

**Public Hearing on Esser III Use of Funds  
Special Called School Board Meeting  
August 3, 2021**

Chairman Alderton, Superintendent Hutchings, and members of the School Board:

I am Kristen Amundson, here representing EduTutorVA. It is an honor to address you tonight. I'm here to talk about addressing learning loss as students come back to school this fall.

In March of 2020 during the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak, America learned a difficult truth: The digital divide is real and it is deep.

From the first day schools were closed, educators knew that while all students would be expected to have some learning loss while they were not in the classroom, those who need direct instruction and support from a teacher the most -- low-income students, English learners, students with disabilities, and Black and Brown students -- were likely to face the most dramatic losses.

Sadly, all of those fears turned out to be true. We now know that students who were already behind when schools closed fell even farther behind. Within the last week, nationwide results of the MAP Growth test, which Alexandria administers, showed that all students struggled last year . . . and students of color or from low-income families struggled the worst. As the report notes, "Student learning has been disrupted on an unprecedented scale, exposing previously unseen and deeper inequities within our education system."

This is true even in Alexandria, where the school division was never passive in addressing student needs. You worked hard to get every student a device and access to the Internet. You made extensive outreach to families to encourage them to keep their children enrolled and engaged.

Yet one of the toughest lessons we all learned was that teachers simply could not close these learning gaps by themselves. Even the most dedicated teachers need time to recharge after a tough day and to spend time with their own families. That is where we come in.

I am one of the co-founders of a nonprofit organization, EduTutorVA, that was launched last spring specifically to address learning loss. We are a research-based program that pairs some of the K-12 students with college students who are preparing to become teachers. We provide free, online tutoring to help close their achievement gaps.

During the past school year, we were fortunate to work at William Ramsay Elementary School. I use the word "fortunate" advisedly – the principal, Mr. Routhouska, and the members of the Ramsay staff are clearly dedicated to

helping their students succeed. They welcomed our tutors as additional partners in supporting all students.

As research recommends, EduTutorVA provided tutors to work in very small groups – 2 or 3 students – on a frequent basis, typically three times per week. We paid these tutors using funds we raised. There was no charge to the school division or of course to the families.

We know we have made a difference. We are currently studying the MAP scores of the students we worked with, with the goal of designing individualized programs of instruction for next year.

We are anxious to continue our work at Ramsay ES free of charge to ACPS. However, we also see a need to expand to an additional school. We consider Hammond MS to be a logical addition so that the students might end up with four years of targeted, individualized tutoring at Ramsay and Hammond. As Principal Routhouska says, "This could change the trajectory of these students' lives."

EduTutorVA's costs, roughly \$1500 per student, are significantly lower than other high-intensity tutoring programs across the country. Adding additional schools will require our partner school divisions to support those expanded numbers. We believe that funding from the American Rescue Plan, which mandates that at least 25 percent of the total funds received be dedicated to learning loss, is an ideal source of funding for such an expansion.

We value our partnership with ACPS. We are confident that we have made a difference for some of your most vulnerable students. And we look forward to expanding EduTutorVA so that we can help even more students reach their highest potential.

Kristen Amundson

Co-Founder and Board Member

EduTutorVA

[www.edututorva.org](http://www.edututorva.org)

EduTutorVA



EduTutorVa

AN INNOVATIVE SOLUTION  
PAIRING FUTURE TEACHERS  
WITH AT-RISK STUDENTS



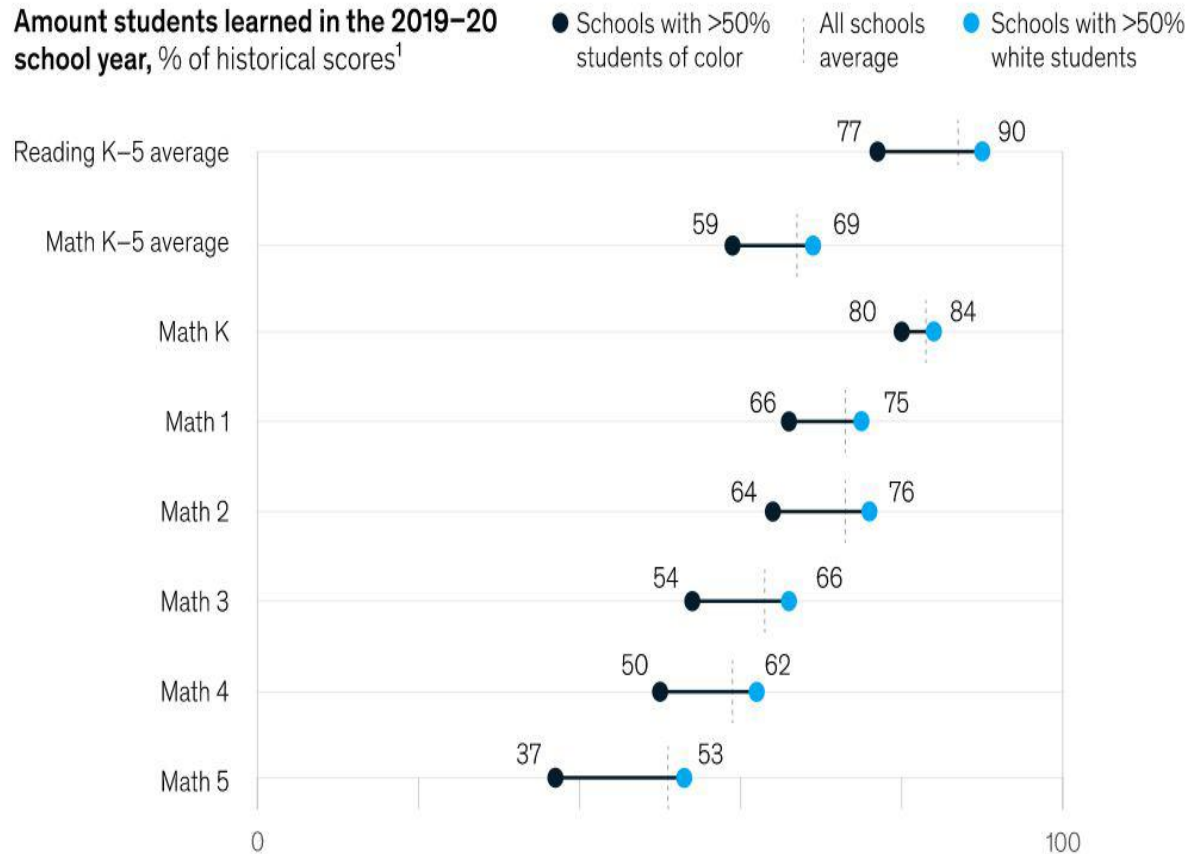
**IN AMERICA, WE NO LONGER HAVE A LEARNING GAP  
IN OUR SCHOOLS...WE HAVE A LEARNING CANYON.**

**THE MASSIVE EDUCATIONAL DISRUPTION OF THE  
COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS WIDENED THE ALREADY  
ALARMING GAPS FOR K-12 UNDERSERVED STUDENTS.**

**WE BELIEVE THAT TARGETED TUTORING CAN HELP ALL  
STUDENTS ACHIEVE AND ENSURE A MORE EQUITABLE  
RECOVERY FROM COVID-19 AND BEYOND.**

# Most students are falling behind, but students of color are faring far worse.

Amount students learned in the 2019–20 school year, % of historical scores<sup>1</sup>



- **Students on average could lose five to nine months of learning by the end of June 2021.**
- **Students of color could be six to 12 months behind, compared with four to eight months for white students.**

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- Achieve measurable academic recovery from pandemic-related learning loss and, in the future, measurable achievement to grade level in math and literacy.
  - Provide support for the social and emotional learning needs of students through a partnership with Communities in Schools
  - Small tutor-to-student ratio.
  - Frequent contact. Best practice research indicates that two to three tutoring sessions per week is optimal.




## Program Goals for Students

# Mission



Provide free individual or small-group tutoring by trained college students in core academic areas and thereby:

- Bolster the teaching workforce.
- Give future “teachers in training” a positive introduction to the profession and help develop their skill set.
- Pair tutors with students in the grade levels they eventually want to teach with an emphasis on elementary education to receive valuable hands-on experience.
- Serve a diverse community of students, including English language learners, with a significant portion of bilingual EduTutorVA tutors.

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- A photograph of a woman with dark hair, wearing a brown cardigan over a white top, leaning over a young girl with dark curly hair wearing a yellow shirt. They are both looking at a laptop screen. The woman is smiling and pointing at the screen. The background is a bright window with blinds.
- Provide paid, meaningful jobs to current college students and recent graduates.
  - Expose current college students to high impact tutoring targeting K-12 underserved students.
  - Gain on-the-job training through monthly professional development provided by experienced practitioners, teachers and university instructors.
  - Develop lesson focus and next steps to work with each individual student in specific areas of need and ability.
  - Use NWEA MAP assessment data to drive lesson planning and determine learning progression for every student.

## Program Goals for Tutors

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## Academic Year 2020-2021



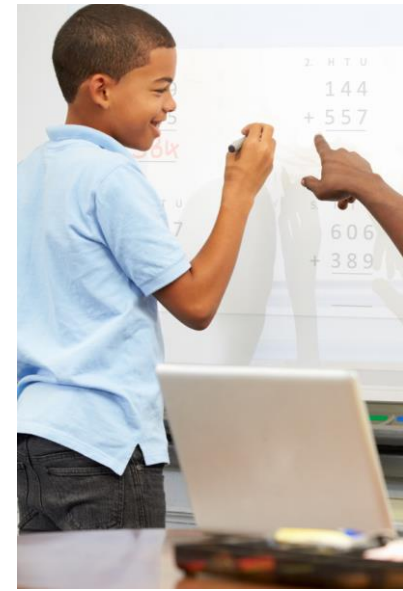
EduTutorVa is engaged in tutoring in public schools in Arlington, Alexandria and Fairfax County



Plans to double tutors and students in academic year 2021-2022



<https://www.EduTutorVa.org/>



# Jack Wood Award Recipients for 2021

## Innovation Award

*(recognizes a town-gown program that is created to meet a timely need)*

Only the second time this category has been awarded.

### George Mason University recognizes EduTutorVA:

*“The massive education disruption, caused as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, has widened the already alarming gaps for K-12 underserved students. EduTutorVA was created to provide free individual or small-group tutoring by trained college students and alumni, including those from Mason and Northern Virginia Community College. The students receive targeted support in core academic areas, and the tutors receive a positive introduction to the teaching profession. To learn more about EduTutorVA, visit <https://www.edututorva.org/>.”*



EduTutorVA Directors and Founders