

# *What Instructional Leaders Must do to be Successful with ThinkCERCA*

## 1. Establish a Vision for Your Literacy Initiative

When you commit to partnering with ThinkCERCA, you need to have a vision for what literacy looks like across your school(s). Will ThinkCERCA be used in more than one grade? Will it be used across subjects? Is writing part of your district's strategic plan?

Start with the literacy vision. Then, partner with ThinkCERCA to make your vision a reality.

*Tips to Establish a Vision for Your Literacy Initiative:*

- Have a strategic plan in place for how you want ThinkCERCA to be used.
- Make sure your vision is realistic. Plan, reflect, and revise before implementing.
- Understand that your literacy initiative *must* be executed teamwide to see the most results.
- Plan for the long term. Change doesn't happen overnight, but dedication over the long term helps teachers to invest in your literacy initiative and understand that it will stay.
- Know exactly what your team is aiming for. You may have an inspiring goal for implementation, but be sure to set goals for data-driven results as well.

## 2. Communicate the Vision to Your Team

Just as important as establishing your vision, however, is making sure your team understands it. In order for teachers and team leads to commit to the literacy initiative too, they must understand *why* it's important, as well as what their role in the initiative is – and how they can help the team meet goals.

*Tips to Communicate the Vision to Your Team:*

- Set expectations about writing in content areas.
- Communicate to your teachers the importance of delivering specific and actionable feedback on student writing.
- Use common terms across the school(s) when discussing literacy.
- Emphasize the value of using ThinkCERCA for the school. Explain *why* it is a priority. Stress this importance throughout the school year.

### 3. Collaborate with Teachers Throughout the Initiative

Listen, observe, solicit feedback, and encourage teachers to collaborate throughout the process. Part of getting buy-in is distributing ownership and leadership of a new initiative.

#### *Tips to Collaborate with Teachers Throughout the Initiative:*

- Create a space for dialogue. Maybe it's a time every Friday at lunch where teachers share what they've learned and what they're trying with ThinkCERCA.
- Make ThinkCERCA a part of quarterly staff/team meetings. Look at student work, schoolwide trends, and discuss strategies for growth.
- During planning stages, identify lead teachers and staff who can assist with integration and support of ThinkCERCA.
- Set up the structure for peer feedback and observations so that teachers can see each other in action with ThinkCERCA.
- Celebrate wins and replicate those wins across the building.

### 4. Be Accountable for Usage

One of the keys to ThinkCERCA success is regular usage. An implementation won't be successful without hitting usage goals throughout the school year.

#### *Tips to Be Accountable for Usage:*

- Before the school year begins, partner with teachers to find appropriate spots in their calendar to use ThinkCERCA. This way, every teacher knows what they should be teaching and when, and can devote the instructional time needed to achieve student growth.
- Watch the data. You can review weekly usage reports (delivered to your inbox) to see if teachers are using ThinkCERCA. You can also log into your ThinkCERCA admin account to monitor use and progress on a monthly basis.
- Set clear goals for ThinkCERCA progress and use at the beginning, middle, and end of school year.