

CASE STUDY

Boosting Literacy Development & Cultivating Culture through Competency-Based Coaching

[5-8 minute read]

SITUATED EAST OF THE SPRAWLING Dallas, Texas, metroplex, Mesquite Independent School District (ISD) is composed of 50 schools and nearly 40,000 students. In 2015, the district entered into a new partnership with engage2learn (e2L) in an effort to focus on boosting literacy development, embarking on the rewarding journey toward building an innovative, inclusive, and intentional district culture.

“What we are doing is creating a model that centers around **BUILDING CAPACITY OF TEACHERS**, while allowing the teachers to be the **OWNER & INNOVATOR** of what needs to occur in that classroom.”

– Dr. David Vroonland, Superintendent



The Strategy

Knowing that a successful implementation begins with a locally designed solution, e2L facilitated multiple strategic sessions with district stakeholders to collaborate on and design the Mesquite ISD Literacy Framework.

This simple yet effective foundational plan provided teachers and campus literacy

leaders with a strategic roadmap, guiding the way toward classroom and instructional innovation. Every elementary campus team was charged with designing a unique plan to bring teachers up to mastery level on seven fundamental literacy best practices, such as Guided Reading, within the framework.

The Challenge

Then Superintendent Dr. David Vroonland wanted to improve literacy development and readiness while moving the district from a culture of compliance-driven professional development to one of evidence-based, smart professional learning that embraced ownership and innovation. With a long track record of intentionally creating the kind of district culture that helps schools build capacity, retain teachers, and improve student outcomes, e2L was the ideal partner for Mesquite ISD.



The Strategy continued

Such laser focus on the core elements of balanced literacy, with job-embedded, smart professional learning around the high-yield strategies for each, fully delivered on Dr. Vroonland's vision to ensure all Mesquite ISD learners were reading on level by third grade.

To provide all teachers, coaches, and leaders with the right tools and support to execute the literacy plan with fidelity, Mesquite ISD extended the partnership with e2L to deliver competency-based coaching using the GROWE coaching conversation protocol and GroweLab, e2L's all-in-one teacher support and instructional coaching platform for educators. Over the course of three years, district educators and staff

participated in evidence-based, growth-focused conversations, resulting in mastery of instructional best practices and a transformed district culture.

What's more, the focused training for instructional coaches prepared the district to maximize educator support while sustaining innovation in literacy development and other content areas long after the partnership ended. This investment in building internal coaching capacity, facilitating educator growth, and implementing innovative instructional practices would prove to be invaluable to the district's commitment to improving student outcomes.



The Outcome

Mesquite ISD made immediate progress towards the superintendent's goal of reading on level by grade 3. In year one, 87% of second graders with teachers receiving e2L coaching were reading on grade level, compared to just 78% in non-coached classrooms. In addition, at-risk second graders receiving Tier 3 or Tier 2 academic interventions at the start of the year were able to transition to Tier 1, thanks to the strong foundation of differentiated instruction exemplified in the Literacy Framework. Similarly, 268 students who entered kindergarten at-risk in 2017 left for first grade on track!

Cultivating an innovative literacy environment in primary classrooms across the district has left an indelible impression and changed the trajectory of learners' lives in Mesquite ISD, developing a more literate and confident community as a whole. In fact, to extend the mission of literacy development outside of the classroom, Mesquite ISD launched RealPlayTalk, a research-based, community-supported initiative designed to promote literacy among its pre-kindergarten through second



grade students, many of whom come from low-income households. The program includes volunteers, community partners, parents, and relatives in a comprehensive approach toward making its vision of "strengthening families and the community through literacy" a thriving reality.

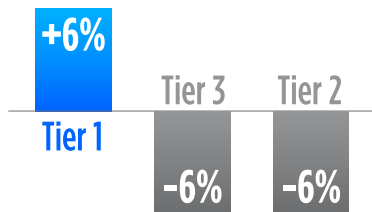
What began as a partnership to guide the district toward increased literacy development, improved educator support and professional learning, and a transformed culture has blossomed into a systemic shift for the district community at large — with the educator growth and improved student outcomes data to prove it.

- 6,045** Planning/Other
- 3,345** Coaching Conversations
- 1,728** Classroom Visits
- 974** Admin Meetings
- 872** Modeling/Co-facilitating

2019 ISIP* Comparison

*Istation's Indicators of Progress

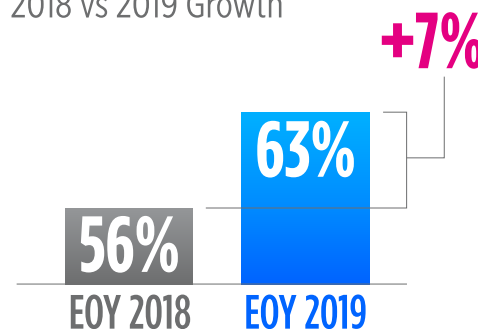
+/- % Students BOY vs. EOY



- 1,623** High Yield Strategies
- 147** e2L Best Practices

ISIP Tier 1 Improvement

2018 vs 2019 Growth



Ready to learn how engage2learn can accelerate literacy development and improve student outcomes through smart professional learning in your school or district?
Schedule a meeting to learn more today!

