



## MMTIC® at Combs Elementary | Year 3 Summative Brief

*Prepared for Combs Elementary and the Center for  
Applications of Psychological Type*

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# Acknowledgements

This summative implementation and impact brief highlight key activities from the Murphy-Meisgeier Type Indicator for Children (MMTIC®) Initiative at A.B. Combs Leadership Magnet Elementary (Combs) during the 2020-21 school year. Given the context of the COVID-19 global pandemic and the shift to virtual and hybrid learning, this brief will outline implementation successes and continued challenges as well as the impact of the program on teachers and students. The brief concludes with three lessons learned for future implementation sites.

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## Background

### An RPP Approach to Type Awareness

Since 2018, the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation (FI), Center for Applications of Psychological Type (CAPT) and the Myers & Briggs Foundation, and A.B. Combs Leadership Magnet Elementary School (Combs) have engaged in a research-practice partnership (RPP) to create a new model for application of the [MMTIC® instrument](#) (Murphy-Meisgeier Type Indicator for Children®) to improve instruction and student's social, emotional and academic decision-making in public schools in Wake County, North Carolina. RPPs are enduring reciprocal collaborations between practitioners and researchers that are designed to investigate shared problems of practice and solutions for improving outcomes over time (Coburn, Penuel, & Geil, 2013). Key tenets of RPPs include acknowledgement of each collaborator (i.e., researchers, administrators and teachers) as an equal contributor to the process and iterative engagement between all collaborators to refine data collection, analysis and interpretation (Tseng, Easton, & Supplee, 2017).

### The Partners

Within this RPP, the FI and CAPT both serve as the research partners, and Combs is the practitioner partner. The relationship between the organizations is as follows:

- **CAPT**, a not-for-profit organization, extends and teaches the accurate understanding of the ethical and practical applications of C.G. Jung's theory of psychological types. CAPT is the exclusive worldwide publisher of the MMTIC® instrument as well as related support materials and provides professional development sessions, coaching and resource support for Combs teachers and administrators to learn about type and how to incorporate type awareness into their school community.

- Led by Principal Muriel Summers, **Combs** is an elementary school in Wake County, North Carolina, that served over 767 students in grades K-5 during the 2020-21 school year. Combs serves as the implementation site for the MMTIC® Initiative in this partnership. The Combs principal, assistant principal, magnet coordinator, six third grade teachers and five fourth grade teachers were directly involved in this initiative. The magnet coordinator, who is certified to administer the MMTIC®, handles scheduling matters, delivers all type feedback sessions to students and serves as a liaison to the FI.
- The **FI** is a research institute of the North Carolina State University College of Education. FI researchers collect data to measure strategies employed in the initiative and resulting outcomes.

In 2018, the three partners collectively drafted a logic model to illustrate the key strategies, expected outcomes and ultimate goal of the initiative. This model was updated in 2019-20, and the most current version is available in [Appendix A](#).

## Previous Work

In year one of the initiative (2018-2019), third grade students completed the MMTIC® and learned about the type preferences. Simultaneously, third grade teachers modified their instruction to promote type awareness by using the Z-model for problem-solving, revising assignments and assessments, offering students choices and using language respecting type differences. In the first year implementation, data demonstrated several positive outcomes for teachers and students. Teachers reported developing type awareness, understanding and connecting with their students, working as a team and seeing new possibilities for assessing student learning. Likewise, students exhibited seven interrelated outcomes: developing type awareness, enhancing their self awareness, advocating for their choices, challenging themselves to improve their stretches, improving classroom community, enhancing their self-management and promoting motivation and engagement. There were few opportunities for parents to engage in the initiative in year one; still, some reported positive impacts, such as gaining a better understanding of how their children learn. Moreover, many parents articulated a desire for deeper involvement with the initiative.

Inspired by the promising initial results of this initiative, the Combs community decided to continue it into the 2019-20 school year. To begin to scale the program and provide continuity for the students, the initiative was expanded to include fourth grade teachers and students. A mentorship program was also developed where returning third grade teachers served as mentors to the fourth grade teachers as they learned about type and began integrating type awareness into their classrooms.

## The Impact of COVID-19

In early 2020, a global health pandemic—COVID-19—emerged and halted many aspects of day-to-day life. Travel and in-person gatherings were restricted, and social distancing and mask requirements were instituted to limit the spread of airborne pathogens. On March 14, 2020, the governor of North Carolina ordered the closure of all public schools in the state. Wake County schools closed for several weeks as school and district staff prepared to transition all instruction to a virtual format. Combs began their first official week of remote learning on April 13, 2020.

Due to the pandemic, several data collection activities scheduled for the end of year two (2019-20) were cancelled, including parent focus groups, a parent survey, student focus groups, a student survey and an additional end-of-year teacher focus group (see Table 1, below). The research team and Combs jointly decided to cancel these activities to avoid overburdening teachers, students or families, as they were adapting to an unexpected crisis.

Table 1. Planned Data Collection Activities for 2019-20

2019-20 Research Questions	2019-20 Data Sources (Red font indicates cancelled for 2019-20 due to COVID-19)
Q1: To what extent did the professional development and ongoing support enable teachers to utilize type awareness in their practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher PD survey</li> <li>• Mid-year teacher focus groups</li> <li>• <b>End-of-year teacher focus groups</b></li> <li>• PD observations</li> </ul>
Q2: To what extent did the mentoring program enable teachers to utilize type awareness in their practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher PD survey</li> <li>• Mid-year teacher focus groups</li> <li>• <b>End-of-year teacher focus groups</b></li> <li>• PD observations</li> </ul>
Q3: To what extent did teachers use type awareness to change their planning, teaching, communication and assessment strategies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher impact survey</li> <li>• Mid-year teacher focus groups</li> <li>• <b>End-of-year teacher focus groups</b></li> <li>• Classroom artifacts</li> <li>• Planning day observations</li> <li>• Classroom observations</li> <li>• Administrator focus group</li> </ul>
Q4: To what extent did family education prepare parents to use type awareness in assisting their children with homework and enhance communications and connections with the school community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher impact survey</li> <li>• Teacher focus group</li> <li>• <b>Parent survey</b></li> <li>• <b>Parent focus group</b></li> <li>• Administrator focus group</li> </ul>
Q5: To what extent did students use type awareness to enhance their primary type preferences, self-management, sense of belonging and problem-solving skills?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher impact survey</li> <li>• Mid-year teacher focus groups</li> <li>• <b>End-of-year teacher focus groups</b></li> <li>• Student survey</li> <li>• Student focus groups</li> <li>• <b>Parent survey</b></li> <li>• <b>Parent focus group</b></li> <li>• Administrator focus group</li> <li>• Classroom artifacts</li> </ul>
Q6: What is the impact of the MMTIC initiative on student academic and behavioral outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid-year teacher focus groups</li> <li>• <b>End-of-year teacher focus groups</b></li> <li>• <b>Parent focus group</b></li> <li>• Administrator focus group</li> <li>• Administrative data</li> </ul>
Q7: To what extent did type awareness promote student motivation and engagement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher impact survey</li> <li>• Mid-year teacher focus groups</li> <li>• <b>End-of-year teacher focus groups</b></li> <li>• Student survey</li> <li>• Student focus groups</li> <li>• <b>Parent survey</b></li> <li>• <b>Parent focus group</b></li> <li>• Administrator focus group</li> <li>• Classroom artifacts</li> </ul>



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To respond to the unanticipated data collection challenges, the FI requested a no-cost extension to revisit the cancelled data collection activities through July 31, 2021, and produce a summative implementation and impact brief highlighting key activities from the initiative, implementation successes and continued challenges, and the impact of the program on teachers and students within the context of the pandemic and the shift to virtual and hybrid learning. CAPT approved the request.

As a part of the no-cost extension, the FI conducted three strategic planning meetings with Combs administration through December 31, 2020, to determine:

- Which activities will be most useful/feasible to conduct during the 2020-2021 school year and what, if any, alternate activities are necessary, and
- How to adjust their format to accommodate participant needs (e.g., virtual platforms, revised questions, etc.)

Through these discussions, it was determined that elementary school students and their parents may not be in the best position to respond to data collection requests in light of still adjusting to school, work and parenting obligations during a pandemic. Thus, teachers and administrators were selected as the stakeholders of interest for the supplemental report brief. The FI authored an adjusted research plan to investigate three research questions presented in Table 2 (below).

**Table 2. Data Collection Activities for 2020-21**

2020-21 Research Questions	2020-21 Data Sources
Q1: What key activities from the initiative were implemented during the 2020-2021 academic year?	Teacher focus groups
Q2: To what extent did type awareness impact the school community's response to COVID-19?	Administrator interviews
Q3: What are the continued supports and barriers to implementation? How can implementation be improved?	

Both CAPT and Combs approved the plan. The FI secured Institutional Review Board approval and completed the research as outlined. This brief discusses the findings from those data collection activities.

# **Methodology**

This research used a qualitative design (Merriam, 2002) to inform the study. Qualitative methods allow for an in-depth examination of programs, events, activities, processes and individuals (Merriam, 1998). There are many ways for individuals to interpret and construe their reality at a given time; the open-ended nature of qualitative methods allows for a deeper understanding of the realities and experiences of individuals at a particular point in time and in a given context (Merriam, 2002). As such, qualitative data collection can allow for rich information, intricacies and nuances to be uncovered that may not be realized with a quantitative approach. Qualitative methods were most appropriate for the study design because they provided the research team with a comprehensive view of how teachers and administrators made sense of their realities during this unconventional time period. Two qualitative data sources were used to answer the research questions: semi-structured teacher focus groups and administrator interviews. More information about how the data were collected and analyzed are described below.

## **Data Collection**

The FI invited third and fourth grade teachers to participate in semi-structured focus groups and administrators to participate in semi-structured interviews. The purpose of these focus groups and interviews was to gauge teacher and administrator perceptions of the initiative's impact amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers and administrators were informed that their participation in data collection was optional; and the research team employed several measures to protect participant confidentiality and anonymity. These procedures—including mechanisms for obtaining consent and ensuring data security throughout the project—are detailed in their approved Institutional Review Board protocol.

The semi-structured focus group and interview protocols were developed in concert with all RPP partners to surface the data most meaningful to all constituents. In particular, data were gathered to measure how teachers and administrators used type awareness to inform their response to virtual and hybrid instruction and their perception of the impact of the initiative on students. See [Appendix B](#) for the focus group and interview protocols. In accordance with social distancing procedures, these focus groups and interviews were held virtually via Zoom in May 2021. Sessions were audio and video recorded and professionally transcribed by a third-party agency. Transcriptionists were required to sign a confidentiality agreement and destroy the recordings after completion of their job.

## **Data Analysis**

Qualitative analysis is concerned with classifying data into groups or themes (Ryan & Bernard, 2000). The research team employed a mix of a priori and emergent coding schemes to analyze the data. The codebook from the first two years of the project was adapted to cover additional topics related to program implementation, COVID-related factors and teacher/administrator collaboration. The codebook contained codes, research questions pertaining to different areas of interest and definitions and served as a guide for analyzing interview and focus group data (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011). The a priori and emergent codes were added to Atlas.ti, a qualitative coding software, along with the transcripts from the interview and focus groups. The transcripts were then qualitatively coded in order to identify the major themes in participant responses. The research team engaged in two rounds of coding, followed by an iterative characterization process to identify major findings by research question. Findings were discussed among the research team to determine consensus and then aggregate shared with participants to member check and ensure validity of the results.



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## Findings

### RQ1: What key activities from the initiative were implemented during the 2020-2021 academic year?

In examining research question one, two major findings emerged: (1) Combs teachers aligned their classroom activities to multiple personality preferences, and (2) Combs teachers and administrators applied typology to their daily practice.

#### ***Aligning classroom activities to multiple personality preferences***

During the 2020-21 academic year, Combs modified their instruction to adapt to multiple modalities including fully remote classrooms, hybrid remote/in-person classrooms and some fully in-person classrooms towards the end of the year. Reflecting on the year, one administrator stated,

**“**We've been remote, we've been in person [and] we've been a hybrid of both. [We tried] to create something that is appropriate for both because grade levels are split. We have some teachers who are virtual and then some who are in-person, but they're working together as a team creating activities.**”**

Because of their first two years implementing the MMTIC® initiative, Combs teachers had a solid understanding of type and how to adapt their instruction to meet the needs of various learners. This foundation was especially critical during their transition to remote and hybrid learning environments, as teachers used this knowledge to shape how they developed and presented their lessons. For example, building off previous

years' findings about the importance of providing their students with choices, this year, teachers found ways to enable student choice using the functionality of their virtual classroom. Many teachers discussed utilizing the chat, raise hand and breakout rooms features to offer options for students to engage in a way that was comfortable to their preferences. When asked what MMTIC® activities were implemented this year, one teacher shared,

**“** *Giving options, like strength or stretch, or even just, ‘Would you like to go ahead and start working? Or would you like some more directions for me? Or do you want to write it in the chat or raise your hand if you want to present your information this way?’ And I think just having that information in our head and kind of having those choices and even [Dr. Murphy’s] sentence starters and sentence frames, like, of what she says and how she provides those options, have been a game changer, especially virtually.* **”**

Other teachers described how type awareness influenced their design of assessments and homework during the pandemic. For example, one teacher described preparing their assignments with “12 brains” to consider how it could be understood and interpreted by different learners. As they explained,

**“** *I read [my assignments] in 12 different brains and try to see how many people are going to [interpret] what I’m asking them. [...] If my goal is to have them show me this math equation, then I need to make sure I word it so that’s what they give me. If I want any answer, then it doesn’t matter.* **”**

Similarly, another teacher summarized how they have provided multiple ways for their students to show their thinking on assignments.

**“** *[We give] options for students [across] learning types, in multiple areas, to be able to show their thinking throughout the unit and [make] sure we’re giving questions that aren’t all just one type but gives them an opportunity to show their thinking in a way that suits them best.* **”**

### ***Applying typology to daily practice***

Combs teachers and administrators also applied their understanding of type beyond classroom activities, and it became a part of their daily practice. This idea of embedding typology into the culture of Combs was perhaps most succinctly articulated by an administrator who said,



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**“** Once your eyes are opened to personality preferences, it’s really hard not to accommodate for those. So in every decision that we made, in every activity, every challenge with social emotional learning [...] In every single thing that we did, we tried to consider personality preferences, because like I said, it’s hard not to once you have it in your brain. **”**

In particular, Combs teachers and administrators utilized four strategies to apply typology to their daily practice: (1) incorporating type awareness into everyday language with staff, students, and parents, (2) instituting additional opportunities for students to thrive based on their preferences, (3) fostering ad-hoc, informal school-wide mentoring where MBTI-trained teachers coach their peers and (4) utilizing type awareness to ensure external presentations meet the multifaceted needs of the audience. Participant quotes illustrating each strategy are included in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Salient Strategies of Applying Typology to Daily Practice

Strategy	Illustrative Quotes
1. Incorporating type awareness into everyday language with staff, students and parents	<i>“We had lots of discussions, [professional learning team meetings], just putting it to use, [and] application of how this would work [and] how this could be beneficial [...] and we used it in almost everyday language in the office when we had parent issues or students coming [to the office].” – Administrator</i>
2. Instituting additional opportunities for students to thrive based on their preferences	<i>“We would stay on [the virtual classroom link] after our school day ended and I would have, like, four or five kids just stay back and chat with me. And that’s just because I feel like that’s what they needed too, [catering to the] extrovertedness in them. And then with me being extroverted also, I think it helped both of us, all of us.” – Teacher</i>  <i>“I noticed there are some that will just manage themselves and others that need that guidance, and just giving that little check-in every morning, I started doing that as part of our daily routine. And that’s really helped keep those ones that need that deadline on track.” – Teacher</i>

Strategy	Illustrative Quotes
<p>3. Fostering ad-hoc, informal school-wide mentoring where MBTI-trained teachers coach their peers</p>	<p><i>"We have a couple other people who are MBTI trained [and] they do have a little bit more of a base knowledge of personality preferences. They were kind of the coach on their grade level, not just third and fourth [grade teachers]."</i> —Administrator</p>
<p>4. Utilizing type awareness to ensure external presentations meet the multifaceted needs of the audience</p>	<p><i>"We did a speech for one of the district meetings and they were trying to make decisions [...]. At the end of the speech we used four questions. One question that kind of addressed a sensing question. We did intuitive, feeling, thinking and that was kind of the end. And it was just a great way to get that group of people to really think and consider every single aspect of the personality preferences so that everyone was considered."</i> —Administrator</p>

## RQ2: To what extent did type awareness impact the school community's response to COVID-19?

In examining research question two, three major findings emerged: (1) Combs teachers had an amplified sense of agility, (2) Combs teachers and administrators had heightened insight into the “second story” of students, parents and staff, and (3) Combs teachers were empowered to communicate transparently with students about the challenges associated with change.

### ***An amplified sense of agility***

Transitioning from fully in-person learning environments to remote or hybrid learning environments necessitates any educator to be flexible; however, because of their type awareness, Combs educators discussed an amplified level of agility. As described earlier in [aligning classroom activities to multiple personality preferences](#), because of their first two years implementing the MMTIC® initiative, Combs teachers knew how crucial it was to provide students choices and were open to adapting their instruction to meet different learner needs. This background preparation uniquely readied them for unprecedented circumstances. When faced with the uncertainty of COVID-19, the school community jumped into action, seeking ways to pivot and accommodate their students in this new environment. As one teacher described, “It was already a huge transition going virtual at first, but then [we were] open to [it, asking] ‘What different platforms can we use? What options can we give students?’ I think that was a huge connection there.”

### ***Heightened insight into the “second story”***

The pandemic coupled with the novelty of remote and hybrid learning prompted different emotional triggers and behavioral responses among Combs teachers, administrators, students and parents. Because of their type awareness, Combs teachers and administrators did not merely assess these triggers and behaviors on the surface but instead probed deeper to investigate and understand what we are titling the “second story”, or the underlying motivation behind the trigger or behavior that is often related to personality preferences. For example, instead of automatically assuming their student is not engaged in the virtual class because their camera is off, teachers considered the possibility that their student could prefer a different way to engage and provided them an alternative way to participate. One teacher expounded on this idea when describing their virtual classroom,



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“ There’s quite a few people on the [computer] screen. I think [some students] feel very spotlighted even though they don’t realize that nobody’s looking at them. But I think when they look at their screen, they feel like everyone’s staring at them and just them. And so I think a lot of kids are overwhelmed by that.

—Teacher

Armed with this understanding of a second story, another teacher described how a student reacted in their virtual classroom,

“ We do some really silly greetings for our morning meeting. And some [students] are like, no, I’m just going to give you a wave and knowing that that’s okay too. It doesn’t mean that they’re choosing not to participate. [...] One girl the other day, we were doing all the dance moves, and she was just like, and ‘Nope.’ That’s all she said. And she was like, ‘Good morning, class,. And I was like, ‘That’s okay.’ It doesn’t have to be one way or the other. There’s other ways to participate.

—Teacher

Understanding the “second story” was also important for adults in the Combs community as well. An administrator described how she would listen to teachers express their frustrations with remote learning and connect those challenges to the teachers’ personality preferences. For instance, she shared,

**“** We had one teacher who said, ‘I just want to be around people. I just want to be able to talk to people during the day, not through a little tiny screen.’ And you have to imagine, well, maybe she’s an extrovert, but maybe she’s an introvert. Maybe she just wants to be able to observe things that are going on and be a part of it in that way.

—Administrator **”**

Later in the conversation, the administrator shared how knowledge of type preferences also influenced how she engaged with parents and families during this emotionally charged time, stating,

**“** I think [the pandemic] brought about so many different feelings and emotions for staff and students, parents, families, that type [awareness] really gave us the power to navigate conversations in a way that we never would have been able to navigate before.

—Administrator **”**

In short, Combs teachers and administrators were more attuned to why different community members (i.e., students, parents and fellow staff members) might react differently to the same stimuli, and because of this knowledge, they were able to respond more effectively.

### ***Communicating transparently about challenges associated with change***

Although Combs completed a successful academic year, it is important to note that the year was not without hardship. In fact, it was filled with transitions, as Combs has navigated both the logistical challenges of adapting instruction to suit different learning needs and modalities and greater societal challenges as the country and world responded to a first-in-a-lifetime event. With no guidebook on how to traverse this terrain, knowledge of type preferences empowered Combs teachers to be transparent with themselves and their students about the difficulty of transitioning between these unfamiliar learning environments, and more broadly, dealing with change and uncertainty. To accomplish this, teachers extended their “strength” and “stretch” language beyond discrete classroom tasks to more broadly discuss how they are jointly negotiating this new way of learning with students. For instance, speaking frankly about their experience, one teacher shared,

**“** It’s been really difficult, I think, not only for us to kind of navigate, at first, how to implement instruction and how to assess students’ understanding, but we were really transparent with the students and allowed them to know, ‘Okay, for us, this is a stretch for us in this. For example, we implemented Go Formative and for some students that was more tricky for them to navigate, [so we] acknowledge[d] that this is going to be a stretch, but this is something that will help them grow and not every single thing is going to be comfortable. So we’ve used that language throughout the year as well.

—Teacher **”**



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Another teacher echoed this experience, stating,

**“** [We allow] them to recognize change and then recognize that it's going to be a strength or a stretch. And even being back in person, I think for some of them, preparing them even for the EOGs right now is saying this activity might be a stretch in terms of your stamina, because it's been different this year and your attention span might have been different with the challenges with virtual, but kind of preparing them with that language and acknowledging it. Like you're saying, even for us saying, this is a personal stretch for me, but it's important that I do it so that I grow and then modeling that so that they have that same outlook.

—Teacher

### RQ3: What are the continued supports and barriers to implementation? How can implementation be improved?

In examining research question three, three major findings emerged: (1) the initiative's alignment with Combs' mission and top-down buy-in promotes continuity, (2) continuous professional development and implementation support would increase Combs' teacher and administrator confidence and efficiency and (3) access to student type reports early in the year is advantageous for Combs students and teachers.

#### ***Alignment with Combs' mission and top down buy-in promotes continuity***

Combs is an award-winning leadership-focused elementary school. The mission of Combs is to take risks and seize opportunities to become creative collaborators, effective communicators, compassionate leaders and change-makers. Combs embodies a learning-centered model that strives for leadership development in its students based on Dr. Stephen Covey's *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*® (Covey, 1989). Combs

teachers and administrators agree that the MMTIC® initiative is well aligned with the school's organizational mission and focus. As such, the "work" of MMTIC® often overlaps with Combs' "Leader In Me" model and does not feel superfluous to the staff, which facilitates continuity and sustainability.

**“** *In terms of our leadership model as well, I think it just brings seeking first to understand, like, a whole new level and kind of almost like an added layer to that habit that we're teaching our students. And they're able to get more specific language from there and understand how they learn and even connections. I know we had a recent guidance lesson that was how they process and how they learn information. And so it was almost like everything's being built upon or interwoven to make those connections, which I thought was really neat.*

-Teacher

Another key success factor that has helped MMTIC® to persist at Combs is buy-in starting with the school leadership and filtering down to the teachers. The initiative is well supported by Combs' current administration, led by Principal Muriel Summers. When discussing how integral buy-in is to Combs' school culture, one teacher stated,

**“** *Here at Combs, we are a very eager bunch. We are a very buy-in bunch. That's just the culture of this school. Not every school is like that. [MMTIC®] doesn't feel like another thing. We integrate pretty quickly because we have a skillset of how to integrate. We don't add on. Leadership is integrated. [...] We're blessed at Combs that when we sign our contract with Muriel, it's, like, check the box of buy-in.*

Moreover, once Principal Summers retires at the end of this summer, it is vital that the new instructional leader takes an interest in MMTIC® for it to be sustained long term. As one teacher said,

**“** *Whoever our new principal is, we're going to need them to take the test. So definitely bringing that back in will help, I think. That would be a really good support for next year.*

### ***Continuous professional development and support would increase confidence and efficiency***

In previous years, Combs has held one in-person full staff professional development days and two in-person grade-level specific professional development days to increase staff awareness of type. Those trainings were facilitated by type expert Dr. Elizabeth Murphy. Due to the pandemic, no official training occurred during year three. Combs teachers and administrators adapted and taught each other via informal mentoring (see [Applying typology to daily practice](#)). However, they all agree that providing beginning-of-the-year workshops and monthly refresher opportunities on typology would be beneficial moving forward.

**“** Definitely having another workshop on it and getting the new teachers to take the personality test as well as definitely the kids next year. Just having that tool will really help us with our lesson plans more and delivering our lessons, working with other staff members.

—Teacher **”**

**“** Specifically thinking about our staff, I think having [...] a monthly refresher of all things type [would help]. [...] Our staff has wanted more reminders, more applications spread out throughout the year so that they feel more confident in using it. So that might be a good support to have something created where there's the little monthly refresher for teachers.

—Administrator **”**

In particular, teachers also identified a new opportunity, application and implementation support as necessary to take the initiative to the next level. One specific example of this type of support is operationalized MMTIC® lessons for busy educators, including scaffolds, rubrics and websites to help educators integrate MMTIC® into their curriculum. Reflecting on this experience as a pilot implementer, one teacher explained how beneficial this support would be as follows:

**“** And so when we lesson plan, we were trying to figure out how we could honor those different types to assess what students truly know and how they want to show us. So if there's any way that there would be a group of educators in concert with the MMTIC® people to create an operationalized platform of, not just of resources, of quick lessons [or] websites [...]. And I know there's copyright [restrictions], but we did this with each other and we were isolated and there wasn't, like, a large forum for us to jump into, for example, like with Leader In Me [...] I just would love to see it more operationalized and easier to access for very busy, impacted teachers.

Another teacher articulated this type of support, stating,

**“** Just making more explicit instruction for the students so that we know that we're implementing it on our end and trying to teach it to the best of our ability so that they understand it. That way they also are making those connections for themselves, if that makes sense.

—Teacher **”**

In addition, while teachers created informal mentoring in year three (see [Applying typology to daily practice](#)), they desired to continue the formalized mentoring program that was instituted in year two but did not formally continue during the pandemic. As one teacher expressed,



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“ But having that mentorship I think was really nice and pairing grade levels. So I feel like when you’re trying to roll it out to a new grade level, having those supports in place so they know who they can ask questions to and kind of help guide them in that process. Cause I feel like I’ve given some trainings during informal meetings with my team, but I feel like they’re just wanting more and I don’t know necessarily how to give my whole team more when I don’t have that opportunity to check in with them on a daily basis, just strictly to talk about MMTIC® and those resources.

—Teacher

### **Access to student type reports early in the year is advantageous**

Although knowledge of type helps teachers teach to all dichotomies, Combs teachers and administrators echo previous years’ reports citing that they all prefer having access to student type reports early in the school year to further customize classroom lessons.

“ I think it also helps too when we do have the student’s personality type right in the beginning of the year. So I know we have talked about having second graders being tested last year before the pandemic. So when they came to us this year, we would know right away. So I know it’s going to be hard this year to do that, but definitely in the fall, if we could get all of our third graders and then the second graders being tested at the end of next year,[...] cause I think fourth grade, they had the students’ personality types from last year. That was in third grade. And I think that helped them embrace it even more, because they knew their students’ personality type. So that would be helpful.

In addition, Combs teachers highlighted how students having access to their type empowers them to begin to make connections about their preferences and advocate for themselves.

**“** Last year we also said something about having, or even presenting, the types in a student friendly way to the students. So then they can get an idea of what type that they fall under, or not fall under, but maybe what they gravitate towards and then knowing their stretches as well. So even just having a quick info for them in the beginning of the year, even middle of the year. I think we talked about it as the beginning of the year last year just so then they get an idea of their strength [...] so even if they just get an idea of those and then maybe what types they gravitate towards. So then they can understand the way that they like to learn better.

—Teacher **”**

It is important to note here that Combs administrators were adamant that Combs does not “pigeon hole people with a type, a four-letter type, [but] more so [uses type to understand] how do those preferences [work together].”

## Lessons Learned

The research team has identified three main lessons learned from year three. These lessons, detailed below, may be helpful to other implementation sites.

### Lesson #1: Remote learning provides options for levels of engagement across the spectrum of dichotomies, which can continue post-pandemic

Although many classrooms are going back to in-person learning in the fall 2021 semester, there are several engagement strategies from remote learning that may be beneficial to continue post-pandemic to provide opportunities across the spectrum of preference dichotomies. Examples include incorporating Flipgrid and slide activities and offering computer-based options (i.e., type into the chat, use the raise your hand feature before sharing out loud). In addition, providing a way for parents to join parent sessions virtually allows parents to manage multiple family responsibilities while remaining active in school life. Both teachers and administrators expounded on these strategies as follows,

**“** So my class has been online the entire year [...] so it was a little bit different, but I think that for some kids, that actually opened up different options for them, because we incorporated more Flipgrid activities where they could do videos to respond, or they got to do slides [...] so there was very little paper/pencil kind of stuff for at least our two classes the whole year and obviously everybody at the beginning of the year.

—Teacher **”**

**“** We did lots of parent sessions that we typically would have had in-person. We usually have a monthly [parent session], where they come in the building and they go into the classrooms and they do different activities as a family and things like that—parent family development— just like we have teacher professional development. And we did those virtually, so that was successful. And actually that's one thing that we decided we would keep going forward is to, yes, of course we want to have parents back in the building when there are people, but we also want to offer virtual options because it allowed for families who they could make dinner and then one parent could go hop online and join in on the discussion. So that was great to be able to do that.

—Administrator **”**

## Lesson #2: When implementing type in a remote or hybrid setting, it's important to be comfortable with the uncomfortable

Even with their extensive background regarding type, at times, implementing in a remote or hybrid environment felt “awkward” for Combs teachers as opposed to their traditional in-person classrooms. In those moments, it was important for Combs teachers to lean into that discomfort because that's where growth occurred. This lesson can put new implementation sites at ease; even veteran MMTIC® implementers have to adapt to new modalities. Moreover, learning how to implement MMTIC® in a school community is an ongoing process that requires continuous iteration and improvement. One teacher illustrated how this adjustment process both looked and felt as follows,

**“** I grabbed the eight types graphic that's multicolored and we refer to that in the morning [in my classroom]. [...] We talked about, for example [...] the thinkers versus the feelers. When you're doing some kind of navigation, there's an abundance for all of us. We're going to be able to figure out everybody's place. And so when we do the read aloud books and we talk about some of the leadership activities that we've done, I've actually brought in a little bit of that [MMTIC®] language, and I'm going to be honest again. [It has] felt a little awkward, cause I'm still...I'm not as versed in it as I am the other pedagogical strategies that I have. So I have to refer to my notes at times, [...] but the students seem to lean into it much more easily.

—Teacher **”**

## Lesson #3: A school-wide understanding of type and operational support is necessary for future implementations

As mentioned previously in the findings section, the Combs community has bought into the relevance of MMTIC®. This buy-in has been shepherded by their school leadership and has permeated throughout their staff. Administrators and teachers both believe that employing MMTIC® can make a positive difference in their students' lives, and this top-down buy-in promotes MMTIC® continuity. Extending these findings to other contexts, future sites should consider beginning their implementation by establishing buy-in about the relevance of MMTIC®. One practical way to establish buy-in is to develop a school-wide understanding of type.

When asked what other sites should know, one administrator shared,

**“** Let's just say we started a new school. We were like, 'How can we get this work out there?' I think making sure the staff has a very good, deep understanding of type and how to apply it first and then slowly moving into the option of doing the actual assessment and whatnot, that would be the way to go, because [...] our school, we do feel kind of like one big community. It doesn't matter what grade level you teach. They're all our kids. We're all in this together kind of mentality we've always had, which is very fortunate, but I like the entire school having that knowledge to be a support to all the children.

—Administrator **”**

In addition, data also underscore Combs' strong culture for integrating initiatives into their mission. By embedding MMTIC® into how they function, Combs has lessened the possibility that MMTIC® will be considered an “add-on” for teachers. When applying this finding to broader audiences, it is key to recognize that all schools do not have the optimal environment or skills to begin integrating MMTIC® into their daily work. Although findings indicate that third party operational support was desired by Combs, for these schools lacking integration prowess, this type of support will be even more critical. One teacher described this idea as follows:

**“** So when MMTIC® was presented, we didn't think 'add on.' We thought 'integrate', but not all educators are going to go that way because they don't have the skill set or the culture. So operationalizing, here are websites to help you integrate this into your curriculum. Here are scaffolds or rubrics or lesson types that's going to help the integration. Otherwise you're just going to get an add-on and not the buy-in.

—Teacher **”**

Thus, it is advisable for future sites to consider partnering with third-party professional development trainers and consultants that can help them integrate MMTIC® into their lessons. The inherent caution here is that such assistance, while advantageous, can also be costly. Administrators, in particular, noted funding concerns for themselves and future sites interested in implementing this work.

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# Appendix A: Logic Model

## Integrating the Murphy-Meisgeier Type Indicator for Children (MMTIC) at Combs Elementary

Strategies	Outcomes	Ultimate Goal
1. 3rd & 4th teachers receive ongoing PD on personality type from content experts		
2. 3rd & 4th teachers administer MMTIC to students to identify their personality types	A. Increased knowledge of personality type B. Increased self-awareness C. Enhanced instructional content and strategies based on personality type differences D. Improved communication and connections with students and other teachers E. Enhanced problem-solving skills and decision making	O. Increased knowledge of personality type P. Development of the primary type preferences in their natural order Q. Increased social intelligence R. Increased love of learning and satisfaction in classroom S. Increased self-awareness, self-management, sense of belonging, and coping skills
3. 3rd & 4th teachers' planning groups focus on integration of personality type into instruction		
4. 3rd & 4th teachers revise existing and create new lessons and assessments to respect personality type differences		
5. 3rd & 4th teachers develop and use language that respects personality type differences		
6. Content-trained school staff provide training for families on personality type	F. Increased knowledge of personality type G. Increased self-awareness H. Improved communication and connection with other teachers I. Enhanced problem-solving skills and decision making	T. Enhanced problem-solving skills and decision making U. Increased leadership effectiveness V. Improved communication and connection with peers, teachers, and families W. Decreased major and minor disciplinary referrals X. Increased academic growth
7. Administrators embed and articulate alignment of personality type into ongoing social initiatives		
8. All teachers and administrators take MBTI to identify their personality types	J. Increased knowledge of personality type K. Increased self-awareness L. Improved communication and connection with teachers and students M. Increased integration of personality type into school culture N. Enhanced problem-solving skills and decision making	Y. Increased knowledge of personality type Z. Increased ability to help children with homework AA. Improved communication and connection with children BB. Enhanced problem-solving skills and decision making
9. All teachers and administrators receive Type and Teamwork training		
10. All teachers and administrators take MBTI to identify their personality types		
11. Returning 3rd teachers serve as type mentors to 4th teachers		School community embraces personality types to self-manage lifelong learning and value differences in others to form interdependent communities of leaders

**Project purpose:** Create scalable for integrating personality type into schools to improve instruction and students' social, emotional, and academic decision-making

## **Appendix B: Teacher Focus Group and Administrator Interview Protocols**

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this focus group/interview. The purpose of the focus group/interview is to better understand your experiences with the MMTIC® initiative at your school. I would like to record today's conversation so that I will have an accurate record of our conversation. Is that okay with you?

I would also like to begin with a few disclosures:

- Your participation in this focus group/interview is voluntary. You have the right to be a part of this focus group/interview, to choose not to participate or to stop participating at any time.
- The discussion will be kept completely confidential; any information obtained from you that can identify you will be disclosed only with your permission. We will use code numbers in the management and analysis of focus group/interview data and your name will not be associated with any focus group/interview results.
- The focus group/interview will last approximately 30 - 45 minutes.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Teacher Focus Group</b>	<b>Administrator Interview</b>
RQ1: What key activities from the initiative were implemented during 2020-2021?	What MMTIC® activities were implemented this school year?  How did you adapt MMTIC® activities to fit the remote learning environment?	What MMTIC® activities were implemented this school year?  How were MMTIC® activities adapted to fit the remote learning environment?
RQ2: To what extent did type awareness impact the school community's response to COVID-19?	Your school has a depth of knowledge about type awareness. How did this awareness impact how your school responded to the COVID-19 pandemic?  How did type awareness influence your interactions with students?  How did type awareness influence your interactions with your fellow teachers or administrators?  What type-related impacts have you seen with your students during COVID-19?  What type-related impacts have you experienced as a teacher during COVID-19?	Your school has a depth of knowledge about type awareness. How did this awareness impact how your school responded to the COVID-19 pandemic?  How did type awareness influence your interactions with students?  How did type awareness influence your interactions with your teachers or fellow administrators?  What type-related impacts have you seen with your students during COVID-19?  What type-related impacts have you seen with your teachers during COVID-19?

Research Question	Teacher Focus Group	Administrator Interview
<p>RQ3: What are the continued supports and barriers to implementation? How can the program be improved?</p>	<p>What have been the major successes of the initiative this year?</p> <p>What implementation barriers have you encountered this year?</p> <p>What have been the main areas of improvement for the initiative this year?</p> <p>What implementation support have you received this year?</p> <p>What type of additional support would be useful?</p> <p>Is there anything you would like to share that has not been covered?</p>	<p>What have been the major successes of the initiative this year?</p> <p>What implementation barriers have you encountered this year?</p> <p>What have been the main areas of improvement for the initiative this year?</p> <p>What implementation support have you received this year?</p> <p>What type of additional support would be useful?</p> <p>Is there anything you would like to share that has not been covered?</p>



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