INDIANAPOLIS: BROOKSIDE elementary

Remote team teaching and small group instruction
Explore the concrete ways Brookside Elementary employed “Power Strategies” that address critical student needs now and lay a sustainable foundation for lasting improvement.

Learn more and see examples here.
Jeremy Baugh was a first-year principal, during a pandemic, figuring out how to best support students and staff...
AT BROOKSIDE ELEMENTARY:

#1
Empowering, Adaptable Instruction

#2
Time & Attention

#3
The Teaching Job

#4
Relationships & Social-Emotional Support

#5
Family & Community Partnerships

See Snapshot of Brookside Elementary
In March 2020, students and teachers at Brookside Elementary went remote.

**Students’ Experiences in March 2020**
- Struggled to engage in full-group lessons over the screen
- Weren’t able to reach out for help as easily

**Teachers’ Experiences in March 2020**
- Instantly had radically increased responsibilities, including
  - Learning new technologies
  - Adapting lessons for online learning
  - Checking-in with students and families
  - Figuring out how to effectively teach over a screen
- Reverted back to a “one teacher-one classroom” model for teaching, despite having more collaborative structures in place

First-year principal Jeremy Baugh quickly realized it wasn’t working.
Principal Baugh knew they would need to make some key changes...

**Changes to Students’ Experiences**
- **Simplified schedules** to help students focus on the most important areas for learning
- **Created opportunities for regular small-group instruction** to give students the time and attention they need

**Changes to Teachers’ Experiences**
- **Distributed teaching responsibilities** to reduce workload and allow teachers to focus on specific skills
- **Made space for collaborative planning time** to help teachers get back to working as a team
To make these changes reality, Brookside shifted resources in five key ways...

1. Consolidate homerooms into one virtual classroom per grade level for core instructional blocks, such as reading, writing, math, science, and social studies.

2. Assign each homeroom teacher to lead planning and instruction in one content area.

3. Reduce group sizes during core instructional blocks by pushing in support staff, including social workers, behavioral specialists, and aides.

4. Add dedicated time in the afternoon for intervention with small groups of students who need additional support.

5. Secured 80 minutes for collaborative teacher planning for each grade-level team 2x/week.


**Previously**, students were split into homeroom classes with one teacher. The same teacher, with the same group of students, cycled through core content.

**Now**, all students in each grade level have the same core instructional blocks together in one online classroom each morning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mrs. Jones</th>
<th>Mr. Adams</th>
<th>Ms. Gutierrez</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Writing / Social Studies</td>
<td>Math / Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing / Social Studies</td>
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<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math / Science</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Writing / Social Studies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sample 2nd-Grade Shift**

This shift provided simplicity and generated a sense of community among students and teachers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mrs. Jones, Mr. Adams, and Ms. Gutierrez together</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing / Social Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math / Science</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grade-level teams designated each teacher as a **content lead**, responsible for the planning and teaching of **one** core content area.

This reduced the burden for teachers to plan and deliver lessons for every subject and freed up more time to plan for small group instruction and intervention.

This shift also allowed strong teachers to lead the content for all students.

**Sample 2nd Grade Teacher Roles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2nd-Grade Schedule</th>
<th>Content Lead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Mrs. Jones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing / Social Studies</td>
<td>Mr. Adams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math / Science</td>
<td>Ms. Gutierrez</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*When all 2nd-graders are on a Zoom call for reading, Mrs. Jones leads the mini-lesson. Then, Mr. Adams leads the writing mini-lesson with all of the 2nd-graders, followed by Ms. Gutierrez leading the math lesson.*
HOW THEY DID IT:
Reduce group sizes during core instructional blocks by pushing in support staff, including social workers, behavioral specialists, and aides.

Consolidating homerooms also created an opportunity to differentiate group sizes for core instruction.

Brookside assigned support staff to each grade level — including social workers, behavioral specialists, teacher assistants, and others. They joined the virtual lesson to directly support students in two main ways:

1. **Instruction**
   After the teacher’s lesson, they facilitated small group instruction, including guided practice or independent work.

2. **Engagement**
   They monitored the chat for students’ responses and questions, and connected with families if students were absent or experiencing technology issues.

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### Sample 2nd-Grade Support Staff Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2nd-Grade Schedule</th>
<th>Teacher Content Lead</th>
<th>Assigned Support Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Mrs. Jones</td>
<td>Mrs. Radisha, Social Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing / Soc Studies</td>
<td>Mr. Adams</td>
<td>Ms. Hall, Reading Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math / Science</td>
<td>Ms. Gutierrez</td>
<td>Mr. Galen, Instructional Aide</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# A Closer Look at How Brookside Shifted Staff Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Former Responsibilities</th>
<th>New Remote Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>• Plan and lead instruction for homeroom students each day in all core subjects</td>
<td>• Plan and teach one content area to all students in the grade level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Morning: Support teachers on their team in small group breakout sessions in other content areas</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Afternoon: Facilitate targeted intervention</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-Assistants &amp;</td>
<td>• Support in-classroom behavior management</td>
<td>• Lead morning meetings with students when their assigned grade-level teachers are in meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Facilitators</td>
<td>• Provide individualized instruction support</td>
<td>• Monitor attendance and support students in their assigned grade level with technology access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Assist with non-instructional duties, like arrival, breakfast, hallway duty, and dismissal</td>
<td>• Support teachers by facilitating breakout sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Workers</td>
<td>• Student/family engagement</td>
<td>• Facilitate small group intervention, including literacy groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Small group counseling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Attendance monitoring</td>
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HOW THEY DID IT:
Add dedicated time in the afternoon for small-group students additional support

With grade-wide academics each morning, afternoons are dedicated to specials and independent learning.

- Allows for targeted intervention for students who are furthest behind.
- Core teachers use data from morning lessons to inform groupings and select which skills to reinforce.
- Teachers hold 1:1 check-ins with students who are struggling academically or social-emotionally.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Students' Experiences</th>
<th>Teachers' Experiences</th>
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<tr>
<td>7:00-8:00</td>
<td>Breakfast, getting online (at home)</td>
<td>Professional Learning Community and Grade Level Planning Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00-8:20</td>
<td>Morning Meeting</td>
<td>Reading — Mrs. Jones leads Other teachers &amp; staff facilitate small group break-out</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:20-9:20</td>
<td>Reading Mini-Lesson Followed by small group break-out</td>
<td>Math — Ms. Gutierrez leads Other teachers &amp; staff facilitate small group break-out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:20-10:20</td>
<td>Math Mini-Lesson Followed by small group break-out</td>
<td>Writing — Mr. Adams leads Other teachers &amp; staff facilitate small group break-out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:20-11:00</td>
<td>Writing Mini-Lesson Followed by small group break-out</td>
<td>Science/Social Studies Mini-Lesson Followed by small group break-out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00-11:30</td>
<td>Science/Social Studies Mini-Lesson Followed by small group break-out</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30-12:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00-12:30</td>
<td>Specials</td>
<td>2nd-grade teacher prep Specials teachers teaching</td>
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| 12:30-2:30| Small Group/Independent Learning Includes interventions and literacy groups | Teachers and some support staff:  
  ● Small group pull-out support  
  ● Leading literacy groups  
  Other support staff:  
  ● Home Visits |
**Secure 80 minutes for collaborative teacher planning for each grade level team.**

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- Brookside committed to...
  ✓ 80 minutes per week for **Professional Learning Communities**.
  ✓ 80 minutes per week for **Grade Level Planning**.
- During this time...
  ✓ **Support staff** facilitate students’ online arrival and morning meeting.
  ✓ **Teachers** finalize the content and facilitation for their lessons.
WHAT SUPPORTED CHANGE AT BROOKSIDE?

ROLE FLEXIBILITY
The district temporarily relaxed existing teacher-of-record and other role restrictions over the summer to support remote and hybrid teaching.

PRIOR CAPACITY
Brookside already had experience with team teaching and teacher-leadership roles through being an Opportunity Culture school.

TIME FLEXIBILITY
The lack of in-person duties (such as arrival and dismissal) created more time for instruction, and shorter overall days created more flexibility and time for teacher collaboration.
Students, teachers, and families have been positive about the changes Brookside has made to support students and teachers.

- Principal Baugh observes that students enjoy the added time for small group instruction.
- Families report that they appreciate how many teachers know their children well and tailor instruction to meet their needs.
- After a period of transition, teachers at Brookside School 54 have expressed their support for maintaining their current model when they return to fully in-person school.

“Parents appreciated that their children were getting to know more adults in the school this year, even though they weren’t physically in school.”

JEREMY BAUGH, PRINCIPAL
As part of their next steps, Brookside could focus on building toward...

- **Differentiating Teacher Roles & Compensation**
  Maintaining differentiated teacher roles that leverage the diverse talents of Brookside educators. Roles include lead teachers, content leads for each core subject, and flexibility to integrate other staff into instructional time.

- **Creating Opportunities for More Small-Group Instruction**
  Creating frequent opportunities for small-group instruction by using technology, differentiated class sizes across grade levels and content areas, and flexibly using both instructional and non-instructional staff to push in at key moments.

- **Organizing Independent Learning**
  Treating asynchronous learning time as an asset that is part of a holistic learning experience, by being more systematic about how and when it happens – for example, assigning non-teaching staff to help facilitate.

- **Focusing on Sustainable Collaborative Planning Time**
  Maintaining the increased time for teachers’ collaborative planning by consolidating non-teaching time, stacking existing planning time, or releasing teachers from their non-instructional duties.
APPENDIX
SCHOOL SNAPSHOT

ENROLLMENT

~500 STUDENTS

Grades K-6

FUN FACT

Now 27 classrooms, Brookside’s original 1865 building was a two-room schoolhouse!
SCHOOL SNAPSHOT

- Black: 56%
- Latinx: 23%
- White: 14%
- All Other: 7%

- Students from Low-Income Backgrounds: 82%
- English Language Learners: 15%
- Students With Disabilities: 18%
Prior to COVID, Brookside had designed teacher-leadership roles by implementing Opportunity Culture.

See Brookside's Master Schedule.

**ARTIFACTS**

- Igniting the Learning Engine  *Education Resource Strategies*
- Broad-Based Academic Supports for All Students  *EdResearch for Recovery*
- Improving the Quality of Distance and Blended Learning  *EdResearch for Recovery*
- School Practices to Address Student Learning Loss  *EdResearch for Recovery*
- District Systems to Support Equitable and High-Quality Teaching and Learning  *EdResearch for Recovery*
- Teaching in the Pandemic: ‘This is Not Sustainable’  *The New York Times*
- Teaching Innovation: New School Staffing Strategies Inspired by the Pandemic  *FutureEd*
- Where Teachers Thrive  Susan Moore Johnson, Harvard Education Press

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