

Spotlight on Schools



Building an Authentic Partnership

In the spring of 2014, UCBHSSP was contacted by the Brentwood Union School District [to support implementation of the Common Core](#) among middle school history and science, and later English, teachers. The goal was to provide teachers with [discrete literacy strategies](#) to support student reading and writing in the content areas. Additionally, the school district asked UCBHSSP to work with teachers on integrating literacy lessons within the context of larger units.

In July 2014, UCBHSSP Academic Coordinator Emily Richards began, what is now a close and authentic partnership between consultant and school district. During these two years, teachers have been implementing UCBHSSP literacy strategies such as [Thesis-Evidence](#), Headings & Highlights, and [Keep It or Junk It](#) at their school sites, and the work has grown to include collaboration with the district's Common Core coaches. In

addition to workshops and planning sessions, UCBHSSP, in partnership with district coaches, have also provided [demonstration lessons and coached](#) individual teachers.

Unit Mapping and Literacy Strategies

In year two (2015-2016) of this partnership, the Brentwood Union School District Curriculum and Instruction office decided to provide more concentrated support and training to teachers as they redesigned their [units of instruction to align with new content frameworks](#) as well as the Common Core. UCBHSSP supported teachers in developing content-based focus questions that could serve as a driving force for inquiry-based unit planning. Currently, teachers meet, in disciplinary groups, with UCBHSSP coaches to create and refine their [unit maps](#) – revising focus questions, identifying key areas of content instruction, selecting materials, and designing literacy-based lessons. In addition to this work with teachers, UCBHSSP began supporting the district's Common Core coaches, who work more frequently with teacher teams to plan the specific lessons and literacy strategies.

Looking Forward

As UCBHSSP and the Brentwood Union School District plan for the next few years, we, as a member of the district's instructional envisioning team, will be working on creating plans and implementing supports so that all teachers have the opportunity to move students towards mastery of the literacy standards. Through the partnership of district and site leaders, along with the district Common Core coaches and UCBHSSP, classroom teachers are able to engage in [a coordinated and supported cycle of inquiry](#) that allows them to move their practice forward in the way the best honors their disciplinary goals and responds to student needs. This collaboratively planned work will be implemented at both the site and district level to ensure that each site and discipline is met where they are and supported in the best way to move everyone towards the district's shared instructional vision.