

# inflexion POINTS



## Developing a Playbook to Support Staff in Teaching Literacy Every Period, Every Day

*How do you provide structured, intentional support for all staff?*



### What was the Need?

Valley High School's student academic outcome data showed the need for explicit support and practice to develop the literacy skills necessary to be successful in postsecondary opportunities without remediation. Valley had been the lowest-performing high school in the county for several years in a row and had a reputation as a school with a multitude of discipline problems and low academic rigor.

The need from both the Valley staff and students was clear: Students at Valley required specific, deliberate instruction in disciplinary language development. The staff also reported both anecdotally and in surveys that they felt ill-equipped to support language and literacy development.

### What did they Do to Address the Need?

At Valley, school leadership relies heavily on a distributed leadership model. As a result, and given the focus in the Common Core State Standards on developing content, language, and literacy simultaneously, the Valley Literacy Team stepped into the gap to provide a menu of professional learning options for the Valley staff. The Valley Literacy Team emerged when Principal Dave Richey recognized that getting momentum and providing support for ALL teachers across the curriculum would be a task too large for one individual, so he put together a team of teachers to lead the work. Mr. Richey supported

### SCHOOL FACT BOX



Valley High School, located in Santa Ana, California, serves more than 2,100 students, with 97% identified as being socioeconomically disadvantaged and 36% in programming for English Learners. The demographic profile reflects that 97% of the students are Hispanic/Latino; 2% Asian; <1% White; <1% African American; <1% American Indian or Alaska Native; and <1% Filipino.

the team with professional development, as they created a common vision and grew in their capacity to look at and understand the data that called for a change in teaching strategies and ideations in order to improve student outcomes and experiences.

Monthly staff meetings became monthly literacy PD opportunities. While planning these professional learning opportunities, the Valley Literacy Team felt it needed to carefully consider the experiences of “support” that the participants had received in the past and how they might approach the new support that the team would provide. The team considered how it could

create professional learning experiences that would honor staff members as professionals while also meeting their individual learning needs. Essentially, preparation and empathetic design was key. When it came to actual delivery, it was critical to a) offer multiple entry points to support each member of the diverse staff, b) include elements of personal choice that honored staff members’ autonomy, and c) provide recursive experiences (no “one and done”).

The Valley Literacy Playbook was the Literacy Team’s major initiative to promote coherence in literacy practice. The team researched highly effective literacy practices that can be applied regardless of content area and created one source of highly effective, research-based literacy strategies for supporting all students in disciplinary language development. These practices are packaged in an easy-to-read guide; the Literacy Team refers to the Playbook in each of its professional learning sessions. The team worked closely with Inflexion and Education Northwest, who provided programmatic and instructional coaching and consultation in the design, development, and implementation of the Valley Literacy Playbook.



## Resources

- *Valley High School - Teaching Literacy Every Period, Every Day*  
Find at: <https://www.inflexion.org/teaching-literacy-every-period-every-day/>