

FROM GRANT TO GROWTH

What High-Impact Tutoring Looks Like in Practice — Participant Guide

Arkansas DESE · Learning Services | Arkansas High-Impact Tutoring Pilot (LEARNS Act, Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-16-1601 to -1604; DESE Rule 6 CAR §§ 282-101 to -104)

Statewide footprint: 13,635 students in HIT across 82 districts, 191,207 tutoring sessions (avg 32 sessions/student); 21% in the outcomes-based-contracting cohort.

Why high-impact tutoring works — the non-negotiables

Decades of research show intensive, relationship-based tutoring produces some of the largest, most consistent gains in reading and math — but only when programs hold to the design. Watered-down tutoring produces watered-down results.

- **Dosage & frequency:** 3+ sessions/week, 30–60 min, for 10+ weeks — frequency is what separates HIT from occasional help.
- **Small group size:** Four or fewer students per tutor, or one-on-one.
- **In-day scheduling:** Embedded in the school day, not bolted on after school.
- **Consistent tutor:** The same tutor every session builds the relationship that drives growth.
- **Aligned & data-informed:** Sessions use HQIM tied to the district's core curriculum; progress is monitored and instruction adjusts to it.

The three levers that turn a grant into growth

1 · Scheduling — protect the time, or the program erodes

- **Guardrails:** put tutoring on the master schedule first; never pull students from the subject being tutored; same time/days; plan for real attendance; build make-up slots to recover missed dosage.

2 · Staffing — the tutor is the intervention

- district staff, community/college near-peers, vetted vendor/virtual, or approved AI/asynchronous tools — all require initial training, ongoing coaching, and a consistent caseload. For digital tools, a responsible adult must watch dosage and act on the data.

3 · Instructional alignment — tie tutoring to the classroom, not around it

- **The proof:** A 2025 Knox County (TN) randomized trial found aligning tutoring to core materials produced +1.3 months more literacy growth (up to +1.8 for the lowest readers) with the same time, staff, group size, and cost. Coherence isn't a bigger investment — it's a smarter one.

What early implementation taught us

- **Dosage is destiny:** Enrolled ≠ attending. An Arkansas RCT delivered ~5–11.7 hours against an 18-hour design and saw no ELA effect — because students didn't get enough of the intervention. Track dosage delivered, not just enrollment.
- **Staff time drives delivery:** Two districts using the same vendor differed >3× in true cost — the gap was school-side staff time to schedule, log students in, and protect the block. Budget for implementation, not just the subscription.
- **Coherence is the soft spot:** The weakest link statewide is the tutor–teacher–family data loop. Close it with a signed Data Sharing Agreement before tutoring begins.

A quick readiness self-check — any “no” is your first improvement target

- ☐ Tutoring is scheduled during the school day and protected on the master schedule.
- ☐ Groups are four students or fewer per tutor, or one-on-one.
- ☐ Students meet 3+ times a week for at least 10 weeks, with the same tutor all cycle.
- ☐ Tutors are trained and receive ongoing coaching.
- ☐ Materials are high-quality and aligned to our core curriculum.
- ☐ We monitor attendance, dosage, and progress — and act on it.
- ☐ A named person owns tutoring at the district and each campus.

Three things you can do Monday

- **1. Audit the schedule** — pull your master schedule and find the protected, in-day block tutoring will live in. If it isn't there, that's step one.
- **2. Pick your data loop** — choose one progress measure and a 2–3 week cadence; decide now who reviews it and what they'll change.
- **3. Name an owner** — assign one district lead and one campus lead. Accountability is the difference between a program and a pile of sessions.

Use the state's tools & save the date

- **HIT Instructional Coherence Toolkit** — four coherence strategies, “Practices for Achieving Coherence” checklists, case studies, and the “Look Fors” observation tool.
- **Data Sharing Agreement Guidance** — put a DSA in place (ATLAS access, FERPA training, named data contact) before a vendor touches student data.
- **SY 2026-27 HIT grant** — DESE funds 70% of estimated HIT cost with a 30% district match (SY26 average ~\$1,300/student). Start gathering student counts by grade/subject, budget with vendor quotes, and priority areas now.

The grant funds the program. Intentional implementation grows the students. Protect the time. Support the tutors. Align to the classroom. Watch the data.

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