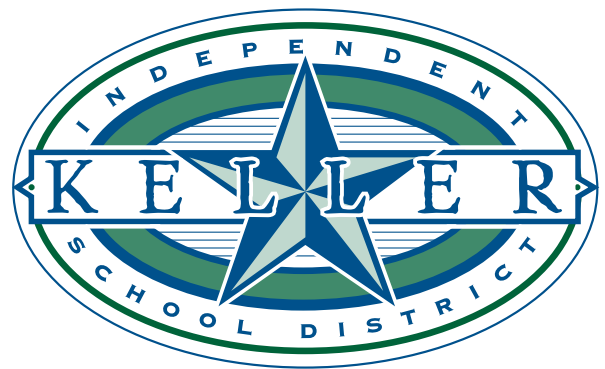




Helping every student:

Keller ISD deploys Read&Write

A forward-looking independent school district in Northern Texas is helping students of all abilities and backgrounds to study and express themselves with greater confidence.



Background

Rated 'A' for overall performance by the Texas Education Agency, Keller Independent School District (KISD) serves more than 35,000 students and employs over 2,700 classroom instructional staff across 41 schools in North Texas.

In the fall of 2018, the district offered every student the opportunity to realize their full potential with the help of Read&Write – the easy-to-use suite of literacy support tools from Assistive Technology experts Texthelp.

KISD's adoption of Read&Write dates back to the spring of 2016, with a pilot project that saw the software offered to some 250 students with additional needs such as dyslexia or other learning disabilities. Tracking the students' usage on their devices quickly confirmed that Read&Write was being embraced with enthusiasm by young learners.

The trial was instigated by **Dr Gena Koster**, Executive Director of Special Education at Keller ISD, who had been impressed by the results achieved with Read&Write at her previous school district in Oklahoma: "In seeing the huge impact it had on all students – including those with special needs and English Language Learners – I knew that Read & Write was a 'must have' in the toolkit going with me to Texas. And when my KISD colleagues saw the success our kids were having, and the implications it could have on student outcomes, the clear message was 'this is something we've got to have – not just in special ed, but for all our students'".

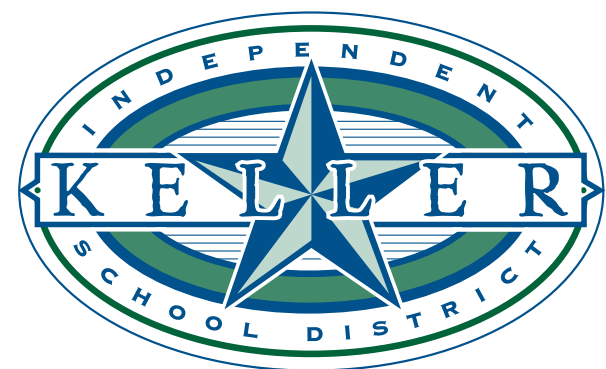
Sharpening students' writing skills

So what benefits have KISD students enjoyed since the district's across-the-board implementation of Read&Write? "Our district leadership has recognized the need for a major focus on improving writing skills" says Gena. "Read&Write is great for getting students to express themselves with more ease and confidence. If they're thinking of a word but maybe aren't sure how to spell it, they can just speak it and see it written on screen. Similarly, students like to hear what they've just written played back to them – it's a big help with proofing their writing or responses in general".

Read&Write's use isn't restricted to the classroom. Keller's district-wide license lets students log in using their credentials on any device, while they're studying at home or on the move. Dr Koster also reveals that Read&Write has had a positive impact on her own academic work. "While you're researching a topic you are reading and processing literally hundreds of articles. Using Read&Write's highlighter tool I was able to pick up trends showing up in the literature, and gather instances together to cite in my paper."

Gena stresses that getting teachers and administrators on board was a priority in ensuring the district's successful rollout of Read&Write. To support this, KISD has created a website that offers a wide range of videos, tutorials and other training resources.



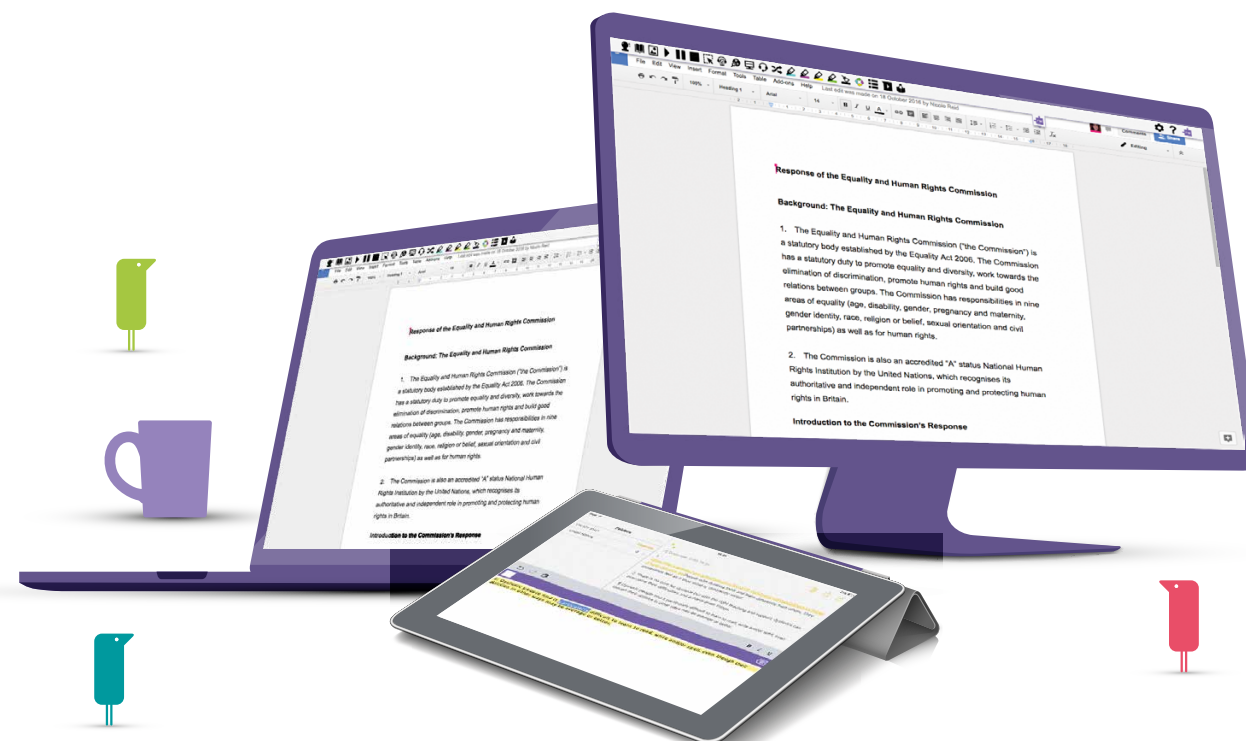


Helping in class and at home

Similarly, KISD has focused on explaining to parents how the software can help their children in class and at home. In the fall of 2017 the district held a successful introductory evening, where more than 70 parents learned how to use Read&Write for themselves. Supported by a subsequent training webinar, this led to enthusiastic KISD parents forming a Read&Write user group of their own to swap tips and information.

“Read&Write is very much for all our kids” emphasizes Jennifer Price, Director of Assessment, Accountability and Improvement at Keller ISD. “Initially we offered it to individuals needing adjustments due to dyslexia and other literacy challenges. But we quickly saw its appeal beyond Special Education – and today we’re finding it equally valuable for our most able students. We’re heavy Google classroom users: Read&Write connects seamlessly with Google Drive and G Suite for Education, so it’s great for everyone, including our ‘fast track’ students taking more advanced placement courses.”

Jennifer adds that Read&Write is equally welcomed by busy teaching staff: “they say that it saves them hours of prep time”.



Smarter use of educational resources

Read&Write has also delivered direct cost benefits through optimized use of precious human resources, as Dr Koster explains: “Whenever a student needs special accommodation for oral administration of a quiz, test, or daily assignment, we have to draft in a human to help – whether it’s staff or paraprofessionals – and that’s a big resource overhead for us to manage. With Read&Write and a pair of earbuds taking care of the oral administration for us, we can make use of those paraprofessionals much more efficiently and effectively, so that the focus of our staff can be on the actual teaching and instruction of our students.”

“If I can only keep one thing from all the different tools and technologies that we use, it would be Read&Write, It’s the way to go!”

Dr Gena Koster, Executive Director of Special Education at Keller ISD



If you would like to learn more about Read&Write and how it can help both you and your students please call or email our texthelpers:
Email: u.s.info@texthelp.com Tel: 888-248-0652