

LOCS Elementary Literacy Curriculum Presentation

February 11, 2026

Presenters:

Kerri Anderson, Director of Elementary Curriculum
Kate DiMeo, Student Service Coordinator and ELA Specialist
Sarah Dabrowski, 3rd Grade teacher Stadium Drive
Bri Metz, 4th Grade teacher Orion Oaks
Emma Palushaj, 2nd Grade teacher Orion Oaks
Michele Smyth, Kindergarten teacher Webber
Lorie VanArsdale, Kindergarten teacher Stadium Drive

Why this journey to a new elementary literacy curriculum started:

- ▶ MDE Dyslexia Law passed in October 2024
- ▶ Science of Reading Research
- ▶ MDE came out with a list of approved curriculum programs to choose from CKLA was rated the highest
- ▶ LOCS had to make a choice regarding curriculum programs on approved list in July 2025 to apply for the 35m grant money from MDE

Overall Score (Average of Phases 1-3)

Amplify CKLA, 3rd Edition (2025) received the following scores in Overall Series Alignment

| Phase 1 Non-Negotiables: Research-Based Series Alignment | Phases | Percentage earned in each phase |
|---|--|---------------------------------|
| Meets - | PHASE 1: Research-Based Series Alignment | 99% |
| | PHASE 2: High-Quality Instructional Materials Alignment Scoring Process | 95% |
| | Phase 3: ESSA Levels of Evidence | 100% |
| | Overall Percent | 98% |

Thank you to all the staff who went on this journey!

31 teachers from all six elementary schools with all grade levels represented.

Instructional Coaches:

Kate DiMeo - committee chair

Beth Bruce

Melissa Berndt

Lisa Jones

Andrea Moede

Emilie Schiff

January Stafford

Allison Webb

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Michele Smyth | Kindergarten | Webber |
| Dawn Burks | Kindergarten | Webber |
| Sarah Masarello | Kindergarten | Webber |
| Lorie Vanarsdale | Kindergarten | Stadium Drive |
| Lauren Miller (S2 only) | First Grade | Webber |
| Katie McCall | First Grade | Webber |
| Danielle Carroll | First Grade | Webber |
| Claire Demoff | First Grade | Carpenter |
| Julia Moore | First Grade | Blanche Sims |
| Carly Riddle | Second Grade | Paint Creek |
| Morgan Battershell | Second Grade | Paint Creek |
| Amanda Bedient | Second Grade | Paint Creek |
| Hannah Ordiway | Second Grade | Webber |
| Erin Kawamoto | Second Grade | Stadium Drive |
| Emma Palushaj | Second Grade | Orion Oaks |
| Jodie Marsden | Second Grade | Orion Oaks |
| Nicole Shuler (S2 only) | Third Grade | Blanche Sims |
| Kari Robbins | Third Grade | Blanche Sims |
| Amanda Kulik | Third Grade | Blanche Sims |
| Adrian Carl | Third Grade | Paint Creek |
| Sarah Dawbrowski | Third Grade | Stadium Drive |
| Teresa Ratkowiak | Fourth Grade | Stadium Drive |
| Shelby McCumber | Fourth Grade | Orion Oaks |
| Bri Metz | Fourth Grade | Orion Oaks |
| Francie Robertson (S2 only) | Fourth Grade | Orion Oaks |
| Cami Giberson | Fifth Grade | Orion Oaks |
| Teresa West | Fifth Grade | Carpenter |
| Bethany Goll (S2 only) | Fifth Grade | Carpenter |
| Amy Ducharme | Fifth Grade | Carpenter |
| Dayna Brown | Fifth Grade | Webber |
| Jessica Soullier | Fifth Grade | Stadium Drive |

CKLA Amplify is built on the science of how kids learn to read



Word Recognition

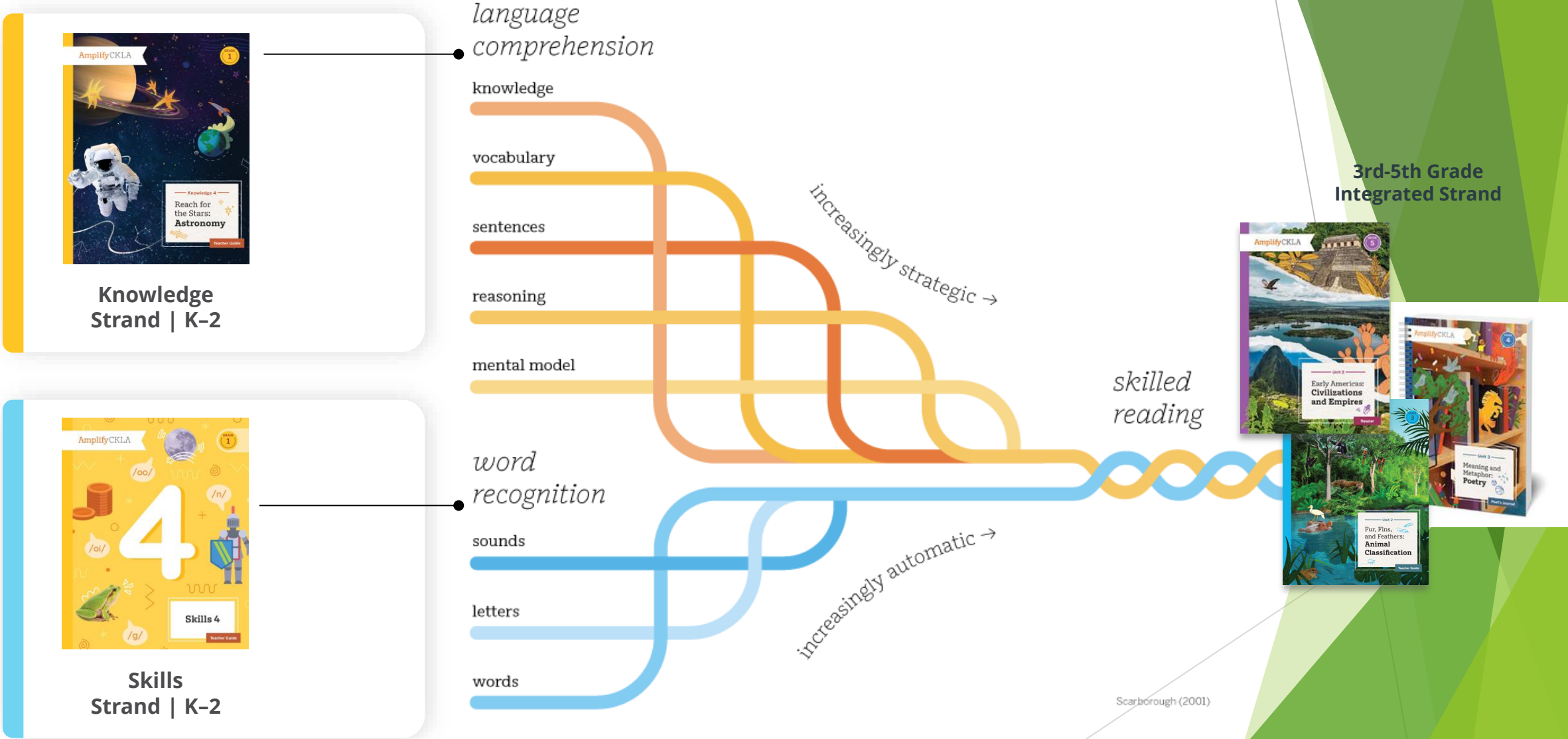
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**Language
Comprehension**

=

**Reading to
gain meaning**

CKLA program structure is grounded in research



K-2nd Grade Program Structure

Knowledge Strand

- Building knowledge
- Vocabulary
- Sharing ideas



knowledge

vocabulary

sentences

reasoning

mental model

*language
comprehension*

increasingly strategic →

*skilled
reading*

Foundational Skills

- Phonemic awareness
- Phonics
- Deliberate reading and writing practice



*word
recognition*

sounds

letters

words

*word
recognition*

increasingly automatic →

Comprehensive Skills Instruction

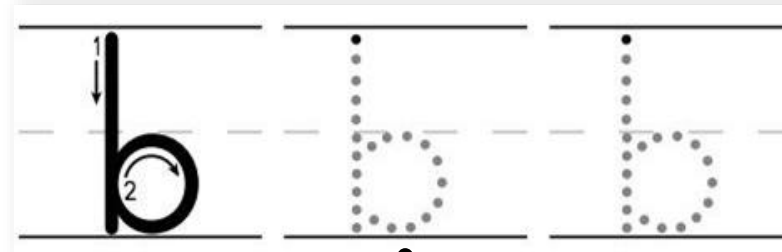
read decodable texts



write about text



map sounds to letters



daily practice and reinforcement

Kindergarten

Units 1-2 Purely Oral Phonemic Awareness

Units 3-5 One-to-one letter-sound correspondences; CVC words with "short" vowel sounds like *cat*, *dog*, *bed*

Unit 6 Consonant Clusters, CCVC words like *flag*, CVCC words like *dust*, CCVCC words like *blast*.

Unit 7 Consonant sounds written with digraph spellings (e.g., 'sh', 'ch', 'th', 'ng')

Units 8-9 Tricky Words; double-letter spellings like 'ss', 'ff', 'ck'

Unit 10 Basic code spellings for /ee/ spelled 'ee', /ae/ spelled 'a_e', /oe/ spelled 'o_e', /ie/ spelled 'i_e', and /ue/ spelled 'u_e'; Tricky Words

K-2 CKLA Skills Code Progression Overview

Grade 1

Unit 1 Review of CVC, CCVC, CVCC, CCVCC words; Tricky Words

Unit 2 Basic code spellings for /ee/ spelled 'ee', /ae/ spelled 'a_e', /oe/ spelled 'o_e', /ie/ spelled 'i_e', and /ue/ spelled 'u_e'; Tricky Words

Unit 3 Basic code spellings for vowel sounds /oo/, /oo/, /ou/, /oi/, and /aw/; Tricky Words

Unit 4 Basic code spellings for r-controlled vowel sounds /er/, /ar/, /or/; past-tense endings; two-syllable words; Tricky Words

Unit 5 Common spelling alternatives for consonant sounds (e.g., 'ch' for /ch/, 'g' for /j/, 'wr' for /r/); Tricky Words

Unit 6 Common spelling alternatives for consonant sounds (e.g., 'c' for /s/, 'kn' for /n/, 'wh' for /w/)

Unit 7 Spelling alternatives for long vowel sounds (e.g., 'ai' and 'ay' for /ae/, 'oa' for /oe/)

Grade 2

Unit 1 Review of basic code spellings for /ai/, /i/, /e/, /oi/, /u/ and all consonant sounds; spelling alternatives for /s/, /j/, /w/, /r/, /h/; tricky spellings 'c', 's', 'g', 'n'

Unit 2 Review of basic code spellings for /ae/, /ee/, /ie/, /oe/, /ue/, /oo/, /oo/, /ou/, /oi/, /er/, /or/, /ar/; spelling alternatives for /ee/, /ou/, /oi/

Unit 3 Spelling alternatives for /ae/, /oe/, /ie/, /ue/, and /aw/; tricky spellings 'a', 'd', 't'

Unit 4 Spelling alternatives for /er/, /i/, /ie/, /oe/, /ee/, and /aw/; tricky spellings 'e', 'ow'

Unit 5 Spelling alternatives for /u/ and /ou/; tricky spellings 'a', 'e', 'o', 'o_e', and 'ou'

Unit 6 Spelling alternatives for /er/, /oi/, /ai/, /u/, /i/

3rd-5th Grade Program Structure

language
comprehension

knowledge

vocabulary

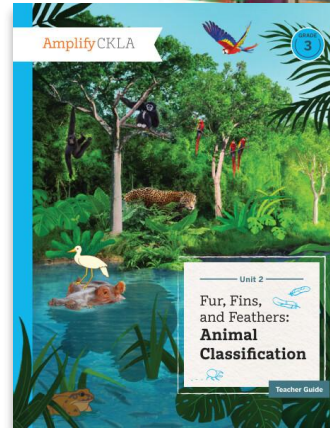
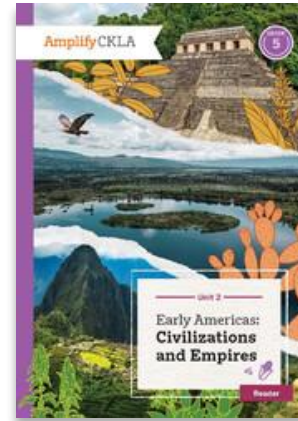
sentences

reasoning

mental model

increasingly strategic →

skilled
reading



Integrated Strand

Using Skills to Build Knowledge

- Close Reading
- Unpacking Complex Text
- Writing to Evidence
- Vocabulary in Context
- Response to Text
- Collaborative Conversations
- Morphology
- Grammar
- Spelling

increasingly automatic →

Scarborough (2001)

Connections within and across grades

Amplify CKLA's systematic and spiraling approach to knowledge building improves students' reading fluency, vocabulary, and text understanding.



Student Quotes:

- ▶ I loved the poetry unit. I liked Haiku. I remember that haiku needs to be 5-7-5.
- ▶ I like learning how to there are so many ways to write poems.
- ▶ My favorite unit is poetry. I like the poem "Mother Doesn't Want a Dog." I remember in the poem Mother doesn't want a dog and she kept saying that she doesn't want a dog, but the child was telling the story and then the child said that I guess you want a snake.
- ▶ My favorite unit is Rome because I like learning about Ancient Rome and all the fun characters. It will always be my favorite unit.
- ▶ My favorite unit is Ancient Rome. I liked learning about Julius Ceasar. I remember looking at pictures of Ancient Ruins in Rome.
- ▶ My favorite units were Ancient Rome and Animal Classification. I liked learning about Julius Ceasar and the duck billed platypus. I will remember that the duck billed platypus is a mammal, but it lays eggs.
- ▶ I loved learning how Julius Ceasar lived and how it was when they lived in Rome. Julius fought for the poor.
- ▶ I liked learning about Ancient Rome. I remember when Julius crossed the Rubicon River and when he helped Cleopatra become Queen of Egypt.



Parent Quotes:

Also, he's been talking about reading a lot. He was telling me about The Tall Tales last weekend. We found a Paul Bunyan movie to watch that he liked. Figured I'd give some feedback on the reading curriculum. He's never talked about reading lessons before! 😊

Andi came home beaming with excitement about the game show and how you dress up and make it so special. Was thinking she'll remember that forever. Thanks for always going the extra distance to be exceptional about job to the benefit of your students ❤️

Oh, and as a side note, if you are discussing the “body systems” part of the curriculum in your meeting, I just wanted to say that as a parent I find it wonderful! Eleanor is coming home and sharing so much information that she is retaining amazingly. I feel that with this subject matter she is leaps and bounds ahead of my older daughter. She finds the material interesting and engaging, and she's learning to speak about her body and what it is doing in an eloquent and well “defined” manner. Again, I think this is a great subject matter to teach for their age group. I also say this as someone in the medical field as well. I thought I would share just in case you need a “parent perspective.”

Ms. McCall, we believe that the CKLA is offering up very good applicable learnings for Aria. She shares information with us especially on the knowledge units discussed and taught in class, and tries to relate to real scenarios. I believe this new program integrates practical aspects of their learnings well. The Although we do not see this being an an issue with Aria, the learning pace is noticeably accelerated with additional content compared to our observation when our son was in 1st grade. We really only limited data points, therefore we cannot tell whether others in the class are impacted by this. Overall we are pleased with what Aria has been introduced to and learns in this new program.

A parent at conferences mentioned how much she loved the new reading units. She said that her daughter is always coming home and sharing about the topics. Her twin brother who was in the class next door was not a part of the CKLA pilot and did not come home talking about ELA as much.

Boost Reading

- **Student-driven**, digital practice program
- Data places students into **personalized, adaptive learning path**
- Delivers effortless **differentiation for ALL students**
- Systematic foundational skills practice **aligned to CKLA's scope and sequence** in games and e-reader texts
- **Proven** to boost reading proficiency





| Phonological Awareness | Letter Combinations | Early Decoding | Advanced Decoding | Comprehension Processes | Key Ideas & Details | Craft & Structure | Integration of Knowledge & Ideas | Vocabulary | App |
|------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Placed Out | Placed Out | On Grade | On Grade | On Grade | On Grade | Not Expected | Not Expected | On Grade | On Grade |
| Placed Out | Placed Out | On Grade | On Grade | On Grade | On Grade | Not Expected | Not Expected | On Grade | On Grade |
| Below Grade | Below Grade | Below Grade | On Grade | On Grade | Below Grade | Not Expected | Not Expected | Below Grade | Below Grade |
| | | | | | | | | | |

CKLA BOOST

Usage Calendar

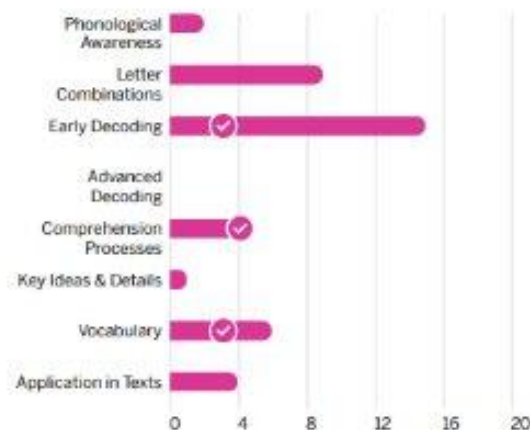
This calendar shows when Amalea has used Boost Reading. We recommend 30-45 minutes of weekly Boost usage, ideally spread across 2-3 sessions (15 minutes per session).

January

| Su | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa |
|----|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----|----|
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 35m | 6 36m | 7 32m | 8 10m | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 33m | 13 44m | 14 21m | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 7m | 21 31m | 22 8m | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 21m | 28 30m | 29 | 30 | 31 |

Progress this Year

Amalea has completed 41 out of a goal of 24 subskills this year.



Current Quest & Activities



Quest 14: Samuel's Secret

The quest is the storyline that frames your student's Boost experience. All students in a class experience the same quest storylines as they progress through the program.

The diary references a secret room inside the Wen House, and Viola is eager to find a way in.

You portal into the diary to find clues about the secret room, and your Curioso inspires Viola to put the pieces together.

You discover that each of the Bookerton Founders had a unique personality trait that Olivia valued.

Discussion Starter

Activities and Skill Practice

Amalea receives activities appropriate to their reading level. The list below the skill games, eReader texts and interactive lessons from their current q



Why Warthog Goes About on His K Not Started
Grade 1 Book 8: Why Warthog Goes About on His Knees



Read All About It Not Started
Words with: ch, qu, th (voiced), ng, ee, oo, sh, ou, th (unvoiced), aw, er, ck, oi, ar, tch, wr, ai, kn, or, wh, ow,...



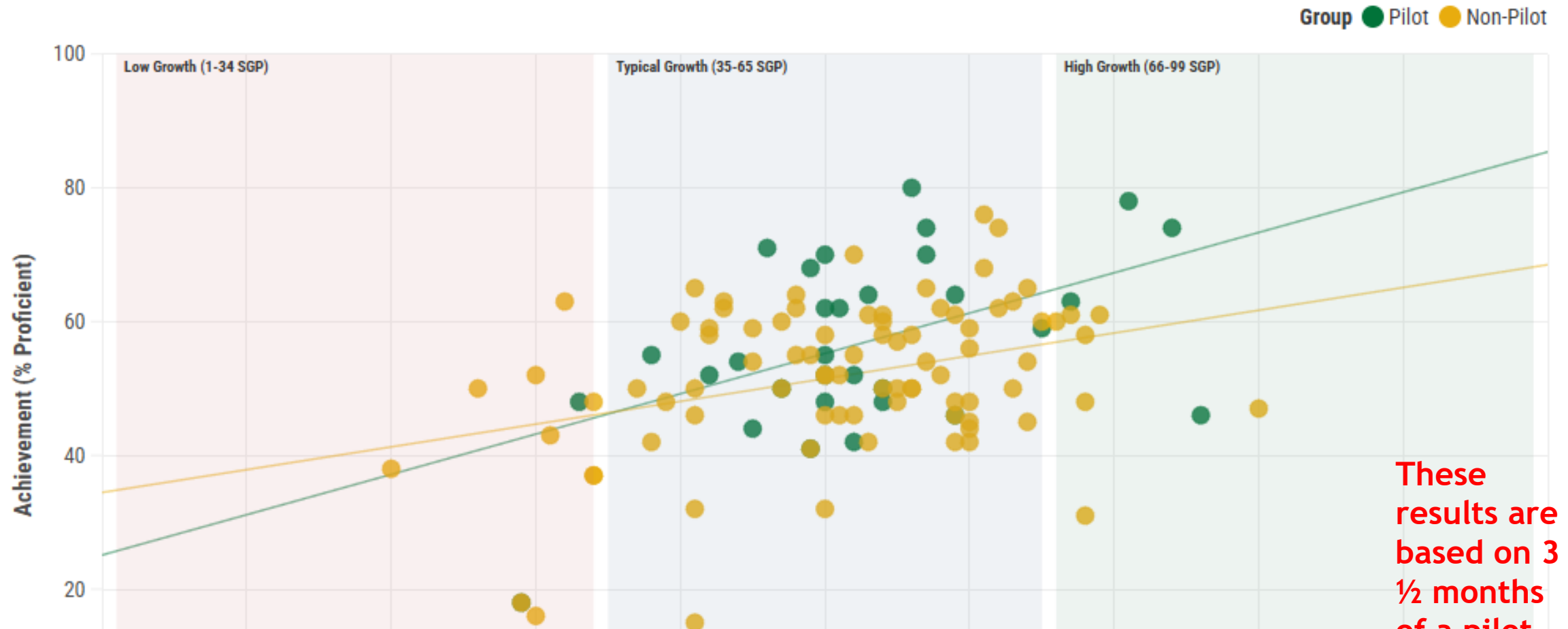
Ink Blott In Progress

CKLA BOOST

CKLA Star Growth Proficiency – Winter 2026

Pilot vs. Non-Pilot Comparison

All



Change Outcomes



Research and Efficacy Studies

FINDINGS

Amplify CKLA significantly improved vocabulary and knowledge scores.

- 📖 The treatment group [CKLA students] outperformed the control on proximal vocabulary assessments, with a statistically significant effect size of 0.55.
- 📖 The treatment group [CKLA students] outperformed the control on proximal social studies knowledge and science knowledge assessments, with statistically significant effect sizes of 0.97 and 0.26, respectively. Differences in the magnitude of effects between the proximal science and social studies knowledge outcomes likely reflect the topics being assessed.
- 📖 Statistically significant effects were also found for standardized measures of generalized vocabulary (effect size 0.09).

FINDING 1

Test scores significantly improved with the Core Knowledge curriculum.

- 📖 The treatment group **outperformed the control group on all state reading tests**, with a statistically significant effect size of 0.473.
- 📖 From kindergarten to sixth grade, the **cumulative long-term gain for the Core Knowledge students** was approximately 16 percentile points.

“To put this into perspective... national student gains [in reading] similar to the gains realized in this intervention would place the U.S. among the top five countries.”

Daniel Willingham
Professor of Psychology, University of Virginia

FINDING 2

Income-based achievement gaps were eliminated.

- 📖 While students from high- and middle- income areas also outperformed the control group, **students from the low-income area experienced even greater gains.**
- 📖 The effect size for the treatment group from the high-income area was 0.445—a strong effect size for an instructional program in K–12 education. For the low-income area, **the effect size was a remarkable 1.299—virtually unheard of in studies of K–12 program impact.**
- 📖 Students in the low-income area also saw **increases in state math test scores** in third and sixth grade, as well as **gains in state science test scores in fifth grade.**





Student Data

Student Data

Student with an IEP

| | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|----------|-------|-----|----|------|-----|----|
| 9/11/25 | 22:40 | ■ 863 | 2 | 9 | 21.8 | 1.1 | 44 |
| 1/14/26 ^b | 01:27:46 | ■ 963 | 3.5 | 30 | 39 | 3.2 | 87 |

Student that went from high to higher

| | | | | | | | |
|---------|-------|--------|-----|----|------|-----|-----|
| 9/11/25 | 28:16 | ■ 1042 | 5.9 | 81 | 68.5 | 4.9 | 136 |
| 1/21/26 | 28:24 | ■ 1083 | 8.4 | 91 | 78.2 | 6.6 | 177 |

Student that had large growth

| | | | | | | | |
|---------|-------|-------|-----|----|------|-----|-----|
| 9/9/25 | 27:26 | ■ 963 | 3.5 | 37 | 43 | 3.2 | 87 |
| 1/13/26 | 25:13 | ■ 991 | 4.2 | 44 | 46.8 | 3.7 | 104 |

High Growth

Student that speaks English as a second language

| | | | | | | | |
|---------|-------|-------|-----|----|------|-----|-----|
| 9/11/25 | 24:07 | ■ 950 | 3.3 | 31 | 39.6 | 3.0 | 80 |
| 1/13/26 | 28:22 | ■ 987 | 4.1 | 42 | 45.8 | 3.7 | 102 |

Teacher Voice

100% of pilot teachers felt that CKLA is superior in vocabulary to our current program.

100% of pilot teachers felt that CKLA has a better scope and sequence for print, grammar and conventions and is consistent with current research.

100% of pilot teachers felt that CKLA supports executive functioning skills for students.

100% of pilot teachers felt that CKLA is stronger with phonics and phonemic awareness.

Pilot team is recommending CKLA Amplify for the K-5 Literacy curriculum adoption.

AmplifyCKLA



Budget

- ▶ \$945,610.32 Total cost for Amplify CKLA & PD grades K-5
- ▶ -\$614,553.00 35m grant (received spring 2025)
- ▶ \$331,057.32 LOCS contribution
- ▶ Reminder that there is a potential for a 5% deduction in the student foundation allowance from MDE if a district does not adopt a literacy program from the MDE approved list. LOCS would also have to write a letter to the community stating why they have chosen not to adopt one of the MDE approved literacy programs.
- ▶ 35m grant must be fully spent by September 30, 2026.





Questions?

Thank you for your time!

