



Madill Public Schools, Oklahoma

Bridging the Gap: Building Strong Home-School Partnerships with Waterford Family Resources

Madill Public Schools is located near the southern Oklahoma/Texas border. With approximately 1,750 PreK-12th grade students served across three buildings, the school district plays a central role in the community.

The Madill Early Childhood Center, led by Principal and Federal Programs Director Elissa Cox, serves as the foundation for the district's early literacy efforts. The center operates a full-day PreK program alongside seven kindergarten classrooms, ensuring students build strong academic foundations before entering primary elementary grades.

Student Population:

Free / Reduced Lunch: 75%

Hispanic / Latino: 52%

White: 27%

Multiracial: 11%

American Indian / Native American: 8%

African American: 2%

Asian / Pacific Islander: 1%





The Challenge

Post-Pandemic Skill Gaps, Screen-Time Fatigue, and Home Connection

Madill knew its youngest learners needed more support. Post-pandemic learning disruptions had left many incoming PreK students behind in key language and numeracy skills, putting early academic success at risk. But with teachers and parents hesitant to adopt yet another technology solution, district leaders faced a difficult question: How could they close readiness gaps, build stronger school-home connections, and support learning beyond the classroom without increasing complexity or screen time concerns? The answer would transform the district's approach to early learning.



The Solution

Purposeful Tech, Dedicated Coaching, and Family Engagement

Madill's solution needed to do more than address learning gaps. It needed to earn teachers' trust, engage families, and extend learning beyond the classroom. To accomplish this, the district implemented Waterford Early Learning for PreK students, pairing personalized instruction with a deliberate focus on teacher and family engagement. They took a three-pronged approach to implementing Waterford.

- **Daily Routines:** PreK classrooms established a focused 15-minute daily Waterford routine, keeping use short and purposeful.
- **Professional Learning:** Waterford's professional learning consultant not only helped teachers use the program effectively, but also visited classrooms, introduced new features, and, most importantly, showed staff how to use student data to create small groups.
- **Proactive Family Engagement:** Madill connected home and school through hands-on Waterford Family Literacy Nights and the Waterford Family App, giving parents clear visibility into their child's progress and actionable ways to support learning at home.



Measurable Results: Historic Benchmark Achievements

Madill's focused approach delivered immediate growth under Oklahoma's Strong Readers Act (RSA) benchmarking.

Kindergarten Reading Proficiency Increased from 43% to 97%.

When Madill implemented Waterford in April 2022, just **43%** of kindergarten students were performing at or above grade level in reading. By the end of the 2025-2026 school year, that number had climbed to **97%**, meaning nearly every kindergarten student met grade-level literacy benchmarks.

Students Requiring Intensive Reading Support Fell to Just 4.

As reading outcomes improved, the number of students identified for intensive intervention dropped to a historic low of **4 out of 148 students (less than 3%)**.

Stronger Home-School Partnerships.

Parents and caregivers embraced the program after seeing tangible skill growth, turning home learning into a supportive extension of the classroom.



Elissa Cox, Principal at Madill Early Childhood Center, Family Engagement

"Only 4 out of 148 kids in kindergarten are struggling. PreK is doing their job! We have never been in the single digits! And 2 out of the 4 weren't in our district last year."



From Under Half to Nearly Universal Proficiency

Following the implementation of Waterford in April 2022, student performance surged from a 43% baseline to 97% on grade level—more than doubling grade-level proficiency and below-grade-level performance from 57% down to just 3% in Fall 2026.



Advice for Leaders

Principal Cox shares, “Waterford works. Yes, it may take time. We are seeing phenomenal results. It’s truly helping our kids have strong results. We are going to have some really strong readers. Give it a try.”

Drawing from Madill’s success, Principal Elissa Cox offers practical advice for school and district leaders.

1. Invest in Ongoing Professional Learning.

On-site and virtual professional learning, including job-embedded coaching, helps teachers build confidence and maintain high-fidelity implementation over time.

2. Engage Families with Hands-On Workshops.

Equip parents by showing them exactly what their children are learning and how to support those skills at home. If parents can’t attend, send materials home.

3. Focus on Continuous Improvement.

Build on your implementation each year. Learn the technology and fit it into the schedule. Incorporate data to inform instruction. Implement with fidelity.



**Discover what’s possible
in your district.**

Request a demo and talk to our team.
waterford.org/waterford-early-learning-demo