

Alongside School Mental Health Solution Earns ESSA Level III Certification

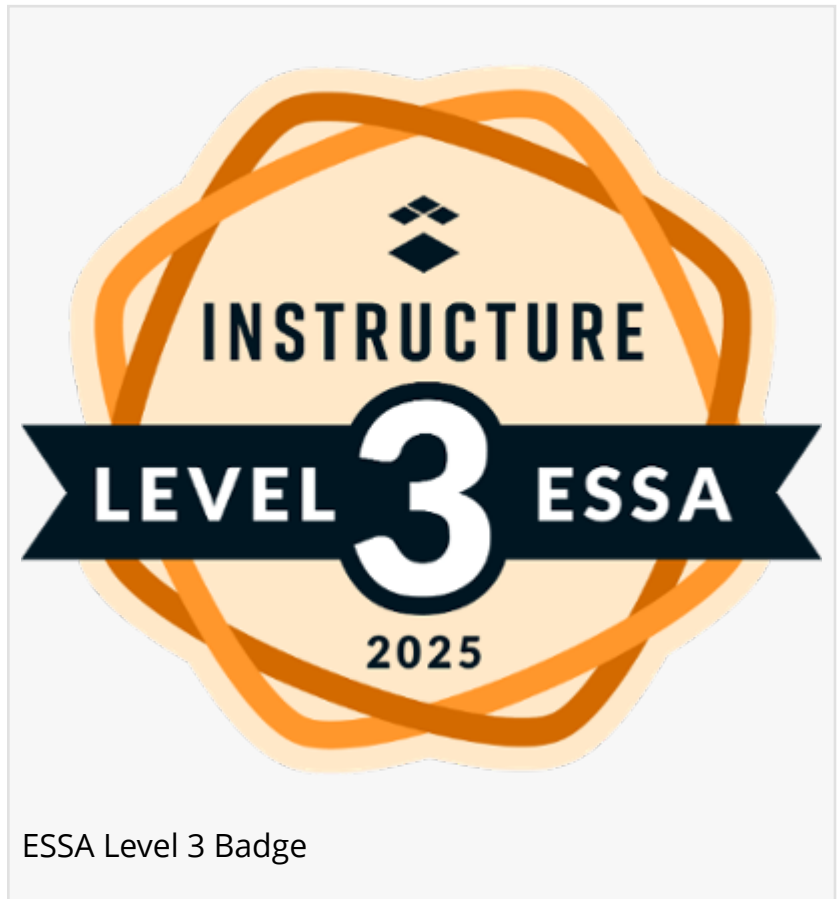
A recent independent study from Northwestern University confirms Alongside's positive effects on student mental health

SEATTLE, WA, UNITED STATES, February 27, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Alongside](#), an AI-assisted student support platform for K-12 schools, has earned Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Level III certification, supported by "promising evidence" of its impact on student mental health and well-being.

"Supporting the social-emotional growth and mental health of students has never been more crucial," said Dr. Elsa Friis, Head of Mental Health at Alongside. "With Alongside, schools and districts can provide an effective, evidence-based solution for prevention and early intervention that is backed by rigorous research."

The ESSA evidence standards, which include four levels of evidence, help school districts choose interventions that are shown through robust research to improve student outcomes. Alongside's [ESSA Level III certification](#) confirms that Alongside is supported by a properly designed and implemented correlational study, statistically controlling for selection bias, and showing a statistically significant positive effect on student mental health.

Alongside worked with [Instructure](#), a third-party educational research company, to review an independent study conducted by the Northwestern University Lab for Scalable Mental Health. The open pilot evaluation, which was conducted from January to March 2024, examined the trajectories of mental health challenges and well-being among middle and high school students across 5 different schools who used the Alongside platform over a 3 month period.





This rigorous research shows the significant positive impact brief mental health intervention tools like Alongside can have on the well-being of students."

*Dr. Jessica Schleider,
Northwestern University*

The study found that, across all students, overall mental health challenges significantly decreased after students used the app for one month, and hopelessness significantly decreased after 3 months of use. In students with elevated stress, using Alongside was correlated with a reduction in stress after both 1 and 3 months of use. Similarly, 25% of users with elevated anxiety saw a clinically significant reduction in anxiety after only one month of use. Alongside is currently conducting a quasi-experimental study to further validate these promising initial results.

The study was conducted across both rural and urban school districts with a >90% low-income BIPOC population. "We found no differences across age, gender or language, which is incredibly exciting as we want to ensure Alongside resonates with and is effective for all students," says Jay Goyal, CEO of Alongside.

"This rigorous research shows the significant positive impact brief mental health intervention tools like Alongside can have on the well-being of adolescents," said Dr. Jessica Schleider, lead researcher and founder of Northwestern University's Lab for Scalable Mental Health. "Earning ESSA Level III certification is a testament to the effectiveness of Alongside's thoughtfully designed platform and its ability to support students in a meaningful way."

In 2024, Alongside partnered with Instructure to complete a foundational logic model in alignment with ESSA Level IV requirements. Alongside is now working with Instructure on a study designed to meet the standards of ESSA Level II, demonstrating the company's ongoing commitment to research and moving along the ESSA continuum as it builds its evidence base.

About Alongside: Alongside is a mental health platform that provides tier 1 mental health prevention and early intervention support to students in grades 4-12. Alongside is self-directed and available 24/7 in 36 languages, allowing students to get the help they need when they need it. Students can learn over 125 clinical strategies that are foundational for building mental health resilience across social, emotional, and behavioral domains. In addition, students receive immediate support through engaging with Alongside's chatbot and in-app resources, created by a team of doctoral mental health experts and directly informed by evidenced-based clinical models. The founders of Alongside previously founded Actively Learn, a K-12 digital curriculum company which was acquired by McGraw Hill in 2021.

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