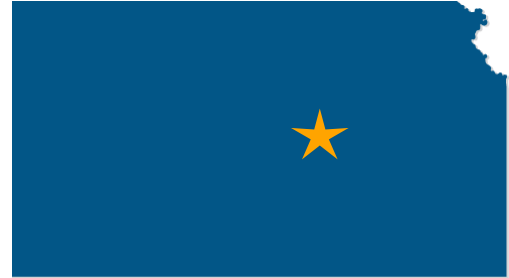


# IMPACT STORY

## Greenbush Consortium

Central Heights  
USD 288



### TIMELINE OF ACTIVITIES

#### 2018-2019

Explored student and district literacy needs. Created comprehensive plan.

#### 2020-21

Literacy plan in place with professional development, resources and family engagement.



#### 2019-2020

Implemented USD 288 Comprehensive Literacy Plan.

### CURRENT LiNK IMPACT

Central Heights Unified School District 288 is a very rural district located between a cow pasture and a corn field.

The LiNK project set this district on a journey that would send a wave throughout classrooms and the community. District staff built their knowledge, capacity and unity toward literacy. Teachers increased their research to find best practices resources; received specialized training; provided project-based materials; and set up family engagement activities.

Core values demonstrated by all educators strengthened the literacy instruction and achievement of students in reading, writing, listening, publishing, and presenting across all curricular areas.

*"The goals we have in place are sustainable and we are carrying on the work from the past three years."*

- Ann Collins, Elementary Principal/LiNK Lead

*"I learned so much about the science of reading; the importance of interventions; the incredible opportunities that research-based methods provide for our students; and the deep relationships that form when we provide opportunities for our families and communities to get involved in literacy activities. What a wild ride and amazing experience."*

- Michelle Smith, 8-9 GR ELA Teacher

### FUTURE LITERACY IMPACT

As educators, we knew LiNK would be a great opportunity for us, but we had no idea how much we would all benefit from the journey. The desire to serve our students was always within the hearts of our teachers, but opportunities were not.

With the ability to explore literacy content, we created a districtwide comprehensive literacy plan and action plan to put all literacy components in place. With a structure in place, even the pandemic did not stop strong instruction using virtual learning. Family relationships only strengthened from the engagement activities we have as part of our literacy structure.

The impact of LiNK will ripple throughout the halls for years to come. We have evidence-based research methods in place, emerging literacy leaders, relevant literature for students, and confidence to see it through.

*Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.*

# IMPACT STORY

## Greenbush Consortium

Columbus  
USD 493



### TIMELINE OF ACTIVITIES

**2018**  
Adopt Core Reading Curriculum.

**December 2019**  
Begin "Books and Breakfast" family events Pre-K to 6th grade.

**August 2019**  
Implement Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS).

**2020-2021**  
Implement new structured literacy reading series and MTSS structure in place with evidence-based materials.

#### CURRENT LiNK IMPACT

Columbus USD 493 was not seeing the literacy gains expected in its kindergarten through fifth-grade Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) model. The resources were outdated, and some of the MTSS planning structures were not working correctly.

Through LiNK, the district had a literacy instructional coach provide outside ideas and technical assistance to help revamp what was in place.

Currently, USD 493 has a true MTSS structure, offers training for teachers, and utilizes evidence-based materials. Student data provides evidence that the MTSS structure and literacy resources are helping students become academically successful, as evidenced by student literacy data.



*Shari Napier providing first-grade students with support using the Heggerty program to address phonemic awareness skills.*

#### FUTURE LITERACY IMPACT

USD 493 has a solid system in place for MTSS and will continue to grow and revise as needed based on data. The district created positions for an interventionist and a reading specialist to ensure that all buildings are cohesive with literacy support. These specialists will continue to provide professional development in the areas of reading and best teaching practices.

The district also plans to continue to facilitate MTSS small group intervention support in order to see continued student literacy growth. Staff is now in place to analyze data and monitor small groups during MTSS intervention periods.

# IMPACT STORY

## Greenbush Consortium

Hiawatha USD 415



### TIMELINE OF ACTIVITIES

#### Before 2018

District shifts from many programs and practices.

#### 2021 and beyond

Systems change and collective knowledge results in student gains.



#### 2018-2019

Begin Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) re-structuring of LiNK project.

### HIAWATHA USD 415 – OUR STORY

A snow globe, with a captured, perfect scene of a beloved location, only needs an occasional, gentle turn upside down to provide the owner with the satisfaction of seeing the flakes swirl, then gently drift back down upon the familiar scene.



Hiawatha USD 415 has possibly been using this same approach of Gentle Turns for school improvement. After all, the district piloted outcomes-based accreditation several years ago. Our district utilizes mission statements and visions and measurable goals. We offered professional development and performed Gentle Turns requiring implementation documentation for items deemed as improvements.

We deftly shifted from No Child Left Behind, to Quality Performance Accreditation and then to Kansas Education Systems Accreditation (KESA) with district and building leadership teams intact and functioning. We implemented MTSS. We learned about the new Kansas Standards and picked apart the 5 Rs. We took another Gentle Turn by transitioning to Schoolwide Title to serve more students.

#### We “kept up.”

However, some students never quite overcame their struggles with reading and math. We began to trend out of the “scored higher than the state average” side. Year after year, we complained about skills that students could not master - math fact fluency, content vocabulary, spelling or reading independently. Financial hardship connected to state funding dogged us, and we delayed curriculum resource adoptions. Even our nationally normed tests fell under the hatchet of budget cuts.

In the snow globe world, our dome was yellowed, leaking and in peril of failing. We exhibited all the risk factors but explained them away. We didn't recognize what we didn't know.

The application and acceptance to participate as part of the Greenbush LiNK consortium began at the same time as an intentional restructuring of our MTSS system with TASN guidance. Our story cannot be told separately. It took both of these initiatives to help see why we had been sliding, and what we needed to do.

Our staff's openness to applying for these opportunities, and the persistence of some key administrators and teachers led to the knowledge that Gentle Turns were not enough.

After a year of working to set the foundation of leadership and planning, our district began the 2019-2020 year gathering data from all new assessments. With this data, USD 415 staff members made instructional decisions, effectively grouped and provided interventions, and strengthened fidelity to the appropriate resources. Instructional changes occurred vertically and horizontally across the district. We began to realize we needed some major shaking up.

In a pristine, snow globe world, now is the time to say everything is improving, and we can stop shaking the globe. Systems are in place. We continue to grow our collective knowledge base and expertise in using data, MTSS, and persistence in recognizing the actual status of our achievements and gaps - because we want the best for our students.

The process is underway, but our snow is still swirling. We still need to improve our fidelity, competence and confidence. We need to verify we are on the right path. We are more informed and will continue to use evidence-based practices which benefit students. Our district and community “scene” is changing.

Many thanks to all involved in making this grant/program a reality for Kansas students.

Written by Jean Brintnall  
CIA coordinator USD 415 Hiawatha Schools

# IMPACT STORY

## Greenbush Consortium

South Brown County  
USD 430



### TIMELINE OF ACTIVITIES

#### 2018-2019

Teachers learned evidence-based strategies through professional development.

#### Spring 2020

Books and reading materials for classrooms.



#### Fall 2019

New core curriculum resources, intervention materials.

#### Summer 2020

"Chargers' Summer Read" book giveaway.

### CURRENT LiNK IMPACT

Throughout the LiNK project, educators found significant benefits from professional development of all types, including an instructional coach for personalized learning.

The instructional coach works with many new and veteran teachers who are interested in becoming more effective literacy leaders.

Many classrooms, including Ag Ed, Art and Technology receive literacy materials, proving that literacy is a part of all learning.

The community also supports literacy with new book baskets available in businesses, such as the pharmacy, banks, local health clinics and child care centers.



*South Brown County students were able to choose books during the "Chargers' Summer Read" program in 2020.*

### FUTURE LITERACY IMPACT

USD 430 staff members will maintain their goal to continue growth in literacy practices.

Teachers now have a better understanding of foundational skills and are using evidence-based literacy strategies in their classrooms, with small-group interventions and during after-school programming.

Planning for the future includes staying up-to-date with literacy resources and professional development for all staff members.

Ultimately, South Brown County educators know that continual learning for teachers will ensure that students' needs are met.

# IMPACT STORY

## Greenbush Consortium

Southeast USD 247



### TIMELINE OF ACTIVITIES

**2018**

Identify instructional materials and professional development materials.

**2020-2021**

Reading curriculum alignment completed and evidence-based materials in use.



**2019**

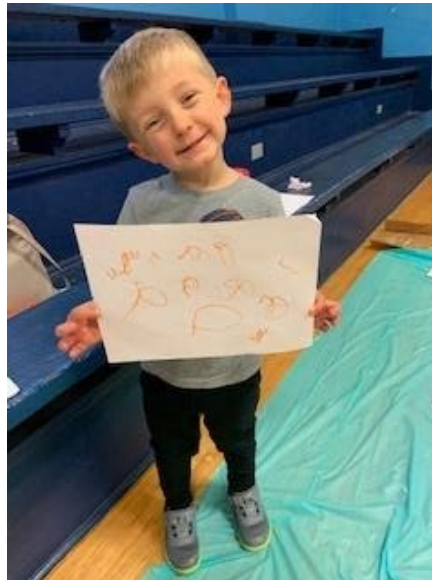
Support for professional learning communities.

#### CURRENT LiNK IMPACT

Southeast USD 247 participated in the LiNK project in order to define its literacy needs; determine what resources to use at each grade level; and update educator skills with the appropriate professional development.

Evidence-based resources such as *95% Group* materials and the *Barton Reading and Spelling System* provide support for all student levels.

Teachers receive excellent professional development and support in the implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in order to work on essential literacy standards and collaborate to align standards by grade level.



*Literacy begins at the earliest grade levels, and this Southeast student shows that learning letters can be fun!*

#### FUTURE LITERACY IMPACT

With the alignment of reading standards for all grade levels completed, and engaging professional development for the continuation of PLCs, Southeast is equipped to provide core classroom support, as well as small group reading intervention, for all students.

LiNK also provides the community with additional library books and family literacy resources.

A state initiative has also secured books to families with young children through the *Dolly Parton Imagination Library*.

# IMPACT STORY

## Greenbush Consortium

Woodson County  
USD 366



### TIMELINE OF ACTIVITIES

**2018**

Determined need for Structured Literacy focus.

**2020**

Intentional focus on specific structured literacy elements.

**2019**

Professional development, instructional coaching, and literacy resource review.

**2021 and beyond**

Increased literacy knowledge and resources.

### CURRENT LiNK IMPACT

With LiNK, the district has grown leaps and bounds with the use of structured literacy elements in classrooms.

LiNK funds provide professional development, curriculum resources, and a literacy coach who focused on explicit and intentional literacy instruction.

Many educators attend conferences that open viewpoints and offer opportunities to collaborate.

Teachers better understand the importance of vocabulary instruction with word walls, explicit word skills and the necessity of rich text. Teachers also utilize phonological awareness and phonics instruction with information and resources provided by LiNK.

A new phonics intervention resource allows for strategies to make a cohesive and streamlined system of support.



*Teachers are happy to provide more books for children and to feel more confident in helping struggling readers, as well as enhancing learning for all students.*

### FUTURE LITERACY IMPACT

With literacy knowledge and new resources in place, educators are making full units encompassing all structured literacy components.

Literacy coach, Janet Rehmert, continues to provide multiple professional development opportunities for grade levels to collaborate about the ELA standards. Teachers understand the need to encompass structured literacy with standards and rich text to support all students.

District educators will continue to make units containing more robust literacy practices and utilize materials purchased with LiNK funds.

Because the district acknowledges the importance of a literacy coach, this position will be sustained long-term..