



# HIGH-DOSAGE TUTORING

*Saga Education*

Saga's high-dosage tutoring model strives for increased persistence and achievement in math by leveraging adult-learner relationships and in-a-school-day, personalized tutoring sessions.

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## OVERVIEW

Saga's mission is to help states and districts to strengthen student confidence and achievement in math—a leading cause of high school dropout. Saga Direct's model for high-dosage tutoring prioritizes the academic and socioemotional needs of students in under-resourced schools by ensuring all students feel a sense of belonging and achievement. This model personalizes math intervention or acceleration through rigorous tutoring sessions scheduled during the school day. Highly trained tutors, called Fellows, act as mentors and work closely with teachers and families to support student growth within and beyond the classroom.

Saga Direct's high-dosage tutoring model is provided to 6,000+ students, built within the school day. Saga's Widespread Impact division also provides comprehensive services to schools and districts: a standards-aligned math curriculum, a specialized platform for remote tutoring, as well as support for implementation, fidelity, training of supervisors and tutors, onsite inspections, and program management. With Saga, students can receive up to 150 hours of personalized instruction as part of their school day—and that tutoring time yields up to up to two-and-a-half years of academic gain in just one academic year. [▶ Saga: See Our Story](#)



## What Makes This Model Innovative?



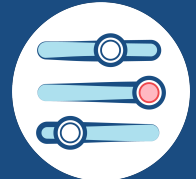
### High Expectations with Unlimited Opportunities

Saga Direct's model works best when it is offered to large cohorts of students, such as whole grade levels or content areas. This ensures that academic support is normalized, removing the negative stigma around tutoring.



### Connection & Community

Saga's Fellows are mentors who work to build strong relationships with their students. Fellows often become a vital part of learning communities by remaining consistent, connecting with parents, training with teachers, and often attending school events.



### Customization

Saga's math curriculum is tailored to meet the specific needs of every learner. Fellows work closely with content teachers to align on objectives, and then tailor the Saga tutoring materials to ensure students receive personalized academic support and are appropriately challenged.

## DESIGN

### Goals

Saga Direct focuses on leveling up on math skills and content aligned to grade-level standards in order to strengthen students' sense of belonging in school.

#### Math Learning & Achievement

Students who consistently participate in Saga will show growth and higher achievement on the internal foundational skills assessments (FSAs), as well as perform dramatically better on end-of-course standardized assessments than in previous years and non-Saga students.

#### Academic Persistence & Confidence

Students gain confidence in their ability to overcome challenging academic programming well past middle and high school.

#### Inspire Future Educators

A significant number of tutors who partner with Saga will shift their career plans to become full-time educators.

## Experience

Saga's model consists of daily, in-school math tutoring sessions that are personalized, help build confidence in academic achievement, and are supported by the power of human relationships. In addition to a traditional, in-person high-dosage tutoring model, Saga Direct also offers blended and fully online tutoring programs. Though the modalities and student-to-Fellow ratio differ across models, the key components described below remain the same. [► How it works](#)

### Tutoring Sessions

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Saga's tutoring sessions are embedded into the school day and must take place at least three times a week for a minimum of 30 minutes. Where possible, Fellows meet with their tutees daily in groups of two to four students that remain constant for the academic year. Fellows plan and execute student-centered learning activities focused on remediation or acceleration of rigorous, grade-level math content. Regular and routine learning activities include:

- An exploratory curriculum designed to heighten mastery, confidence, and critical thinking in all students.
  - Review of, and support with, class content or difficult homework. Students can bring specific problems they struggled with in class, to work through with their Fellow and peers.
  - Student-led discussions and other collaboration structures where student thinking, voice, and problem-solving is centered.
  - Informal assessments and checks for understanding—to diagnose progress and mastery.
  - Timely feedback on transferable thinking and problem-solving skills during and after sessions.
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### Relationship Building & Family Communication

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Fellows and their student groups develop a trusting and cohesive group dynamic to support each other in and outside of tutoring sessions. Building trust and a sense of belonging can take the following forms:

- Fellows carry out formal and informal check-ins throughout the day in advisory sessions and during recess, lunch, or other flexible time during the day.
  - Fellows build a strong connection with teachers and families to support students' academic and non-academic goals and progress.
  - Fellows attend their students' extracurricular activities to show support and build trust with the community.
  - Fellows work closely and productively with school-based educators to best collaborate on lessons and tutoring materials.
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## Supporting Structures

Undertaking high-dosage tutoring requires careful consideration and planning to ensure key supporting structures are in place—Saga founder offers a 4+2+1 Systems Perspective to evaluating a school or district's conditions for implementation. [► 4+2+1 Systems Perspective](#)

**Saga provides a curriculum where session materials are personalized and that offers various instructional strategies and include standards-aligned assessments.**



### **CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, & ASSESSMENT**

Saga prioritizes both breadth and depth in its math curriculum in order to best align with the standards of different states and different students' needs. Lessons provide Fellows with instructional strategies, guiding questions, prompts, and practice problems to help ensure rigor. [Sample Lesson Plan](#) Anyone can access a bank of resources for free by signing up on the website. [Math Curriculum](#)

To best personalize content and skills for each student, Fellows are trained to choose lessons that are the best fit for their small groups. There is no specific sequence or order to follow as the curriculum is best implemented when aligned closely to the core teachers' scope and sequence. And, for any and all Fellow-related needs, a remote curriculum team is available to answer questions and receive feedback.

Formal and informal assessments are an integral part of assessing whether additional supports are working. Saga administers internal foundational skills assessments (FSAs) and has programmatic goals related to student performance and growth. The curriculum also provides formal and informal assessment types, such as tickets to leave, practice problems, and checks of understanding. These are administered routinely in sessions.

*Separate from the Saga Direct offering, Saga Education also offers one year's worth of free math tutorial content on their website to anyone interested.*

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**Saga's high-dosage tutoring model should be offered to large cohorts of students in order to best support the normalization of tutoring across an entire community.**



### **SCHOOL COMMUNITY & CULTURE**

Saga's high-dosage tutoring model proactively offers the program to a set range of students (e.g., to an entire grade level, to all students taking Algebra I, or to all students enrolled in 9th-grade math) to normalize receiving accelerations or interventions in school. This practice offsets any stigma around tutoring and provides a chance to build a culture around persistence in math.

Saga also supports schools to ensure students, teachers, school leaders, and parents are invested and engaged in the program. Program managers share achievement scores with teachers and school leaders, Fellows call home and provide progress reports and celebrate successes alongside families, and teachers and Fellows communicate around learnings about their students and content alignment. Fellows also become an integral part of the learning community and attend all school, departmental, and grade-team meetings.



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## **Saga provides hands-on coaching and professional development to all Fellows.**



### **ADULT ROLES, HIRING, & LEARNING**

Fellows are school-based tutors that lead small-group tutoring sessions, support students in and outside of the classroom, and collaborate with teachers and parents for student growth and success. Fellows also receive training around social-emotional support and mentoring in relation to building relationships with students, how to be an appropriate source of support, or how to provide critical and thoughtful feedback. [Positive Educator-Student Relationships](#)

Saga manages the recruitment, hiring, and training of full-time AmeriCorps members through an internal recruitment team. Fellows can also be career-changing professionals or recent college graduates who are inspired by young people and want to support innovative and equitable education efforts. [Why We Serve](#) [Service Year with Saga](#)

Site directors oversee Saga's high-dosage tutoring school sites and act as liaisons between the organization and schools. They oversee Fellows pre- and in-service training and coaching year-round, deliver professional development, observe and provide feedback on tutoring implementation, and support with content planning and instruction. [Coach Overview](#)



### **SCHEDULE & USE OF TIME**

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## **Students' schedules must reflect consistent full-period sessions that take place at least three times a week.**

Scheduling is an important consideration for school leaders when constructing the master schedule. Saga recommends students experience at least 45 minutes or more of tutoring three times a week for the greatest gains.

The model is rooted in ease and access, so by incorporating it into a student's schedule, it ensures students can attend without outside time commitments and builds practical routines and consistency. These sessions can be held in any open classrooms or flexible learning spaces in the school building.



### **FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

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## **Saga provides training and support for Fellows around responsibly integrating into school communities and engaging meaningfully with families.**

Teachers, parents, Fellows, and site directors—as well as school leadership—must be aligned and invested to ensure Saga's high-dosage tutoring model results in improved levels of student achievement and persistence.

Integrating Fellows into the community and school culture is essential. Fellows are trained to communicate directly with their students' families to

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provide students progress reports. [Serving Communities](#)

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**With Saga's support, schools must plan to allocate funding for this model in the short and long-term.**



**BUDGET & OPERATIONS**

Saga's high-dosage tutoring model prioritizes getting high results at a relatively low cost. Saga encourages schools and districts to plan around short-term funding streams such as federal grants, but also plans concretely for sustained long-term funding. Currently, tutoring programs (like Saga) can be funded through Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act, and receive additional funding support through Title IV, Part A.

*Their Saga Consult services can provide schools with customized budgets and funding planning.*

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## IMPLEMENTATION

### Supports Offered

[Saga Education](#) offers a variety of supports to implement high-dosage tutoring in your classroom, school, or district. In addition to the in-person model described in this entry, Saga also offers blended and fully online tutoring programs.

#### Saga Direct

*Cost Associated*



This is Saga's turnkey service tailored specifically to your school community and students' academic needs. Saga Direct offers:

- Curriculum and assessments
- School-based site directors that coach tutors and support day-to-day implementation
- Recruitment, hiring, and training of Fellows
- Program and data management
- Continuous learning and improvement support measures.

*Saga Direct incorporates the offerings below as part of its implementation with school partners. Each of these can also be bought or used separately.*

[Learn More](#)

#### Saga Math Curriculum

*Free*



Saga offers its math curriculum free of charge to interested districts.

[Learn More](#)

## Saga Consult

*Cost Associated*



Saga Consult provides stand-alone advisory and consultancy services to schools, districts, or states seeking to implement Saga's high-dosage tutoring model—whether in schools, blended, or fully online. Saga Consult offers:

- Program design
- Curriculum & assessments
- Pre-service leader and tutor training
- In-service leader and tutor coaching
- Onsite checks for fidelity of implementation.

[!\[\]\(a03a7eb2f4046e1d3c76772003e549ea\_img.jpg\) Setting Up Your Program for Success Guide](#)

### [Learn More](#)

## Saga Coach

*Free*



An online learning platform for Fellow onboarding and training. The virtual platform includes the following:

- Training for Fellows on relationship building, creating, and delivering rigorous tutoring sessions, and teaching to small groups online
- Self-paced lessons with built-in reflections.

### [Sign Up](#)

## Saga Connect

*Cost Associated*



Saga's unique online tutoring platform—created specifically for the integration of math tutoring into remote learning. This platform features:

- Audiovisual capabilities
- Chat features
- Math manipulatives
- Shared whiteboard space
- Function & expression keys
- Embedded Saga math tutoring curriculum

### [Learn More](#)

## Reach

**7,000**

Students

**59**

High schools

**80%**

Students identify  
as BIPOC

**35%**

Fellows identify  
as BIPOC

## Impact

Schools implementing Saga show overall positive academic gains as well as improvement in non-academic indicators, such as attendance. [Urban Labs, 2021](#)

- Students who participated in Saga's tutoring program experienced a 63% decrease in math course failure.
- Students who participated in Saga's tutoring program experienced a 25% decrease in non-math course failure.
- The program's high-dose tutoring provides an additional 1–2.5 years' worth of additional math gain per academic year.
- Implementing Saga is shown to increase student attendance by 18 days per academic year.
- Students continued to see persistent gains in math test scores and GPA a year or two after tutoring.

## Contact

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Vice President for District Partnerships

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## RESOURCES



### [See Our Story](#)

This video is an overview of how Saga's mission and purpose impact young people and their learning.



### [How It Works](#)

Watch a Saga Fellow speak about the transformative tutoring model, and its impacts on young people, in a TED-style talk at the University of Chicago.

### **The 4+2+1 Perspective**

At Saga Education, we are on a mission to eliminate educational inequity, by providing personalized and consistent tutorials for students, resulting in youth gaining confidence and academic strength.

Research has shown that individualized tutoring can help students who have fallen behind catch up. However, successfully deploying a tutoring program within a school or school district can be incredibly challenging without proper planning and consideration.

The 4+2+1 Perspective: Purpose

### [4+2+1 Perspective](#)

This blog post was written by Saga's CEO and founder and provides a framework for sustaining a HDT program.

### Nana's Lemonade

This activity aligns with unit M6.1 Ratios and Rates.

6.RP.A.3 Use ratio and rate reasoning to solve real-world and mathematical problems, e.g., by reasoning about tables of equivalent ratios, tape diagrams, double number line diagrams, or equations.

Purpose: Apply equivalent ratios to create recipes that lead to the same taste.

Introduction:

If possible, show students the first video on <https://www.101us.com/3043>.

If it is not possible to show the video, show students the image below. Tell them that Nana adds 1 lemon wedge to a small glass of water. She then fills up a large container with water and wants to know how many lemon wedges she should use to make it taste the same as the lemon water in the small glass.



## Nana's Lemonade Stand

Explore a tutor-facing lesson plan annotated for instruction for 6th-grade math on ratios and rates.

### Saga Curriculum Resources Saga Consult

[Asynchronous Saga Curriculum Training](#)

6th Grade

7th Grade

Algebra

Geometry

Additional Resources

Foundational Skills

[Asynchronous Saga Curriculum Training](#)

Curriculum Asynchronous Training Session - to learn more about the Saga curriculum and how it is delivered in tutorials, take a look at this asynchronous training session.

6th Grade

## Saga Curriculum

Saga's math curriculum can be accessed for free by signing up on their website.

## How does a positive educator-student relationship impact the learner?

When it comes to tutoring young learners, educator-student relationships matter.

For Latress Strickland, a Saga fellow in Chicago, honesty is everything. To create close, successful relationships with students, she stresses the importance of "telling kids see who you are," and in turn earning their trust. This kind of vulnerability is essential for tutors to connect with their students on more than an academic level and to help students feel more comfortable around their tutors. Young learners in this kind of environment not only feel comfortable, but also confident—and confident students ask the questions that turn them into successful learners.

Latress also emphasizes the importance of making students feel safe to voice confusion and try something even if it doesn't work. In her small tutoring pods, Latress makes an effort to call on students who may be confused. She does not do this to shame them for misunderstanding a problem, but

## How does a positive educator-student relationship impact the learner?

This blog post explains why near-peer mentorship is so impactful.

### Martin Luther King Day 2021 - Why We Serve

[fellow spotlight, community service](#)

Dr. King recognized the power of service. He famously said, "Everyone can be great because everybody can serve".

Several fellows shared why they serve with Saga Education and what a service year means to them. We are so inspired by our fellows who dedicate a year, and in some cases several years to serve their communities and fight educational inequities!

Thank you, fellows, for your ongoing commitment and greatness today, and every day.

#### Why do you serve?

"I had some very talented, impactful educators in my life during my k-12 education who really helped me love school and learn more than math. I know because almost both school and education is a very important factor to me."

## MLK 2020: Why We Serve

This blog post spotlights Fellow quotes that exemplify just how impactful and meaningful working with Saga can be.

### Why You Should Consider a Service Year with Saga

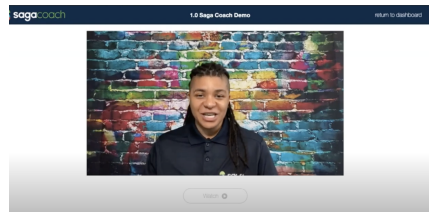
In the United States, nearly 11 million children, roughly 1 in 7, are experiencing poverty. And the social and economic obstacles faced outside the classroom have a profound impact on a child's academic performance and wellbeing within it.

At Saga Education, we believe the potential to achieve is universal and every student is capable of shaping a story of success – in school, and in life. As things now stand, however, not every student has a fair chance to see it.

Many factors affect student learning, but a fundamental challenge is the mismatch between where students are academically and what is being taught in their classroom. At Saga Education we address

## Why You Should Consider a Year of Service with Saga

This blog post answers commonly asked questions for those interested in learning more about whether Saga is the right choice for them.



## Overview of Saga Coach

This video provides an overview of the features of Saga Coach, Saga's online training platform.

### Serving Their Cities

[community service](#)



## Serving Their Cities

This blog post provides vignettes into how Saga Fellows become a part of the communities through service and volunteering.

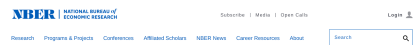


### SETTING UP YOUR PROGRAM FOR SUCCESS GUIDE

Part 1- District

## Saga Consult: Setting Up Your Program for Success Guide

This toolkit and guide provides key information and strategies for schools to consider when starting a high-dosage tutoring program in their district.



### Not Too Late: Improving Academic Outcomes Among Adolescents

Jonathan Guryan, Jens Ludwig, Monica P. Bhatt, Philip J. Cook, Jonathan M.V. Davis, Kenneth Dodge, George Farkas, Roland G. Fryer Jr., Susan Mayer, Harold Pollack & Laurence Steinberg

## Not Too Late: Improving Academic Outcomes Among Adolescents

This Urban Labs report underscores the positive impact of Saga's HDT program on children in Chicago public schools.

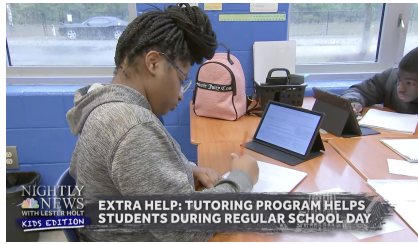
### Could Tutoring Be the Best Tool for Fighting Learning Loss?

In-school tutoring is not a silver bullet. But it may help students and schools reduce some pandemic-related slides in achievement.

Give the article

### [NYT: Could Tutoring Be the Best Tool for Fighting Learning Loss?](#)

This New York Times article highlights high-dosage tutoring as a powerful intervention to combat learning loss.



### [NBC News: Tutoring program helps students get ahead during the school day](#)

This NBC news video shares the impact of Saga at R.B. Stall High School in South Carolina.