

Year 1 CCC Implementation: Insights from “High Implementer” Schools

Overview

In spring 2018, the Research & Evaluation department conducted site visits in six “high implementer” schools to examine Year 1 implementation of Center for the Collaborative Classroom (CCC). Our sample included schools with both high and low performance, and included: Roxhill Elementary, Arbor Heights Elementary, Graham Hill Elementary, Rainier View Elementary, Adams Elementary, and Hazel Wolf K-8 STEM School. Data collection included interviews with school leaders, focus groups with teachers, focus groups with students, and classroom walkthroughs to observe instructional practice.

This memo details findings – strengths, areas of opportunity, and key leadership practices – and makes recommendations – that can inform the district’s continuous improvement approach for this and future curriculum adoptions.

High Level Findings

In general, staff at high implementer schools felt that the CCC curriculum was high quality, comprehensive, and rigorous. In many schools, respondents reported that they were skeptical at first of the new curriculum, but that many of these same teachers and principals became “believers” in the new curriculum once they saw benefits – both academic and behavioral/social – in their students as the year progressed. That said, respondents also identified some persistent challenges in implementation, and some teachers noted that they were making modifications to the curriculum in their classrooms.

Below are the top strengths and challenges identified by respondents in high implementer schools:

Strengths	Challenges
School leaders and teachers firmly believe that CCC provides equitable access to high quality literacy instruction	The pedagogical shift is big – many teachers are hesitant to adapt and make modifications
Distributed leadership helps teachers to implement “as intended”	Full implementation takes lots of time – which can mean instructional time away from other subjects, activities
Teachers recognize and appreciate embedded “gap closing strategies” in core instruction	Teachers want additional resources to support struggling students, split classrooms
Teachers and school leaders are beginning to see students’ social, academic gains	Collaborative Literacy Leaders want clarified roles and expectations

Our analysis also yielded six recommendations for this and future curriculum adoptions:

- Recommendation 1:** Clarify Alignment to District Processes, Systems, and Prior Knowledge
- Recommendation 2:** Slow the Rollout Process for New Curriculum
- Recommendation 3:** Provide Differentiated Professional Development in Year 2
- Recommendation 4:** Provide District Guidance on Allowable Modifications in Year 2
- Recommendation 5:** Ensure Alignment Between Curriculum and Report Cards
- Recommendation 6:** Articulate Curriculum Links to Upper and Lower Grade Levels

Findings from High Implementer Schools: Strengths

School Leaders and Teachers Firmly Believe that CCC Provides Equitable Access to High Quality Literacy Instruction

Across all six “high implementer” schools, school leaders and teachers stressed that having a common K-5 ELA curriculum provides students with equitable access to high quality literacy instruction. They noted benefits in three key areas:

1. Within the classroom¹ – CCC sets forth consistent instructional approaches from day to day.
2. Within the school² – CCC’s aligned literacy approach follows students from grade to grade.
3. Across schools³ – CCC’s common approach is the same regardless of geography and school type.

Additionally, teachers said that having a common curriculum helps them to align their practices and reclaim time that they previously spent on developing curriculum and sourcing materials. The foundational structure and supportive materials has been helpful for everyone, they said, but is especially helpful for new teachers.⁴ Since teacher turnover is particularly high in lower income schools, respondents also noted that a common curriculum is an equitable districtwide practice.⁵

Distributed Leadership Helps Teachers to Implement “As Intended”

SPS employed a distributed leadership approach to CCC implementation, in which both school leaders and teacher leaders – called Collaborative Literacy Leaders or “CLLs” – are empowered to help implement the curriculum in their schools. Both groups received dedicated professional development, and were asked take this information back to their schools so that all teachers could benefit from an improved understanding of the curriculum and its many components. We asked about both levels of this distributed leadership approach.

School Leaders: Teachers appreciated the strong, clear, and consistent communication from their school leader about teaching CCC “as intended.” Messaging about CCC implementation didn’t just happen once at the beginning of the year; instead, teachers heard it consistently throughout the school year until it became part of the core expectations of the school. Additionally, school leaders in several schools conducted lesson-specific walk-throughs. School leaders would ask in advance for teachers to share the unit/week/day of the CCC lesson, and then would visit the classroom with that lesson pre-printed from the Implementation Guide.



Leadership Move Spotlight

Principal Anitra Jones at Rainier View Elementary prioritized CCC-driven peer learning in her school. She encouraged CLLs to model lessons, organized classroom walkthroughs for teachers, and asked teachers to dedicate PLC time for CCC lesson planning and review.

Having that flexibility and that I think openness, the comfort, the trust to share what's going on and what's working and what's not working, was a big thing for our building and for all of the teachers... If there's anything that you can see in my classroom that might help you, having that trust from them to me and just within the building was very helpful. – Rainier View teacher



Leadership Move Spotlight

Principals at several schools had specific “look-fors” to ensure that teachers were using CCC “as intended.” For example, at Graham Hill, Principal Deena Russo said she looked to see if teachers had put sticky notes throughout their teacher guides, and then put weekly reminders about CCC implementation into her weekly bulletin. At Arbor Heights, Principal Christie Collins asked teachers to identify ahead-of-time the unit/week/day so that she could pull the lesson, preview it, and come prepared to provide structured, specific feedback to teachers during classroom observations.

CLLs: Teachers greatly appreciated the support provided by CLLs. Principals also said it was very helpful for teachers in the building to receive support from a peer, rather than their evaluator.⁶ For their part, CLLs said they appreciated the opportunity to receive extra trainings and support for implementation, and that they were grateful for the leadership opportunity.⁷ Many CLLs expressed hope that they could provide more helpful support and guidance in Year 2 of implementation, now that they more fully understood the materials and instructional approaches themselves.⁸

Teachers Recognize and Appreciate Embedded “Gap Closing Strategies” in Core Instruction

Teachers and school leaders highlighted four areas they felt CCC had the potential to help the district meet its goal of eliminating opportunity gaps in literacy proficiency for Historically Underserved students, including students of color as well as English Language Learners.

- Diverse textual materials – Teachers and students in four schools reported that the CCC mentor texts reflect a diversity of backgrounds and viewpoints, and that these depictions help students connect to the texts.⁹ That said, teachers in five schools also provided constructive feedback, saying a greater emphasis should be placed on representing historically marginalized communities in contemporary settings, as well as Muslim, Asian, and LGBTQ communities.¹⁰
- Culturally Responsive Teaching Moves – CCC asks teachers to embed specific social emotional learning and culturally responsive teaching moves into literacy instruction. Although teachers across all six schools noted that these teaching moves represented a big shift and challenge,¹¹ they also said that they are beginning to see positive results, including: improved confidence of students; increased student responsibility for learning; increased participation (particularly from shy, struggling, and/or Historically Underserved/ELL students), and improved test scores. Teachers noted that these changes often extend beyond literacy and become part of the general school culture.¹²
- Vocabulary – Teachers and principals also noted that the vocabulary component of CCC is particularly helpful with English Language Learner students. Teachers said that the vocabulary helps all students¹³ – but in particular ELL students¹⁴ – to connect with the texts and improve their comprehension. However, some teachers also noted that this part of the curriculum is not uniformly implemented because it is perceived by some as taking too much time.¹⁵
- Small group guided instruction – CCC provides for small group guided instruction in grades K-2. Many teachers noted that they greatly appreciate these opportunities for scaffolded support,¹⁶ but others didn’t implement fully because it ran in contrast to what they already knew.¹⁷ Teachers in two schools said that this gap closing strategy needs to be extended into grades 3-5, and that there should be additional resources in grades K-2 for readers who are below grade level.¹⁸



Leadership Move Spotlight

Traditionally, schools have used Tier 2/3 interventions as gap closing strategies. However, Principal Tarra Patrick at Roxhill Elementary asked staff not to pull students out for ELA interventions until they had a good sense of the core curriculum.

“We had a master schedule that prioritized interventions, but the interventions did not have clear alignment to core instruction. I said that we couldn’t intervene this year. You intervene when you know Tier 1 hasn’t worked, and then you give a targeted specific time-bound instruction to address a specific skill. This year we would prioritize the Tier 1 core instruction...I stood firm.”

Teachers and School Leaders are Beginning to See Students’ Social, Academic Gains

Teachers are beginning to see positive shifts with students in two areas. First, as noted above, teachers believe that CCC’s constructivist approach helps all students – but particularly shy, struggling, and/or Historically Underserved students and ELLs – to engage with texts and their peers in exciting new ways. Students agreed, saying that they felt more comfortable contributing ideas in class this year.¹⁹

Second, teachers observed a shift in students’ reading, writing, and critical thinking.²⁰ We asked high implementer schools whether they had concerns about the rigor of the materials and a perceived lack of alignment to the Common Core State Standards. They said that these concerns largely dissipated as the year progressed and teachers began to see positive changes with student comprehension and performance.²¹

Findings from High Implementer Schools: Challenges

The Pedagogical Shift Is Big – Many Teachers Are Hesitant to Adapt and Make Modifications

Teachers across all six high implementer schools noted initial trepidation with the new curriculum. The resources themselves, they said, were new and unfamiliar, the structure of the curriculum ran counter to previous trainings they may have received (e.g. on standards alignment, phonics instruction), and the pedagogical moves (e.g. constructivist approaches) felt strange and uncomfortable. Of the six high implementer schools, only two schools – Roxhill and Rainier View – noted consistently strong implementation across all teachers in all grades. In other schools, some individual teachers or grade bands were slower to adapt aspects of the curriculum.

Full Implementation Takes Lots of Time – Which Can Mean Instructional Time Away from Other Subjects, Activities

Although teachers reclaimed time previously spent on developing curriculum materials, they noted that teaching CCC “as intended” is difficult to fit inside their literacy block, particularly considering the extra time needed for assessments. Some teachers said they condensed or even omitted certain components of the lessons to save time.²² Additionally, teachers in five of the six schools noted that full implementation of CCC takes time away from teaching other subjects.²³ This concern was especially prevalent among teachers in the two STEM schools in our sample: Hazel Wolf and Arbor Heights.



Leadership Move Spotlight

Principal Anitra Jones at Rainier View said that she invested time herself to understand the curriculum so that she could best support teachers with scheduling:

“My role is making sure that there's a school-wide instructional schedule that supports the academic assurances that we want to ensure for every classroom here. One, it took me knowing and understanding the CCC recommendation of the different components within. Then, during the beginning of the year, having that conversation with teachers within grade level teams on the components within, and then building that schedule to assure that teachers not only had the time, but they also understood the how you can get this done within an elementary school day.”

Teachers Want Additional Resources to Support Struggling Students, Split Classrooms

Teachers said that they wished they had access to additional resources so that they could better scaffold supports for struggling students. The main items on the “wish list” were additional Being a Reader sets for struggling students who are below grade level, as well as full CCC materials for librarians, SPED, and ELL staff.²⁴ However, teachers also noted that there were equity issues here, since not all schools can afford to leverage funding to buy additional materials.²⁵ An additional resource issue was raised by teachers of split classrooms, where resource decisions would need to be made about which texts could be swapped out the following year for students who had already received that grade’s curricular instruction.²⁶



Leadership Move Spotlight

In half of the high implementer schools, school leaders used discretionary funding to purchase additional CCC materials to spread the reach of the curriculum. Principal Deb Nelsen of Hazel Wolf and former principal of Adams Elementary, Tim Moynihan, both purchased additional Being a Reader sets for teachers who said they needed them. Said Principal Nelsen:

“I left myself really open to if they were saying they needed it, I was gonna give it to them. They said, ‘This is what we need. We need to have these small group things. We need to have this.’ Then, they were gonna get it, if that's what they felt was the barrier.”

Collaborative Literacy Leaders Want Clarified Roles and Expectations

As noted in the “Strengths” section, Collaborative Literacy Leaders (CLLs) in all six high implementer schools greatly appreciated the leadership opportunity and hope that the CLL program will continue. They wished, however they had had more support in the following areas:

- Time to pilot the materials before fielding questions from their colleagues²⁷
- Clearer role definition, including expectations for working with school leaders and (where applicable) Satterberg Foundation coaches.²⁸
- Time to do professional development with teachers,²⁹ including possibly modeling lessons.³⁰

Recommendations for Year 2, Future Curriculum Adoptions

Recommendation 1: Clarify Alignment to District Processes, Systems, and Prior Knowledge

School leaders suggested that the district place a greater emphasis in the future on communicating alignment to district systems and structures, in particular MTSS (and Tier 2/3 interventions) and new assessments (F&P, District Interim Assessments). CLLs also asked the district to make clear the alignment of CCC to the district's Balanced Literacy approach, while acknowledging prior instructional approaches widely used in schools. School leaders and CLLs alike said that communication in the summer would be helpful so that they could set expectations in the beginning of the year.

Recommendation 2: Slow the Rollout Process for New Curriculum

Although teachers appreciated getting their hands on the new materials quickly, they also needed more time to fully understand the scope and pedagogical approaches. Similarly, CLLs wished they could have piloted the materials for a year so that they didn't have to "learn alongside" their colleagues. Finally, teachers noted the difficulty in rolling out two very new things – the CCC curriculum *and* the new Fountas & Pinnell (F&P) assessments – at the same time. If the district must rollout out major change initiatives simultaneously, they would like support in understanding implementation expectations.

Recommendation 3: Provide Differentiated Professional Development in Year 2

Teachers, CLLs and school leaders all mentioned that professional development opportunities in Year 2 should be calibrated to individual teacher needs.³¹ Although all the schools we visited were technically "high implementer" schools, it was clear that there were teachers in these schools who would benefit from basic PD geared toward "emergent adopters," while the "advanced adopters" were ready to go deeper on specific topics. School leaders also expressed a desire to learn alongside CLLs in Year 2.

Recommendation 4: Provide District Guidance on Allowable Modifications in Year 2

In Year 1, teachers and school leaders in high implementer schools mostly said they appreciated the clear and consistent guidance for implementing the curriculum "as intended." That said, they would appreciate guidance in Year 2 about when and how to make slight to the curriculum based on identified need within their classroom or the makeup of the school. These asks were raised were particularly prevalent in the two STEM schools in our sample, as well as in schools with split-level classrooms.

Recommendation 5: Ensure Alignment Between Curriculum and Report Cards

Teachers noted that it was difficult to provide guidance about students' progress when the curriculum and the report card were essentially using different rubrics.³² Some teachers noted that the alignment issue was with CCC, whereas others said it was a larger issue with standards-based report cards.

Recommendation 6: Articulate Curriculum Links to Upper and Lower Grade Levels

Although the key task in Year 1 was to understand one's own grade-level implementation, teachers said that a task for Year 2 could be to better understand the larger scope and sequence of new curriculum. Teachers said they would like to examine materials for the grade level before them and the grade after them to understand the curricular progression.³³ And 5th grade teachers noted that it would be helpful to articulate transitions to middle school for their students.³⁴

Quotations

¹ *Principal: Suddenly we had that alignment, we had that coordination, and we had a resource that was providing time and opportunity and allowing teachers to see what comes next. What would be coming before... And to start to remove the “accident” in literacy.*

² *Teacher: There's been a certain level of excitement or acknowledgement that it's going to be really good for us as a school to have a continuum across grade levels, that there'll be some consistency in knowing every third grader you get has had the same experience. I think there's been some buy-in because of that.*

³ *Satterberg Coach: And that alignment ... right now you could go from [School X] and [School Y], they're teaching the same lesson today. And it's beautiful...It has just really helped us as a community come together and look at our instructional practices and elevate our skills.*

⁴ *Principal: One of the things that CCC has done, it has really empowered teachers -- all teachers -- to be able to teach literacy and to teach it well. Not all teachers have a background in literacy, and this curriculum is constructed in a way that all teachers can teach children how to read, and I think that is huge for elementary school teachers, how we're responsible for the foundations of reading. Our charge is to get it right because we know how important reading is for the rest of the student's life. I've seen a shift where individuals who may or may not have known the different components of reading, but now you have, this is a way a pedagogical practice to teach phonics with Being a Reader. This is how you can teach your comprehension skills and making meaning. This is how you can teach writing and being a writer. All these components connect. You have your vocabulary within your making meaning, so all those other components within balanced literacy that we were expecting teachers to do just on their own and kind of learn it as you go, now there's an opportunity for teachers to feel empowered and successful with teaching all learners to read and that's huge for me to be able to watch.*

⁵ *Satterberg Coach: We have a lot of new teachers in [this region]. [The curriculum has] really just given them that little push that [teachers] needed and so that they could start teaching right away. And we talk about that a lot. Even looking at the anchor charts from kindergarten through fifth grade, we all have the same language now. We didn't have the same language before. I hate to say praise the CCC, but it's a beautiful thing because then when I come into the building, I already know what the expectation for learning is and what students are expected to know and be able to do and then teachers already know that those are the questions I'm going to be asking.*

⁶ *Principal: Having two teachers who were trained [was helpful]. It set up that teachers could have conversations about what was going well and what wasn't going well and they weren't talking to their evaluator, they were talking to a colleague.*

Principal: We know the researcher says peers learn best by peers. I can stand and do a professional development at any time, but it's powerful if I'm working with the CLL leads to work with colleagues.

⁷ *CLL: I was excited to have an opportunity to not only dive deeper into the curriculum, but also to further learn strategies to teach teachers. Something that going forward I really want to do with my career is mentor other teachers, and so I felt like it was a good starting point, and it was a really great opportunity, again, for me to not only better myself in that way, but also to just be better for my students.*

⁸ CLL: I'm glad that the CLL program is continuing next year, because I feel like next year, now that people have a year under their belt of using their curriculum, I think they will be in a better place to have some PD or some practice around diving deeper into it.

⁹ Teacher: I think the books are really diverse, so I think that really helps students to have authentic conversations around other cultures and other perspectives.

Teacher: When I looked at the book list and kind of did my own diving into what the text would be, I was very excited because the representation, just the vocabulary, and the authors, everything about the books that we've had the opportunity to read this year has kind of encompassed the students who are in our classes and the different languages. We very recently read a book about the Great Grape Boycott. It took place in Mexico with Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta... As I was reading, the kids were just in love with the book. They still talk about it today. It's like, "Remember when we read that?" "I read another biography about Cesar Chavez." So it just lit up this spark in a lot of the kids, and it was the kids who I thought were going to need to most help in comprehending the text.

¹⁰ Satterberg Coach: Their representation of Asians was almost non-existent. To be honest, that reflects trends in children's literature at the moment.

Teacher: I've heard some complaints from third grade teachers, but for the second grade texts I feel like they've been as far as showing racial minorities in a variety of life situations, not just showing African Americans as dealing with civil rights or slavery but also as contemporary characters.

Teacher: In fifth grade there's an essay about all boy versus all girl schools that doesn't really feel like it matches up to some of the community building things that we want to do here. It's basically pretty heteronormative about like I can't work with a boy because I'm a girl and I think boys are cute and it's just weird.

Student: I think that maybe the curriculum could do a little bit better about talking about black excellency, because I feel like we focus a lot on America's history, and we kind of focus on the aspect of slavery, and I understand that yes, we did go through slavery, but we don't talk a lot about what African American or even just different races or like how they, or what they achieved or what they've done. I think we focus a lot on Native Americans, like this year we're learning a lot about colonial times, and it's a lot of white history. And that's good to learn, but I think we should also open up our circle and learn about other cultures, because it's important to be well-rounded.

¹¹ Teacher: So the neutral responses was something that for me, was tremendously difficult at the beginning just because I have always had this class environment where it was like, we cheer each other on for being on the right track...It was hard at first. I just constantly bit my tongue. It was like, "Okay, now let's hear from someone else." At first, the students are like, "So I'm totally wrong." It took a lot for them to understand that Miss [X is] not going to tell you if you're right or wrong. I want you to do that thinking. Once they got it, it was almost more powerful for them because they owned that responsibility for finding their evidence and supporting their thinking, not depending on me to validate them.

At first I felt, I was a little nervous about it, you know? I'm just gonna let it go, let go that control and let them have that conversation, but it's been an incredible experience, watching them grow and the language that they use.

My students feel like they're owning their own learning a lot more. It's been nice because I feel like I am truly a facilitator rather than being kind of this expert of everything, and they are having really authentic conversations with each other. I think that it's been challenging because I also have a special ed background, and so there's that part of me that wants to positively praise every single move they make, and so that's been hard for me.

¹² *Teacher: I feel like this year I've had a bigger variety of kids participating whereas last year it was the same kids who were always right. Even the kids, I could see on their face when those friends would share, they knew that they were right and they knew that is the kid who always raised their hand, but this year everybody's participating.*

Teacher: The students came in this year with all sorts of feelings about who they could and couldn't work with. That's not happening at all anymore. It's pretty amazing to watch them work together, they really take their learning seriously.

Teacher: Their discussion skills have developed further than I've ever seen a Kindergarten class go. I'll have kids say, "Well, to build on what this person said." It's like, wow! And also I have a whole class that knows how to ask a question and that's really big. That's a hard concept, particularly for English Language Learners.

Teacher: I felt like kids felt more confident, both as readers and writers. I saw fewer kids feeling like they couldn't participate or have something to say because I think it was a much more of an open playing field, some of the questions that were being asked. My partner and I were both saying that we felt like we didn't have the same number of kids this year feeling like, well I can't lead, or I can't, you know. And I think that comes from so many group discussions and supported scaffolds.

Principal: Social-emotional components show up in all areas of the day. Students are adopting those practices of 'how do you join a conversation?' 'How do you contribute to a conversation?' 'How do you build on or add more?' That has been a welcome, when you think about the 21st century skills needed for this generation, where the workforce is more of a collaborative approach.

Teacher: I mean I see it all the time, even in school assemblies. We were having an assembly on Friday and part of it was a discussion with the students and they naturally turn their bodies and look at a speaker. They participate in conversations by saying "in addition to what so and so said". This is just how we operate now.

Teacher: It just now bleeds into every part of our day. Even when I'm planning math lessons, if there's something I think where we're gonna be sharing materials, I'll use a couple of phrases that I know CCC would say like what are we going to do to share these pattern blocks with two other partner groups? So it's just been from that standpoint a helpful language to use throughout the whole day.

Satterberg Coach: It just levels the playing field. 'Culturally responsive' for me is that everyone in the culture understands the rules of engagement, and with CCC you got that.

¹³ *Principal: You have your vocabulary within your Making Meaning, so all those other components within Balanced Literacy that we were expecting teachers to do just on their own and kind of learn it as*

you go, now there's an opportunity for teachers to feel empowered and successful with teaching all learners to read and that's huge for me to be able to watch.

Teacher: This year, one of the things that the students, at least the beginning of the year, kept commenting on is like, "Oh that's the word from that book!" so they were making the connections and it took the lift off of me and put it on the kids for them to make those connections versus me trying to say, 'This is our list of vocabulary words and I found a book that had this vocabulary word.' I'm telling them what the connection is, they were able to do that this year.

¹⁴ *Teacher: Obviously the growth is there. And the people it helped the most was my ELL kids, having that very direct vocabulary instruction. Because again, I was kind of skeptical about it. So, like, "Okay, well we're going to test it and see."*

Teacher: With my ELL students, I feel like to vocabulary was wonderful...When they take MAP and other assessments, the feedback I get is vocabulary, vocabulary, vocabulary. So rather than me searching for things to do to try to improve their vocabulary, I feel like it happened much more naturally because of the books that we were reading and how vocabulary was approached this year.

¹⁵ *I felt terrible about not teaching the vocabulary piece because we were like, no, we just don't have time. And that's a small piece that we didn't do.*

¹⁶ *Teacher: I really think that CCC is on the right page with how they are teaching those small groups for those very low-level readers...When we're doing Making Meaning and they're having a conversation with someone, these students are generally able to engage with a grade level text that's read to them, at close to, at, sometimes even above grade level, but it's decoding the words on the page. That's where the breakdown is, and so I'm excited for those kids that are in kindergarten and first grade who are going to get that really, really strong foundation in decoding.*

¹⁷ *CLL: We tried to dip in with Being a Reader, but that piece is a lot more daunting to the K-2 team because it goes against a lot of what they were doing in the past.*

¹⁸ *Teacher: Especially, at third grade where I still have a lot of kids who aren't reading at grade level, I wish there was a component where we could meet in small groups, the differentiated groups. I understand that there is an idea that we could borrow, second grade being a reader, so I know in theory that happens, but in practice we don't really have access to those materials as an intermediate. I wish we had materials for struggling readers and small group instruction.*

¹⁹ *Student: So, last year, I wasn't raising my hand a lot because I was kind of confused what the teacher was saying. But this year, the new curriculum helped me stronger in raise my hand a lot, and that helped me, I'm thinking I did better this year than last year. Interviewer: Can you tell me a little about that? About why you feel like you felt more comfortable raising your hand more? Student: Because I think that last year [the curriculum] didn't help me understand a lot? But then, this year it helped me understand a lot because the new way we turn-and-talk.*

²⁰ *Teacher: I think success is seeing where kids are, at the end of the year, on their F&P reading assessments and we were worried that it wouldn't align necessarily, but they actually got further than they have before. To see the growth has been really amazing.*

Teacher: I think that helped me to really buy in and give it that implementation with integrity effort because I was able to see the change with the kids.

Teacher: I really like this curriculum, I think it's really great, I've enjoyed it. It's cool to see kids being so successful in ways that they weren't previously. Especially the kids that traditionally haven't necessarily been successful right off the bat, seeing those kids on day one like, "I am a reader. I am a writer," is really exciting because for me as a teacher, if they can leave first grade loving reading and loving writing, then I have won. So that's exciting for me.

Student: This year I'm in 5th grade, so it's my last year of elementary school and I really like the curriculum. It really helped me with the state testing.

²¹ *Principal: I heard a shift from skepticism and worry that maybe it wasn't rigorous enough and maybe it wouldn't serve students well enough, to increasing excitement. And that shift happened mid-to-late fall and so based on what I've seen and based on the conversations I've had with people, I think our teachers on the whole are really excited about it and have embraced it. And have been very much on board to implement it.*

²² *CLL: I've heard teachers express concerns about not being able to dwell or take more time with areas or components that they felt they would like to.*

Teacher: If you add up every curriculum that we use including science and everything, there's just not enough time in the day. That would be the only tweak I can think of is that they were worried about having to cut down some of the blocks. That was something I was not for, and I told them you can't cut down CCC. You have to figure out ... you have to cut something else and not literacy.

²³ *Teacher: We were trying to do this with fidelity it really came at a cost with science and social studies.*

Teacher: It did such a lovely job of meeting those reading and writing standards, but it left us with very little time to incorporate those other things where we were used to kind of mixing all of it together. And these felt much more separated. So we were left with less time to explore the Science and Social Studies aspects.

Teacher: We used to teach science every day for 30 minutes. Maybe 20, 30 like quick short lesson. I would say probably three to four days a week, and now it's like an hour on Wednesdays and that's it. As a STEM school, that's been a huge struggle and challenge... Literacy, yes, is humongous and as K-1 teachers we completely agree with that. You can't learn science if you can't read. I get it, but where's that piece coming in? Just trying to find ways to make it work next year without feeling like we're sacrificing or cutting from another subject area.

²⁴ *I would love it if our special ed and our ELL teachers had access to the actual hard copies of the curriculum, and if the ELL teachers had more of the training for how to partner. I feel like the Special Ed actually pursued it and got the SIPPS. So, I don't know if they did that on their own, but I feel like they weren't given the curriculum...Yeah, they need the curriculum in order for their students to be doing what we're doing in the classroom. Other teacher: And our librarian, I feel like there was some kind of movement among the librarians, where they were kind of equipping each other to help take on some of the technology pieces. So that's actually been really cool that by the end of the year I feel like there was*

some coordination amongst the librarians where they were starting to do some of the technology extensions here with our library time, which was really cool. Yeah, I think supporting them in supporting the program is great.

²⁵ Teacher: It makes me feel lucky that I'm in a school that has money. That I can get money from my principal, or from our PTSA, or from our parents. We were able to ask, we need letter stamps and they sent it in. That's not the case in a lot of schools and that equity piece bothers me.

²⁶ Teacher: I felt like I got no guidance from the district or CCC on how we're supposed to navigate that, the only recommendation I had was, teach the younger grade first and then alternate the next year. But that created some pretty significant tissues in our building with rising first graders who shifted gears mid year but the K-1 teacher was told to teach Kindergarten and I was teaching second so first graders in that class they're gonna be in 2/3 class would be jumping from a K curriculum to the third next year which doesn't make any sense.

²⁷ CLL: I think looking forward, that model to me should be ... The piloted teachers should then be the CLLs, if that makes sense.

²⁸ Principal: It was confusing. What it is they were learning and then what were they going to bring back? ... I feel like they were confused even at their trainings too, and they felt frustrated at times going. If they went to something and had some very concrete takeaways, this is what you're going to do at your building, I think it would have been more useful.

²⁹ CLL: It's been tricky to find the time, especially with the new Wednesday early release schedule. You think there's a lot of time but there's actually kinda been less. So for [the other CLL] and I for most of the year, we were just able to work really well together and kinda look at what the whole session was about and hone in on what we thought would be most useful and practical for the teachers right away. I mean, there's so much more that we didn't get to do.

Teacher: I feel like I relied on [my CLL]. 'I don't understand this, how do we do this?' I think something that might have made it even stronger this year is just having that time. [The CLLs] would go to something and didn't always have time to bring it back to the whole group. But that's not a CLL problem; that's just a scheduling issue.

³⁰ Principal: I think one of the successes of CCC has really been the teacher leadership. We have a model here where teachers go visit other classrooms for model lessons, and I would say that has been very instrumental to this first year implementation-wise, being a success. I would say the number one thing, if you can see it being done, then you're more likely to replicate that within your classroom. In reflection of this year, I'm thinking about what we want to carry forth for next year, is providing opportunities for teachers to go observe a colleague teaching the lesson.

³¹ Teacher: I think that although PD for a whole staff is really helpful, that sometimes there's teams that are just ready for things at a different rate, and so kind of differentiating support. Rather than making it kind of a one-size-fits-all....Yes, not everybody is doing Making Meaning and Being a Writer in all the buildings in the district, but our school is, and we've got a good thumb on it, whereas this is not going well, and I need support here, and so it would've been nice to have more of that for at least the buildings who are ready for it.

³² Teacher: There's no correspondence to how we assess them on their report cards. So, it was just like, um, that skill... So I would love, tell the people who be, that the report card needs to be reassessed according to Common Core, what we actually teach in the classroom.

Teacher: There's some breakdowns there, and there are a few pieces. I guess that's where I'm seeing the biggest struggle is the report card and CCC. I feel the rigor is there, the standards are there, but there's some breakdown between what we're reporting on and what we're doing.

³³ Teacher: I think next year, looking ahead, if there was more what do we do K-5? And we'd have to look at that more, rather than just your own grade trying to swim through it. It might help because we could see, oh, they're in second grade, this is what's happening. Or with their reading centers and all of that, they're getting all this ... I can build or that or refer to that.

³⁴ Teacher: if we're going to adopt curriculum as a K-8, there needs to be a story that's being told K-8. That's how I feel about it. Other teacher: Yeah, I think that the transition to 6th grade is challenging enough for most of these kids, so if there is some way for continuity to be placed there ... Whether it's using the same curriculum K-8 or what ... There's enough bumps in the road for those kids ...