

KIPP Bay Area Public Schools

Collaborative Literacy Excites KIPP Bay Area Public Schools

SCHOOL PROFILE

KIPP Bay Area Public Schools is a consortium of 15 charter elementary, middle, and high schools serving over 6,000 students in multiple cities throughout Northern California. The schools operate in educationally underserved communities.

CHALLENGE

KIPP school staff needed a more comprehensive English Language Arts curriculum and more effective use of shared and close reading in their lessons. The teachers wanted a comprehensive curriculum—one that did not require supplemental materials for vocabulary, grammar, and handwriting—in order to result in stronger outcomes.

IMPLEMENTATION

Following an extensive search for a curriculum that met a long list of criteria (including leveled texts, cultural relevance, equity, shared reading, read-alouds, assessment tools, process-based writing, integrated phonics, and an emphasis on independent reading), KIPP selected Collaborative Literacy. They planned to use it for the first year of a newly founded elementary school,



Photo courtesy of KIPP Bay Area Public Schools

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but leaders and teachers from the other schools became interested in the curriculum, and so it was implemented in all their Bay Area schools starting in 2018–2019.

“Teachers immediately found that they liked Collaborative Literacy, and appreciated how the alignment supported them and kept them from having to do extra work,” said Lisa Shugart, Associate Director of Academics.

RESULTS

Because this is the first year of implementation, KIPP does not yet have year-over-year data to demonstrate the differences or results of Collaborative Literacy in their classrooms. However, in the first six months of implementation, teachers have had a strong positive reaction to the curriculum. Reported strengths in the classroom include “a lot more excitement about books,” and that the curriculum “created and fostered a culture of respect and compassion, allowing students to take other points of view, listen, and respond thoughtfully.”

Here’s what KIPP teachers said about Collaborative Literacy in their classrooms:

“Text selections and integration of the curriculum led to students making far more text-to-text connections. My students have a good amount of background knowledge with the texts, which has made it easy for them to make their text-to-self and text-to-text connections.”

– Maggie Brown, first-grade teacher

“The vocabulary portion of Collaborative Literacy has produced a new level of excitement in my class about learning new words. I’m filled with joy when my students share that they have found a vocabulary word in an independent reading book. Their faces light up, and learning new words is so fun for them.”

– Sawyer Hulbert, second-grade teacher

“Students are excited about the turn-and-talks and think-pair-share work due to the amazing texts and related questions.”

–Cathy Cowan, first-grade teacher

“I notice kids are implementing SEL in all parts of their day, and really listening to their peers.”

– Victoria Sarantopoulos, kindergarten teacher

