



Topic: Early Literacy Academy

Description

The *Early Literacy Academy* model is a data driven instructional approach designed to accelerate student achievement in English Language Arts in grades K-2. Students receive targeted instruction in Foundational Reading Skills as well as the Common Core State Standards in Reading, Writing, Speaking/Listening and Language. This is accomplished through flexible groupings centered on instruction and intervention that is based on student needs as determined by multiple measures. Individual student data is carefully examined to identify students' instructional needs in the following CCSS Foundational Reading Areas: print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, fluency, and comprehension.

The guiding principles of the *Early Literacy Academy* model include:

- Data driven system designed to inform instruction and intervention
- Multi-tiered system of support with higher levels of intensity provided to students with higher needs
- Small group, differentiated instruction that is flexible and fluid, based on identified student need
- 90 minute homogenous grouping in kindergarten, cross grade level homogenous grouping in grades 1 & 2.
- Frequent and on-going progress monitoring with student benchmark assessments
- Embedded professional development designed to model the teaching strategies in the classroom
- Collaboration and participation in your PLC and in classrooms

This model is based on a pilot in six schools that was funded by a Target Grant. The first year showed substantial gains that outpaced the district. The six pilot schools increased Kindergarten benchmark growth in foundational skills at the beginning of the year (BOY) to the end of the year (EOY) by 30% as compared to the district growth of 19%. The pilot schools significantly reduced the Kindergarten intensive students by 30% as compared to the district decrease of 16%. In first grade, the pilot schools dramatically increased their benchmark students by 22% as compared to the 14% growth by the district. There were comparable results when looking at the subgroups of English Learners and Students with Disabilities.

Objectives

- Build capacity of teachers to provide explicit and systematic first instruction
- Build capacity of teachers in data driven decision making to define and deliver effective strategies for students at risk
- Facilitate teacher ability to implement multi-tiered systems of support
- Establish a shared responsibility for all students
- Establish infrastructures for ongoing data analysis and progress monitoring
- Implement research based instructional strategies in the areas of oral language, phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency (use of Multi-syllable routines in the identification and reading of multi-syllabic words), print concepts, and comprehension.

Commitment

- Implementation of high quality, evidence-based instruction
- Data is analyzed at regular intervals
- Structures are put in place to provide differentiated instruction to students based on need
- Professional development time dedicated to early literacy practices and programs