

## SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT

# Top-Performing Franklin Special School District Pursues Excellence ‘for All’



Franklin Special School District (FSSD) in Tennessee’s Williamson County is one of the state’s top 10 districts for overall performance. This Grades pre-K–8 district’s vision statement, “Excellence in Teaching and Learning for All,” speaks to an overall commitment to continuous growth, community, and rigor.

In 2016, FSSD began looking for a new core math program that included robust professional development and instructional resources that were rigorous enough to prepare students for mastery of the Tennessee Academic Standards for Mathematics.

After a thorough evaluation, an adoption committee of administrators, teachers, and parents voted to implement Curriculum Associates’ *Ready® Mathematics*—a rigorous, standards-aligned, and teacher-led math program—and Teacher Toolbox—a digital library of instructional resources—across its schools. “We are very intentional about having strategic and ongoing support for our teachers and administrators,” said Mary Decker, Ed.D., associate director of schools for teaching and learning at FSSD.

Based on students’ results and teachers’ enthusiasm, the district rolled out the program to all students in Grades K–8 in January 2021.



STUDENTS  
3,494

GRADES  
Pre-K–8

TITLE I  
39%

*“We knew we were choosing a best-in-breed program, but we didn’t realize just how well it would actually align.”*

—Josh Bracamontes

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# What They Did

Indeed, the district had such a strong experience that FSSD decided to try Curriculum Associates' *i-Ready Assessment*, an award-winning assessment suite, in 2016. After the Teaching and Learning team piloted the online program and analyzed its linking scores to the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP), the district fully implemented *i-Ready* in 2017. "We knew we were choosing a best-in-breed program, but we didn't realize just how well it would actually align," said Josh Bracamontes, instructional technology specialist at FSSD. "In looking at the data, the growth for the classrooms in the initial pilot was crazy." FSSD educators attribute their successful implementation of *Ready Mathematics*, *i-Ready Assessment*, and Teacher Toolbox to the following:



## Professional Development

FSSD's Teaching and Learning team was impressed with the professional development options and supports available to FSSD educators as part of program implementation. "The professional learning support from Curriculum Associates is the gold standard," said Gina Looney, Ed.D., reading and RTI coordinator at FSSD. "It's timely, it's knowledgeable, and it supports the work we are doing with teachers to get to the next step."



## Data Culture

Data from *Ready Mathematics* and *i-Ready* has enabled educators across FSSD to engage in collaborative dialogue around the areas teachers and students needed support in the most. "With the data from *i-Ready*, teachers can fill in gaps and deliver truly differentiated instruction, which is a big focus of mine when working with our middle school teachers," said Shelly Robinson, instructional technology specialist at FSSD. "It's really a dream program."

"Our principals are always looking at Curriculum Associates' data around program usage and student growth," said Summer Carlton, curriculum and professional learning supervisor. "This is a focus in their meetings as well as in our professional learning communities. It's just part of our culture."



## Instructional Resources

FSSD educators appreciated the wealth of instructional resources the new programs provided and how they helped them deliver engaging, standards-based differentiated instruction.

"Between *Ready Mathematics* and *i-Ready*, I can't think of a time teachers couldn't find the resources they needed for their lessons," said Carlton. "There's no need for them to go searching on the internet—it's all right here."

*"The professional learning support from Curriculum Associates is the gold standard . . . It's timely, it's knowledgeable, and it supports the work we are doing with teachers to get to the next step."*

—Gina Looney, Ed.D.

## What They Accomplished

Since FSSD implemented *Ready Mathematics*, *i-Ready*, and Teacher Toolbox, the district's students have continued to achieve impressive academic growth in both mathematics and ELA.

This success, which has led to numerous state recognitions, can be attributed to several factors, including the district's commitment to ongoing professional learning, the building of a strong and effective data culture, and the hard work of FSSD educators.

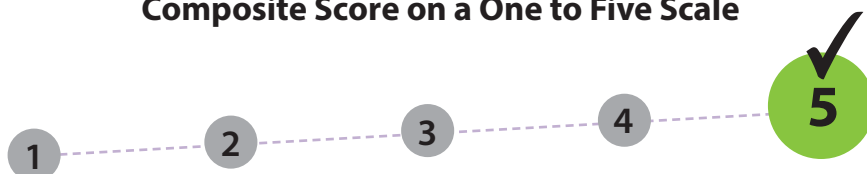
At the end of the 2020–2021 school year, educators' and students' accomplishments included:

- Outperforming the state proficiency rating (as measured by the TCAP) by double digits in math, ELA, social studies, and science
- An overall composite score of five, on a one to five scale, for student growth in both math and ELA based on state assessment data

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—Shelly Robinson

### Composite Score on a One to Five Scale



- Five FSSD schools earning “reward status” based on the schools’ TCAP scores, student growth, English Learner progress, and chronically absent rates

Now, as FSSD educators look forward, they remain steadfast in their commitment to excellence. “Everyone from the top down is truly invested in the ongoing success of our students,” said Carlton.

In 2022–2023, *i-Ready Assessment* and Personalized Instruction for Reading and Teacher Toolbox will have a reading/writing pilot at Freedom Intermediate, and Franklin Special will be sharing their success at the next *i-Ready Tennessee Summit* in September 2022.

“Even with great support and programs, such as what is provided by Curriculum Associates, you need district champions and a great team to make it all work,” added Bracamontes. “And that’s what we have here at FSSD.”



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