Project Evaluation Form

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Caveat

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