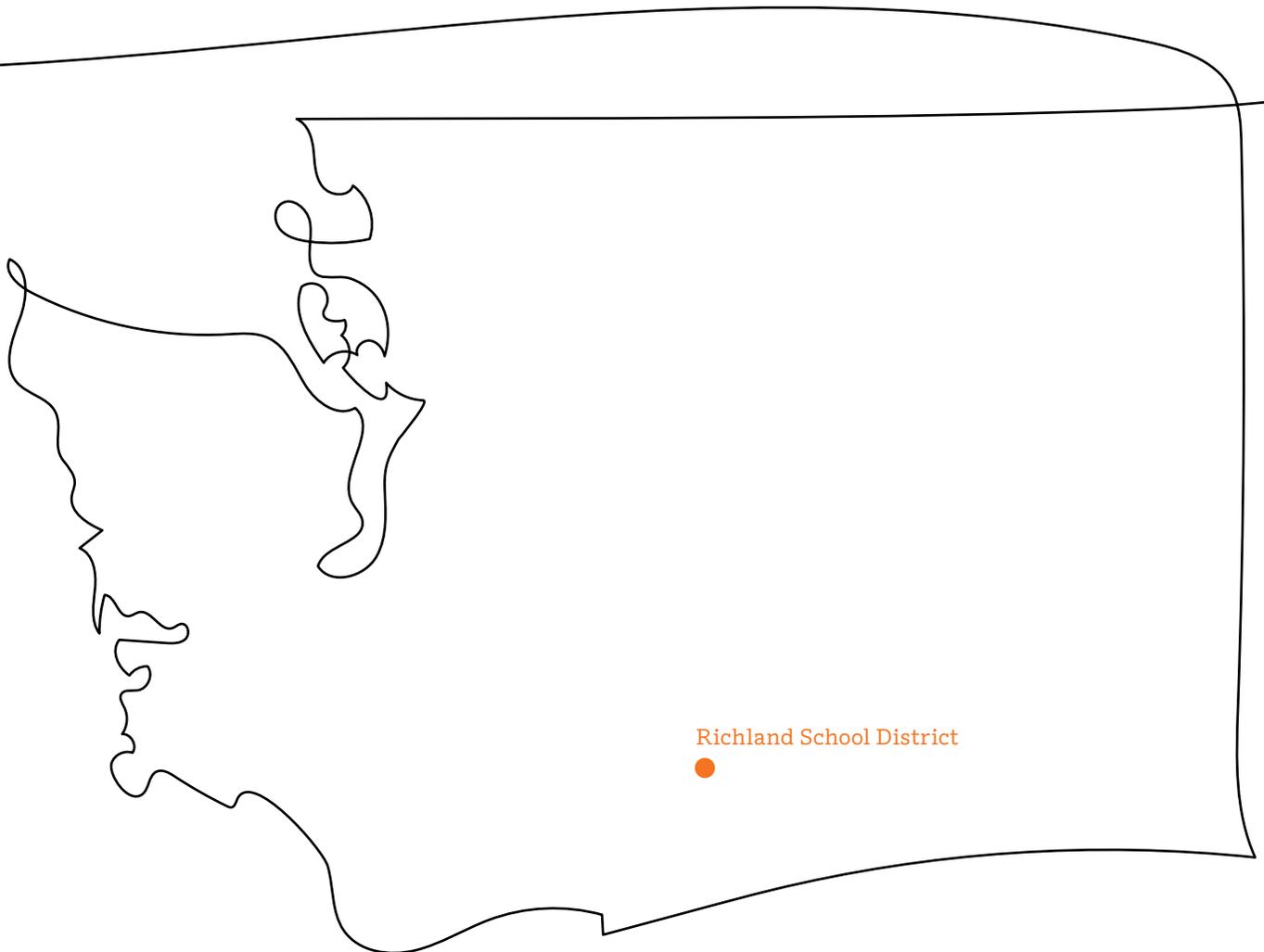


Driving impact through implementation science

How Richland School District raised elementary reading proficiency by up to 45% through strategic curriculum adoption of Amplify CKLA



Background

Richland School District serves roughly 13,700 students in West Richland, Washington, through an early learning center, 11 elementary schools, 4 middle schools, 2 high schools, an alternative high school, an online academy, and a homelink school. The student population is 67.7% White, 21.1% Hispanic, 5.6% two or more races, 3.6% Asian, 1.4% Black, 0.4% American Indian, and 0.2% Hawaiian. 5.5% of students are multilingual/English learners, and 28% of students are eligible for the free and reduced-price lunch program. The district's strategic plan focuses on fostering academic excellence and personal growth to develop compassionate, resilient, and innovative future leaders.

Challenge

In 2021, district leaders acknowledged significant gaps in their literacy instruction approach. "Our teachers realized a need to switch from a balanced literacy approach to an approach based on the Science of Reading, to ground our instruction in evidence-based practices and better support our students," said Kristina Tucker, district coordinator of ELA and social studies.

Solution

Foundation-building and selection process

Richland initiated their transformation in September 2021 by providing its staff with LETRS professional development. In January 2022, they launched an 18-month comprehensive evaluation process to choose a new literacy curriculum.

The district assembled a 38-member ELA committee, which included teachers, principals, special education teachers, speech-language pathologists, counselors, multilingual learner coaches, instructional coaches, specialists, and community members. Over 14 full days, the committee analyzed data trends, reviewed standards alignment, and examined research-based instructional practices.

21
schools

13,700
students

28%
eligible for the free
or reduced-price
meal program

Using evaluation tools from The Reading League and EdReports, the committee created their own instructional materials review rubric. After reviewing multiple programs, conducting vendor presentations, and completing two 12-week field-testing cycles, the committee unanimously recommended Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) for board approval. On May 14, 2024, the board approved the adoption of Amplify CKLA.

The district partnered with Amplify to create a robust training and implementation process to make sure that Richland educators felt comfortable and confident teaching Amplify CKLA in their classrooms.

Pre-launch implementation strategy

- System-wide strategy: The district developed a three-year PD schedule: coaching support for two full days in year 1, continued coaching for one day in year 2, and sustained training through year 3. The district maintained LETRS training throughout the three years.
- Leadership development: The district joined Amplify's Literacy Transformation program to develop systematic implementation practices so that district leaders could help to ensure a smooth and aligned district-wide rollout. They also established frameworks for gathering and analyzing stakeholder feedback and making informed decisions throughout the implementation.
- Administrator preparation: Elementary principals received two days of training in LETRS for Administrators, followed by Amplify CKLA's administrator professional development, which specifically connected Amplify CKLA to the LETRS Administrators Literacy Framework.
- Teacher preparation: Teachers were able to participate in overview sessions before comprehensive summer training.

Launch and ongoing support

- System-wide strategy: The 2024 launch training involved pairing schools and training teachers in grade bands (K–2 and 3–5). The two-day format included a Science of Reading overview, Amplify CKLA training, and guided planning sessions.
- Leadership development: Through Amplify's Literacy Transformation program, district leaders participated in change management and implementation science workshops, as well as in on-site and virtual planning. They engaged with other district leaders in their first year of implementation to apply their learning to their implementations, work through challenges, and share their successes.
- Administrator preparation: District leaders used what they had learned in Amplify's Literacy Transformation program to work with their building leaders on guided classroom observations. Principals reviewed the Amplify CKLA Implementation Guidelines: Commitments & Flexibilities resource and worked with leaders in science-focused implementation workshops to create district-specific commitments.
- Teacher preparation: Teachers received comprehensive curriculum guides, alongside access to collaborative resource-sharing platforms. The district implemented a structured coaching model with two coaching days in year 1. The first coaching day provided building-specific trainers who conducted Q&A sessions, collaborative lesson planning, classroom modeling, and debriefing. The second coaching day offered flexible support during planning time with optional team meetings and administrative walk-throughs.



Impact

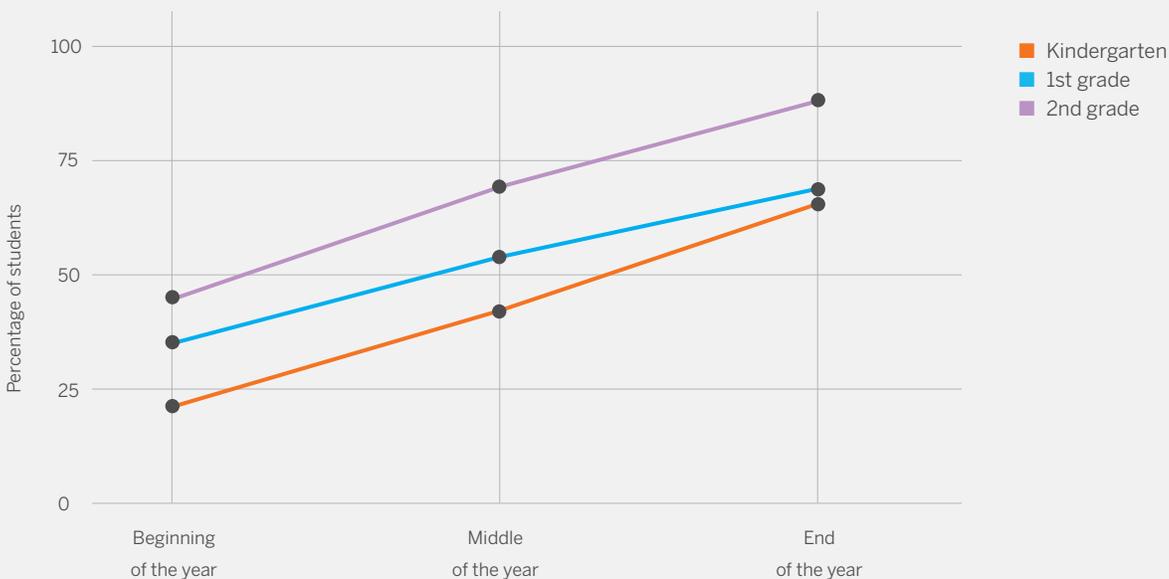
The year 1 implementation produced significant student achievement gains across Richland’s elementary schools. Teachers reported dramatic reading improvements, with one educator noting:

“I went from 50% of my class being two or more grade levels below grade level to only 8% being two or more grade levels below grade level.”

Students demonstrated enhanced engagement and critical thinking. Teachers reported that students were consistently engaged and outperformed previous years on i-Ready testing, and that they learned discrete skills while also learning how to think and apply previous knowledge. One teacher said that students had “cracked the code”—that is, learned to apply phonics skills while developing expertise in citing textual evidence.

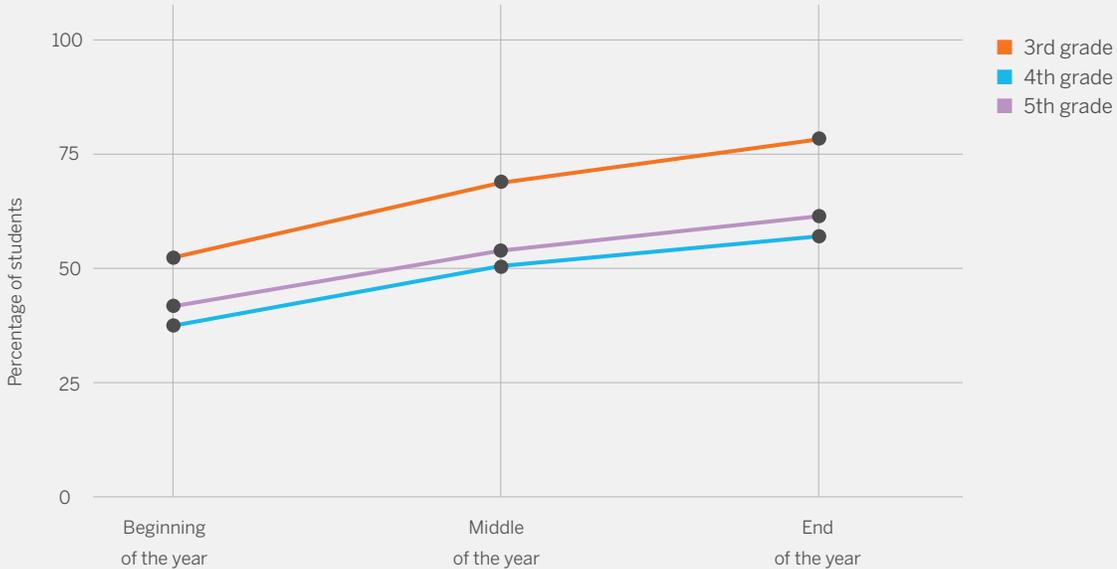
The impact on learning was also reflected in student assessment data. In kindergarten through second grade, proficiency rates increased by up to 45% during the first year of Amplify CKLA implementation.

Richland School District students at grade level: 2024–25 school year



The trend persisted in grades three through five, with proficiency rates increasing by up to 25% by the end of the school year.

Richland School District students at grade level: 2024–25



The curriculum also expanded instructional quality beyond traditional ELA boundaries. As one teacher reported,

“Students gained a great deal of content knowledge in social studies, even topics beyond our standards. I also taught more grammar, vocabulary, and prefixes/suffixes than ever before.”



Teachers noted high levels of student engagement. District leaders noted positive stakeholder feedback, successful adjustments to scheduling, strong alignment with the Science of Reading, and high rates of implementation fidelity.

Survey highlights

At the end of the 2024–25 school year, teachers reflected on their experience with Amplify CKLA.

- 94% of teachers agreed with the statement “I have become increasingly more confident in my ability to teach CKLA.”
- 86% of teachers agreed with the statement “My students are engaged and excited about what they are learning in CKLA.”

Conclusion

Richland School District’s systematic and thoughtful approach to curriculum adoption and implementation demonstrates the importance of preparation, stakeholder engagement, and sustained support. Moving forward, the district is eager to continue with Amplify’s Literacy Transformation program. They believe the partnership will enhance their work as they continue to provide comprehensive professional development, refine their pacing guides, maintain implementation commitments, and conduct ongoing data analysis for continuous improvement. The district’s evidence-based approach to its shift from balanced literacy to the Science of Reading has established a foundation for sustained literacy improvement across all elementary schools, positioning students for long-term academic success.

OUR BRIGHTES

Rhyming
pop + hop
cat + hat
fog + bog
hog + log
pet + set
head + bread

words that sound
the same and end
the same!



3.1

Handwriting practice sheet with multiple rows of dashed lines for tracing. The word "ran" is written in a large font at the bottom of the page, with a dashed outline for tracing. The word "ran" is also written in a smaller font above it, with a dashed outline for tracing. The word "ran" is written in a smaller font above that, with a dashed outline for tracing. The word "ran" is written in a smaller font above that, with a dashed outline for tracing. The word "ran" is written in a smaller font above that, with a dashed outline for tracing.



For more information about Amplify's complete early literacy suite based on the Science of Reading, visit **[amplify.com](https://www.amplify.com)**.

This story reflects the experience of Richland School District, as told from the perspective of the district leader, Kristina Tucker, and includes i-Ready data from 2024–25 as of November 7, 2025.

Amplify.

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