TomoClub

CASE STUDY

Future-Ready Skills Curriculum at Innovation Education Management Charter Schools

How a California homeschooling charter network used TomoClub's game-based social-emotional learning curriculum to develop leadership, innovation, and emotional intelligence across 117 students in three schools.

Parameter	Detail
School Network	Innovation Education Management (IEM)
Schools	South Sutter Charter • Ocean Grove Charter • Sky Mountain Charter
Location	California (Multi-County)
School Type	WASC-Accredited Homeschooling Digital Charter (K–12)
Program	TomoClub Future-Ready Skills Curriculum
Duration	September 2023 – June 2024 (Full School Year)
Students	117 Licensed • 72 Monthly Active Users • Grades 3–8
Sessions	193 Sessions Delivered Across 9 Cohorts

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1. Executive Summary

During the 2023–2024 school year, Innovation Education Management (IEM) — a network of three WASC-accredited homeschooling digital charter schools in California — partnered with TomoClub to implement a full-year Future-Ready Skills curriculum for students in Grades 3 through 8. The program used TomoClub's multiplayer, game-based approach to build social-emotional learning (SEL) competencies in a population of students who, by the nature of their homeschool model, had limited structured opportunities for peer collaboration.

Over the course of 193 sessions delivered across 9 cohorts, 117 licensed students engaged in weekly educator-hosted gameplay sessions designed around the CASEL framework. The results were striking: student competency scores in Leadership, Innovation, and Emotional Intelligence grew by approximately 80% from the first session to the last. Every guardian surveyed reported noticing growth in their child's behavior and SEL skills, and 100% expressed interest in re-enrolling their child for the following year.

This case study documents the full implementation — from the challenges IEM faced, to how the program was deployed, to the measurable outcomes and guardian testimonials that emerged. It is intended to help other charter schools, homeschool networks, and district leaders understand what a TomoClub deployment looks like in practice and the kind of impact they can expect.

117	193	~80%	100%
Student Licenses	Sessions Delivered	Competency Growth	Guardian Satisfaction

2. About IEM Charter Schools

Innovation Education Management (IEM) operates three charter schools across California: South Sutter Charter School, Ocean Grove Charter School, and Sky Mountain Charter School. Together, they serve families in over a dozen counties spanning from Sacramento and the Central Valley to the Bay Area and Southern California.

IEM is a homeschooling digital charter network — a model where students learn primarily from home, and parents select instructional programming from a list of school-approved vendors. This parent-choice curriculum approach means every tool and program used by a family is a deliberate decision, vetted and approved by the school. IEM's schools are WASC-accredited, NCAA-approved, and built around individualized learning plans.

This model gives families enormous flexibility in how their children learn. But it also creates a structural challenge: students learning independently at home have far fewer opportunities for the kind of collaborative, peer-to-peer experiences that build social-emotional skills. IEM recognized this gap and actively sought a vendor that could deliver structured SEL programming in a format that worked for remote, digital learners.

The Three Schools

School	Region Served
South Sutter Charter School	Butte, Colusa, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, Yuba counties
Ocean Grove Charter School	Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Benito, Santa Clara, San Mateo counties
Sky Mountain Charter School	San Bernardino, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside counties

3. The Challenge

IEM's homeschool model is designed for academic flexibility and family autonomy — qualities that parents value deeply. But those same qualities create a tension when it comes to social-emotional development. The core skills that employers, colleges, and communities demand — communication, collaboration, emotional regulation, conflict resolution, empathy — are inherently relational. They develop through practice with peers, not through worksheets or videos watched alone.

IEM's leadership identified several specific challenges:

- **Limited peer interaction.** Students working from home had few structured opportunities to practice collaboration, giving and receiving feedback, or navigating group dynamics.
- **The engagement gap.** Traditional SEL curricula — worksheets, slide decks, video lessons — showed poor engagement and low retention among IEM's digital learners. Static content simply did not hold attention or translate into real behavioral change.
- **Scalable, remote delivery.** Any solution needed to work across three schools and multiple grade bands, delivered entirely via video conferencing to students at home, without requiring specialized hardware or extensive teacher training.
- **Measurable outcomes.** As a parent-choice network, IEM needed to show families — and their own leadership — clear data that any vendor was delivering real, measurable growth in student competencies.
- **Ethical screen time.** Parents were already concerned about how much time their children spent on devices. Any new program needed to represent purposeful, educator-led screen time — not another app competing for a child's attention at home.

4. Program Overview: What We Implemented

TomoClub's Future-Ready Skills curriculum was selected as an approved vendor within IEM's parent-choice model. The program is a game-based, CASEL-aligned SEL curriculum designed for Grades 3–12. It uses multiplayer collaborative games — hosted live by trained educators — to develop leadership, innovation, and emotional intelligence through structured gameplay and guided debriefing.

The program is not an app students play alone at home. Every session is educator-hosted, meaning a trained TomoClub facilitator (or a school teacher who has completed TomoClub's professional development) leads the gameplay live via video conference. Students join from their home devices — typically Chromebooks — and participate in real-time, multiplayer interactions with their peers.

What Makes It Different

Multiplayer by design. Every game requires collaboration and active communication between players. Students cannot succeed individually — they must work together, communicate strategies, give directions, manage frustration, and celebrate others' contributions. This is a fundamentally different experience from individual worksheets or passive video content.

Educator-hosted, not self-serve. Sessions are not available for unsupervised play at home. A trained educator manages each session, using pause/resume controls, running debrief discussions, and connecting gameplay to real-life SEL concepts. This ensures every minute of screen time is purposeful and pedagogically grounded.

Research-backed framework. The curriculum is built on the CASEL framework for Social-Emotional Learning and aligns with ELA Common Core standards (critical thinking and problem solving). Each of the 25 weekly sessions has a full lesson plan, learning objectives, and debrief questions.

Data-driven reporting. TomoClub collects three layers of data: student surveys (formative and summative assessments of self-perception and growth), session feedback (quick 5-question checks after every session), and correlation data (connecting engagement to attendance, academic performance, and behavior referrals). Schools receive semester-end reports with competency growth charts, guardian survey results, and operational analytics.

Guardian Snapshots. After every session, guardians receive a "Snapshot" — a brief summary of what their child worked on, how they engaged, and what skills were practiced. IEM's guardians consistently praised these snapshots as one of the most valued features of the program.

5. How We Deployed the Program

Deployment at a Glance

Parameter	Detail
Total Student Licenses	117
Active Cohorts	9
Total Sessions Delivered	193
Monthly Active Users	72
Duration	September 2023 – June 2024 (10 months)
Grade Bands	Grades 3–5 (50 students) and Grades 6–8 (41 students)
Delivery Format	Remote, educator-hosted via video conferencing
Session Frequency	Weekly (with seasonal variations)
Facilitators	TomoClub-trained experts hosted all sessions

Devices	Student Chromebooks (no special hardware required)

Implementation Timeline

September 2023 — Onboarding. Cohorts were set up on the TomoClub dashboard. Students completed pre-assessments to establish baseline competency scores in Leadership, Innovation, and Emotional Intelligence. Guardians were introduced to the program and the Snapshot reporting system.

October – November — Core Curriculum. Weekly sessions launched across all 9 cohorts. Students began with foundational topics: class expectations and agreements, self-awareness and belongingness, effective communication, and team building. Games like The Crisis Crew, The First Settlers, and Cosmos Color Clash provided the gameplay context.

December – January — Continued Delivery (Holiday Adjustments). Session volume dipped in December due to winter break, then rebounded in January. Topics deepened: emotional vocabulary, creating space, empathy, and the Iceberg Model for feelings and thoughts.

February – April — Advanced SEL & Application. The curriculum progressed to higher-order topics: patience and grit, opportunity cost, prioritization (the Eisenhower Matrix), growth mindset, peer pressure, bullying, and conflict management. This phase also introduced the capstone game design project, where students designed their own game narratives and mechanics.

May – June — Assessment & Reporting. Students completed summative assessments. Guardian surveys were administered. Semester-end reports were compiled and delivered to IEM leadership, including competency growth charts, guardian feedback, and operational analytics.

6. Curriculum & Game Library

The program followed a 25-week structured scope and sequence, with each week pairing an SEL topic with a specific multiplayer game. Topics progressed from foundational skills (self-awareness, communication) through applied competencies (conflict resolution, creative thinking) to a culminating game design capstone project. Each session included a lesson plan aligned to ELA Common Core standards, with structured debrief activities following gameplay.

Scope & Sequence Highlights

Weeks	Topic Area	Games Used	Key Skills
1–3	Class Norms & Communication	Crisis Crew, First Settlers, Cosmos Color Clash	Active Listening, Consensus, Collaboration
4–5	Team Building & Leadership	First Settlers (Dark), Secret Santa	Strategic Thinking, Initiative
6–9	Emotional Vocabulary & Empathy	EI Joe, Crisis Crew (Dark)	Empathy, Recognizing Emotions
10–15	Patience, Grit & Growth Mindset	Backyard Blast, River Taxi, Jolly Jumpers	Frustration Mgmt, Prioritization
16–21	Peer Pressure & Conflict	River Taxi, Backyard Blast, EI Joe	Second-Order Thinking, Conflict Resolution
22–25	Creative Game Design Project	Student-Designed Games	Creative Thinking, Presentation, Feedback

Games in the TomoClub library include Emotional Rollercoaster, River Taxi, Backyard Blast, Secret Santa, EI Joe, Food for Every Mood, The First Settlers, Jolly Jumpers, Cosmos Color Clash, The Crisis Crew, Mayday, and History Lesson — each designed to develop specific SEL competencies through collaborative, multiplayer interaction.

7. Results: Competency Growth

Students were assessed on three core competency areas — Leadership, Innovation, and Emotional Intelligence — using formative and summative assessments at the beginning and end of the program. Scores are on a 1–5 scale. The results showed dramatic, consistent improvement across all three areas and both grade bands.

Overall Competency Growth (All IEM Students)

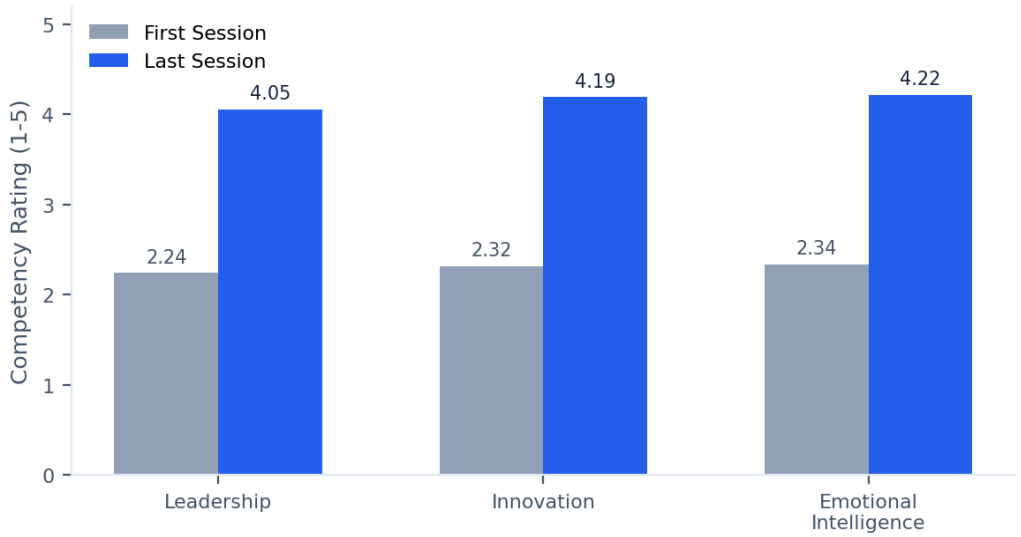


Figure 1: Competency ratings across all IEM cohorts, first session vs. last session (scale 1–5).

Competency	First Session	Last Session	Change	% Growth
Leadership	2.24	4.05	+1.81	**+81%**
Innovation	2.32	4.19	+1.87	**+81%**
Emotional Intelligence	2.34	4.22	+1.88	**+80%**

Growth by Grade Band

When we break the data down by grade band, an interesting pattern emerges: younger students (Grades 3–5) showed higher percentage improvement in SEL scores compared to the older cohort (Grades 6–8). This suggests that the game-based format resonates especially well with elementary learners, though both groups showed substantial growth.

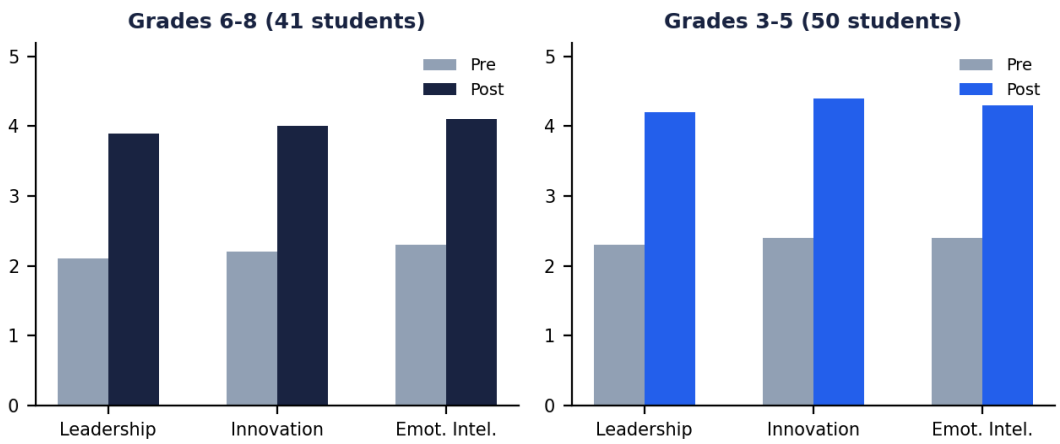


Figure 2: Competency growth by grade band — Grades 6–8 (41 students) vs. Grades 3–5 (50 students).

8. Results: Student Engagement & Learning

Student Excitement

Across 388 student feedback responses collected over the year, 90% of IEM students reported being excited to join their TomoClub sessions each week. This is a notable figure for any curriculum, but particularly significant in a homeschool setting where student attendance is voluntary and engagement cannot be assumed.

Learning Track

TomoClub's learning track measures whether students are retaining and applying what they learn. Based on data from 145 IEM sessions:

A high percentage of students were able to recall concepts from prior sessions, indicating strong engagement and curriculum effectiveness. However, students found it more difficult to apply their learnings to daily life situations compared to remembering concepts — a finding that pointed to the need for sessions to emphasize real-life application and transfer.

This insight directly shaped curriculum adjustments: later sessions placed greater emphasis on debrief discussions connecting gameplay to real-world scenarios, and the capstone game design project gave students an opportunity to synthesize and apply their SEL learning in a creative, practical context.

Game Feedback

Student feedback on individual games revealed that several titles — Crisis Crew, Cosmos Color Clash, and River Taxi — consistently earned high engagement scores throughout repeated play. Some games like First Settlers and Secret Santa performed better on their second play-through, as students became familiar with mechanics and could focus on strategy and collaboration. The data also showed an age-based pattern: Secret Santa, First Settlers, and River Taxi worked better with older students, while Crisis Crew and Backyard Blast resonated more with younger groups.

9. Results: Guardian Feedback & Satisfaction

At the end of the school year, TomoClub administered a survey to all IEM guardians. The results were uniformly positive: 100% of guardians noticed growth in their child's behavior and SEL skills, 100% would like to re-enroll their child in TomoClub for the upcoming year, and 90% of students were excited to join sessions.

But the numbers only tell part of the story. The guardian responses — collected across three survey questions — paint a vivid picture of the kind of change families saw at home.

On Innovative Thinking & Problem-Solving

> *"I love that my child has been given the opportunity to be a leader and help others by learning to communicate clearly. I also love that the kids are encouraging toward each other and giving feedback to one another."*
> **— IEM Guardian**

> *"She will express her emotions more clearly. And find solutions a lot quicker than usual."*
> **— IEM Guardian**

> *"Tomo presented ideas and discussions that plant seeds for problem solving and innovative thinking they can surface at any time."*
> **— IEM Guardian**

On Social-Emotional Growth

> *"My child deals with things differently now. Instead of getting upset right away because something isn't working in her favor, she tries a few times in a few different ways and then expresses her discontentment. Before, she would complain right away. She would give up if something was difficult or different. But now she is willing to work through everything and has a smile on her face (half the time). She is slower to anger and quicker to try to problem solve."*
> **— IEM Guardian**

> *"She's definitely more vocal when speaking amongst her Tomo Club peers. She still gets nervous when on the spot, but overall she is coming out of her shell."*
> **— IEM Guardian**

> *"Communication in general has improved a great deal. Also her ability to handle loss or frustrating situations has improved."*
> **— IEM Guardian**

> *"Peer interactions and conflict resolution significantly increased."*
> **— IEM Guardian**

On Overall Impact

> *"The necessity to communicate through gameplay has been wonderful. I also loved the collaboration during the development of the video game and the opportunity to make a presentation. It has all been great for her."*
> **— IEM Guardian**

> *"The time she got to spend with peers really has changed the way she reacts and now she responds in kind instead of constant reaction / misproportioned reactions."*
> **— IEM Guardian**

> *"Just a positive, non-stressful space."*
> **— IEM Guardian**

The Snapshots that were sent to guardians after every session were also well-received. Guardians consistently praised them as a window into what their child was actually doing and learning — a level of visibility that is rare in most EdTech vendor relationships.

10. Operational Insights

Session Delivery

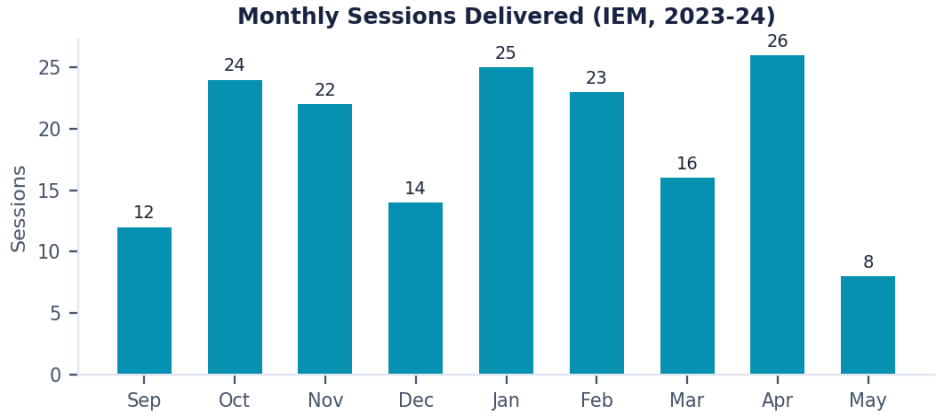


Figure 3: Monthly sessions delivered to IEM students, September 2023 – May 2024.

Session volume followed the school calendar, with dips in December (winter break), March (spring break), and May (sessions only in the first week as the year wrapped up). Peak months were October, January, February, and April, each delivering 23–26 sessions.

Session Quality

Internal session quality ratings — assessed by TomoClub's team based on student engagement, concept delivery, and debrief effectiveness — averaged 4.2 out of 5 across all IEM sessions. Multiple facilitators led sessions throughout the year, with specializations emerging: some facilitators excelled with younger cohorts, others with older groups; some were particularly strong in technical game management, others in debrief discussion facilitation.

Cohort & Attendance Patterns

The number of active cohorts fluctuated over the year as new students enrolled and cohorts were occasionally merged or completed. Monthly active users (students attending at least one session per month) peaked at 72 out of 117 licensed students. Attendance patterns showed the expected seasonal variations, with strongest attendance in October–November and January–February.

11. Why This Works for Charter & Homeschool Networks

The IEM deployment demonstrates that TomoClub's model is particularly well-suited to the unique structure of homeschooling charter networks. Several features of the program align directly with the needs of this school type:

- **Parent-choice compatible.** TomoClub fits seamlessly into vendor-selection models. Guardians can see direct evidence of impact through regular Snapshot reports and semester-end data, reinforcing their confidence in the program as a deliberate, worthwhile investment.
- **Remote-first design.** The entire program is built for digital, virtual delivery. It works on Chromebooks, requires no special hardware or software installation, and sessions are hosted live by educators over standard video conferencing.
- **Peer connection for isolated learners.** Multiplayer games give homeschool students rare, structured opportunities for peer interaction — addressing the social isolation that many families

in this model worry about. The collaborative gameplay creates the kind of relational experience that cannot be replicated through solo worksheets or video content.

- **Zero teacher prep burden.** IEM used the “Hire a Tomo Expert” implementation model, where TomoClub’s trained facilitators delivered all sessions directly. This meant zero prep time for IEM’s teachers and staff. Schools that prefer teacher-led delivery can use TomoClub’s 4-hour professional development program instead.
- **Transparent, data-driven reporting.** The semester-end report delivered to IEM included competency growth charts, guardian survey results, session analytics, and game feedback data. This level of transparency gives school leaders the evidence they need to justify continued funding and communicate value to families.
- **Ethical, purposeful screen time.** Games are not available for unsupervised play at home. Every session is educator-led, time-bound, and tied to specific learning objectives. This addresses the common parent concern about screen time by ensuring every minute is intentional.

Educator & Administrator Voices

While the IEM deployment was supported by TomoClub’s own facilitators, educators and administrators across the broader TomoClub network have shared their experiences implementing the program. Several of their observations are directly relevant to the IEM context:

> *"TomoClub is our Friday thing — it has directly boosted our end-of-week attendance."*
> **— Jacquelyn Neal, 5th Grade Teacher, South Sutter School, Sacramento**

> *"I was not sure of games in class, but it’s been easy to host sessions, and I have full control functions. When I start debriefing, every child has something to say."*
> **— Shauna Anderson, Administrator, Sky Mountain School**

12. Applicability to Traditional & In-Person Classrooms

While the IEM deployment was designed for a homeschooling charter environment — with remote delivery, parent-choice vendor selection, and students joining from home — the results and program model translate directly to traditional, brick-and-mortar school settings. In fact, many of the outcomes observed at IEM are amplified when the program runs in a physical classroom.

From Remote to In-Person: What Changes, What Stays

The core of the TomoClub program — the multiplayer games, the 25-week scope and sequence, the CASEL-aligned lesson plans, the debrief structure, and the competency assessment system — remains identical whether the program runs remotely or in a classroom. What changes is the delivery environment and the facilitation dynamics.

	IEM (Remote / Homeschool)	Traditional Classroom
Delivery	Educator-hosted via video conferencing	Teacher-led in classroom; students on school devices
Devices	Student Chromebooks at home	School Chromebooks or computer lab
Facilitation	TomoClub expert hosts remotely	Trained classroom teacher (after 4-hour PD)
Peer Dynamics	Students meet peers they may not know in person	Students play with classmates; deeper existing relationships
Session Format	Weekly sessions, 30–45 min	Two 15-min advisory sessions/week or one 30–45 min deep-dive
Scheduling	Coordinated across home schedules	Fits into advisory, homeroom, or before Math/ELA class
Debrief	Discussion via video	In-person group discussion; richer nonverbal cues
Class Size	20 students per cohort	Upto 30 students per classroom; scalable with pause/resume

Why In-Person Classrooms Can Expect Equal or Greater Impact

The IEM results — 80% competency growth, 100% guardian satisfaction, 90% student excitement — were achieved in a remote setting, where engagement is inherently harder to sustain and peer connection is mediated through a screen. Traditional classrooms offer several structural advantages that can amplify these outcomes:

- **Richer peer interaction.** In-person gameplay creates more natural social dynamics. Students can read body language, share physical space, and experience the collaborative energy of playing together in a room. The debrief discussions — where educators connect gameplay to real-life SEL concepts — are significantly richer when students can see each other face-to-face.
- **Existing relationships deepen faster.** At IEM, students were often meeting peers for the first time through the program. In a traditional classroom, students already know each other. The multiplayer games give them a new context to practice skills like conflict resolution, giving feedback, and managing frustration with people they interact with daily — making the learning immediately transferable.
- **Teacher as embedded observer.** When a classroom teacher facilitates TomoClub sessions, they observe their students in a completely different context. Teachers consistently report discovering leadership qualities, social strengths, and emotional challenges in students that traditional

academic work never revealed. This insight transforms how they support students across the entire school day.

- **Attendance and behavior effects.** Across TomoClub's broader network, schools have reported that TomoClub sessions directly boost attendance — particularly on days when sessions are scheduled. One South Sutter teacher noted that making TomoClub their Friday activity boosted end-of-week attendance. Schools using the program in advisory or homeroom periods have reported 85% fewer behavior referrals.
- **Seamless scheduling.** The program is designed for flexibility: two 15-minute advisory sessions per week, one 30–45 minute deep-dive, or embedded before Math or ELA classes. It runs on existing school Chromebooks with no special hardware. Teachers have built-in pause/resume and classroom management controls for smooth facilitation.

Evidence from Traditional School Deployments

TomoClub's results are not limited to homeschool charters. Across traditional public and charter schools, the program has demonstrated:

Metric	Result	Source
Student Engagement	97% high engagement rate	Aggregate across partner schools
Behavior Referrals	85% reduction	Schools tracking disciplinary data
Attendance Impact	Directly boosted end-of-week attendance	South Sutter School, Sacramento
School Climate	Significant rise in Sense of Belonging	Choice Charter School
Academic Correlation	Positive effect on reading and Math scores	Waseca Public Schools

> *"Since implementing TomoClub, our school climate surveys show a significant rise in Sense of Belonging, which has led to a measurable drop in behavioral disruptions."*
> **— Cynthia Knight, CEO/Director, Choice Charter School**

> *"These sessions cover ELA standards and critical thinking so effectively that we've seen a positive effect on our reading and Math scores."*
> **— Brooke McGuire, Director of Teaching & Learning, Waseca Public Schools**

> *"I've seen the 'too cool' students transform into collaborative leaders. They aren't scared to fail anymore; they are focused on winning together."*
> **— Natasha Bessimier, Counselor, Lone Star School District**

The Bottom Line for Traditional Schools

If TomoClub produced 80% competency growth and 100% guardian satisfaction in a remote homeschool setting — where engagement is harder, peer connection is mediated by screens, and session attendance is voluntary — then the program's potential in a traditional classroom environment, with its natural advantages of physical presence, existing peer relationships, and embedded teacher observation, is even greater. The IEM case study is not just a proof point for homeschool charters — it is a conservative baseline for what any school can expect.

13. Next Steps

The IEM deployment demonstrated clear, measurable impact across every dimension — competency growth, student engagement, guardian satisfaction, and operational viability. Whether your school is a homeschool charter, a traditional public school, or a private institution, TomoClub offers a straightforward path to getting started:

- → **Book a 20-minute live demonstration.** See the games and educator dashboard in action. Experience a live gameplay session and understand how debriefing connects play to SEL outcomes.
- → **Discuss a custom implementation plan.** TomoClub tailors deployment to your school's schedule, grade bands, and staffing model. For traditional schools, teachers complete a 4-hour professional development program to facilitate sessions independently. For remote/charter settings, TomoClub experts can host sessions directly.
- → **Start with a pilot.** Many schools begin with a single grade band or advisory period before scaling to a full school-wide deployment. TomoClub's team supports onboarding, pre-assessment setup, and ongoing program management throughout.

TomoClub • Future-Ready Skills Start Here

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