



C.W. Shipley Elementary School
Video Transcript

Carolyn Miller, First Grade Teacher: I think there are two reasons that Shipley has been a very successful school throughout my career here. One of the reasons is I think we work together as an entire staff and faculty for the betterment of our students. And the other reason, I believe, that we are successful is because we come together and write common, school-wide goals each year in August. We analyze test scores, we identify areas that may need a little extra focus, and then we work together as a whole school.

Brooks Kursey, Principal: One of the things that we looked at as a district was that we really wanted to, we really prioritized differentiation and meeting kids where they're at, academically. We know that teachers are working hard. But you know when we looked at our data, that's really what made us take a look and say, "Okay, how are we teaching reading?" You know, why aren't we seeing quite the results that we would like to see. So that's kind of what led us to adopt this approach and start implementing it this year.

Katie Hillman, Instructional Coach: Any time that there is change you might have a little bit of apprehension from teachers and them not wanting to let go of what they normally do. But I think that eventually they saw the need. You know, when you show them the NAEP and the fact that we haven't made progress in so many years, it really speaks volumes that hey, what we're doing isn't working and what we're doing, hey, it might be reaching that top group of kids but there's 40% of children that need that structured literacy approach. So, as a district we really began researching as a literacy team and we read articles, we listened to podcasts, we talked to other districts, we looked at other states and what their reading programs were. And we created a rubric to help guide us in our selection for our curriculum. So our first step as a district is we had two schools pilot the program and then we were able to learn from them.

Seth Gilbertson, Fourth Grade Teacher: I would suggest for teachers and schools that are trying to implement a new reading curriculum that you keep an open mind. Whether you're a teacher that's new to the profession or whether you're a teacher that's been, you know, 10, 15, 20 years in, there's always new things to be learned and there's always things that we can improve upon.

Brooks Kursey: So in our primary grades, kindergarten, first and second, they have their skills piece, kind of where they work on some of those decoding skills, phonemic awareness. And there's our upper elementary kids, third through five, they have units. So they are getting those reading skills but it's kind of encompassed within different topics.

Jessica Bond, First Grade Teacher: We have been working on long vowel sounds. And one of the components are called wiggle cards. So the students will read the short phrases or the sentences and then it gives them a prompt to act out. So I think today you saw "stand on your heels" and "act like a tree" and "graze like a deer." So one of the components to the science of reading is vocabulary. So we talked a lot about what grazing meant and what that looked like.

Logan Haines, Kindergarten Teacher: We were really segmenting words and finding out those full names of each words and can we hear those sounds. And can we put letters to the sounds. So we're working a lot on phonemic awareness, and the kids are really, really doing a good job of improving each time and noticing word and print around the school, around the classroom. And they're really trying, too. You hear them stretching out words just so they can say them.

Carolyn Miller: One of the things that I have noticed, informally, with my students is that they are able to carry over the skills that they have learned into their journal writing. We have been focusing a lot on long vowels with the magic 'E' on the end. And when I see it in their writing, and I see their faces light up, that's one of the ways that I can tell it's definitely transferred.

Seth Robertson: Part of the reason I became a teacher is, for me, it's a type of social action in terms of creating citizens that can create and share ideas in order to uplift our society. And I think it's important for teachers to remember that like that's the gravity of what we're doing. As much as we can remember that is going to inform our connection to our students and inform our practice. It will help us keep us fresh and positive about what we do.