



On Your Mark, Get Set, Go!

How One California School Hit the Ground Running with Odyssey Ramona, California

IN LATE AUGUST 2007, RAMONA UNIFIED School District (RUSD) in rural northeast San Diego, one of California's top-ranked districts, kicked off a district-wide implementation of CompassLearning Odyssey® in all ten of their K-12 sites. Teachers, administrators, and students have shown great enthusiasm and dedication to implementing Odyssey. This has directly led to a strong implementation, as exemplified by their district's positive, can-do attitude and motto for this first year of implementation: On your mark, get set, GO!

On Your Mark... A quality implementation plan begins with working with district leaders to set goals and expectations for program implementation. In early August, Ramona district administrators participated in a day-long "leadership academy" that consisted of the principals from each site, the Director of Technology, the Director of Assessment, and the Assistant Super-

intendent of Educational Services. CompassLearning's Professional Development team worked with RUSD's leadership to create district implementation goals and to schedule ongoing professional development dates for the 2007-08 school year. "When we began this journey, we knew we needed support for classroom teachers, which would individualize daily instruction for each and every student according to what they needed. All of our extensive investigation pointed to Odyssey," said Dr. Bob Graeff, Assistant Superintendent of RUSD.

The mark was set: All teachers were to utilize CompassLearning NWEA-aligned curriculum on a weekly basis for a minimum of 30 minutes per subject level, as well as create teacher-generated lessons aligned to their weekly curriculum, within the first month of school. This was an ambitious goal for a district that had just begun utilizing NWEA testing one year ago. However, the commitment was there and the goal was set, so it was time to prepare the sites.

Get Set... A critical component of hitting a home run during the first year of implementation involves communication and site preparedness. A district technology team visited each Ramona school to ensure that all computers utilizing Odyssey met the necessary system requirements. Principals created lab rotation schedules that allowed the maximum usage per day for their student populations. Teachers worked with their CompassLearning Educational Consultants to modify RIT range assignments for students, as well as create customized lessons in Odyssey. Odyssey demonstration lessons and student orientations were conducted at each campus.

targeted toward more advanced Odyssey management features. Several sites chose to tailor their workshops by teacher-designated skill levels—beginner, intermediate, and proficient—to enable teachers to select their own learning pace. Teachers who needed additional instruction on basic program navigation reinforced those skills while others proceeded to advanced features, such as creating authentic tasks and Odyssey Writer assignments.

The Ramona school district attributes its successful integration of Odyssey to the tremendous partnership between principals, district administrators, and the CompassLearning Professional Development team.

“We are on our way. We are on a journey to a place where this small, rural K–12 school district of 7,000 students has never been before. We are ready. We are ready to learn. We are ready to grow. We are ready to let the data guide us in educating our students.”

—RUSD Director of Assessment, Dr. Cathy Pierce

GO! Within the first four weeks of school, Ramona students were immersed in their differentiated paths of activities from the previous spring’s MAP testing cycle. Teachers were excited to introduce the new program with their classes because they felt it directly met their students’ individual needs. “Odyssey helps teachers meet the demand for individualized instruction in a manageable way for all students,” wrote teachers Linda Ball and Pat Ravin.

The district’s decision to make the Odyssey implementation their top priority flowed to all channels throughout their ten schools. General education, special education, and after-school programs began using Odyssey during class, for small group learning centers or special education remediation, and as whole-class direct-instruction lessons.

By the spring of 2008, principals were asking for Next Steps Professional Development sessions that were

Together, they collaborated to achieve the common goal of improving student learning for RUSD’s population of 7,000 students.

Ramona’s search for innovative, exciting resources and field-proven solutions to support student learning led them to their partnership with CompassLearning. It has been an exciting partnership and a year of wonderful successes.

CompassLearning is a leader in facilitating student success by collaborating with educators to create personalized learning experiences. Our innovative educational software solutions individualize instruction for each student based on his or her unique needs. Odyssey, our core product, influences student success because it is based on current and confirmed research about how students engage, think, and learn. Teachers and administrators benefit from our custom implementation, professional development, and customer support solutions.

