Small-Group Instruction, Big Gains: Flour Bluff's STAAR Growth Story

Focus Areas

- Differentiation at Scale (SPED, Dyslexia, Behavior Needs)
- Immediate, Actionable Feedback
- Small Group Instruction

A Strong Teacher in a Demanding Setting

Flour Bluff Elementary is **known for its academics and strong supports for students with special needs**. The school serves a large SPED and dyslexic population in Corpus Christi, Texas, and many families move into the district specifically for its services.

For 4th-grade ELAR and Social Studies teacher Lisl Ames, that means teaching students with a wide range of needs and behaviors within the structured, calm environment she is known for creating.
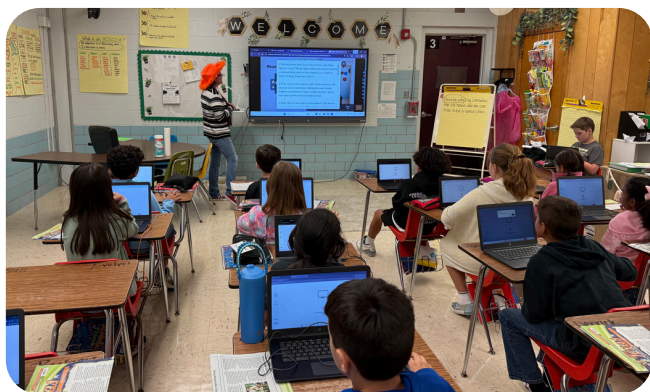
> "We do have a very large SPED population and a large dyslexic group," Ames explained. "The need for differentiation there is massive."

How Curipod Made the Difference

When Ames first tried Curipod, she noticed how much smoother her lessons felt.

Before, she pushed through long slide decks, and "kids were glazed over." She reflects, "I've bored myself!" **With Curipod, the structure keeps her students moving and attentive.**
"It chunks everything out, which is so nice."

Curipod gave her more freedom as a teacher. "It helps me structure my lessons. I'm at every single desk and not as stagnant." Instead of being tied to the front of the room, **she was free to circulate and connect with students.**

Powerful Small-Group Instruction Tool

Ames also found Curipod to be **a powerful tool for small-group instruction**. The same structure and immediate feedback that lifted her whole-class instruction helped her target individual needs more efficiently with small groups.

The biggest shift came from feedback. **Ames had struggled to keep up with the cycle of collecting, grading, and returning student work.**
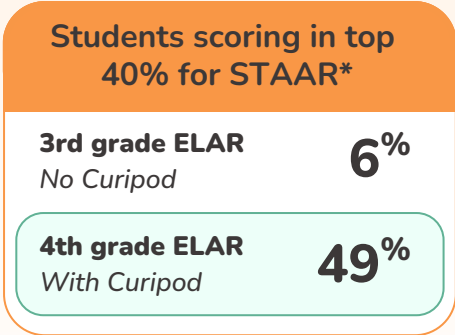
With Curipod, her students didn't have to wait days for feedback—they could revise instantly. "They'd revise based on the feedback. They gasped because their score went up. It's real time… instant."
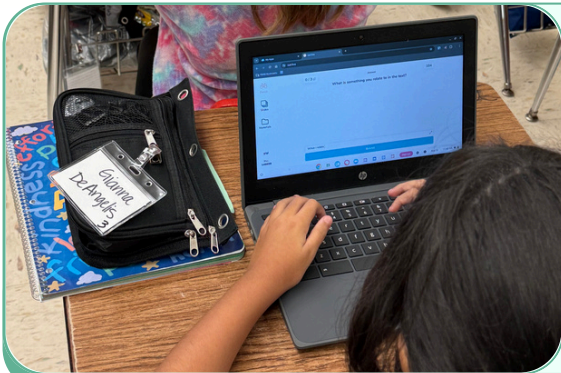
Results You Can See and Feel

The impact of Curipod was visible almost immediately. Ames explained that **students who once rambled through their responses or failed to finish began to focus with precision.** "They are more aware of the focus of the question... We're going for quality over quantity and no rambling," she said.

Nadine Lynch, the district's Elementary Curriculum Supervisor, also noticed a shift. "They were much more specific with their evidence... 'in paragraph eight, it says...'" she explained, pointing out how **students' writing grew more disciplined and text-dependent over time.** Even small wins felt huge: "A bunch of them got zeros the first time and everybody screamed when they got a one... it's the most tangible takeaway."

Ames herself reported that "90% did pass the STAAR test and... a good portion of them did not pass the year before." Both she and Lynch credit Curipod's immediate feedback and student-centered design for fueling that growth.

Students scoring in top 40% for STAAR*	
3rd grade ELAR *No Curipod*	**6%**
4th grade ELAR *With Curipod*	**49%**

*The data table above is based on STAAR quintiles—five equal bands (20% each). The first quintile is the lowest-performing 20% statewide; the fifth is the highest-performing 20%.

> " **"It really does support that small group tutoring group,"** Ames shared. **"I can hone in even tighter... especially with the test prep."**

Why It Matters

Curipod didn't change who Ames was as a teacher—**it amplified her strengths.** Automating the parts of teaching that drain time and energy gave her more space to do what she does best: *connect with students and push them to succeed.*

For **emergent bilinguals and dyslexic students**, the chunked lesson flow and feedback made success more accessible.

For **teachers**, it meant less lecturing, more movement, and better connections.

For **administrators**, it delivered confidence that high expectations and high support could coexist in every classroom.

And as Ames put it: *"Curipod is a tool that takes a lot of guesswork out of so many aspects... It really does support every single aspect of what we're teaching. Beyond the test prep... it's invaluable."*