

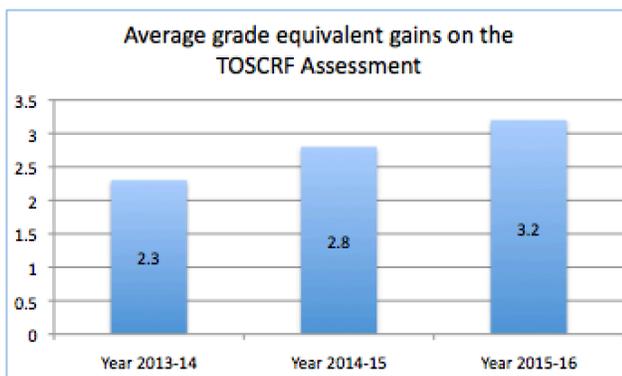
The Power of One: One Teacher's Story of Success

In 2012, Katelyn Hagan had a tough decision to make. Should she stay in her current position as a special education teacher at a middle school in Concord, North Carolina, or should she risk taking a new position that had been added to the staff roster? The new position was that of reading teacher, and it came with a vague job description and no clear process for placing students in the class. Despite all of that, Katelyn chose to accept the challenge and began a journey that would change her life as well as the lives of many students in her district. She had chosen to become one of the first Xtreme Reading teachers in North Carolina.



Although she came to the job with no prior knowledge of SIM learning strategies or the Xtreme Reading program, she worked hard, with the support of her SIM coaches, to learn the rigorous curriculum. Katelyn routinely worked long hours to meticulously review her students' work and plan her daily lessons, so she would be ready to provide each student feedback and move her classes along at a quick pace.

She also had to tackle other challenges that first year. One of the biggest problems was the school's lack of data decision rules or placement procedures for getting the right students in the class. Katelyn had to become a spokesperson in the school for developing solid data procedures for effectively placing students in interventions. Even more challenging to Katelyn was the low level of morale and motivation of her students. It took patience, a lot of nurturing, and effective use of the ACHIEVE expectations and the Possible Selves Strategy to redirect the negative feelings that her students had about learning. She convinced students that they could attain what once seemed impossible.



Without knowing it, Katelyn was building the most successful Xtreme Reading classroom in the state. Over the span of the next three years, each group of students that Katelyn taught averaged more than two years of growth on reading assessments at the end of the one-year course. The results remained consistent over time; Katelyn's students were making great gains.

Impressive data charts can be motivating for a teacher, but Katelyn maintains that it was her personal relationships with students and her desire to see each child succeed that inspired her to push forward every day. The impressive data was a result of her hard work and her personal commitment to each and every child. One of Katelyn's most memorable moments involved one of her 8th-grade students who had entered Katelyn's class at a 5th grade reading level. This student had never passed any of the yearly state reading assessments. However, when the 8th grade test scores came in at the end of the year, the results

were amazing. Not only had this student attained an incredible growth point on the reading test, she had also passed the state assessment for the first time ever with a very impressive score! That student had become a winner!

Katelyn shares that Xtreme Reading not only helped her students, but it also catapulted her forward as a professional. According to Katelyn, "It helped me achieve things with my students that I never thought possible." But more importantly, Katelyn says that the program has allowed her students to achieve things that they never thought they would achieve. "It is great to see the light bulbs go off for kids, and they finally understand how to tackle learning."

So, it is clear that one decision by one dedicated teacher can result in one huge success story for kids. That truly is the power of one!