



## PERSONALIZED LEARNING

Progress-Monitoring Data

Adaptive Technology

Teacher Effectiveness

“The best part of Core5 is its adaptive technology. Students receive individualized instruction from Core5 progressing through the program at the pace that’s right for them.”

– NANCY HATZENBIHLER,  
RTI CURRICULUM COORDINATOR,  
STERLING INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL, WA

## Sterling Intermediate School, WA

### School achieves literacy proficiency goals across its diverse student body

#### Challenge

As the nation’s population becomes more richly diversified, U.S. schools are being called upon to serve an increasing number of bilingual and EL (English Learner) students. Not all institutions have the educational infrastructure to take on this challenge, and Sterling Intermediate School in East Wenatchee, Wash., is one of many schools that have turned to technology to improve the success of its diverse student population.

Sterling Intermediate serves a largely agricultural community with 55 percent eligible for free or reduced lunch and about 15 percent of its students being bilingual. To successfully engage these students and accelerate their learning, the school needed to deliver more differentiated instruction than its current teaching approach could accommodate. “Our kids not only face language barriers,” says Chris Hall, principal, “but they’re also behind academically.”

Without a technology-based literacy program that provided personalized instruction, teachers were challenged to find the resources they needed to help students achieve success in reading. “Teachers would try to adjust our regular curriculum,” says Nancy Hatzenbihler, RTI curriculum coordinator, “or I would go online to find resources to better meet the students’ individual needs.”

#### Solution

Leveraging the state of Washington’s Learning Assistance Program (LAP), a program designed to provide supplemental services for K-12 students scoring below grade-level standard in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, Sterling Intermediate sought out a technology-based literacy program that would help it better serve its bilingual students.

A teacher for 32 years with a Masters in Reading, Hatzenbihler valued Lexia® Core5® Reading's rigorous scope and sequence and the fact that the program does not allow the students to move on without mastering the content. Individualized to help students progress at their own pace and level, Core5 was initially used solely with the school's bilingual students. However, they soon realized that it would also benefit the school's non-bilingual students, many of whom were performing below grade level in reading.

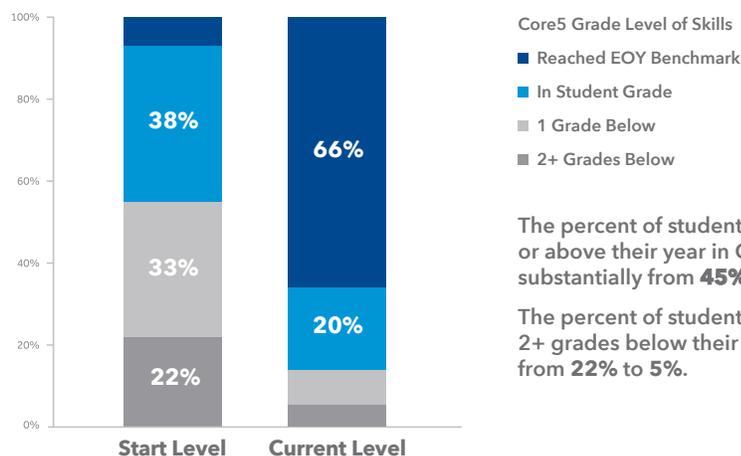
When the school began using Core5 with fidelity and across its K-5 population (for all students K-4 and struggling readers in grade 5), something remarkable began to happen. **By combining consistency of use, teacher training by Lexia, regular monitoring of the program by the teachers, and Response to Intervention (RTI), the school began to see significant positive results from its investment.**

"Initially, usage was hit-or-miss and we didn't feel like we were getting much bang for our buck; we weren't using Core5 to the fullest extent," says Hall. "Then, this year, we changed our approach and it has just taken off. We ensured that students are on the program on a consistent basis and teachers are really looking under the hood, working with their students, and leveraging the program's individualized approach—with the support of our RTI instructors."

## Results

Students at Sterling Intermediate are experiencing impressive growth as a result of using Core5. Those who were meeting Core5 recommended usage over at least 20 weeks made meaningful progress. The percentage of students working in or above their year in Core5 increased from 45 percent to 86 percent, and the percentage of students working 2+ grades below their year in Core5 decreased from 22 percent to just 5 percent.

**Figure 1. Progress of Students Meeting Usage (N=128)**



The percent of students working in or above their year in Core5 increased substantially from **45% to 86%**.

The percent of students working 2+ grades below their year reduced from **22% to 5%**.

The positive results associated with Core5 extend beyond strong usage and literacy improvements.

Because parents have access to the program at home, in a school where incoming kindergartners are almost 50 percent bilingual, the positive reinforcement outside of school hours also contributes to students' progress.

The RTI program at Sterling Intermediate works with a wide range of students throughout the day. For those students in grades K-4, Core5 helps pinpoint students' skill levels and determine which of them can move ahead, and which need additional literacy instruction in certain areas. In fact, Sterling Intermediate administrators discovered students in grades three and four were not getting enough time on Core5 to meet their prescribed minutes—which can range from 20-80 minutes per week—so, the school dedicated time to the program during their specialist block as well as their classroom intervention time. "Now, students have two periods during the week when they are going into the computer lab to work on Core5. That has helped get them the time they need on the program to make significant progress," says Hall.

Hatzenbihler added, **"The best part of Core5 is its adaptive technology. Students receive individualized instruction from Core5 progressing**

**through the program at the pace that's right for them. In addition, having the program's data at their fingertips, our teachers and curriculum directors can better direct their time and allocate resources."**

Hall concluded, "In the end, being able to get all instructors using the same technology-based literacy program has led to better cohesion and collaboration among teachers and administrators. That's huge for me because we're all speaking the same language and on the same page in terms of curriculum. It's awesome and I wish all of our curricula were that way."

## Sterling Intermediate School Profile

|                     |       |
|---------------------|-------|
| • Enrollment        | 901   |
| # students on Core5 | 307   |
| White               | 56%   |
| Hispanic            | 39%   |
| 2 or more races     | 3%    |
| Free/reduced lunch  | 98%   |
| SPED                | 10%   |
| English Language    | 15%   |
| • Location          | Rural |

Fig. 1: Lexia Learning students meeting recommended usage (N=128) over at least 20 weeks of use 8/1/2017-6/3/2018