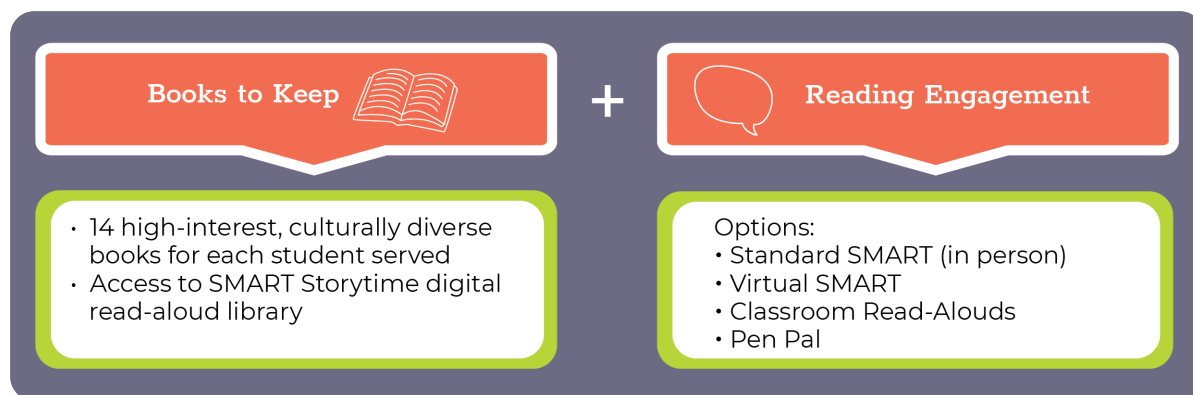




SMART Reading Services in 2021-22

For 30 years, SMART Reading has served kids in Oregon's highest need schools with two ingredients critical for literacy and learning success: access to books, and reading engagement via individualized reading time. While we've adapted our delivery methods and models given pandemic-related considerations, our partners can rely on us to continue providing these two research-based strategies for the children we serve in 2021-22 and beyond.

Our aim for 2021-22 is to be flexible and meet the needs of our communities and site partners. We are offering three fully virtual program models, and also assessing a return to in-person service to begin as early as fall for those site partners for whom that's the right fit.



Access to Books

Grounded in research that demonstrates the importance of access to books for building early literacy skills, providing children with books to keep has always been a core element of SMART Reading. Throughout the pandemic, we've safely continued to get books into the hands of the kids we serve.

Plans for 2021-22:

Over the course of the year, all students served by SMART Reading will receive 14 high-interest, culturally diverse books to keep and add to their personal library. We've streamlined a curated collection for kids to choose from.

- Students will receive books at regular intervals throughout the year.
- As an additional resource for students and families, all of our books include access to SMART Storytime, a digital library (accessible via QR code and web link) of more than 200 video read-alouds created by SMART Reading volunteers. Videos are available in both English and Spanish and can be utilized in and outside of the classroom.
- Book distribution will be offered in combination with one or more reading engagement opportunities that follow.

Reading Engagement

In addition to books, SMART Reading has always provided individualized reading support focused on building motivation, reading enjoyment and confidence. When we had to close in-person programs in March 2020, we began to develop and pilot alternative ways to provide reading support to our students. We'll provide the following virtual opportunities in the 2021-22 school year, in addition to in-person SMART when we're able to do so safely:

Virtual SMART

The closest option to our traditional in-person model, Virtual SMART is a personalized reading experience that connects one student with two volunteers for weekly reading sessions on Zoom or Google Meet.* Students and volunteers access our Virtual Storyroom, where they can select from digital books from our curated collection to read together.

Plans for 2021-22:

After successful pilots in spring 2021, we're excited to be able to offer Virtual SMART more widely in the 2021-22 school year.

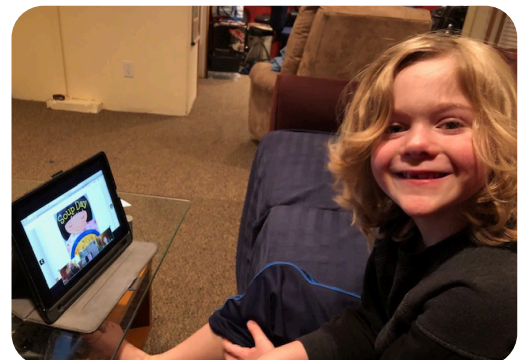
- All of our sites serving Kindergarten through third-grade students will have the opportunity to participate.
- Our goal is to serve at least 600 students statewide.
- We'll offer three, eight-week sessions throughout the year. Students will participate in one or more sessions.
- Each session will last 30 minutes.

Feedback from the Virtual SMART pilot has revealed promising findings aligned with our goals to build children's reading motivation, enjoyment and confidence:

- **Our students are having fun:** In 86% of Virtual SMART sessions, students reported having a great experience.
- **Our students are engaged:** In 89% of Virtual SMART sessions, volunteers reported that students were engaged.
- **Our volunteers are using research-backed literacy strategies.** We coach our volunteers to use dialogic reading strategies to support literacy development. We now have a real-time confirmation of which strategies our Readers are using, with at least two-thirds of our volunteers using five proven strategies during their Virtual SMART pilot sessions.

"It was a joy to hear my child interacting with his volunteers. They had him laughing and telling them stories. With some books my son read for one character and the volunteer read for the other character, which he really liked."

- SMART Reading Parent



Classroom Read-Alouds

While individualized read-alouds are the heart of SMART Reading, with kids experiencing changes to their learning environment, we're committed to providing reading support as broadly as possible. Our Classroom Read-Aloud model pairs a volunteer with a classroom for regular group read-alouds using Zoom or another virtual meeting platform.

Plans for 2021-22:

- This program will be available to PreK through third-grade classrooms.
- Teachers have flexibility to opt into this model in the way that works for their classroom. We recommend a recurring engagement with weekly reading sessions.
- The same volunteer Reader will be paired with the classroom for each session to create consistency and encourage relationship building, and a volunteer Coordinator will be present to supervise each session.

Pen Pal

The relationships that form between SMART Reading students and their volunteers are one of the most valuable aspects of our work. Our Pen Pal program connects kids and volunteers to exchange letters about what they are reading, providing students an enriching opportunity to practice their reading and writing skills, discover what they love to read, and collaborate using technology.

Plans for 2021-22:

- This program will be available to Kindergarten through third-grade classrooms.
- Teachers have flexibility to opt into this model in the way that works for their classroom. We recommend a recurring weekly, biweekly, or monthly cadence.
- The same volunteer will be paired with the student for each exchange to create consistency and encourage relationship building.

To Learn More

For more information, contact your SMART Reading staff member, or visit www.SMARTReading.org/COVID-19.

"Some schools may look at SMART Reading as a supportive program, but it's times like these when SMART Reading becomes an ESSENTIAL program."

*-Debbie Armendariz, Principal
Peninsula Elementary School*

**Our safety policies and procedures do not allow a child to be alone with one volunteer in person or online.*