



PEABODY CHARTER SCHOOL

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By Claire Krock

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In the span of seventeen years, my journey as a classroom teacher predominantly focused on lower grades intertwined with personal challenges and professional growth. With two daughters, one navigating the educational landscape effortlessly while the other grappled with dyslexia and ADHD, my role expanded beyond teaching into advocacy and educational program navigation.

The realization struck me hard: not every child had access to the support systems my family did. Motivated to bridge this gap, I reached out to the Santa Barbara Unified School District seven years ago with a proposal to pilot an intervention program. Armed with years of experience and a newfound expertise in dyslexia and structured literacy practices, I embarked on a mission to revolutionize literacy instruction.

The initial steps were modest yet crucial. Collaborating with the SELPA director, we tailored a pilot program targeting first, second, and third-grade students, with a laser focus on foundational skills. We trained motivated instructors, provided professional development, introduced evidence-based methodologies like Project Read and Heggerty for phonemic awareness, and meticulously monitored progress.

As my role expanded to Director of Curriculum & Instruction & Assistant Principal at Peabody Charter, my commitment to literacy remained unwavering. Together with an exceptional leadership team, we adopted a holistic approach, integrating literacy interventions from the inside out, starting with targeted support teams and gradually scaling up to whole-school initiatives.

Professional development emerged as a cornerstone of our success. Recognizing the diverse knowledge base among staff, we curated a cohort focused on LETRS,

encompassing teachers, administrators, speech-language pathologists, and university staff. This collaborative effort fostered a common understanding and language around literacy instruction.

The journey wasn't without its challenges. Implementing a comprehensive professional development plan required delicate navigation. Drawing upon personal anecdotes and data-driven insights, I rallied support, emphasizing the urgent need for investment in literacy education.

Fast forward to the present, our efforts have borne fruit. Acknowledged as a California Distinguished School and recipient of the National Blue Ribbon Award, our commitment to literacy has translated into tangible academic achievements. Despite the tumultuous post-pandemic landscape, our CAASPP scores have either maintained or improved, a testament to the coherence and dedication surrounding literacy instruction.

Our data journey continues to evolve, marked by an unwavering commitment to closing the achievement gap. Through meticulous data collection and analysis, we track the progress of students receiving intervention, striving to ensure equitable access to academic success.

Looking ahead, our focus remains steadfast: empowering educators, refining instructional practices, and championing literacy as a cornerstone of academic achievement. As a leader within the system, my role extends beyond mere oversight to cultivating a culture of continuous improvement where every student has the opportunity to thrive.

Success story provided in partnership with FULCRUM: www.FulcrumLiteracy.org