

# The Effects of a Writing Tutoring Program on 5th-Grade Academic Performance at a Low-Income Elementary School in HISD

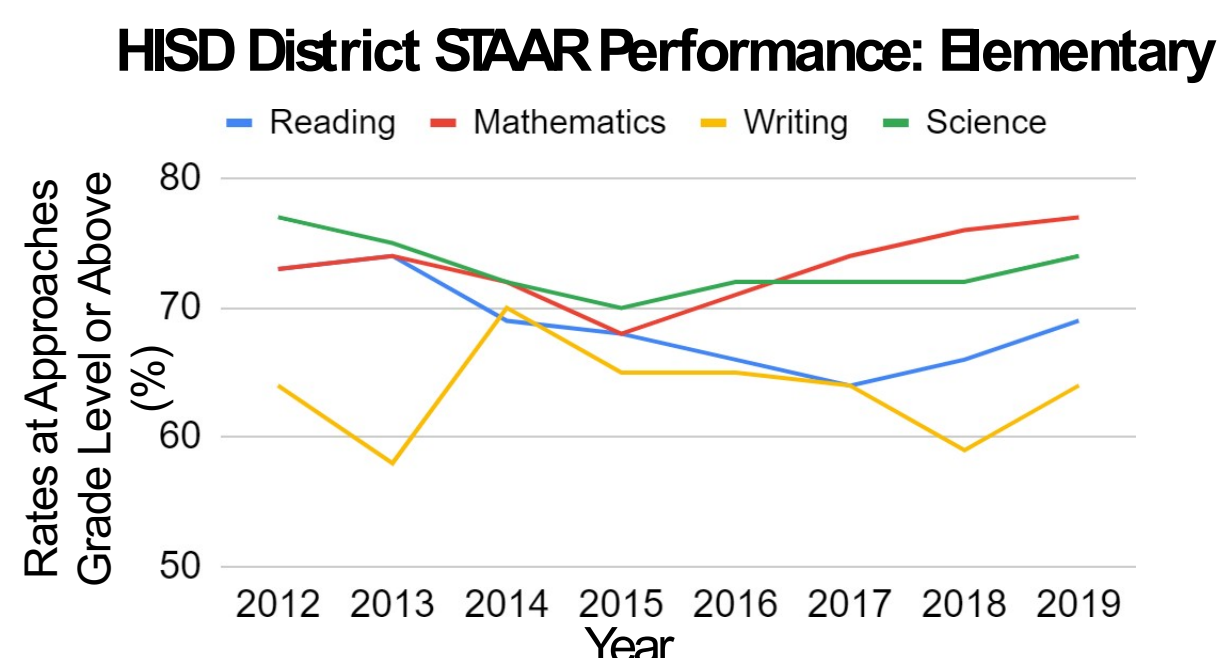
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## Introduction

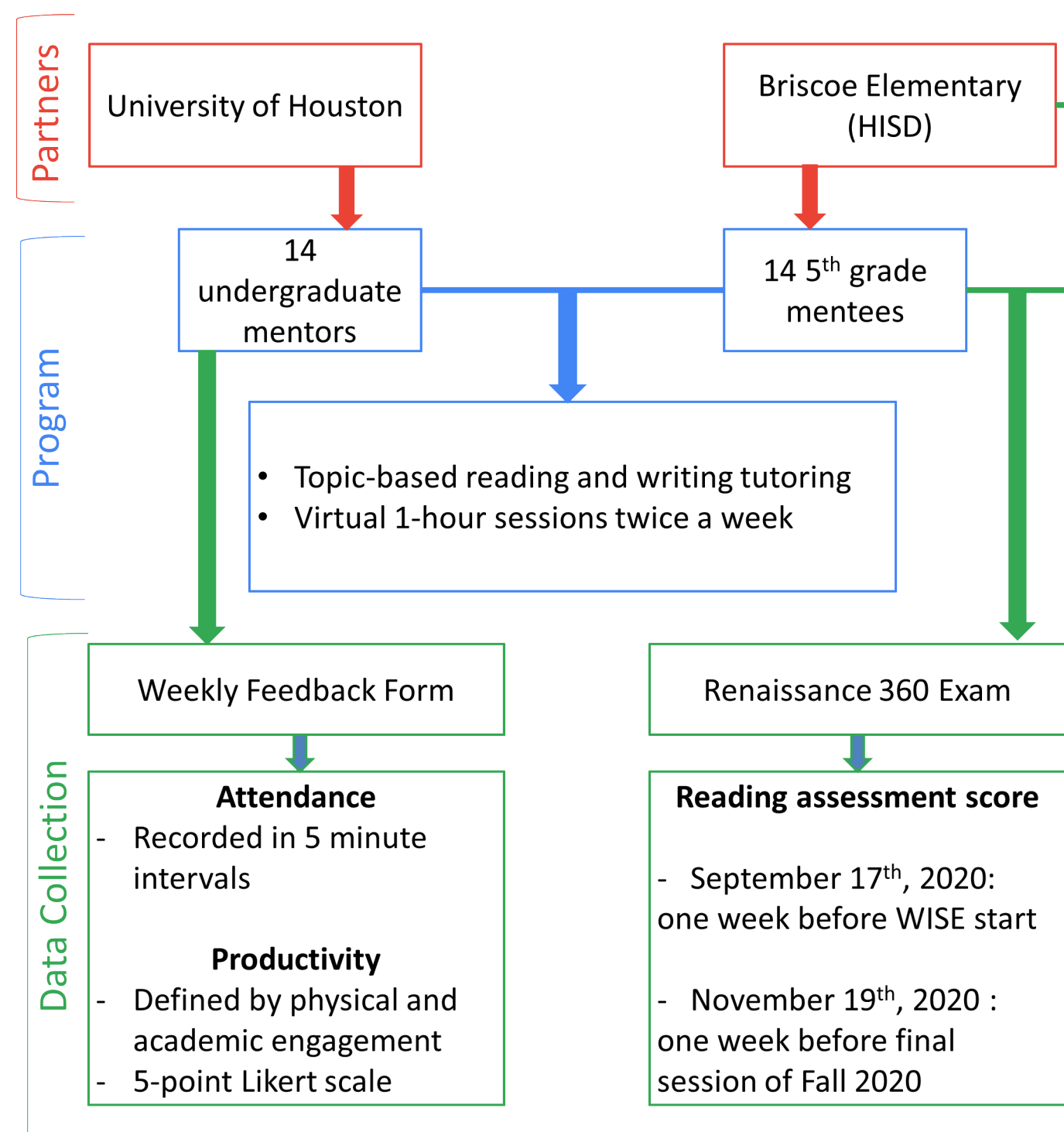
- Elementary schools in the Third Ward area in Houston show consistently lower scores in writing as compared to other subjects on standardized tests



**Figure 1:** HISD overall STAAR performance in elementary schools over time as reported by the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

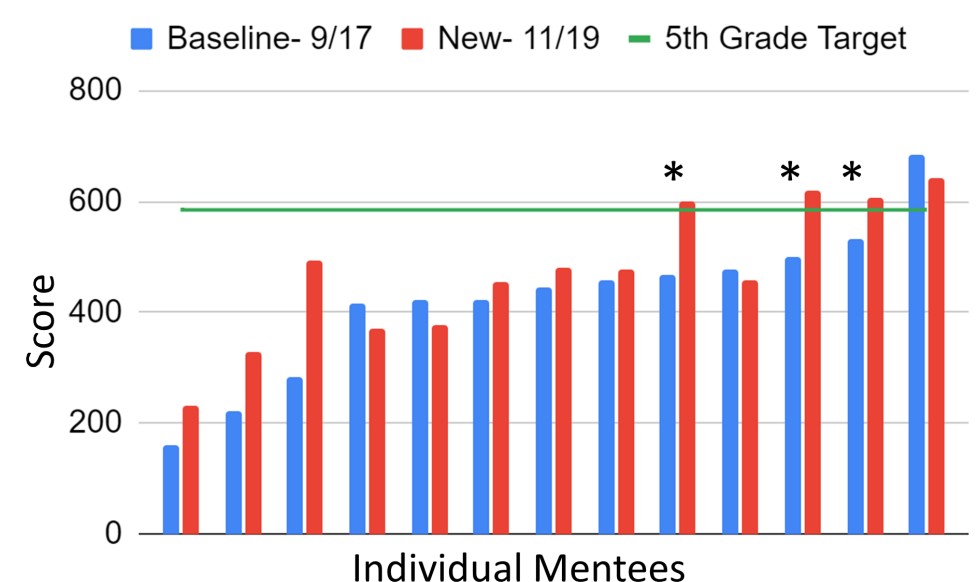
- Writing to Inspire Successful Education (WISE) was created by high-achieving University of Houston Honors College undergraduate students partnering with a lower-income elementary school, Briscoe Elementary, in the Houston Independent School District (HISD) system.
- Program Goals
  - improve the development of foundational writing skills
  - increase students' confidence in their ability to write
  - reduce the income-achievement gap in education

## Methodology



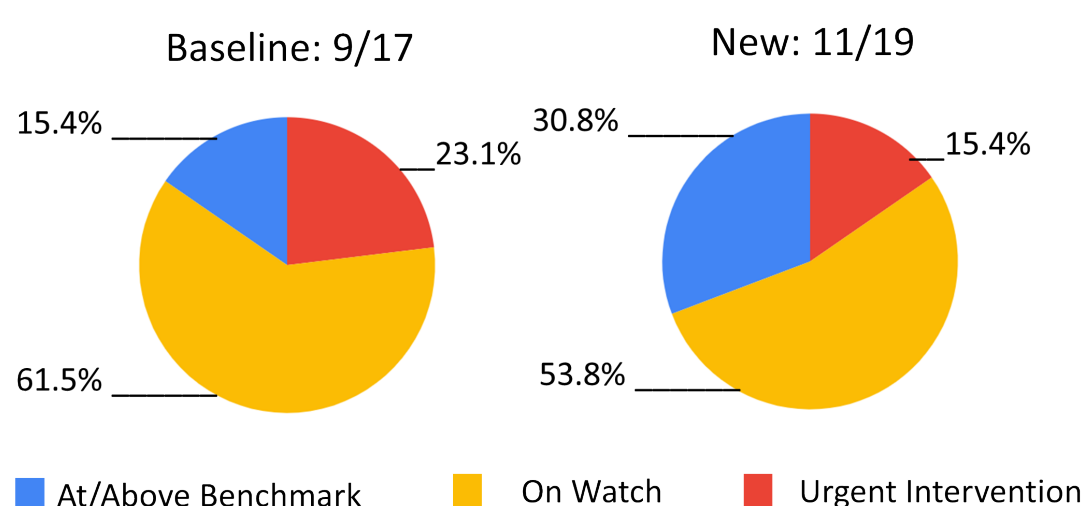
## Results

### Mentee Benchmark Scores



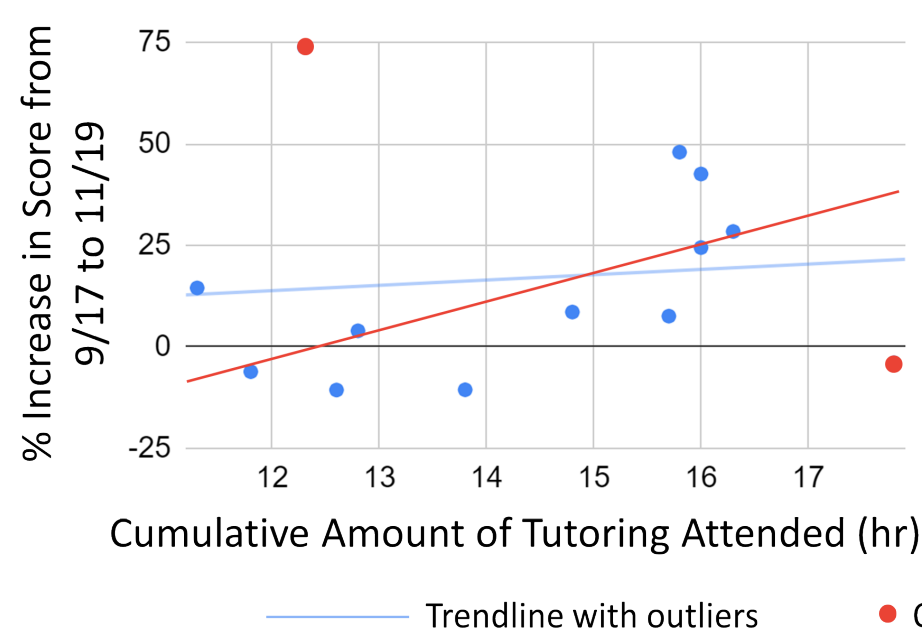
**Figure 2** compares 9/17 and 11/19 reading benchmark scores. Scores are reported individually for a total of 13 mentees. 3 mentees increased to 5<sup>th</sup> grade target by 11/19 benchmark.

### Mentee Benchmark Classification



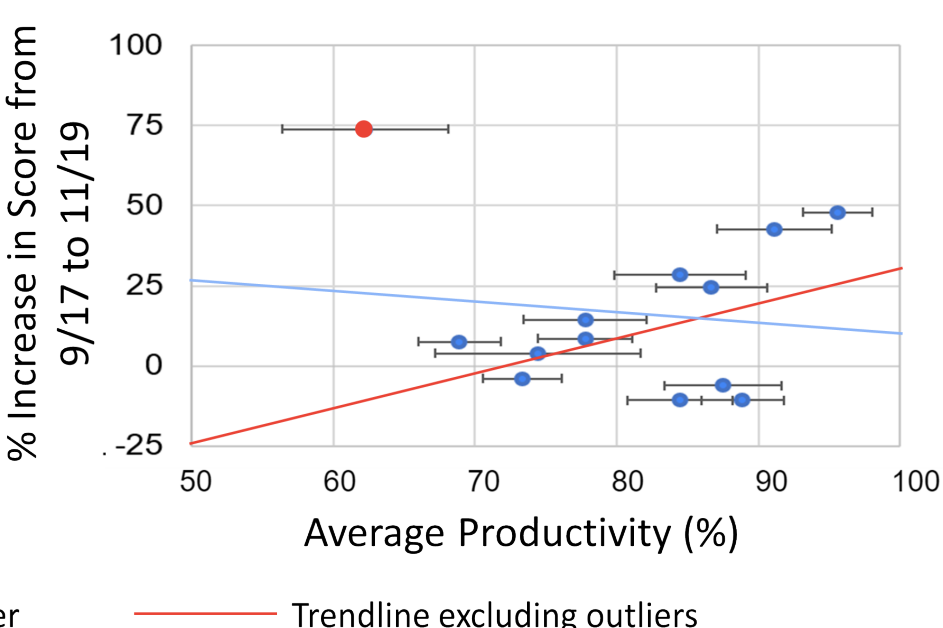
**Figure 3** compares the distribution of benchmark classification in mentee group (n=13). Distribution improved by 11/19 benchmark as shown by "Urgent Intervention" decreasing and "At/Above Benchmark" increasing.

### Effect of Attendance on Benchmark Score



**Figure 4A:** Attendance data for each mentee from 9/17 to 11/19 added and converted to hours. Pearson correlation with outliers: n=13, r=0.1053, p=.732. Without outliers: n=11, r=0.6694, p=.024. Higher mentee tutoring attendance is positively correlated with increased benchmark scores.

### Effect of Productivity on Benchmark Score



**Figure 4B:** Productivity score averaged and converted to a percentage out of 100% for each mentee. Error bars= ±SE. Pearson correlation with outliers: n=13, r=-0.1169, p=.706. Without outliers: n=12, r=0.4611, p=.131. Higher mentee productivity visually correlates with increased benchmark scores but is not statistically significant.

## Key Findings

- Barring significant outliers--there is a visual positive correlation between the amount of both time and productivity in remote tutoring sessions and performance on standardized benchmark assessments for reading low-income fifth-grade students.
- Benchmark distribution improved overall
- Mentees slightly below 5<sup>th</sup> grade target appear more likely to reach target by the 11/19 benchmark

## Conclusion

- Tutoring in writing and reading skills for elementary-aged students may lead to an increase in writing scores on standardized tests such as the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR).
- Collecting and analyzing data from standardized tests such as the STAAR may provide further information on how writing tutoring affects performance in all academic subjects.

### Limitations:

- Low sample size: Further research on the influence of writing tutoring on academic performance is necessary to fully understand the potential this has on reducing the income-achievement gap.
- Lack of writing specific assessment data: While reading assessments give insight into the effect of writing tutoring, additional assessment data is necessary to provide information on WISE's effect on writing skills
- Outliers: External variables such as technological problems associated with virtual tutoring and mentor bias may have resulted in outliers.

## Acknowledgments

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