

Good Afternoon. My name is Stephanie Saulsberry. I am the Title 1 reading teacher at USD #344, Pleasanton Elementary School, in Pleasanton, KS. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to address this committee about the Lexia Reading Program.

Truthfully, I had never heard of Lexia until about a year and half ago. A principal from another school was asking me if we used this program. When I told him that I had never heard of it, he began to describe the program to me. I came back to our school and began to research Lexia at that time. I saw him a week or so later, and he brought some of the Lexia reports that are available and shared with me, also the positive impact that Lexia had on their student's reading success. After seeing all of his data, I was very interested in this program. I came back to school and discussed this with our superintendent. He was aware of the program, but said that the cost for this program would prohibit our district from being able to afford it. We are a small rural district in southeast Kansas. Our enrollment K-12 is 363 and our K-6 enrollment is 213. Pleasanton is located in Linn County which is a very poor county. Of the 213 students that we currently have enrolled in our grade school 78% of them are on free and reduced lunches. This was just not a program that we could afford to utilize. Then at the beginning of school, I received an email informing me that Gov. Brownback had announced the Kansas Reading Initiative and that the Lexia program had been chosen and was available for schools to pilot free of charge. I forwarded the email on to my superintendent. He and the principal set up a meeting with Nancy Beach, our Lexia representative. That day, she helped me fill out the application which was very painless. We were approved in the next couple of days and were able to start implementing this wonderful program.

We implemented Lexia in the middle of September. One of the great things about Lexia is that the students are being assessed the first time they are on the program without even knowing it. The results from the first month were rather disheartening. It showed at that time 74% of our

students were at high risk of not meeting grade level requirements by the end of the school year. 24% were at some risk with only 2% of our students on target for the year.

When our Kindergarten students were first placed 67% of our students were below grade level, meaning they were placed in the Pre-K part of the program. To date, 0% are now working below level with 73% working on grade level, 23% working on 1st grade level, and 4% working on 2nd grade level.

Our 1st grade had 74% score below grade level and 26% on grade level. To date, only 5% are below with 75% on target, 17% on 2nd grade, and 3% working at a 3rd grade level.

2nd grade began with 86% below grade level only 14% working at grade level. Today, 36% are still below, 43% are at grade level and 21% are working above grade level.

3rd grade placement was 92% below grade level with only 8% on grade level. Presently, 50% are working below level, 25% working at grade level and 25% working above grade level. We have even had 1 third grader who has finished the entire Lexia Core 5 program.

4th grade placing showed 70% below grade level and 30% working at grade level. Today, 21% are working below, 44% on grade level and 35% working above. We have had 4 of our 4th graders finish the Lexia program.

5th grade began with 53% below a 5th grade level and 47% working at grade level. 27% are still below with 73% working at grade level. We have had 17 out of 30 fifth graders finish Lexia.

As you can see, every class K-5 has made huge gains with this program. The fact that Lexia is aligned with the Common Core standards also lets

me know that the grade bands Lexia uses is consistent with the standards we teach and the expectations that we have for our students.

Lexia has 18 levels each one spotlighting a different part of our world. The animation at these levels is delightful. The students often have me come and look at what happens when they finish an activity. This really helps the students stay engaged. Each level has 5 activities except for Kind which has 4. There are 89 activities in all. Each activity has from 6-20 units. Pleasanton Elementary has finished 646 levels altogether. Which means that thousands of units have been completed. Each of these levels, activities and units individually meeting the need for each student. That would be an impossible task for one classroom teacher to do. Lexia activities adapt based on each student's performance. There is a 3-step scaffolding system for support and instruction. Students have to show proficiency to progress to the next unit. If they struggle in the standard step with general instruction, they are then taken to guided practice where the language may be simplified and less answer choices less. They are retaught the skill. If they succeed they move back to the general instruction. If they still have problems, they are then directed to explicit instruction. If they correctly finish this step they go back to the standard step. If not, their computer has a small red apple at the bottom of the screen. This flags the teacher that this student needs further help with this skill. The teacher can either sit with the student and give them instruction or there are scripted lessons for each activity that can be used. When a student masters and passes a unit there are paper based skill builders that can be used to check for mastery.

The data system that is included with this program has proven to be a valuable resource for our classroom teachers, Title teacher and Special Education teachers. There are several reports that can be retrieved daily to check on the progress of the students. These include Progress, Usage and Skills reports that can be gathered for classes or individual students. Teachers can access any of these reports from the Home page or by

going to the Reports tab. If a student is struggling, they will have a mark by their name. One of the amazing elements of this program is just how detailed these reports are. It doesn't just tell you that a child is struggling with consonant digraphs, for example, it will even tell you which one. It is so much easier to pinpoint the instruction when you know that they need support with 'CH' and not have to cover all of them.

Our teachers have been using this program in their classrooms when it is their turn to use the iPads and also in the computer lab on their assigned days. Probably one of the biggest concerns for this program has been the amount of time that some of the students were assigned. Some of our older students have 100 minutes per week. The teachers were very concerned about meeting those minutes so our usage would be where it needed to be. So far, we have been able to accomplish this most months. Our usage right now is very low, but we were just getting it raised again after Christmas break when we had almost a week off for snow days, an inservice day and President's Day. Our teachers have been very diligent in getting their students onto the program. The technology at our school is not always the best, so we often have problems with students being kicked off of the program. This sometimes messes with our minutes as well.

We were fortunate to have received a 21st Century Grant last year which enabled us to begin an after school program. Lexia has become one of the enrichment activities for reading twice a week. That has also helped us to fulfill the minute requirements.

We use the MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) tests in our district. Realizing that we started using the program in the middle of September and we tested the beginning of January I knew we hadn't used it all that long, but was anxious to see how Lexia affected our 2nd set of MAP scores. With the exception of 2 grades, which stayed within 2% of their previous scores, our other grades showed improvements anywhere from 5% to 27%. While I don't believe I can credit Lexia for all of that increase I

do believe that Lexia played a huge role in helping to improve our overall scores.

Most of our teachers and students really enjoy doing Lexia. It has added an element to our reading curriculum that is enjoyable and something that is different. It is a resource that is meeting the needs of each student at their own level. The data available is such an important resource to drive instruction for the classrooms and for individual students.

At the beginning of this presentation I shared that in September we had 76% of our students showing high risk and only 2% on target. One of our last reports showed only 31% now at high risk with 47% on target. I believe those are incredible gains for only 5 months of usage.

I would like to thank you for this valuable program that has been graciously provided to schools like mine that would never have been able to afford it on our own. I look forward to seeing what gains next year brings after we have used Lexia for a full year. I dread the day that Lexia is no longer available for our district due to budget concerns. Again, thank you for your time.