



St. Odilia School Implements Blended Learning & Sees Immediate Results

Staff at South Los Angeles Parochial School Changes School Culture

St. Odilia School, a K–8 Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, has faithfully served its inner-city neighborhood for more than half a century. Although student achievement has always been a top priority for both administrators and staff, they understood that no two students learn in precisely the same way, so they felt that a move to blended learning would result in a more personalized academic experience for every student.

To address this situation and better meet the needs of each student in the school, St. Odilia’s faculty created what they call the B.L.E.S.S. Initiative. B.L.E.S.S. stands for “Blended Learning Educating Smart Students,” clearly indicating that St. Odilia’s staff was making no concessions regarding expectations for their predominantly underserved and economically disadvantaged student population.

The team fully committed to making the instructional shifts and did its homework, completing some 900 hours of planning and technology infrastructure adjustment prior to implementation. As with any blended learning initiative, one key to success would be striking the right balance between digital and teacher-led instruction. The selection of a digital partner whose curriculum integrated with and supported the school’s educational goals and would help drive student achievement was critical.

St. Odilia School’s choice? Compass Learning®.

“With Compass Learning®, our students can easily access standards aligned digital content that helps prepare them for graduation, college, and career success. They’re experiencing learning in a brand new way, and their families see the progress that they’re making. Compass Learning has helped us create an exciting blended learning environment that speaks to our students.”

Sima Perez, Principal, St. Odilia School

SCHOOL NAME: St. Odilia School SCHOOL TYPE: Catholic

LOCATION: Los Angeles, California

SETTING: Urban GRADES: K–8 ENROLLMENT: 285

STUDENT POPULATION:
 Latino 95%
 African American. 4%
 Other. 1%

Predominantly underserved and economically disadvantaged.



TRAIN THE TRAINER

- Certifies local educators as professional developers to sustain the digital learning initiative
- Ideal for new staff onboarding and continuing momentum

Preparations were completed in the summer of 2013, and St. Odilia's kicked off the B.L.E.S.S. initiative that fall. The staff took advantage of the Compass Learning® **Train the Trainer** professional development offering to ensure educator support beyond the implementation period in blended learning best practices as well as facility with all aspects of the Compass Learning system. As a success metric, the staff sought to accelerate student reading growth, designating Fall 2013 Iowa Tests of Basic Skills® (ITBS®) reading scores as the baseline and Fall 2014 results as the endpoint. Expected school-wide growth based on national norms was 11.6 points. They hoped to surpass this figure.

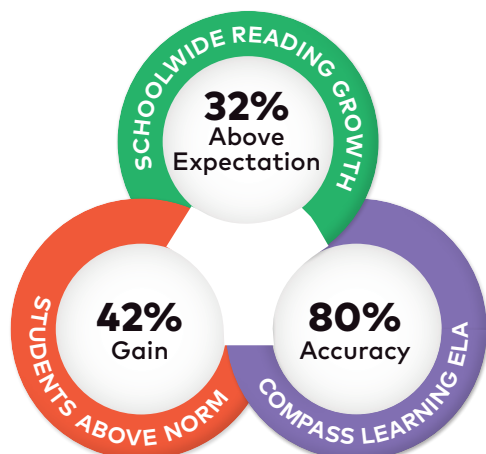
MEETING—AND EXCEEDING—THEIR GOALS

Educators fully integrated Compass Learning into the B.L.E.S.S. model, rotating students in all grades through direct teacher-led instruction, small-group collaborative sessions, and between 45 minutes and one hour per week in Compass Learning activities. As a checkpoint for the effectiveness of their digital implementation, the staff set a performance goal of 80% for the school as a whole on Compass Learning activities and quizzes. They were encouraged by mid-year and end-of-year results ranging from the mid-70% to mid-80% range, **averaging 80%**.

But the real measure of success would be the Fall 2014 ITBS scores, and as a whole, these results proved to be extremely gratifying. Reading results exceeded expectations by nearly 4 points, with the school-wide growth figure reaching 15.4—a **32% improvement** over expectations. Grades 4 and 6 both showed exceptional growth, exceeding expectations by 6 and 18 points, respectively. One result was particularly striking: five of the six tested grade levels showed increases in the number of students performing above the national average; overall, St. Odilia School showed a **42% gain in students testing above the national norm**.

Credit for these results goes to St. Odilia's educators, who enthusiastically embraced their move to a blended learning environment. Compass Learning is proud to have played an integral part both in the success of the B.L.E.S.S. initiative and in fueling academic growth among St. Odilia's students. We look forward to a long and fruitful partnership.

Notable PERCENTAGE GAINS



"Our B.L.E.S.S. initiative . . . has changed the role of teachers from telling and testing to asking and assessing. Students who were having difficulty are now able to use [Compass Learning] to see concepts presented in a different way."

Maria Garcia, 1st Grade Teacher