Introduction

- One goal of the CCSS: Change teaching and learning to close achievement gaps.
  (Vanneman, Hamilton, Baldwin Anderson, & Rahman, 2009)

- Closing literacy gaps in elementary school can have long-lasting effects.
  (Denton & West, 2002)
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<th>Odds-Beaters</th>
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Framing

Sociocultural theory

Cultural congruence

Social ecological theory

Systems congruence
Research Questions

- How do educators in diverse odds-beating elementary schools approach literacy instruction?
- How do they proceed with the adoption and implementation of the CCSS?
- How do they explain their students’ performance on the CC ELA assessments?
Findings: How OB diverse elementary schools differ from TP counterparts

1. Used integrative approaches to literacy instruction—combining the old with the new.
2. Took a “student-centered” approach to CCSS implementation, making decisions based on the local context and the needs of their particular students.
3. Sustained, embedded, and focused PD structured around developing instructional skills and knowledge related to CCSS.
1. Integrated Approaches to Literacy Instruction

- Odds beaters combined the old with the new
- Integrated CCSS shifts into their balanced literacy programs already in place

The Literacy Collaborative at the elementary level really kind of paved the way to the change.

Superintendent, Yellow Valley
Typical performers abandoned former practices and adopted curricular modules recommended by the state.

“There’s such a pressure to understand what they’re wanting us to teach, and then we have to go to what they’ve given us to teach [i.e. state curriculum modules] and how.”

Paige City Teacher
2. Student-centered Approach

- Teams in odds beaters collaborated to **modify instruction** to serve diverse learners
  - Mainstream-special education; mainstream-ESL
  - Differentiation the focus

“**The ELA department is going to start and write their adapted modules of what they used last year and what worked and what didn’t and what they’re going to use going forward. The ESL teachers will sit with them and say, “This is what we have come up with.”**

District Supervisor of ESL, Goliad
In Contrast…

Typically performing schools demonstrated less collaboration leading to inconsistent differentiation.

“Well some did [a curricular module] and some people did whatever they’ve been doing for however long.”

Sun Hollow Teacher
3. Targeted, sustained, embedded PD

- PD in odds beaters focused on deep understanding of the CCSS.
- Coordinated, focused
- Sustained and embedded, e.g. through coaching

“Our success comes from a lot of hard work, dedication, [and] professional development.”

Yellow Valley teacher
In Contrast...

- In typical performers, PD less focused
  - Teachers often confused about the CCSS themselves
  - Teachers still choosing what PD they want
  - Support staff often left out of PD

“\[CCSS ELA PD\] was a whole bunch of theories. People kind of picked and chose what they wanted to do in their classroom.”

Paige City Teacher
In Sum

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<tr>
<th>Odds Beaters</th>
<th>Typical Performers</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ready for the CCSS changes</td>
<td>Reactive to the state mandate</td>
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<td>Teachers expected to understand the CCSS and supported to modify C&amp;I to help all students achieve them</td>
<td>Reliant on state supplied materials, and teachers expected to adopt them with high degrees of fidelity</td>
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<td>Proactive in meeting local needs</td>
<td>Compliance driven</td>
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Implications

- Schools where educators had focused on meeting individual student needs in their local context continued better-than-predicted performance on CCSS-aligned ELA assessments across multiple grades.

- Schools where educators responded to CCSS mandates in a compliance driven way continued to achieve average performance on CCSS-aligned assessments.
Thank you!

- This presentation and abstract can be downloaded at:
  http://www.albany.edu/nykids/

Related materials in the back of the room

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