

Customer Success: K-5 ELA Jones County, North Carolina

*HMH Into Reading, Waggle
and Services*



Bryce Marquis

A Conversation with:
Bryce Marquis, Director of Educational Programs

What were your key reasons for selecting HMH Into Reading?

We have roughly 1100 students in 5 schools and for multiple years our teachers in grades 3–5 had no consistent curriculum. There was no one program. There were no district expectations. We realized that we needed some consistency and something that is research-based and affiliated with North Carolina standards. We needed something to set some expectations and really give our teachers the tools that they needed. It was an extensive process and one of the things that we were looking for in ELA K–6, and K-5 especially, was something with more rigor and a plan. Generally speaking, we had had a lot of success in our county with our state scores, but we knew we could do better. During the evaluations, one thing that stood out with *HMH Into Reading* was how planned out the lessons were. The other thing that was a star, a gold star, was the writing piece.

What was it like implementing HMH Into Reading in your district?

We had to preface to our staff and our teachers and school administrators that it's not all going to happen in the first 6 months. We take it step-by-step because it can become overwhelming. The true measure is month-by-month, or week-by-week, what are we implementing, what are we learning, what can we tweak to meet our needs. We're fortunate because it's a lot easier to tweak when there's an abundance of resources and curriculum and lessons. If it was a weak program, we'd have a lot less leverage in what we could mold to our district needs. The professional development was stacked up front. Of course it was remote, due to circumstances, but I believe we've offered at least nine sessions K-12 in regard to *Into Reading*, *Into Math*, *Into Literature*, *Waggle* and *Writable* trying to encompass everything. We intentionally did not introduce *Waggle* to our teachers until two months into the school year. Our concern was, if we paired it with

Into Reading right away, it was going to be too much. As we went into November we offered *Waggle* training, more support, and the rostering was all done, and at that point utilizing it as a tool for intervention. Our teachers are now using it [*Waggle*] in small groups, and they are also using it for individual intervention which is fantastic. I think moving forward that's a piece we could do even bigger things with. In January we met with our principals to share expectations for what they need to be measuring in the module assessments. That was good because I think if we would have done that initially, with all the stress of the season, it wouldn't have worked as well.

For your K–2 classrooms specifically, why was HMH *Into Reading* a good fit?

They [K–2 classrooms] had an alternate curriculum, and we found that it wasn't intense enough. By the time that bridge came from 2nd to 3rd grade a lot of our kids were falling off a cliff. We needed something with rigor right up front that transitioned seamlessly all the way through the grade levels, not only with the standards and lesson plans but usability and familiarity.

What has HMH *Into Reading* brought to your district that teachers and administrators don't ever want to do without again?

It's brought consistency, not only within specific grade levels, but because our adoption was universal (K–12), all of our teachers are on the same page. It's also brought the ability to reach our students that aren't at school sites, which we would not have had, especially as thorough as *Into Reading* is on the *Ed* platform. Also, the Anchor Charts have been a huge success not only in the writing but in reading. Our teachers have smart TV's in all the classrooms and we're 1:1 which makes it a little easier for the students at this time, but the writing tools that they can project digitally have been a huge gift because a lot of our kids initially were not in the rooms. Through the *Ed* platform, they're able to project those resources remotely whether it be with Google Classroom or Zoom. Lastly, teachers are really excited because they don't have to spend as much time planning as they did in prior school years and that's one thing I think we will have a tough time ever letting go of. So many teachers spend time either Friday or on the weekend planning, and they do a lot less of that now.

