

Visionary-Empowering Student Ownership

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ABSTRACT

Look ahead what do you see? A thoughtful group of scholars taking ownership of their learning. Through blended learning we are working to increase students' independence, voice, and choice. Blended learning is student-centered in its approach because it allows students to use time and resources more flexibly. Blended learning is an intentional integration of traditional and online learning in order to provide educational opportunities that maximize the benefits of each mode of delivery and thus effectively facilitate student learning.

Why blended learning?

The labor market is changing drastically; business predictions state that by 2030, 85% of the professions will be entirely new. Employers will increasingly rely on machines and robots instead of human labor because it helps to reduce cost. 2030 is only eleven years away hence the sense of urgency to rethink students' classroom experience

INTRODUCTION

Concourse Village Elementary School, a six-year-old school near Yankee Stadium that has blended playfulness and academic rigor, close reading and classroom conversation, to impressive effect. Concourse Village Elementary School (CVES) provides a safe and nurturing environment where all students are encouraged, stimulated and motivated by a rigorous curriculum. The school's mission is to develop well-rounded students who will become responsible adults that positively impact the world by embracing iPOWER, the school's core values of Integrity, Perseverance, Optimism, Willingness, Empathy, and Respect.

We have a total of 370 students in grades 3K to 5. We are located in the Melrose section of the South Bronx. We have been identified as the poorest congressional district in the nation. Our student population consist of 66% Latino, 33% African American 1% other. Nonetheless, they vastly outperform their peer group and even the city as a whole on the state exams. Last year, about 80 percent of students passed the state reading and math tests — roughly double the citywide average. The school is well respected in our community. We have been a Showcase School for four consecutive years and we are the 2018 Blue Ribbon Award recipients for Exemplary Performance. We are also part of Campus District Charter Program grant, a program designed to promote collaboration between schools.

The CVES faculty is made up of passionate educators' eager to create the best learning conditions for children, and they work collaboratively to achieve excellence. At CVES, the community believes in working together as "a community of one." They work with one common goal, and that is "excellence for all children." The CVES community is grounded in their core values of Integrity, Perseverance, Optimism, Willingness, Empathy, and Respect (I-POWER). Students begin the day with the Scholars' Creed of Integrity because affirmation of their success is vital for creating the belief of excellence.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

On observation we see that our challenge is transitioning teachers from teacher-talk to student-centered learning. Our teachers dominate the classroom by dictating every move the students make. A major part of the problem is excessive teacher talk, which often results in over scaffolding, which limits students thinking. Teachers are often doing most of the work

and/or thinking. It appears that teachers believe it is important to review, unpack, and overshare information so that students can be successful, however, it is taking the ownership off of them. As a result, students are not demonstrating ownership or interest in learning instead they are passive learners.

METHODS

To create an impact, CVES will build on its strong existing academic program by implementing Blended Literacy, which combines content-rich ELA curriculum, standards-based literacy instruction, and blended learning as a means to personalize learning student students. Content-rich ELA curriculum strategically and cumulatively builds knowledge and vocabulary within and across years. Standards-based literacy instruction equips students with the skills to comprehend text: understanding the concepts of print, knowing what sounds letters/syllables make, being able to recognize letters/words and reading fluency. Blended learning leverages technology to personalize learning, enabling scholars to learn in ways that would not be possible with traditional classroom instruction and curriculum materials. In the CVES's Blended Literacy approach, scholars in grades PK-5 will:

- Engage in a rigorous, interdisciplinary and content-rich ELA content that builds background knowledge and vocabulary cumulatively, both year-over-year and within each grade level
- Experience high-quality literacy instruction that builds reading foundational skills while also allowing students to read, write, speak and listen in tasks driven by complex texts

- Master rigorous grade-level content at their own pace and with differentiated scaffolds and some choice around tasks and assessments via the station-rotation model, with some instruction also delivered through the flipped classroom approach
- Reflect regularly on their own learning by getting to know their strengths as a learner, setting learning goals, and monitoring progress towards those learning goals
- Know and be able to articulate what they are learning in each unit and class, as well as how what they are currently learning fits into the arc of their learning journey.

RESULTS

Our New York State data results are as follows:

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
ELA	59%	94%	79%	87%
Math	84%	98%	84%	88%

REFLECTIONS

Throughout the past year, I have evolved as an instructional leader mostly in the area of reflection. This is vital to my growth as a leader because it usually feels like I am on the go all the time and creating time for reflection has helped me hone in on areas of celebrations, which allows me to see what is working. The Cahn Fellowship has helped me to hone in on a need in our school that has allowed our school to address a problem of practice that has become a high leverage area because it is impacting the instructional structure of our school community.

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APPENDIX

If you referred to any data that is illustrated by charts and/or graphs please include them here as Appendix A, Appendix B, etc.

Blended Literacy Supports SY18-19



Pilot

- We will focus on ensuring a successful Blended Literacy pilot in 5th grade by engaging in
 - Bi-monthly walkthroughs of pilot classrooms
 - Professional development and coaching for 5th grade teachers
 - Ongoing monitoring and refinement of the implementation plan



Refine

- We will focus on continuing to build capacity for personalized learning and knowledge-based literacy instruction engaging in cycles of improvement and visiting schools implementing one or both effectively.
- Each cycle of improvement will include
 - Feedback
 - Reflection
 - Refinement



Plan

- We focus on preparing to expand the implementation of Blended Learning in SY19-20 by
 - Mapping the existing curriculum, conducting a review and making modifications as needed
 - Acquiring any additional hardware and software needed and revising the tools developed for the pilot
 - Building capacity for 3rd and 4th grade teachers to implement in SY19-20