

**CASE STUDY**

# A Path to Confident and Consistent Curriculum Implementation

The Rocklin Academy Family of Schools is a TK–12 public charter organization serving four campuses across Placer and Sacramento counties in California.

**THE CHALLENGE**

## Curriculum in place, but not in practice

When the Rocklin Academy Family of Schools began a partnership with Instruction Partners, its three elementary schools had adopted a high-quality foundational skills curriculum—but teachers were not using the materials consistently and were heavily adapting lessons.

The high degree of customization, though well intended, created system-wide challenges:

1. **Lack of coherence:** Instruction varied widely from classroom to classroom and grade to grade, making it difficult to ensure all students had access to the same learning opportunities.
2. **Overwhelmed new teachers:** Though more experienced teachers were accustomed to designing engaging lessons, new teachers did not have clear guidance on how to pull together lessons across the curriculum and supplemental materials.
3. **Gaps in knowledge sharing:** When teachers moved grades or left the school, much of the institutional knowledge they developed was lost.



Trust in high-quality instructional materials has grown. The conversation is no longer about whether to use the materials. Instead, we're able to focus our conversations on how to make the most of our materials, ensuring that we understand the curriculum's design so that we're able to implement it effectively.

**KRISTEL KAMRAR**

Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction

Elementary principals wanted more consistency but were unsure how to best support teachers in implementing the curriculum with integrity. **Without clear expectations or a formal process for teachers to internalize the materials, inconsistencies in reading instruction persisted across classrooms and grades.**

**THE APPROACH**

## Building leaders' capacity to support curriculum use

Teachers needed professional learning that demonstrated how the materials were designed around the science of reading so that they could confidently leverage them to support their students' learning needs.

Here's how the Instruction Partners team built Rocklin Elementary School leaders' capacity to deliver more effective professional learning for teachers:

**1****A curriculum deep-dive**

Leaders began by studying the design of the curriculum alongside their Instruction Partners team—exploring how it aligned with the science of reading and identifying the components essential for effective implementation. This enabled them to set clear expectations for curriculum use and then tailor teacher learning and feedback accordingly.

**2****Adaptable lesson preparation protocols for PLCs**

Instruction Partners co-planned PLC sessions with Rocklin leaders, developing an adaptable lesson preparation protocol.

Early PLC sessions focused on helping teachers identify how each lesson reflected the science of reading. As confidence and trust in the materials grew, the protocol shifted toward modeling and practicing instructional moves within the materials that strongly aligned with the objective of each lesson.

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Any resistance from teachers to implementing the adopted curriculum is not because it will be hard; it is because they fear that it's not going to meet the needs of their students.

**KRISTEL KAMRAR**

Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction

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During [PLC] facilitation, I think all of us instructional leaders experienced a sense of not really being 'expert' enough to effectively guide internalization. There was some coming to terms with the idea that you just want to build as much knowledge as you can, and it's okay if you don't know it all.

**ANA SOTKA**

Principal, Rocklin Academy

**3****Dedicated time for preparation**

Having a protocol is just the first step—school leaders also needed space to build the skills to use it effectively before bringing it to teachers. Instruction Partners helped build their facilitation skills by modeling the protocol, guiding practice, and providing targeted feedback.

As leaders implemented the new protocol with their teachers, they recorded the PLC sessions so the Instruction Partners team could continue providing actionable feedback to sharpen their facilitation skills.

**4****Instructional rounds with targeted feedback**

With Instruction Partners' guidance, Rocklin school leaders led regular instructional rounds—observing classrooms and providing feedback to teachers. As they became more familiar with the curriculum and deepened their content knowledge, they knew what to look for in classrooms and could focus feedback on specific instructional moves discussed in PLCs.



## THE IMPACT

# Coherence across classrooms

Two years into implementing clearer expectations for curriculum use alongside strong preparation support, Rocklin educators are seeing tangible results. Leaders and teachers report clearer, more coherent instruction and stronger alignment across classrooms.



We've heard from multiple teams that students came to them this year stronger than the year before, that they're seeing the payoff in coherence and alignment.

**KRISTEL KAMRAR**

Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction



The biggest impact we've seen in the classroom is a clear coherence of instruction. It was a clear indicator that there was teacher growth occurring. Teachers were building trust with the program, and it was reaching more students. We've seen particular growth with our EL [English learner] students. **If we stay the course and keep going like we are going, we are going to continue to see data improve.**

**ANA SOTKA**

Principal, Rocklin Academy



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