

Amplify Science MN district 6–8 case study



The study

Big Lake Schools serves more than 3,000 students and employs more than 160 full-time teachers, most of whom have been with the district for more than three years. The district has recently made strategic investments in technology across K–12.

The challenge

In 2018, Big Lake Schools began the search for a new science program in anticipation of the state rolling out NGSS-based standards in 2019. Dr. David Bernard, executive director of teaching and learning at Big Lake Schools, asked his science team to start researching programs. They happened to attend a professional learning session on the NGSS presented by Amplify and the Lawrence Hall of Science, and decided Amplify Science needed to be in the mix.

This curriculum research was happening in parallel with investments in technology and personnel support. Big Lake Schools brought a new tech integrationist on board to make sure devices were not a barrier to the district accessing any curriculum it was interested in.

A new approach to science instruction

Gaining access to a flexible, blended program like Amplify Science was exciting for the teachers. They were willing to jump in and learn new technologies and the interactive curricular resources to maximize Amplify's design to support engaging standards-aligned instruction and assessments.

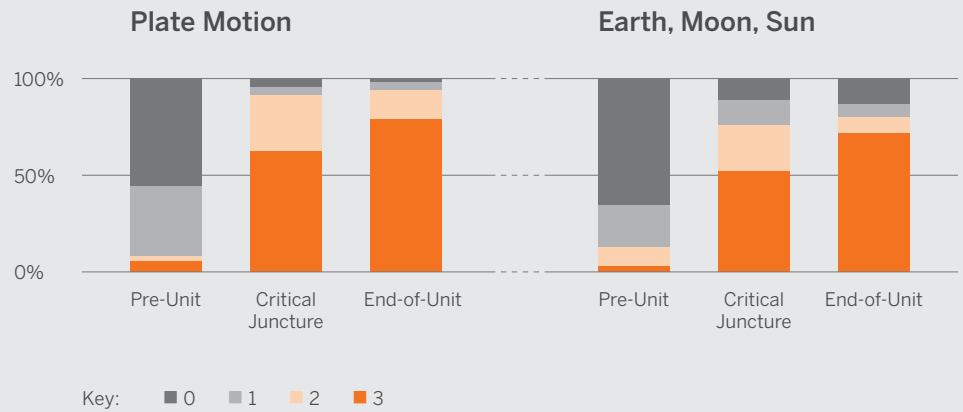
Bernard made sure the teachers were in close contact with their Amplify representative, which helped a lot. A few critical feedback meetings were set up to ensure teachers were heard and answers could be found quickly.

Bernard notes that Amplify has been very supportive from the beginning, and the science teachers' collaboration and dedication, along with the support from the district's technology integrationist helped teachers quickly go from 0 to 90 with technology.

Results

Assessments in Amplify Science measure student learning along a Progress Build, which describes how their explanations of the central phenomenon should develop over the course of a unit.

Progress Builds begin at prior knowledge and preconceptions (0) and progress through increasingly complex explanations of phenomena (3).



“The teachers really hit the ground running.”

—David Bernard, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning at Big Lake Schools

For more information on Amplify Science, visit amplify.com/science.



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