



**Portland Public Schools**  
**Year 3 TechSmart Evaluation Report**

**SY18-19**

## Project Summary

→ GOAL: Improve **literacy outcomes** and **close the achievement gap** for underserved student populations by adopting the **Equity-Based Balanced Literacy (EBBL)** framework.



The **EBBL framework** emphasizes teachers as decision makers, the utilization of students' cultural and linguistic assets, word work and meaning-based instruction, and materials as instructional resources to create caring classrooms where students develop literate identities as reader and writers.



FOCUS on students in **Kindergarten through Grade 3**

🕒 GRANT IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE: **Year 3 of 4 (SY 18-19)**

The grant funded a 1/2 time **Technology Integration Coach** at each school and **classroom technology supports** (Chromebooks, Lexia Core Five, mYON)



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Implementing in **15**  by SY 18-19

## Project Objectives



3rd grade students in PPS pilot classrooms will demonstrate grade-level proficiency in **reading**, and the achievement gap between typical and underserved students will be eliminated.



PPS will understand and implement instructional strategies and practices that leverage technology to provide **culturally and linguistically relevant** personalized learning.



PPS will validate and disseminate **effective instructional strategies** and practices that use technology.



# EVALUATION INSIGHTS

- 1** For the first time since the start of the TechSmart grant, the percentage of Cohort 1 students at benchmark on the DIBELS was higher than its comparison group (by 21%). In SY18-19, this trend was also present for Cohort 1 students of color as the percentage at benchmark was 14% higher than the Comparison Cohort. Cohort 2 has been outperforming its comparison group on the DIBELS assessment since they started the grant and this difference was largest in 2018-19 (36%). Cohort 2 showed particular promise in the subgroup analysis, with DIBELS percentages increasing over time for students of color and SPED students. When examining TechSmart vs. Non-TechSmart students within Cohort 2, SPED students and students of color showed evidence of a reduced achievement gap.
- 2** The qualitative data from the SY 18-19 evaluation indicated that there is a culture of support for technology within most participating schools, but that there has been a noticeable lack of support from the district level. The addition of a Director of Learning Technologies was described repeatedly as an exception to limited district leadership support. Interview participants expressed hope and excitement about the new position and the individual hired to fill the position, sharing that they hope the hire is an indicator of increased support.
- 3** PPS added Seesaw during SY 18-19, with a positive response from many teachers. Teachers reported using myON more than in past years but still described using Lexia more often. Teachers described a need for more support and consistency regarding the integration and implementation of technology in classrooms. Additionally, teachers described a need for more support from the district for repairing devices.

# EVALUATION INSIGHTS

**4** The majority of teachers expressed gratitude for the role of coaches in assisting with technology implementation and PD opportunities. Those teachers who did not have a positive experience with coaches during SY 18-19 commented that the coaches had too many demands placed on them outside of technology coaching, such as additional roles within the school (e.g., half-time technology coach and half-time library staff). Teachers expressed desire for more PD opportunities, as well as for PD opportunities to be spread out more or to have additional follow-up offered. Teachers described how opportunities have diminished over the course of TechSmart grant implementation at PPS.

**5** One key point of positive growth since SY 17-18 is that teachers seem to be improving at adopting both EBL and TechSmart simultaneously, perhaps due to the district's efforts to change the system for later cohorts. Many teachers described use of technology for the workshop model and emphasized the usefulness of technology for differentiating instruction and improving equitable access to technology for at-risk student subgroups.



## Evaluation Methods

### Teacher Survey

- ➔ Cohort 1: **50** responses at baseline (Fall 16-17) and **13** in Spring 18-19
- ➔ Cohort 2: **77** responses at baseline (Fall 17-18) and **5** in Spring 18-19
- ➔ Cohort 3: **32** responses at baseline (Fall 18-19) and **13** in Spring 18-19



Low response rates...  
Interpret with caution!

Please help us improve response rates for the final year of evaluation!

### Leadership Rubric

✓ **4** principals and **1** coach filled out the rubric

### Teacher Observations

✓ District leaders observed **42** teachers

### Teacher & District Leader Interviews

Cohort	Teachers	District Leaders
#1	2	2 principals ; 1 coach
#2	5	2 principals ; 3 coaches
#3	2	2 principals ; 2 coaches

THANK YOU  
for great  
participation in  
observations  
and interviews!

✓ Conducted interviews with **10** teachers and **13** district leaders

### Student Impact Study

Cohort                      TechSmart                      Comparison

**1**



**2**



- ✓ PRE examined DIBELS assessment data for TechSmart Cohorts 1 and 2 against their comparison schools. Data were retrieved from PPS system planning and performance in Fall of 2019.
- ✓ Data are presented for any student that had a DIBELS score at any of the four time points.
- ✓ IDEL data are not included in this report due to availability of data.

# TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

Districts support regular, inclusive and shared professional development (PD) among teachers.

## Year 3 PD Activities

### Teachers

- TechSmart Summer Institute (Aug 2019)
- Embedded PD from building coaches & vendors
- TechSmart overview PD session for Cohort #4 teachers
- TechSmart Labs day for 3 schools from Cohort #1

### Coaches

- Adoption of Google Chat @
- Monthly half-day coach PLCs
- Monthly adaptive reaching foundations program
- Training for Flocabularly Professional workshops
- Visit to Beaverton SD to observe IlluminatED project

**Administrators** participated in a PLC called "Leaders Talk Tech"

12 coaches,  
2 administrators,  
and 1 teacher  
attended  
**Digital & Media  
Literacy Institute**  
in May 2019 at  
Teachers College

## Year 3 PD Impact

Overall, teacher interviewees agreed that **coaches are an invaluable part of the PD model** and described multiple ways that coaches facilitated learning. For example, teachers observed coaches delivering instruction using technology during 1-on-1 classroom sessions.

“ I think that adding the coach was critical to implementing the technology as much as I have. ”  
- PPS Teacher

★ **Cohort 3 teachers expressed more positive opinions of the PD model than Cohort 1 & 2.**

Cohort 1 teachers shared dissatisfaction with the structure or amount of PD. Some teachers expressed a desire to have more attention from coaches or said coaches had too many demands from the schools outside of their TechSmart responsibilities.

### Part-Time Coaching



Though teachers feel that **part-time coaching** was useful, some reported that the part-time schedule **made time management challenging.**

“ Part-time is fine, but the problem that sometimes arises is that the coach has elected to be part-time in the morning, but if I have an issue in the afternoon, [the coach is] the librarian. So then I technically can't talk to them about technology in the afternoon because they're not wearing that hat. ”

- PPS Teacher

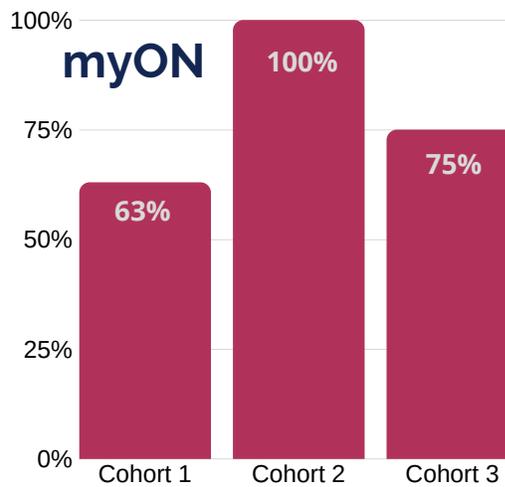
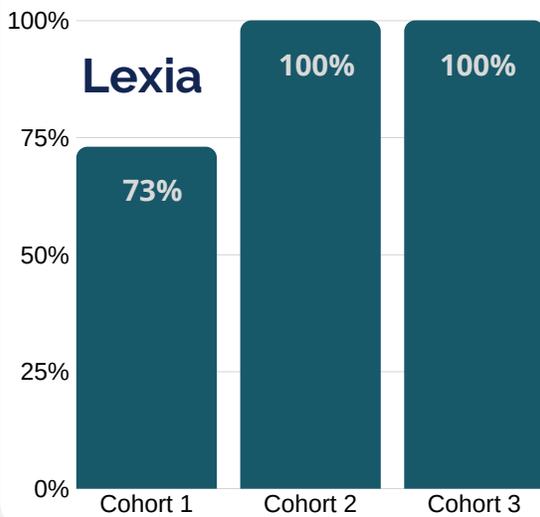
# TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

## Teachers' Use of Technology

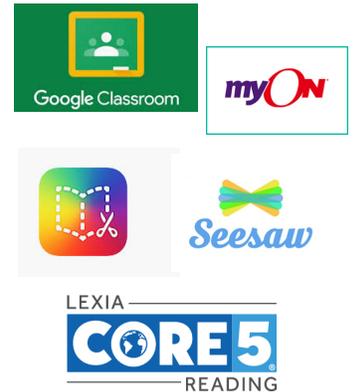
### PPS Teachers' Technology Skill Level by End of 18-19

		#1	#2	#3
★ Level 1	I get someone else to do technology-based tasks for me.	4%	3%	0%
★★ Level 2	I accomplish assigned tasks, but I am more efficient when I don't use technology to do a job.	8%	4%	10%
★★★ Level 3	I have enough skills to complete the management and communication tasks expected of me and occasionally will choose to use technology to accomplish something I choose.	56%	38%	46%
★★★★ Level 4	I use a variety of technology tools, and I use them efficiently for all aspects of my job.	22%	44%	22%
★★★★★ Level 5	I use technology efficiently, effectively, and in creative ways to accomplish my job.	10%	13%	22%

### Teachers' Use of Lexia & myON SY 18-19



New technology being used for instruction:



**"I think Lexia has been really effective. The kids love it...I've been able to build off what they're doing to further differentiate my instruction, which has been helpful."** - PPS Teacher

*"Lexia and myON have provided at-risk students with differentiated materials that keep them engaged."*

- PPS Teacher



*"Lexia bases their lessons on what individual students need at that moment."*

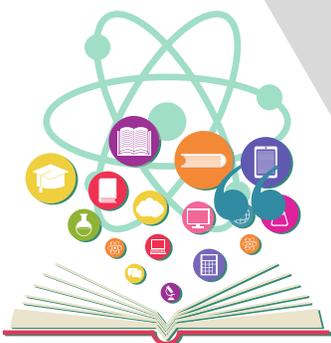
- PPS Teacher

# TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

## Student engagement

Data from SY18-19 provided evidence that student **engagement continues to be positively impacted by technology integration**. Teachers described students' enthusiasm for working with technology in the classroom and reported that using technology is rewarding for students.

By the end of 18-19, **100%** of teachers in all cohorts reported their students are comfortable using digital tools for learning.



**Technology-integrated blended learning** is a "natural fit for the

workshop model of instruction." 

-PPS Administrator

“**Having strict parameters around technology and when it is used makes students more engaged...** I use it really strategically; students don't use it every day or they only use it for certain content areas. When they students do get to use technology, they're really excited and really engaged with it.

- PPS Teacher

**Leaders' ratings of teachers' use of technology for "engaging students in learning" were especially high, and leader ratings were also high for teachers' use of technology for "planning and preparation," "managing classroom procedures," and "demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness."**

*"I think the students' excitement about writing has been really awesome to see. You can't really quantify excitement, but students love publishing their work in book reader. Students that were really hesitant writers, who could maybe get a sentence or two out, are writing pages, adding images, and recording. It has boosted the quality and the quantity of the writing for our students."*

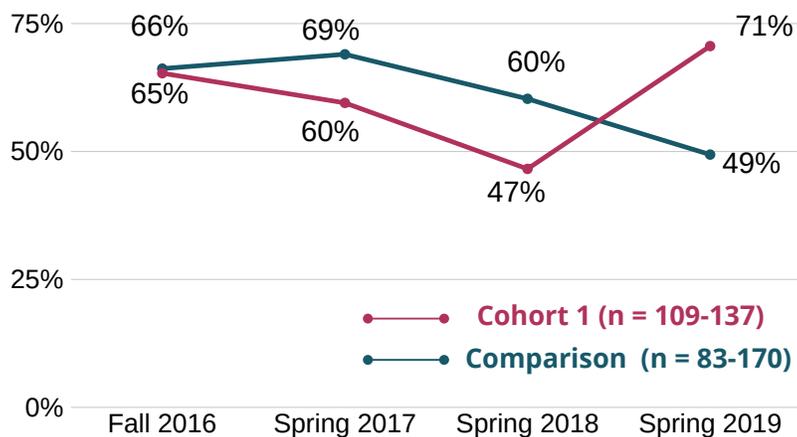
- PPS Coach

# TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

## Student Achievement Results

### Percentage of Students at Benchmark on DIBELS Assessment

#### TechSmart Cohort 1



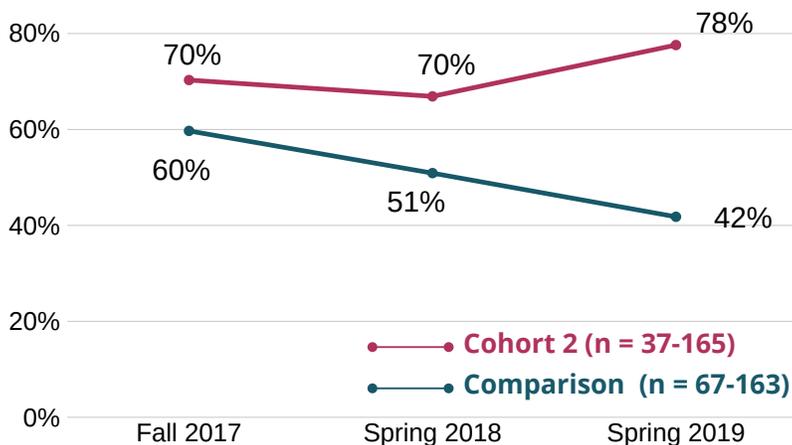
★ The graphs below detail the percentage of students scoring at or above benchmark (Core) at each time point. Any student that had data at any of these time points are included.



The percentage of students performing at benchmark declined for both comparison groups and increased for both TechSmart treatment cohorts



#### TechSmart Cohort 2



***"I think the technology resources are really a complement to quality instruction. I certainly see [promise for improving academic outcomes] in the classrooms where I have my highest quality teachers - my teachers who are most effective at using the technology and really understand the data and keeping track of what the kids are doing. I've seen a lot of growth."***

- PPS Principal

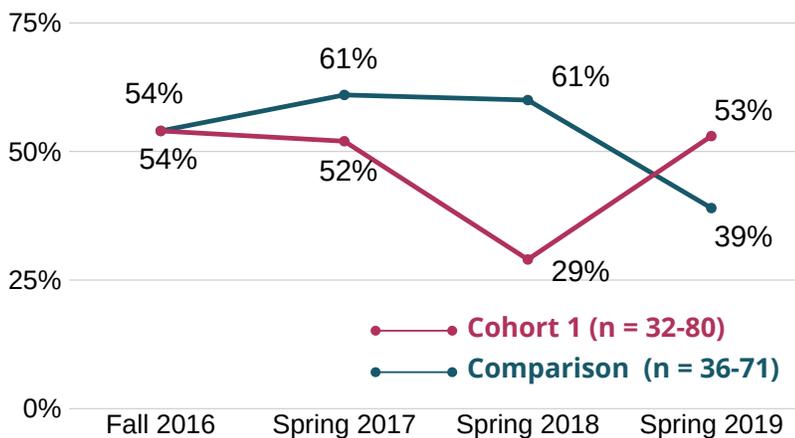
# TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

## Student Achievement Results

Many interview participants emphasized the benefits of technology for **increasing the inclusivity of classroom activities** and **providing opportunities for students to display their learning in diverse, non-traditional ways.**

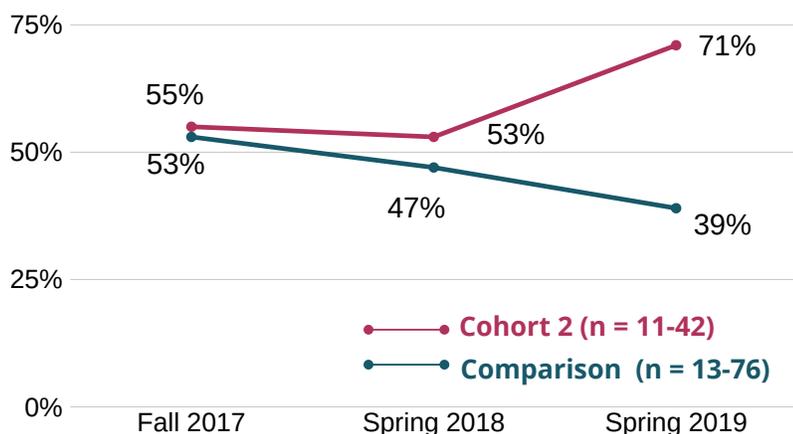
### DIBELS composite growth for TechSmart vs. non-TechSmart minority students

TechSmart Cohort 1



A higher percentage of minority students in both TechSmart cohorts were performing at benchmark by Spring 2019

TechSmart Cohort 2



A closer look at the Cohort 2 DIBELS data showed promise of closing the achievement gap for students of color.  
 Gap in Fall 2017 = **23%**  
 Gap in Spring 2019 = **8%**

*"For students with IEPs, the technology has been really helpful. Teachers are using things like voice-to-text, so students are able to create using the computer. Sometimes writing can be a big barrier for students with IEPs. Students can now compose directly into a Google Doc or into Seesaw, whereas in the past they may have had to write."*

- PPS Coach

# DIGITAL AGE LEARNING CULTURE

District embraces a cultural shift and views technology as positive.

Survey data indicated that the culture of support for technology integration improved from baseline to the end of SY 18-19 in Cohort 2 and 3, but decreased somewhat in Cohort 1.

## Parent Involvement



- ☞ Technology has increased parent involvement and communication.
- ☞ Parents are involved in the classroom or in students' work through technology

*"The technology is really supportive of family interaction, so when they have families engaged with it too, its a nice overall support for the kids' learning."*

- PPS Leader

## VISIBLE LEADERSHIP

District leadership is actively involved and working with key communities to accomplish change.

Participating leaders and teachers report mixed views of support from district- and building-level leaders:

- ➔ In general, teachers reported support from principals and the building-level leaders
- ➔ Many participants reported positive experiences with both the teacher on special assignment (TOSA) for TechSmart and the newly-hired Director of Learning Technologies
- ➔ Most other district-level support showed a need for improvement



*The support comes mainly through the TOSA, who coordinates professional development and professional learning opportunities for coaches. But beyond her - if I thought about leadership as being administration at the district level - I would say there's very little support.*

- PPS Leader

# DATA-DRIVEN IMPROVEMENT

Current, relevant, and high-quality data from multiple sources are used to improve schools, instruction, professional development, and other systems.



All teacher survey ratings of data-driven strategies improved from baseline to the end of SY 18-19.

One coach indicated that special education teachers are beginning to use data from the technology to inform their instruction.

## FUNDING AND BUDGET

District's budget repurposes resources and seeks outside funding to focus on promising practices and technology supports.

During SY 18-19, PPS principals set aside building-level funds to expand device availability beyond TechSmart classrooms. The district also hired a Director of Learning Technologies and implemented a new team to support technology integration within the Office of Technology and Information Services.



“For me, what was really important is we're a K-8 school, and I believe middle school should be 1-to-1 technology. There should be no reason why our middle school kids don't have that technology. So I have focused on making sure that our equity funds through All Hands Raised over these past few years have purchased technology for our upper grades.

- PPS Principal

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

District strategic plan reflects shared commitment to improving outcomes for students.

Although there was no reference to a specific strategic plan, interview responses indicated **the addition of a new Director of Learning Technologies** as a critical step towards strategic thinking around technology integration efforts.



**Leaders Talking Tech Over Coffee:** a new group for those interested in learning more about technology established by the new Director of Learning Technologies