



PERSONALIZED LEARNING

Rigorous pedagogy
Data-driven instruction
Offline instructional
resources

“Core5 is a powerful program that helps students learning to read as well as those who are struggling.”

– TALYA TAYLOR, PRINCIPAL
CLAY CHARTER ACADEMY
MIDDLEBURG, FL

Clay Charter Academy Charter Schools USA, FL

Strong Leadership Drives Student Literacy Gains

Challenge

Principal Talya Taylor joined Clay Charter Academy with only two weeks left in the school year. She soon discovered that 49% of her students school-wide were reading below grade level, with some grades having 70% of students reading below grade level. **“As a former reading teacher, I understood the gravity of the challenge facing our students if these deficiencies were not addressed.** Students have to master literacy skills in the elementary grades because learning doesn’t stop. The work gets more difficult, the text gets more complex, and skill gaps are harder to close once students get to middle school,” she remarked.

In addition, many of Taylor’s teachers were new to teaching, with varying degrees of experience in literacy instruction.

To address these issues, she needed a solution that would accelerate her students’ development of fundamental literacy skills as well as identify skill gaps as they emerge. She also wanted to equip her teachers with data and instructional resources that would help drive instruction.

Solution

A possible solution turned out to be within easy reach. She learned that earlier that year the school had purchased Lexia Reading Core5®, a technology-based literacy program for students of all abilities in grades pre-K-5, however, steps had not been taken at the school to ensure fidelity of use. She decided to evaluate the program.

With her background in literacy instruction, Taylor knew that the process of learning to read is complicated. After

examining the pedagogy behind Core5, she was impressed by the program's rigorous scope and sequence, and systematic approach to instruction in six areas of reading—from phonological awareness to structural analysis to comprehension. The program's adaptive technology would enable differentiated instruction for each of her students.

Taylor also recognized that Core5's Assessment Without Testing® technology would provide valuable data to help her teachers prioritize and plan their instruction. The program predicts students' percent chance of reaching end-of-year benchmarks and prescribes the amount of instructional intensity required to improve the likelihood of reaching their end-of-year, grade-level targets. She and her teachers would have immediate access to real-time progress monitoring data that is collected as students work independently online in the program. To help address skill gaps identified by the program, her teachers would have access to Core5's scripted, offline instructional materials for their small group or individualized lessons.

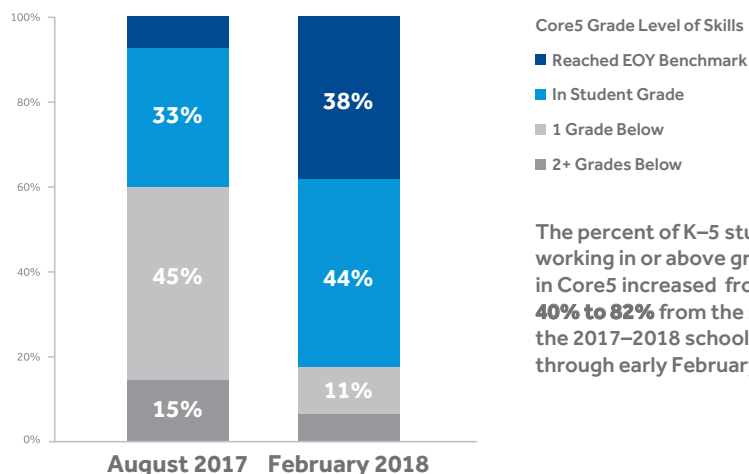
At the start of the next school year, Taylor talked with teachers and observed students using Core5. "After researching the program over the summer and then seeing the impact on students, I was sold. **Core5 is a powerful program that helps students who are learning to read as well as those who are struggling,**" commented Taylor.

Results

Taylor established the expectation that all K-5 students would meet their Core5 recommended usage and teachers would use Core5 resources as part of their instruction. "As educators, we have to do everything in our power to help every student read on grade level," she stated.

In only six months, 89% of students in grades K-5 were meeting their Core5 recommended usage, and the percent of those students who were working in or above grade level in Core5 increased dramatically from 40% to 82% (see

Figure 1. Progress of Students Meeting Usage (N=263)



The percent of K-5 students working in or above grade level in Core5 increased from **40% to 82%** from the start of the 2017-2018 school year through early February 2018.

Figure 1).¹

To support her teachers, Taylor purchased additional Core5 training from Lexia and encouraged all of her teachers, even those familiar with the program, to attend. Third-grade teacher Lindsay Perry, who was new to Clay Charter but had used Core5 previously, stated "**I knew Core5 was a terrific program and couldn't wait to use it again.** I found it helpful to participate in the training in order to be brought up-to-date on the program's enhancements."

"During the Lexia training, Ms. Taylor was fully engaged and led by example," recounted Perry. **"She let us know that we were all in this together.** After that training, teachers began using Core5 as a regular station in their small group rotations. The online portion gives students the differentiated instruction they need, and the offline instructional materials enable teachers to help students close skill gaps. I believe that accounts for the improved scores we're now seeing."

Teachers value Core5's data-driven Class Action Plan and review it daily to see which students need more time on Core5, who may be in need of a teacher-led Lexia Lesson® and who has completed a Core5 level and is ready for a Lexia Skill Builder®. Perry dedicates a station in her centers to Skill Builders, the pencil and paper activities designed to develop students' automaticity in

their newly acquired literacy skills.

"With Core5, I can see my students growing and taking more ownership of their learning," Perry stated. "They work hard in the program, are improving academically, and their self-confidence is building as well."

"Core5 adapts to every child and provides much more individualized instruction than I possibly could," stated Kindergarten Teacher Brittaney Hernandez. "The program accelerates learning for my students who struggle and even my high flyers can advance and continue to learn."

Taylor, her teachers, and the students have all embraced Core5 and are dedicated to reaching their goal of reading proficiency for all. Taylor concluded, **"I'm a believer in this program because, bottom line, Core5 is changing student lives."**

Clay Charter Academy

- K-8 Enrollment 460
- Grades on Core5 K-5
- White 50%
- Hispanic 20%
- Black 19%
- Multi-racial 5%
- Economically disadvantaged 50%
- Rural location

¹ Students meeting recommended usage in Core5 (N=263) at least 50% of the time with at least 12 weeks of usage from 8/1/2017 to 2/4/2018

About Charter Schools USA

Charter Schools USA, founded by Jonathan Hage in 1997, is the first education management company to earn corporation system-wide accreditation through AdvancED and is one of the nation's leading charter school management companies. CSUSA currently manages 84 schools in seven states serving more than 70,000 students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. CSUSA innovative educational advantages include advanced technology, meaningful parental involvement, student uniforms, consistent and fairly-enforced discipline policies, highly qualified and motivated staff, community focus, integrated character education and high academic growth and performance.