



High-dosage tutoring

The most effective method
to help students catch up
academically

Remind

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Educators have always stepped up to provide extra support to students who struggle to grasp content knowledge and skills, but the need to provide effective out-of-classroom support is greater than ever. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, **an increasing number of students are failing to perform at grade level on academic benchmarks**. While students of all backgrounds have fallen behind, students of color and from low-income families have been hardest hit.

Even before the pandemic, many states already required out-of-class support to be offered to those who needed it most. Now, schools and districts must also support an unprecedented number of students who need to catch up.

Tutoring is one way that students can receive this type of extracurricular academic boost, but not every tutoring intervention yields the same results. Given the present need, districts must provide high-quality interventions that can deliver the greatest impact.

Research shows that high-dosage tutoring is the single most effective method to help students catch up academically.

What is high-dosage tutoring?

High-dosage tutoring is an intensive approach that employs frequent one-on-one interactions or very small learning groups that tutors facilitate. Instead of focusing solely on remediation, high-dosage tutoring leverages students' preexisting knowledge and connects closely with what they learn in the classroom.

The following criteria help distinguish high-dosage tutoring from other common models of tutoring.



Frequency

Some tutoring formats are delivered irregularly or only when students' academic needs are unmet. In comparison, high-dosage tutoring occurs **at least two times a week**, sometimes daily for small-group programs. Each session typically lasts up to 60 minutes, includes no more than four students per session, and allows enough time for in-depth study and interaction about the material.



Tutor qualifications

In the high-dosage model, **tutors are trained and meet specific standards**, such as holding a bachelor's degree and demonstrating experience with the subject matter. In contrast, informal tutoring might involve student peers or volunteers who may not have adequate training or education. This is not to say that volunteers or peer tutors are always ineffective, but it may be difficult to provide consistently high-quality tutoring on a larger scale when relying on a small pool of community members.



Individualization

Another hallmark of high-dosage tutoring is its individualized methodology. By integrating classroom material into tutoring sessions, **tutors can better understand students' specific learning needs and skill levels** instead of taking a one-size-fits-all approach. This intensive tutoring style allows tutors to adapt each session to students' strengths and deficits while addressing areas needing improvement.

As with other forms of tutoring, the success of high-dosage tutoring relies on student efforts: Students will need to spend time independently reviewing material, and they might also use study guides and online platforms to guide their learning. However, high-dosage tutoring can help students focus their attention and break down large amounts of material into more manageable chunks. Qualified tutors can also help students learn study methods and suggest material to prioritize.

High-dosage tutoring is:



Frequent (at least two times a week)



One-on-one or in a small group



With qualified tutors



Individualized to student needs



How high-dosage tutoring works over time

In high-dosage tutoring, a **cyclical method** accelerates learning through continuous improvement.

1. The tutor collects diagnostic data from the student that captures their strengths, weaknesses, and foundational knowledge about the subject.

2. The diagnostic data informs the improvement goals that the tutor sets with the student. They also work together to create benchmarks to measure progress.

3. The tutor designs one-on-one instruction to supplement and follow what the student is learning in class.

4. As tutoring sessions progress, the tutor continually conducts assessments that measure the student's growth and captures areas for improvement.

5. As the student reaches each benchmark, they work with the tutor to evaluate their progress and set new goals. The tutor also makes adjustments to the instruction as necessary.



This cycle repeats throughout the semester or academic year, with continuous adjustments to the material and instructional methods.

Although the tutor acts as a facilitator during the tutoring process, they essentially work in partnership with the student.

This relationship contributes to a positive mentoring relationship and instills in the student more ownership of their learning.

What the research says about high-dosage tutoring

The research investigating intensive or high-dosage tutoring is encouraging.



There is strong empirical evidence that this type of program can lead to significant learning gains in students at various grade and ability levels, not just those who struggle academically.

One-on-one or small-group tutoring sessions that take place for 50 hours or more during a semester can be effective in enhancing learning outcomes. Studies show that high-dosage tutoring increases students' competencies in math and reading, and this intensive approach has also been shown to positively impact student test scores.

In one study, researchers at [Northwestern University](#) conducted a [randomized control trial](#) employing intensive sessions characteristic of high-dosage tutoring. Results suggested that intensive tutoring contributed to significant increases in students' test scores over the course of the year.

The model in the study

The study used a **2:1 student-to-teacher ratio** with sessions of one hour per day during standard class time. The tutoring yielded up to **165 contact hours** during the year, with 53 tutors receiving **100 hours** of training and feedback after each session.

Along with the increase in test scores, the study found that both individual and small-group sessions allowed for instruction to be customized. The findings also suggested that intensive sessions over long periods encouraged stronger mentor-student relationships to form.

Students are more likely to bond with their tutors if they can meet regularly and often.

The research on high-dosage tutoring includes several promising implications for schools and districts that might be concerned about implementing intensive tutoring programs. First, tutoring can be effective [when it occurs as part of the school day](#) instead of after school or during the summer; and second, **online or virtual tutoring** doesn't differ significantly from in-person tutoring in terms of effectiveness.

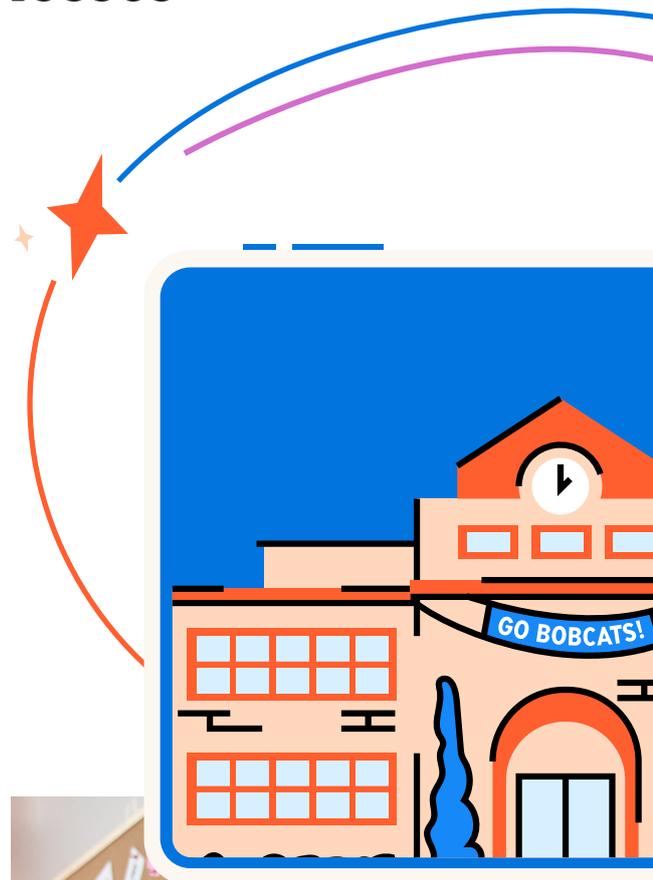
Recouping pandemic learning losses with high-dosage tutoring

Because of the educational setbacks that many students have encountered due to the pandemic, recent research has focused on the potential of high-dosage tutoring to help overcome learning losses. [Studies suggest that the intensive, individualized nature of this model shows promise.](#)

Of note is the [potential for high-dosage tutoring to help close the educational gaps exacerbated by the pandemic.](#) The students experiencing the greatest need for tutoring services include those with disabilities, those coming from families in need, and those whose primary language at home is not English. However, underserved students and their families are also least likely to be able to access, arrange, and afford intensive tutoring on their own.

[School districts are best positioned to be able to provide high-dosage tutoring to all students in need of additional academic support,](#) regardless of their means. Increasingly, [districts are seeking out companies to provide high-dosage tutoring for their communities,](#) although many find themselves constrained by cost and availability.

Some school districts have found that well-trained college students can successfully tutor middle-school students online in reading and math, but additional research is needed to determine its effectiveness. While peer or community tutors might be an option for some organizations, districts with limited resources can also consider applying for [COVID-related emergency funds from the federal government](#) to purchase high-dosage tutoring services.

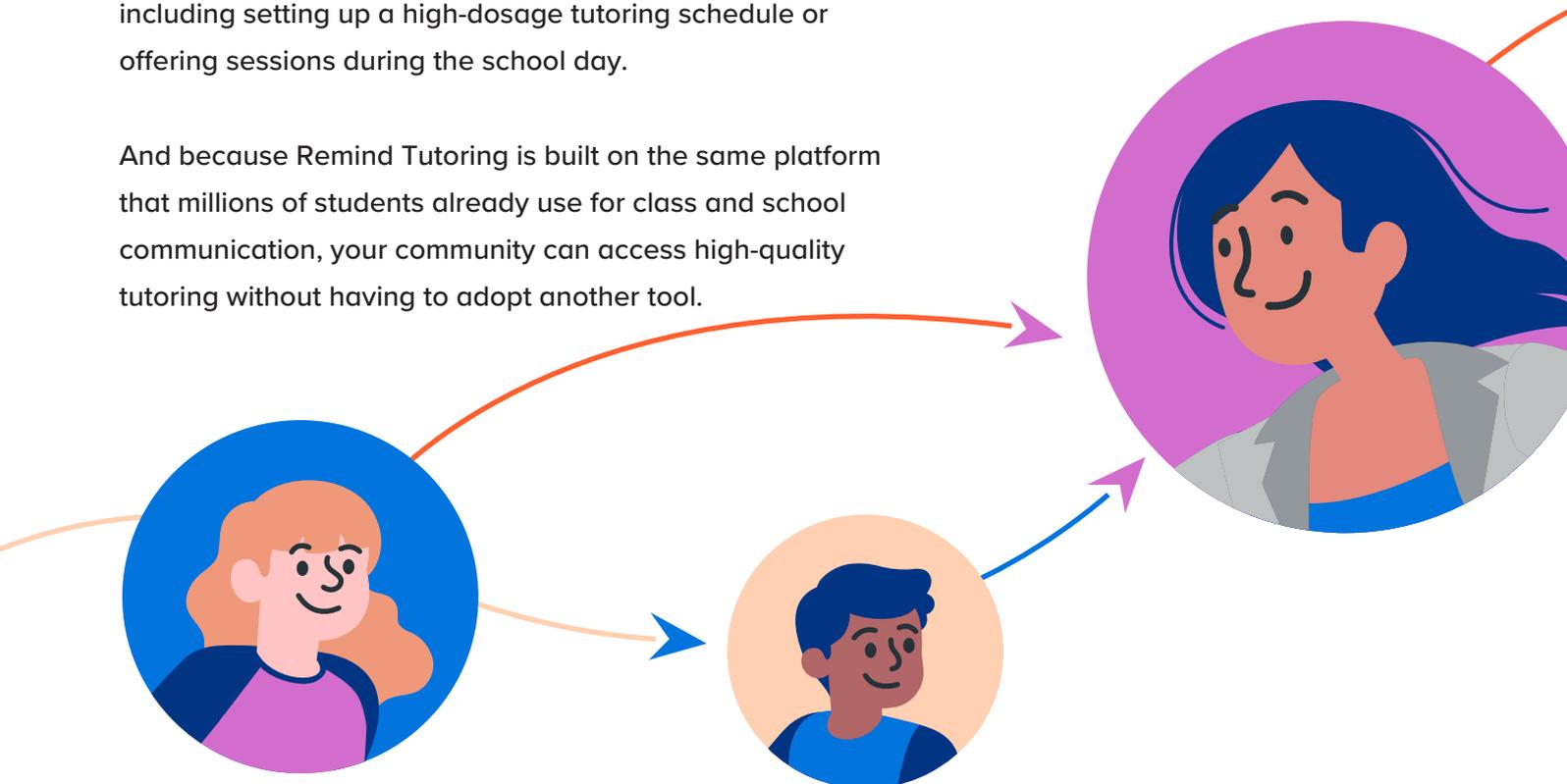


High-dosage tutoring for schools and districts with Remind

Remind Tutoring provides schools and districts with one-on-one virtual tutoring for grades 1–12. Students are matched with experienced, engaging tutors who work with them over time to supplement classroom instruction and address skills gaps. Programs can also be customized for your organization, including setting up a high-dosage tutoring schedule or offering sessions during the school day.

And because Remind Tutoring is built on the same platform that millions of students already use for class and school communication, your community can access high-quality tutoring without having to adopt another tool.

Find out more about Remind Tutoring for schools and districts [here](#).



References

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(Robinson, Kraft, Loeb, Schueler, 2021).

[Can Online Tutoring Help Schools Dig Out of a Pandemic Learning Hole?](#)
(Edweek, 2022)

[High-Dosage Tutoring Is Effective, But Expensive. Ideas for Making It Work](#)
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