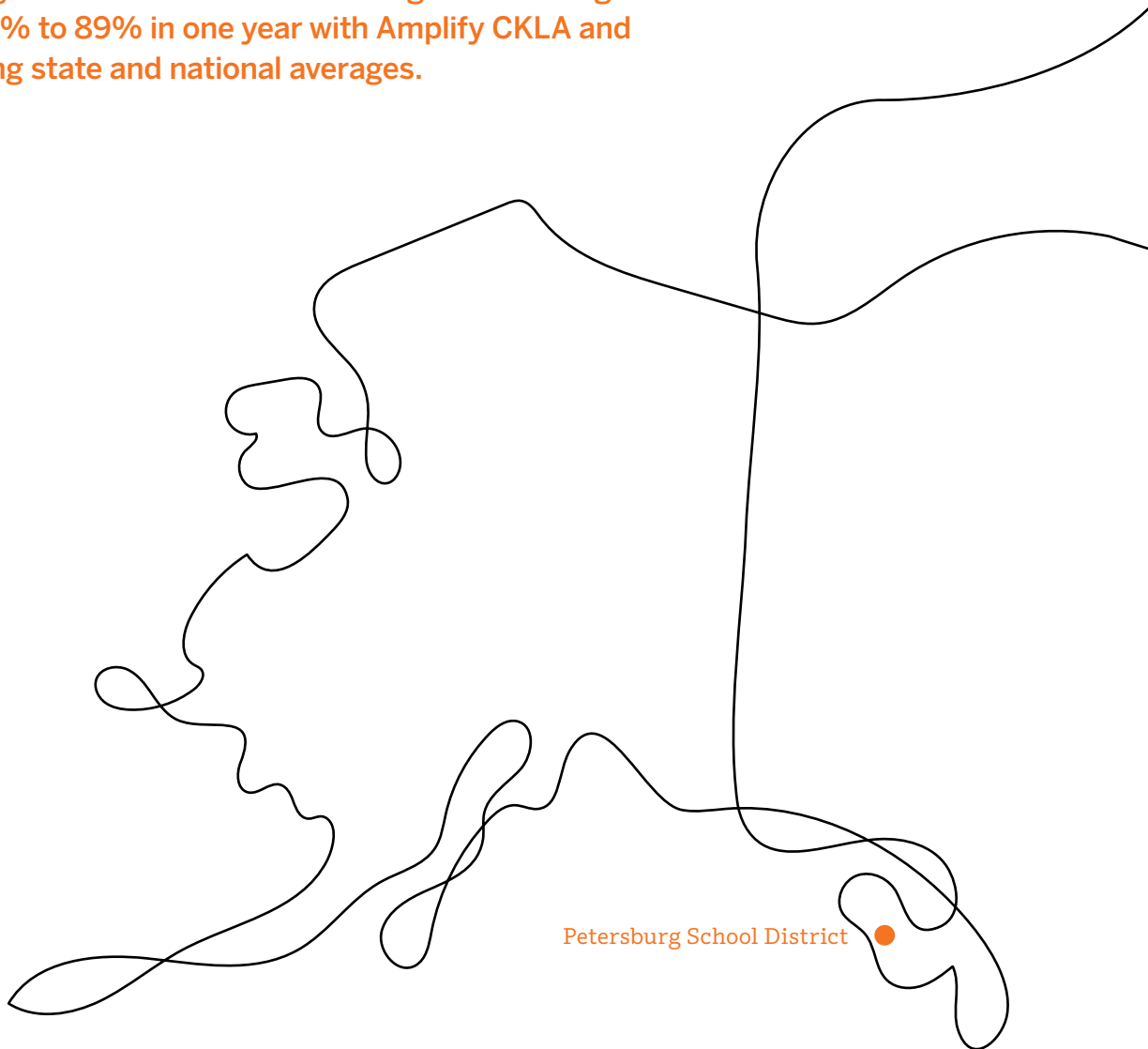


Making the shift to the Science of Reading

Alaska's Petersburg School District raises kindergarten reading proficiency from 10% to 89% in one year with Amplify CKLA and mCLASS, surpassing state and national averages.



Petersburg School District

Challenge

Before adopting CKLA in the 2023–24 school year, Petersburg used a whole language approach. In years past its leadership had been mCLASS® DIBELS® users and enthusiasts. The elementary school principal, Heather Conn, spent years researching the Science of Reading to understand why the district's whole language approach wasn't working and what needed to change.



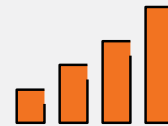
Challenge

Petersburg struggled with a whole language approach to literacy, prompting a need for effective, research-based instructional methods.



Solution

Petersburg adopted CKLA and mCLASS, integrating a sounds-first approach and professional development to enhance Science of Reading alignment.



Impact

Petersburg students outperformed state and national averages, with exceptional growth in Kindergarten and 1st grade surpassing national averages by over 35%.

Background

Petersburg is a small, rural district in Petersburg, Alaska serving just over 400 students. The district is made up of 62.2% White, 21.1% American Indian/Alaskan Native, 5.3% Asian, 4.3% Hispanic, 2.8% Black, and 1.4% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander students. In addition, 2.5% are multilingual/English learners (ML/ELs) and 1.4% of students are eligible to participate in the federal free and reduced price meal program.

Solution

Evaluation: The team at Petersburg reviewed seven core programs before choosing CKLA. They chose CKLA because of its tight alignment to the Science of Reading and its sounds-first approach. In contrast, they felt that the six other programs they evaluated were missing the depth of foundational skill instruction offered by CKLA.

Pilot: As part of the statewide shift to mCLASS, Petersburg leaders piloted the program in the spring of 2022 before its rollout in the fall of 2023. They also developed a train-the-trainer model for professional development, to ensure that they had school-level experts in place for the first year.

Implementation: An integrated suite was paramount to making this shift. So Petersburg decided to purchase

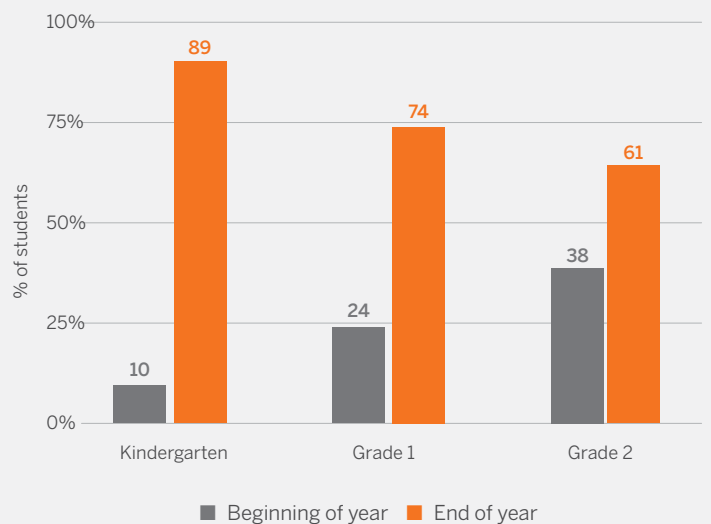
Boost Reading alongside CKLA. While the district had access to Boost Reading in the 2023–24 school year, full implementation didn't begin until the fall of 2024. Petersburg's interventionists received launch training and are encouraging students to use Boost Reading in a new afterschool program.

In just one year of implementing CKLA and mCLASS, Petersburg School District outperformed both state and national averages in all grades, with particularly high growth in Kindergarten and 1st grade. had access to Boost Reading in the 2023–24 school year, full implementation didn't begin until the fall of 2024. Petersburg's interventionists received launch training and are encouraging students to use Boost Reading in a new afterschool program.

Impact

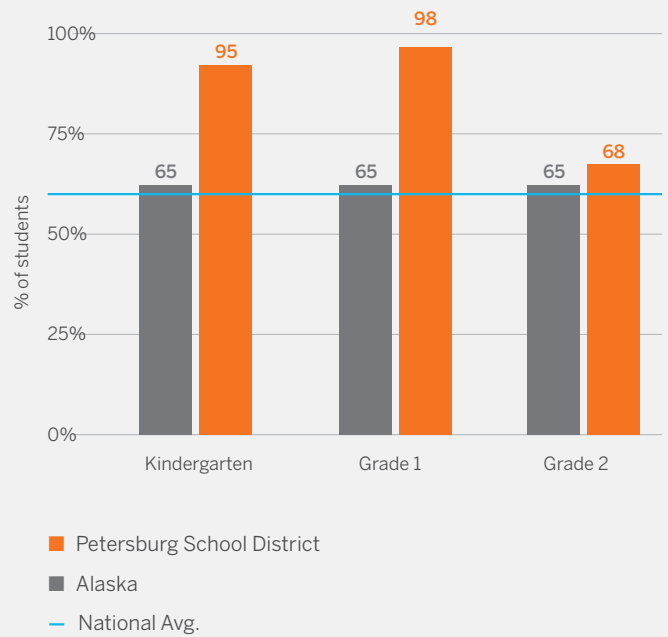
In their first year using mCLASS and CKLA, kindergarten, first-grade, and second-grade students in the Petersburg School District demonstrated significant growth. Notably, the percentage of Kindergarten students performing at or above grade level increased from 10% at the beginning of the year to 89% by the end. Additionally, first-grade students showed a 50% increase, while second-grade students experienced a 23% increase.

Petersburg School District students scoring at or above benchmark in mCLASS in the 2023–24 school year



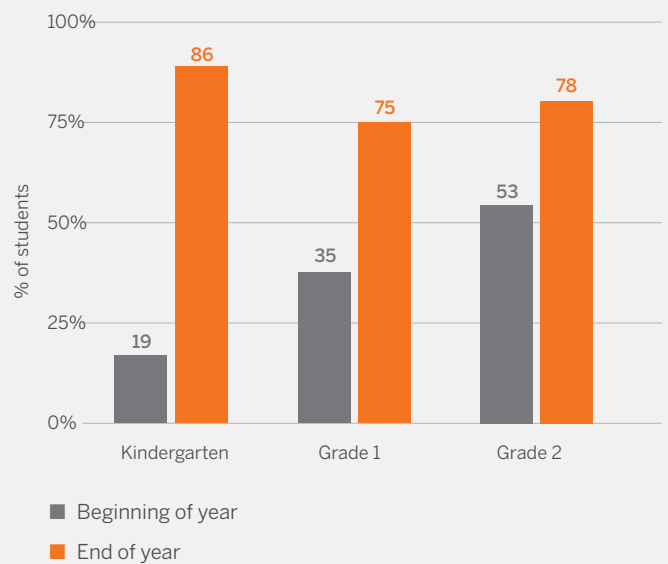
Petersburg School District students also outperformed both state and national averages in all grades, with particularly high growth in Kindergarten and 1st grade, where growth exceeded the national average by 35% and 38%, respectively.

Petersburg School District average or better zones of growth compared to national and state-level data in the 2023–24 school year



In the 2024–25 school year, their second year of implementing mCLASS and CKLA, Petersburg showed continued improvement across all grades. Similar to the previous year, kindergarten saw the most growth, with 86% of students ending the year at or above grade level compared to 19% at the beginning. Additionally, there was a 40% increase in first grade students and a 25% increase in second grade students.

Petersburg School District students scoring at or above benchmark in mCLASS in the 2023–24 school year



Conclusion

Petersburg School District has achieved remarkable progress in literacy through the strategic adoption of CKLA and mCLASS, significantly boosting student performance across Kindergarten to second grade. The district's commitment to the Science of Reading and comprehensive training initiatives has not only closed educational gaps but also enabled students to outperform state and national averages. Building on this success, the district has expanded its partnership with Amplify by piloting Amplify ELA in 6th grade, with plans for full adoption in both 6th and 7th grades for the 2025–26 school year. Additionally, as Heather Conn proudly states, "With such great success, we have now decided to adopt Amplify Desmos Math K–8.



For more information about
Amplify's complete early literacy
suite based on the Science of Reading,
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