

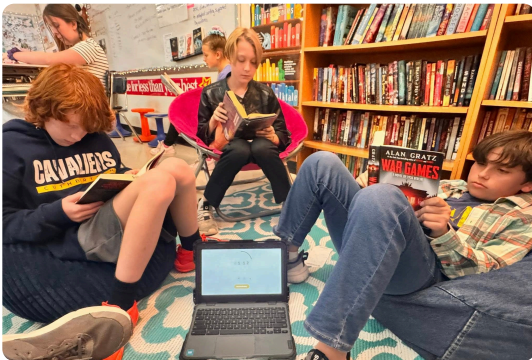


### School Spotlight

## Cuthbertson Middle School: Growing Reading Culture With Book Talks and Badges

When Cuthbertson Middle School in Waxhaw, North Carolina, adopted Beanstack, media specialist Michele Bost had a clear goal: find a tool that would genuinely motivate middle schoolers to read. With 1,300 students, she needed a platform that was powerful, intuitive, and easy to manage.

Beanstack's built-in features—its handy reading timer, Book Talks with Benny, automatic challenges, and flexible logging—quickly became the foundation of a thriving reading culture. Students were so motivated by the gamification and recognition tools that excitement spread across the school before Michele introduced a single prize or incentive. Within weeks, students were logging eagerly, comparing badges, checking leaderboards, and celebrating their reading for the fun of it.

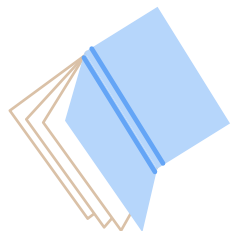


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Beanstack has just caught on like wildfire here. I have children who randomly stop me in the hallway to tell me they logged their minutes.

**Michele Bost**

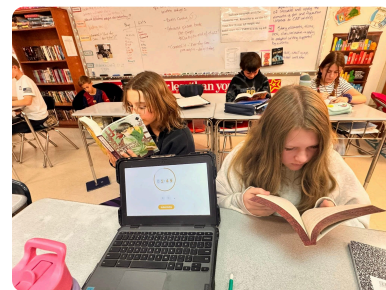
Media Specialist, Cuthbertson Middle School



## Launching a Schoolwide Reading Culture

Michele used a thoughtful, structured rollout to quickly build momentum and get students and teachers excited about Beanstack.

- **Strategic student introductions:** She first presented Beanstack to 6th graders during their media orientation, where it caught on immediately. Then, instruction was built into 7th- and 8th-grade orientations to build school-wide awareness.
- **Teacher presence and early buy-in:** Teachers stayed in the media center during visits, so they learned the platform alongside students—leading to consistent classroom support for logging and reading routines.
- **Ongoing teacher support:** Michele periodically pops into professional development meetings to answer questions, highlight accountability tools, and share quick tech tips.



## Celebrating Reading Across the School

Cuthbertson makes reading visible and fun through recognition and community events.

- **Leaderboard celebrations:** Leaderboards appear on morning announcements and school display screens, highlighting top readers for the whole school, each grade level, and even staff.
- **Milestone celebrations:** After surpassing their first major reading goal, the school celebrated with a book-character dress-up day and extra independent reading time.
- **Community engagement:** Michele shares wins, instructional content, and photos on social media, helping families connect with the reading program and cheer students on.

## Leveraging Beanstack to Maximize Engagement

Michele leans into Beanstack's core features to make logging easy and keep momentum going strong.

- **Book Talks with Benny** creates personalized, friendly moments to check accountability—even reluctant readers eagerly await Benny's responses.
- **Automatic Challenges** deliver ongoing motivation with minimal effort, providing fun new themes and badges each month.
- **Flexible logging options**, including audiobooks, high-interest books, and class read-alouds, help every student feel successful and included.



### Library Circulation

Michele reports that book circulation is “through the roof” since the start of the school year.



### Trailblazer Status

Cuthbertson reached 84% student participation within months of adopting Beanstack.



### 400,000 minutes

Students quickly surpassed the school's initial 300,000-minute goal.

## Conclusion

Cuthbertson Middle School students aren't just logging minutes—they're talking about books, celebrating progress, and embracing the joy of reading for fun. Michele's thoughtful use of Beanstack's built-in tools demonstrates how the right approach can transform reading into a vibrant, school-wide movement. With a PTSO-supported Beanstack store on the way, Cuthbertson's reading culture continues to grow and evolve in all the best ways.