

At ORIGO Education, our mission is to make learning mathematics meaningful, enjoyable, and accessible for all. We achieve this by providing curriculum resources that not only improve student learning but, importantly, create an enjoyment of mathematics so both teachers and students can build confidence in the subject. An independent research study by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) shows that our approach works.

The EdReports rubric and associated reviews provide baseline information about standards coverage, the balance of rigor, the integration of the Standards for Mathematical Practice, and some aspects of usability. To achieve long-term success, ORIGO Education believes that schools and districts should also consider the shared vision between the program and the district, the fit of the program with current needs and initiatives, and the capacity of the building or district to implement the program with integrity. We encourage committees to use the results of this review as one element of a broader exploration during an adoption process.

Why do schools and districts choose *Stepping Stones*?

Stepping Stones is typically adopted by schools or districts that share ORIGO Education's beliefs:

- Learning is a social process that requires language and discourse;
- Students who develop strong thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills grow into productive, innovative members of society;
- Content taught conceptually, and in a logical, learner-friendly sequence develops deep understanding and success; and
- Technology empowers rather than replaces educators.

These beliefs are embedded in *Stepping Stones*, a core program built from research-based practices and designed to:

- Focus on deep conceptual understanding with a Piagetian approach emphasizing visual representations;
- Reduce the "curve of forgetting" through a unique spaced teaching and practice approach to highlight connections to prior learning; and
- Accelerate student learning through deliberate development of language and discourse.

The American Institutes for Research (AIR) conducted an external independent evaluation of the *Stepping Stones* mathematics curriculum. The study was designed to estimate the effect of *Stepping Stones* on student mathematics achievement, as measured by the percentage of students who scored proficient or better on state end-of-year assessments. The results show that *Stepping Stones* schools, when implementing with sufficient professional learning, perform significantly better. [Visit our website to read the full AIR research study.](#) You can also find more information there about specific successes around readiness for algebra and the performance of special education students.

Responses to the EdReports' reports

To help schools use the EdReports' reports most effectively, we are providing additional information in response to some key findings in Gateway 3. We invite you to contact us about these items or any other questions you have about the reports.

Indicator 3J:

Assessment system provides multiple opportunities throughout the grade, course, and/or series to determine students' learning and sufficient guidance to teachers for interpreting student performance and suggestions for follow-up.

EdReports' evaluation, Grades K–6:

"The materials reviewed for *ORIGO Stepping Stones 2.0* partially meets expectations for including an assessment system that provides multiple opportunities throughout the grade, course, and/or series to determine students' learning and sufficient guidance to teachers for interpreting student performance and suggestions for follow-up."

"Summative assessments, such as Check-ups and Quarterly tests, provide an answer key with aligned standards. Performance tasks include an answer key and a 2-point rubric, which provides examples of student responses and how they would score on the rubric. A student achievement recording spreadsheet for each module learning target is available that includes Individual Achievement of Learning Targets for this Module, Whole Class Achievement of Learning Targets for this Module, and Individual Achievement of Learning Targets for Modules 1 to 12. While scoring guidance is included within the materials, there is no guidance for teachers to interpret student performance or suggestions for teachers that could guide follow-up support for students."

ORIGO Education's response to the evaluation:

Within the *Stepping Stones* implementation planning and training, the ORIGO team guides teachers through the assessment tools within the program and gives guidance for interpreting and using assessment data throughout the school year. We choose to personalize this information within program implementation so the work can be coordinated with other tools and resources the district might use.

Indicator 3O:

Materials provide varied approaches to learning tasks over time and variety in how students are expected to demonstrate their learning with opportunities for students to monitor their learning.

EdReports' evaluation, Grades K–6:

“The materials reviewed for *ORIGO Stepping Stones 2.0* provide various approaches to learning tasks over time and variety in how students are expected to demonstrate their learning, but do not provide opportunities for students to monitor their learning.”

ORIGO Education's response to the evaluation:

We encourage teachers to use local tools and systems they have in place for students, across all disciplines, to monitor their learning. Within the *Stepping Stones* implementation planning and training, the ORIGO team partners with the local team to ensure *Stepping Stones* fits student learning and monitoring needs.

Indicator 3S:

Materials provide guidance to encourage teachers to draw upon student home language to facilitate learning.

EdReports' evaluation, Grades K–6:

“The materials reviewed for *ORIGO Stepping Stones 2.0* do not provide guidance to encourage teachers to draw upon student home language to facilitate learning.”

“While there are supports in place to help students who read, write and/or speak in a language other than English, there is no evidence of intentionally promoting home language and knowledge. Home language is not specifically identified as an asset to engage students in the content nor is it purposefully connected within mathematical contexts.”

ORIGO Education's response to the evaluation:

We provide guidance for home language and culture within the *Stepping Stones* implementation planning and training, where we develop personalized plans for each partner district. This allows the work to coordinate with district initiatives and needs, providing a unified system of support for students and families.

Indicator 3X:

Materials include or reference digital technology that provides opportunities for teachers and/or students to collaborate with each other, when applicable.

EdReports' evaluation, Grades K–6:

"The materials reviewed for *ORIGO Stepping Stones 2.0* do not include or reference digital technology that provides opportunities for teachers and/or students to collaborate with each other, when applicable."

"While teacher implementation guidance is included for Fundamentals games and Flare online tools, there is no platform where teachers and students collaborate with each other. There is an opportunity for teachers to send feedback to students through graded assignments."

ORIGO Education's response to the evaluation:

We believe discourse and collaboration are most effective in person, particularly for elementary learners. When virtual collaboration is appropriate, we encourage teachers to integrate *Stepping Stones* resources into their existing collaborative tools, supporting a more coherent experience for young learners. The program also provides an optional integration with *CueThink*. This problem-solving resource supports both synchronous and asynchronous collaboration.

ORIGO Education team members welcome the opportunity to provide additional information about how *Stepping Stones* addresses important aspects of elementary mathematics teaching and learning, both those addressed by the EdReports' rubric and those not addressed by this rubric. We look forward to working with schools and districts to determine if *Stepping Stones* is the elementary mathematics program that most effectively meets their needs.