

## Iredell-Statesville Schools

# COMPASS (Collaborative Organizational Model to Promote Aligned Support Structures)

### DID COMPASS SCHOOLS MAKE GAINS IN READING ACHIEVEMENT COMPARED TO NON-COMPASS SCHOOLS?

## Project Overview

#### **THE PROBLEM: What Challenge Did the Program Try to Address?**

The Collaborative Organizational Model to Promote Aligned Support Structures (COMPASS) focuses on meeting the needs of students with disabilities, academically struggling high-needs students, and students with limited English proficiency. It does so by providing professional development to teachers via the alignment of support structures.

#### **THE PROJECT: What Strategies Did the Program Employ?**

The Iredell-Statesville school district in Iredell, North Carolina was awarded an i3 development grant<sup>1</sup> from 2010–2015 to implement and evaluate COMPASS. Although COMPASS focuses on students with high needs, disabilities, and limited English proficiency, its long-term goal is to increase the academic achievement of all students. By providing training to school-based support staff, their Executive Directors, and teachers, COMPASS aims to give teachers higher quality support structures in order to increase their knowledge, skills, and performance. In turn, the program's model links greater teacher knowledge, skills, and performance to improved student performance. In Iredell-Statesville, COMPASS aligned its support structures through a series of professional development trainings for support structure staff and an online request system. The program's principal components are included in the table below. The program was evaluated by a short, interrupted time-series with a comparison group design in which test data was analyzed and propensity matching was employed to construct the comparison group.

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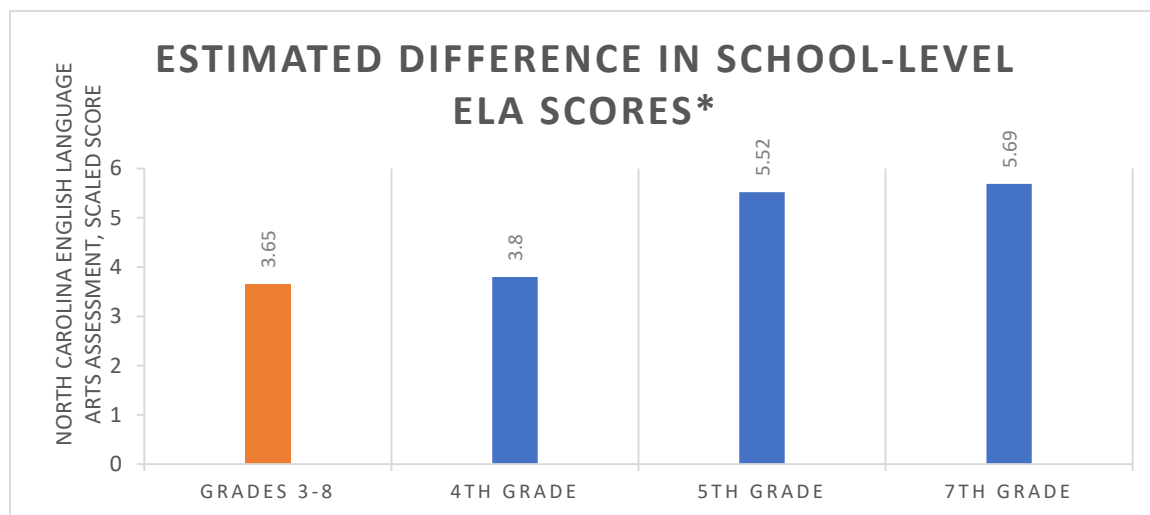
<sup>1</sup> The Iredell-Statesville school district received an i3 development grant supported by the U.S. Department of Education's Investing in Innovation program through Grant Number U396C100105. Development grants provide funding to support the development or testing of novel or substantially more effective practices that address widely shared education challenges. All i3 grantees are required to conduct rigorous evaluations of their projects. The quality of evidence required to demonstrate a project's effectiveness depends on a project's level of scale or grant type.

## THE COMPASS MODEL

- **Early Release Professional Development.** North Carolina requires schools to hold six Early Release Professional Development (ERPD) days per year. During these sessions, COMPASS provided professional development in the Common Core for support staff and teachers in six two-hour half-day sessions.
- **Responsiveness to Intervention (RtI) Training.** In the second and third years of the grant, North Carolina provided five eight-hour training sessions on RtI. COMPASS provided additional district-specific RtI training in the fourth and fifth years of the grant.
- **Leadership Team Meetings.** Each school's leadership team met at least twice monthly to determine the content areas in which support was needed, the support structures and type of support that were required, the delivery method for the support, and the length and frequency of the support.
- **COMPASS Sessions.** In the second year of the grant, COMPASS offered a series of training sessions which provided support staff with detailed information in the following areas: Positive Behavioral Support Overview, SIOP/ESL, Responsiveness to Intervention (RtI) Overview, AIMSweb, Curriculum Based Measures, Interventions, and Progress Monitoring.
- **Online Support System.** COMPASS created an online support request system and began utilizing it in the third year of the grant. School level support staff and principals used the system to request support for instruction, content areas, or behavioral issues. They could also request that COMPASS management team members provide data analysis assistance, model teaching, or other types of support. Principals could also use the system to schedule school-level PD for COMPASS management team members or arrange for individual support for teachers.

## Summary of Results

### DID COMPASS HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON READING ACHIEVEMENT?



The COMPASS program demonstrated promising results for grades 3-8 combined, and statistically significant results for grades 4, 5, and 7

- **COMBINED IMPACT.** COMPASS had a positive and statistically significant impact on reading outcomes when results were averaged across three years and combined across all grade levels in the study. However, the evaluation noted that since this is a school-level analysis, the program likely had a smaller impact on individual students.
- **OTHER RESULTS.** Impact estimates for grades 3 and 6 were positive but not statistically significant. For eighth grade, COMPASS had a negative impact, although this effect was also not statistically significant.
- **INDIVIDUAL GRADE IMPACT.** COMPASS had positive and statistically significant impacts on reading achievement in grades 4, 5, and 7.

Please see Appendices B and C for information about the evaluation's design and the quality of the evidence, respectively.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The evaluation report noted important limitations regarding the study's findings.

- **SINGLE SCHOOL DISTRICT.** Since COMPASS was only implemented in one school district, it is not possible to differentiate COMPASS's effect on reading achievement from other features and elements of the school district itself. In particular, if the district implemented other initiatives to improve reading outcomes in grades 3-8 during the period that COMPASS was implemented, then it may be the case that those other initiatives, rather than COMPASS, produced the positive results seen in the study.
- **DIFFERENTIAL IMPACTS BY GRADE.** Only three of the six grades analyzed demonstrated meaningful positive results for the COMPASS program. It is unclear why this was the case, since the program's support structures and procedures were meant to operate equally across grades and should therefore have produced similar impacts within individual grades. The evaluation suggests one possible explanation, namely that COMPASS may have been implemented at different levels in different grades, but cannot verify this because the study did not collect data on implementation by grade level.

## For More Information

### Evaluation Reports

### Additional Reports

[ERIC - Final Evaluation Report](#) (The Evaluation Group, October 2015)<sup>2</sup>

N/A

<sup>2</sup> The information and data for this result summary was collected from the most recent report as of 01/23/2020: "[COMPASS: Collaborative Organizational Model to Promote Aligned Support Structures - Final Evaluation Report](#)," The Evaluation Group, October 2015.

## Appendix A: Students Served by the Project<sup>3</sup>

GRADE(S)													
PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

HIGH-NEED STUDENTS <sup>i</sup>		
Economically Disadvantaged	English Learners	Students with Disabilities
3.22% <sup>4</sup>	Not reported/Not applicable	Not Reported/Not applicable

<sup>3</sup>These data reflect the entire student population served by the intervention, not just the evaluation sample used in the impact study.

<sup>4</sup> Percentage of economically disadvantaged students in the sampled schools at baseline.

## Appendix B: Impact Evaluation Methodology<sup>5</sup>

### RESEARCH DESIGN:

<b>Design:</b>	Quasi-Experimental Design: Short interrupted time-series with comparison group design (C-SITS)
<b>Approach:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The study used propensity score matching to construct a similar set of intervention and comparison group schools.</li> <li>▪ Selected public elementary and middle schools had to have publicly available ELA standardized test data for at least three consecutive years before the intervention.</li> <li>▪ Schools were matched on the percentage of economically disadvantaged students, Annual Yearly Progress (AYP), the number of students who took the End-of-Grade (EOG) Reading test by grade, and the percentage of students who scored proficient on the EOG Reading test by grade.</li> </ul>
<b>Study Length:</b>	Three intervention years

### DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

<b>Study Setting</b>	63 public elementary or middle schools in North Carolina
<b>Final Sample Sizes (schools)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Intervention Group - 21</li> <li>▪ Comparison Group - 42</li> </ul>
<b>Intervention vs. Comparison Group Characteristics (Schools)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Economically disadvantaged<sup>6</sup> – Intervention: 3.24</li> <li>▪ Economically disadvantaged – Comparison: 3.21</li> <li>▪ Met AYP (%) – Intervention: 24.0</li> <li>▪ Met AYP (%) – Comparison: 21.0</li> <li>▪ Enrollment in grades with EOG Reading test – Intervention: 363.90</li> <li>▪ Enrollment in grades with EOG Reading test – Comparison: 368.07</li> <li>▪ Proficient in tested grades (%) – Intervention: 68.88</li> <li>▪ Proficient in tested grades (%) – Comparison: 70.12</li> </ul>
<b>Data Sources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assessments (impact evaluation)</li> <li>▪ Interviews (implementation evaluation)</li> <li>▪ Meeting minutes (implementation evaluation)</li> <li>▪ Attendance records (implementation evaluation)</li> </ul>
<b>Key Measures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reading comprehension and vocabulary (North Carolina EOG Reading assessment – ABCs Reading)</li> </ul>

<sup>5</sup> These data reflect only the evaluation sample in the impact study, not the entire population served.

<sup>6</sup> Coded on a 1-5 scale, where 1 = 0-20%; 2 = 21-40%; 3 = 41-60%; 4 = 61-80%; 5 = 81-100%

## Appendix C: Quality of the Evidence

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### WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE REVIEW<sup>7</sup>

STUDY	RATING
<b>COMPASS. Collaborative organizational model to promote aligned support structures.</b> <a href="https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Study/84077">https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Study/84077</a>	Study does not meet WWC standards because the measures of effectiveness cannot be attributed solely to the intervention.

### EVIDENCE FOR ESSA REVIEW<sup>8</sup>

STUDY	RATING
Not reviewed as of 01/23/2020	N/A

### NATIONAL CENTER ON INTENSIVE INTERVENTIONS REVIEW<sup>9</sup>

STUDY	RATING
Not reviewed as of 01/23/2020	N/A

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<sup>7</sup> <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/FWW>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.evidenceforessa.org/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://intensiveintervention.org/>

# Investing in Innovation (i3) Grantee Results Summary

Development, 2010-2015

The [\*Investing in Innovation Fund \(i3\)\*](#), established under section 14007 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, is a federal discretionary grant program at the U.S. Department of Education, within the Office of Innovation and Improvement. i3 grants help schools and local education agencies work in partnership with the private sector and the philanthropic community to develop and expand innovative practices that improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates for high-need students.

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<sup>i</sup> "High-need student" refers to a student at risk of academic failure or otherwise in need of special assistance and support, such as students who are living in poverty, attend high-minority schools, are far below grade level, who have left school before receiving a regular high school diploma, at risk of not graduating with a diploma on time, who are homeless, in foster care, have been incarcerated, have disabilities, or who are English learners. For more information see: [\*Applications for New Awards; Investing in Innovation Fund-Development Grants, 81 FR 24070 \(April 25, 2016\)\*](#).