

beanstack CASE STUDY



In Farmington R-7, a rural Missouri district with eight campuses and 4,000 students, sparking a love of reading had become a challenge. Years of relying on a quiz-based program led to disjointed efforts, growing inequities, and fading enthusiasm. District leaders knew it was time for a change. They needed a program that could unite all schools, increase engagement, and help families and communities get involved, without sacrificing the joy of reading.

"The two things I wanted out of a reading program were for my students to enjoy reading and for our parents and community to be involved positively."

Rachel Armstrong

K-12 Educational Technology Facilitator, Farmington R-7

They found their answer in Beanstack.

Washington-Franklin Elementary's successful pilot set the stage for a districtwide rollout of Beanstack, which rekindled a passion for reading through meaningful challenges, community engagement, and a renewed emphasis on reading for pleasure.







Goals



Foster a Love for Reading For All Ages

Make reading feel rewarding and joyful, especially for students who had grown disinterested.



Create Consistency Across Campuses

Streamline how schools track, celebrate, and support reading—eliminating inequities between buildings.



Engage Families and Community Partners

Bring families into the reading experience and partner with local businesses to amplify incentives.



Make Reading Visible and Celebrated

Promote reading progress in ways that students, staff, and families can see and rally around.

Strategies

Staff-First Launch and Teacher Challenges

Each school started with a staff challenge to build comfort and excitement. At Roosevelt, teachers competed to log the most minutes, with a whiteboard table as the coveted prize. Establishing this buy-in paved the way for student success.

Student Training and Goal-Setting

During library classes, students learned how to log minutes, track streaks, and participate in challenges. Pairing younger students with "Beanstack Buddies"—older peers who helped them log—did more than teach tech skills. It built mentorship, community, and confidence.



Personalized Challenges and Celebrations

Schools ran creative, themed challenges like "Librarian Birthday Badges"—where students earned a badge featuring their librarian's smiling face—flashlight read-ins, and puzzle parties. At Roosevelt Elementary, top readers are celebrated during "Thumbs Up Thursdays," a weekly event that gives shout-outs to the highest-reading students and teachers in each grade. The school also shares weekly and quarterly leaderboards and rewards goal-crushers with special perks like lunch with the librarian.

Family and Community Engagement

Quick-start guides, family letters, and regular updates in newsletters and on social media helped bring caregivers into the process. Local businesses donated prizes like popcorn, drinks, and books.



Districtwide Recognition and Fun

From "Super Bean" trophies (a can of beans!) at the middle school to high schoolers earning scholarships for top reading minutes, each building added its flavor. ELA teachers even got in on the action, turning reading into a competition.

Integrated Tools and Flexible Incentives

Teachers used Beanstack during independent reading stations, and librarians incorporated it into read-alouds to model usage. By weaving it into familiar routines, Beanstack felt less like extra work and more like a fun, seamless part of the day. Students earned badges, certificates, and rewards that matched their diverse interests.



Outcomes

Schools across Farmington R-7 achieved these reading culture wins with Beanstack.



Roosevelt Elementary: Over 354,000 Minutes Logged

Participation hit 99%, and the school reached Trailblazer status within a week of launch. Due to student enthusiasm, reading goals were increased four times over the year.



Lincoln Intermediate: 300,000+ Minutes Logged

5th and 6th graders embraced Beanstack with weekly graphics shared in announcements and Google Classroom.



Farmington Middle School: 85% Participation Rate

The school surpassed its reading goal by April, with "Super Bean" trophies rotating weekly between advisory classes.



Districtwide Culture Shift

From PK to grade 12, every school personalized Beanstack to fit their needs, and every student had a reason to read. The shift was clear: from quizzes to joyful reading habits that stick.

Lessons Learned

Teacher Buy-In Is Non-Negotiable

Starting with staff and showing them how Beanstack fits into their existing routines made it less of a burden and more of a celebration.

Consistency Matters

Every school wove Beanstack into daily culture through library routines, classroom stations, and building-wide announcements.

Different Students, Different Motivations

Some chased badges and streaks. Others wanted the popcorn or the leaderboard glory. The mix of intrinsic and extrinsic incentives ensured everyone had a reason to participate.



Conclusion

With Beanstack, Farmington R-7 shifted from isolated reading initiatives to a unified districtwide culture that centers joy, equity, and long-term impact. "That's what we wanted all along," said Library Media Specialist Ciera Baker. "Students are helping each other in the library. They're excited about what they're reading."

