

2024

UPLIFT LITERACY

OUR 2024 IMPACT

Literacy Outcomes

We foster an academic future where all children, regardless of background, have the literacy skills to thrive.



About 28% met or exceeded the standards on the CAASSP ELA assessment by spring of 2024, 27% below our expectations. Approximately 24% and 19% of English learners and students with disabilities achieved our expectations compared to our goal of 35%. Nearly 34% of students who are economically disadvantaged met or exceeded standards compared to our goal of 50%.

Capacity Development

We help systems learn, adapt, and create conditions for high-quality literacy instruction.



We built the capacity of five partner organizations and 20 schools to implement evidence-based reading practices and develop comprehensive literacy plans. We had 135 teachers attend more than 15 educator academy series and coaching sessions over the course of this project, which met the expectations we set in 2022.

Overall, the partnership between San Diego, Imperial, and Orange County has remained strong with ongoing meetings focused on strategies to meet student needs and monitor grant progress. Professional learning continues to be a key focus with educators participating in the Teacher Leadership Academy. Additionally, the project continues to grow leadership skills at the district level, enabling continued literacy work despite personnel changes.

Family Engagement

We support families with limited means to gain the resources they need to support their children's language development.



We engaged 37 parents through various family literacy events. Additionally, more than 150 parents completed our parent engagement survey, which fell short of our expectations to engage 1,500 parents. Nearly three-fourths of parents indicate they are satisfied with their child's reading development.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Region 9, encompassing San Diego, Orange, and Imperial counties along the U.S.-Mexico border, is home to the highest number of American Indian (AI) communities in the state. This region boasts significant diversity within its English learner (EL) population, comprising unaccompanied minors, newcomers, progressing ELs, and long-term ELs. Similarly, the regional AI community reflects rich diversity with 18 distinct Tribal communities.

Persistent literacy achievement gaps exist, and EL and AI students face disproportionate challenges such as linguistic, technological, and geographical barriers, hindering their access to education (Fahle, et al., 2023).

CLSD Priority Area 3, **Uplift Literacy**, endeavors to positively impact EL and AI student literacy outcomes, with a particular focus on capacity-building for TK-5 programs, including the development of biliteracy and primary language instruction. In its initial pilot phase, Uplift Literacy involves the participation of five local educational agencies (LEAs): Valley Center-Pauma Unified School District, National School District, Calexico Unified School District, Bonsall Unified School District, and Santa Ana Unified School District.

Based on our needs assessment, there is a need for educator growth and learning in the area of culturally responsive and sustaining pedagogy, which embraces an asset-based perspective on children, their families, and their communities throughout Region 9. Uplift Literacy aims to enact California's commitment:

California's current educational policies demonstrate its dedication to multilingual learner (ML) students and an asset-based instructional approach that promotes global competence. This implies that all students, including ML students, should be recognized for the unique assets they bring to school, as these assets enrich our society and enhance the state's global competitiveness.

(Improving Education for ML and EL Students: From Research to Practice, 28.)

Uplift Literacy concentrates on fostering effective educator practices needed to comprehend and implement asset-based approaches to literacy, family, and community engagement. The team offers job-embedded professional development for teachers, coaches, and leaders. In alignment with our emphasis on asset-based pedagogy, they employ Liberatory Design from the National Equity Project (2020), a change process characterized by iteration and reflection, involving community co-construction of design. Through this praxis, our goal is to create the conditions for meaningful and enduring transformation for the educational communities and families within Region 9, potentially serving as a model for learning and literacy plan development in California.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation team at the San Diego County Office of Education spearheaded the initiative to furnish *Uplift Literacy* with feedback concerning formative inquiries pertaining to the execution of project initiatives and the resultant outcomes tied to these endeavors. The following section outlines each individual question:

1. ARE PARTNERS COLLABORATING EFFECTIVELY?
2. WHAT CHALLENGES OR BARRIERS ARE SITES EXPERIENCING ENGAGING WITH *UPLIFT LITERACY*?
3. WHAT SUCCESSES ARE PROJECT ADMINISTRATORS AND SITES EXPERIENCING?
4. HOW OFTEN DO PARTNERS MEET AND WHAT ARE THEY MEETING ABOUT?
5. ARE PARENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS ENGAGED IN SERVICES?
6. IS DISTRICT CAPACITY IMPROVING TO IMPLEMENT EVIDENCE-BASED READING PRACTICES?
7. TO WHAT EXTENT ARE TRENDS IN READING PROFICIENCY CHANGING?

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Our evaluative strategy strategically allocates resources towards gathering a diverse range of data types, encompassing both qualitative and quantitative aspects. A proficient team is engaged to expertly synthesize findings from these distinct data types at all stages of the project. Employing a mixed-methods approach, rather than relying solely on qualitative or quantitative methods individually, ensures a cohesive evaluation throughout the grant duration, yielding detailed and insightful reports. *Uplift Literacy* leverages data collected across the project's timeline to appraise shifts in participant perspectives, organizational dynamics, student achievements, and programmatic components facilitated by the grant. Given the extended timeframe of this multi-year evaluation, it is essential to remain adaptable based on insights from formative outcomes, while also maintaining certain constant elements. This approach enables the creation of a longitudinal summary and a comprehensive record of responses to the evolving landscape.

2023-2024 FINDINGS

The following findings emerged from the careful collection and analysis of evidence from interviews, program document reviews, administrative data, and during conversations and meetings with grant administrators. Qualitative findings focus mainly on the interviews conducted with grant administrators, district leaders, and educators. Quantitative findings emerge from local and statewide assessment data, programmatic data, and document reviews.



QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

Through our interviews with multiple stakeholders, we have gathered the following emergent themes that most characterize the experiences of *Uplift Literacy* participants. Our interviews and focus groups included project administrators, district, and site administrators, and TOSAs and teacher leaders, aligning to evaluation Questions 2 and 3. While each interview did not address all the themes directly, the following themes are most often reflected in the content of the interviews:

To understand the ongoing work of Uplift Literacy, its impact as it concludes, and the necessary conditions for maintaining progress toward grant goals after its conclusion, we have gathered perspectives (n=9) of district administrators, site administrators, and instructional leaders in multiple participating districts. Each interview lasted between 45 minutes to one hour. Interviews were guided by a protocol that responded to multiple Uplift Literacy evaluation questions, including:

- What are the challenges or barriers to the implementation of the grantee's systems?
- What are the bright spots and lessons learned that can inform future initiatives related to professional development statewide?

SUCCESSSES

Diversification of School Libraries

For many site-based administrators, the diversification of school and classroom libraries was a highlight of their participation in Uplift Literacy. For district and site librarians, especially, the focus on their work was novel and incredibly meaningful. One interviewee mentioned that the diversification of libraries across her district had led to “a culture of reading” across students. The tangible benefit of books was a major success of this project, as was the enhancement of library spaces.

Tailored Professional Development Offerings

For many site and district administrators, the numerous professional development offerings of this grant were cited as a highlight of their participation in Uplift Literacy. Some of the professional development offerings participants mentioned included: Student-Centered Coaching, Native Ways of Knowing, and the Teacher Leadership Academy. Participants mentioned professional development opportunities that were possible because of grant funding, such as offerings specifically for library professionals and literacy professional learning offered by organizations external to the project. While respondents often said it was too early to say if

teachers were implementing strategies, many interviewees mentioned that there was positive “momentum” in the work. As one interviewee said, “They’re saying this is helpful. They’re saying, we like it. They’re saying, we want more of it.”

CHALLENGES

Unclear Expectations for Participation in Grant Delayed Action

Many site and district administrators mentioned that they had hoped for more initial guidance on what this grant entailed. While the tailored nature of the professional development offerings was often described positively, multiple interviewees wished for more explicit guidance in the form of “exemplars” of project plans and budgets, as well as more opportunities to collaborate across districts to understand how others were using their grant funding. As one interviewee said, “Are we literally the first people that have ever done something like this? Is there something that could guide the work?” Another interviewee mentioned a similar desire for a plan or exemplar to guide district implementation. In the absence of a project plan or guide, this district approached Uplift Literacy as a program they were creating themselves through the implementation of activities.

Delayed Start to Grant Activities, Implementation, and Improving Student Outcomes

Many participants described this grant as a two-year experience. If participants mentioned year one of this grant, they discussed how, from their perspective, nothing had happened. For some of these interviewees, they mentioned having no communication and guidance during that time from project leadership. Some interviewees assumed that COVID had delayed the project, while others mentioned leadership transitions in their districts. In both cases, interviewees mentioned a lack of communication from districts and from the San Diego County Office of Education during the first year of the project. As one interviewee said, “I’m not sure what happened, but it was kind of a rough start.”

Ultimately, this delay has set back progress toward impacting instruction and improving student outcomes. While site and district administration mentioned the “momentum” they now have, they found it difficult to describe changes to instruction or student learning that have occurred as a result of the professional learning. For most all interviewees, they described this grant as starting one year too late and ending one year too early. From their perspective, it is still too early to expect changes to instructional practice to occur.



QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

Quantitative findings emerge from local and statewide assessment data, programmatic data, and document reviews. For evaluation Questions One and Four, we reviewed meeting notes, discussions with project leadership, and analyzed internal project data. For evaluation question, we examined survey data along with internal project data. Finally, for evaluations Questions Six and Seven, we examined state achievement data and local literacy data to draw conclusions about trends in reading proficiency. The qualitative findings are arrayed by category: Capacity Development, Family/Community Engagement, and Literacy Outcomes.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

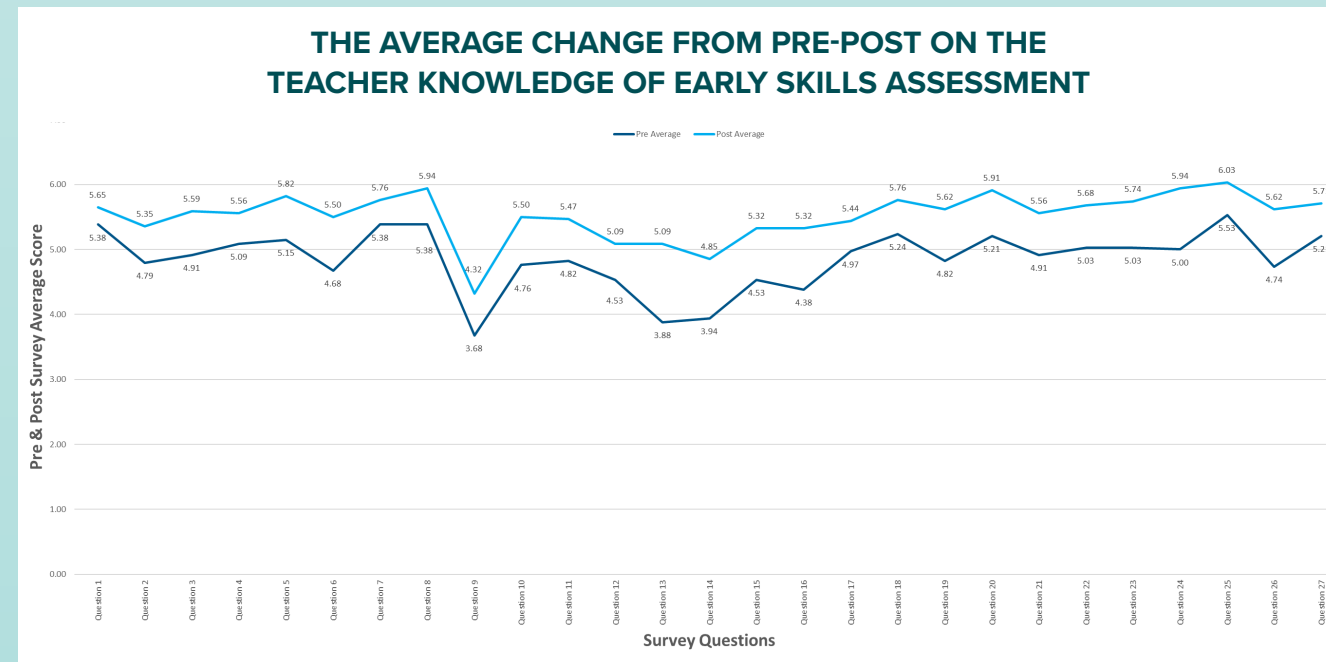
The professional learning model involves embedding evidence-based practices and interventions into literacy instruction, especially for students who are low-income and American Indian students. The process begins with examining and analyzing local system data. Uplift Literacy leadership and its partners then co-create action plans for addressing poor literacy outcomes. Next, Uplift Literacy coaches teachers and leaders to build the associated capacities of their schools to support and strengthen literacy outcomes in these systems. The final product is a highly participatory co-designed process with clear steps for progress.

The Uplift Literacy leadership team met with district leaders, community partners, with other County Offices of Education (COEs), and held internal COE planning meetings 58 times during the past year for the purpose of supporting their respective LEAs to improve language and literacy development. Uplift Literacy supported these LEAs to design and develop literacy plans that address the needs of marginalized student groups. These plans were informed by needs assessment results. District literacy plans followed CDE guidance and laid the foundation for the refinement of the district literacy assessment system, data-based decision making, and systemic improvements to literacy instruction.

Additionally, Uplift Literacy recruited 54 educators to its workshops and events where professional developers shaped educators' abilities and skills to improve literacy development across their respective systems. Various educators attended 6 events in 2023-2024 focused on delivering culturally relevant instruction, comprehensive ELD, and others.

We captured evidence of changes in knowledge from educators using pre-post professional learning surveys. Pre-post survey results indicated that educators rated their skills and abilities slightly higher on the posttest compared to the pretest. These findings suggest that educators improved their understanding of teaching literacy skills after the workshops and that district capacity to implement reading practices has increased.

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS CONT.



COMMUNITY/FAMILY LITERACY EVENTS

Uplift Literacy has designed plans and developed tools to engage parents in their children’s literacy development.

Developing family and community engagement around literacy is one of the three main goals in the project’s work. During the second year, Uplift Literacy worked on developing knowledge at the district level using the English Learner Roadmap Toolkit. Additionally, all five districts distributed a family survey to gather data and better understand the literacy needs of families. This survey supported Uplift Literacy to determine the next steps for engaging families.

Uplift Literacy engaged 138 parents in the parent engagement survey, where they responded to questions about their child’s reading development. The most important findings from the survey included:

- 122 parents (88%) indicated they had attended a school event in the past year.
- 83 parents (60%) indicated their child spent more than 30 minutes a week reading.
- 69 parents (50%) indicated they spent time everyday reading with their child(ren).
- 104 parents (75%) indicated they were somewhat or extremely satisfied with their child’s reading development.

LITERACY OUTCOMES

Finally, *Uplift Literacy* connected over 296 teachers and 6,150 students’ literacy data and developed a system for monitoring progress in important literacy skills.

The purpose of connecting teachers and student outcome data is to improve literacy skills for students from transitional kindergarten through 5th grade. Uplift Literacy uses evidence-based practices, activities, and interventions with an emphasis on disadvantaged children, especially children living in poverty and American Indian children. This approach uses local literacy data measured multiple times a year to set goals and monitor student progress. Additionally, literacy coaches work directly with teachers, and school and district leadership to examine the reasons for results and to address the root causes of poor literacy outcomes.

Overall results from CAASSP ELA assessments indicated that 28% of students were reading at grade level by the end of the 2023-2024 school year, a one-percentage point increase from the 2021-2022 school year.

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS CONT.

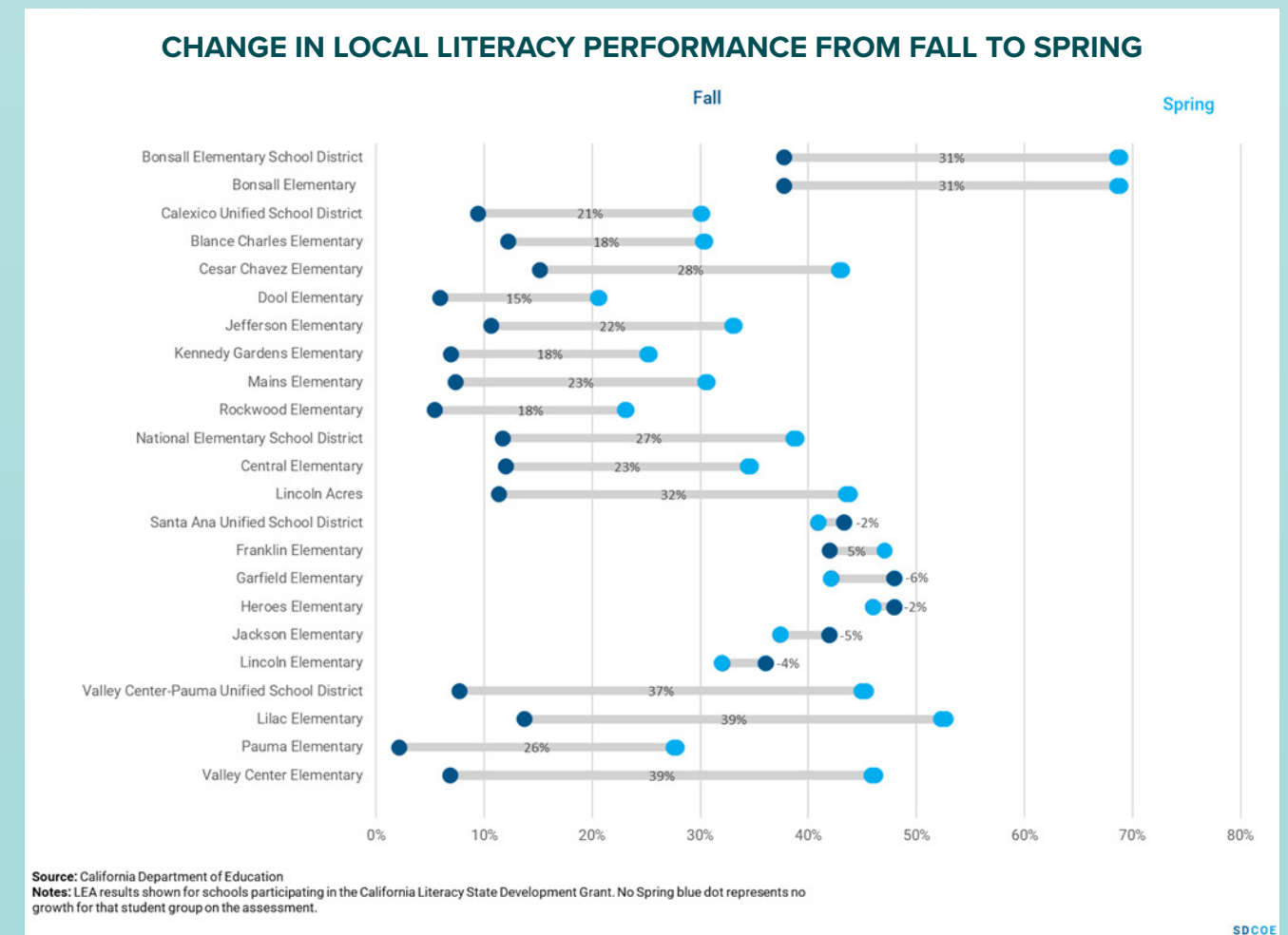
Local Education Agency	School Name	Number of Students, Grades 3-5	2021-2022 CAASPP ELA % Meeting/ Exceeding	2023-2024 CAASPP ELA % Meeting/ Exceeding
Bonsall Union Elementary		376	57%	56% ↓
	Bonsall Elementary	376	57%	56%
Calexico Unified		1,663	18%	22% ↑
	Blanche Charles Elementary	195	20%	29%
	Cesar Chavez Elementary	302	25%	36%
	Dool Elementary	278	13%	16%
	Jefferson Elementary	289	25%	19%
	Kennedy Gardens Elementary	212	15%	15%
	Mains Elementary	169	16%	20%
Rockwood Elementary	218	12%	13%	
National		387	24%	26% ↑
	Central Elementary	209	25%	27%
	Lincoln Acres Elementary	178	22%	24%
Santa Ana		1,075	26%	27% ↑
	Franklin Elementary	158	22%	22%
	Garfield Elementary	245	29%	29%
	Heroes Elementary	214	32%	34%
	Jackson Elementary	227	23%	31%
	Lincoln Elementary	231	18%	20%
	Valley Center-Pauma		741	33%
Lilac Elementary	209	40%	29%	
Pauma Elementary	104	32%	16%	
Valley Center Elementary	424	30%	33%	
Valley Center Prep	4	*	*	
Region		4,119	27%	28% ↑

Source: California Department of Education
 Notes: LEA results shown for schools participating in the California Literacy State Development Grant.

As indicated in the table, the percentage of students meeting and exceeding improved in 2023-2024 for 10 of the 20 schools. Students meeting or exceeding standard declined one percentage points in Bonsall, four percentage points in Valley Center-Pauma while increasing one percentage points in Santa Ana, four percentage points at Calexico and two percentage points in National. Many students are not achieving the goals Uplift Literacy set for this project at 55% of students reading at or above grade level.

Additionally, assessment results from local literacy assessments indicated a positive trend across all locations except Santa Ana. The local literacy assessments encompass

students in grades TK through 5th and are administered multiple times per year, which allows the evaluation team to examine changes in literacy development over a school year. The figure below displays the percentage of students performing at grade level in the Fall of 2023, the Spring of 2024, along with the percentage change across these two time points. These findings indicate that students across all participating schools in the districts (except for Santa Ana) improved. The greatest growth occurred in Bonsall with a 43% increase from fall to spring. These findings suggest that literacy performance is improving for most students in the ways measured by these assessments.

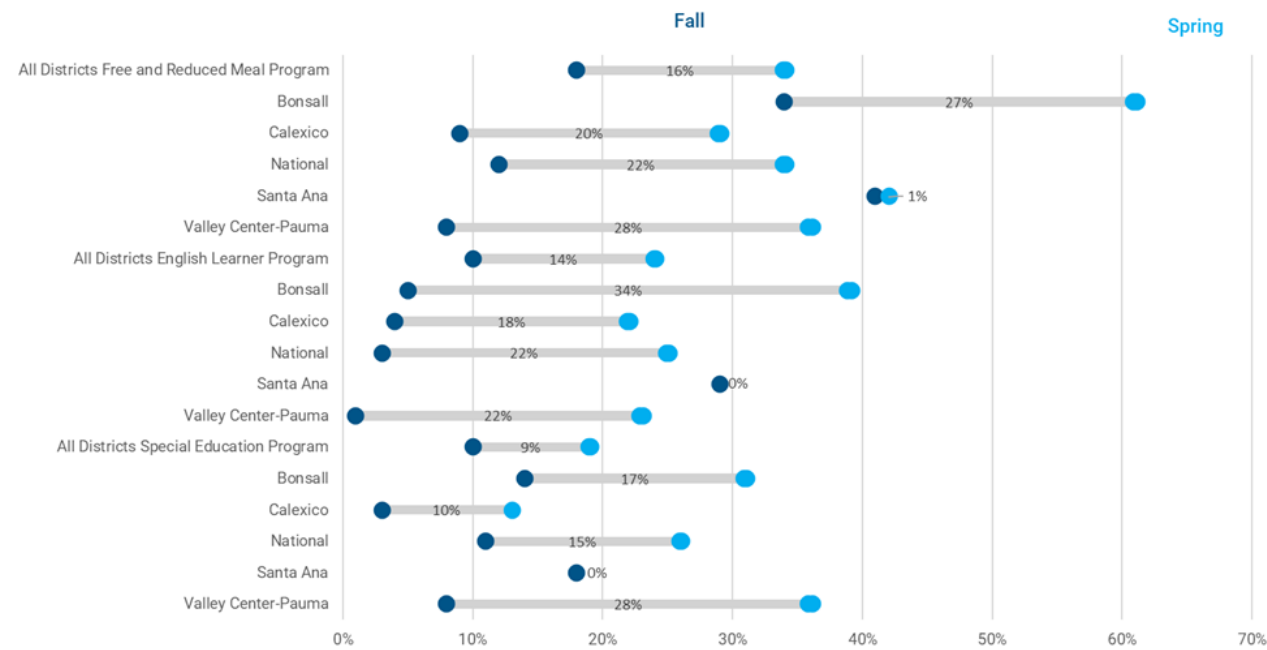


QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS CONT.

Finally, we also examined literacy results for different student population, especially for students who are low-income, English learners, and students with disabilities, three important student groups for this grant. All three student groups showed similar performance trends as all students, improving in all districts except Santa Ana. Again, these findings suggest that results in literacy performance are trending in the right direction on these assessments for these groups of students.



CHANGE IN LOCAL LITERACY PERFORMANCE FROM FALL TO SPRING



Source: California Department of Education
 Notes: LEA results shown for schools participating in the California Literacy State Development Grant. No Spring blue dot represents no growth for that student group on the assessment.

SDCOE

PROJECT CONCLUSION

LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Over the past three years, effective collaboration among the San Diego County Office of Education, Orange County Department of Education, and the Imperial County Office of Education has been crucial in overcoming barriers during the rollout of literacy programs. Successes at individual sites have included consistent and constructive meetings, alongside increased engagement from communities and parents. Collectively, these efforts have led to a districtwide enhancement in adopting evidence-based reading strategies.

However, it is crucial to acknowledge that transformative educational reforms, particularly those targeting systemic enhancements, need time to develop fully. Currently, student performance metrics are comparable to those at the start of the grant, which also coincided with the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. This continued similarity in performance levels highlights that three years is a relatively brief timeframe to anticipate extensive systemic shifts in student outcomes, especially given the substantial disruptions caused by the pandemic. Ongoing dedication and a persistent focus are vital to achieve the long-term educational results intended by this initiative.

Included below are consolidated lessons learned and recommendations designed to refine the Uplift Literacy project's approach. These insights aim to ensure continued

improvement in literacy outcomes and maintain the project's effectiveness in the face of persistent challenges.

LESSONS LEARNED

1. Clear Goals and Expectations

The need for clearly defined expectations was evident, as participants often lacked clarity on the project's objectives and their roles, particularly in coaching and family engagement strategies.

2. Sustained Engagement and Communication

Effective collaboration among partners was crucial but required more consistent and open lines of communication to ensure alignment and shared understanding of the project goals.

3. Adaptability and Support

The project needed to be more adaptable to the needs of different schools and communities, suggesting a more tailored approach to professional development and support.

4. Early and Ongoing Assessment

Continuous assessment of progress and challenges at an early stage would allow for timely interventions and adjustments to strategies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Enhance Professional Development

To build upon professional development, future events should focus on practical, not just theoretical, outcomes from professional learning sessions to ensure they directly impact classroom practices.

Increase Parental Involvement

Further develop more effective strategies to engage parents, potentially through more culturally relevant activities and flexible participation options.

Strengthened Support Structures

Build more robust support structures for educators, particularly in coaching and mentoring, to foster a more cohesive implementation of literacy strategies.

Data Utilization

Improve the use of data to inform teaching practices and to adjust strategies promptly based on real-time feedback.

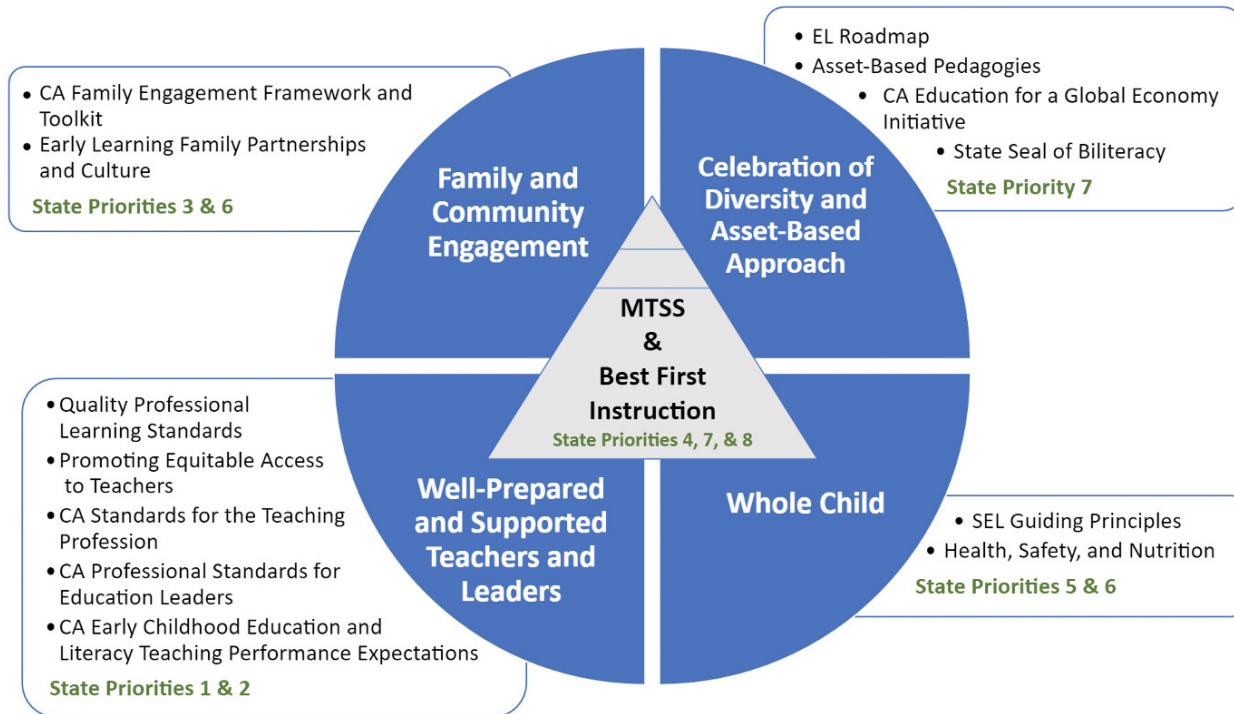
Community and Stakeholder Engagement

Increase efforts to build trust and genuine partnerships with local communities, which is essential for the sustained success of educational initiatives.



UPLIFT LITERACY IMPACT

CALIFORNIA'S COMPREHENSIVE AND INTEGRATED LITERACY MODEL AND THE STATE LITERACY PLAN



California has many existing policies, guidance documents, and structures designed to improve literacy for all California students. While several investments and initiatives have focused on their implementation, the State Literacy Plan provides an opportunity to align and integrate these resources to demonstrate how they are connected and best utilized in a coherent way. A comprehensive and integrated literacy model ensures high-quality literacy instruction occurs within the context of inclusive and equitable systems of schooling featuring elevated levels of engagement, a focus on continuous improvement, and application of the California Multi-Tiered System of Support Framework. The

Comprehensive and Integrated Literacy Model presented in the SLP sets the direction for literacy programs statewide by aligning and integrating state literacy initiatives. It also sets the direction for activities outlined in the SLP Continuous Improvement Process section. (SOURCE - CALIFORNIA STATE LITERACY PLAN [2021] PAGE 8.)

The California Integrated Literacy Model (CILM) serves as our guide when customizing support for each participating district. This year, Region 9 used the CILM to communicate grant goals, capture the current state of district and school literacy programs, reflect on success, and identify needs and action steps for improvement.

SPOTLIGHT ON CELEBRATION ON DIVERSITY AND ASSET-BASED APPROACH

PERSONALIZED ORAL LANGUAGE LEARNING: PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FOR TEACHERS AND FAMILIES

	COUNTIES	DISTRICTS	TK-K TEACHERS	TK-K FAMILIES	HOURS OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING	EST. STUDENTS SERVED
YEAR 2	3	5	65	-	60	1,600
YEAR 3	3	5	40	48	40	1,000
TOTAL	3	5	105	48	100	2,600

BEYOND THE NUMBERS

Provided by the SDCOE Early Education Department, Personalized Oral Language Learning (POLL) strategies for transitional kindergarten and kindergarten teachers focus on teaching practices that adapt to the strengths, experiences, interests, and abilities of young children who are learning English at school. Drawing upon best practices in multilingual literacy instruction, POLL strategies include specific guidelines on the use of environmental supports, intentional messages, anchor texts/experiences, vocabulary imprinting, songs, chants, learning center extensions, and more.

POLL workshops consist of 10 hours of professional learning for teachers, five hours of training for trainers, and four hours for household members. All participants who completed the workshop are given a beautiful collection of books in multiple languages that

they and their students could enjoy in their classrooms or home libraries.

Both types of workshops for educators and for families were highly interactive and focused on building meaningful partnerships between school and home. Some workshops were formatted in a virtual/in-person modality to best support families' needs and interests. Training of Trainers for Families was offered to all participating districts. Teachers reflected on how multilingualism is an asset that builds identity and long-term success in school and life. Teachers also tried new specific supports and strategies, such as the Family Language Interest Interview, and reflected on the importance of building relationships with families through collaborative discussion. Families who attended the workshop shared how they felt that their culture and language were honored as they celebrated the brilliance of what it means to be a multilingual learner.

TESTIMONIALS



I will share how important and beneficial it is to speak more than one language. — Parent

I will continue to stress to people that diversity in language is not a deficit but a strength. — Teacher

Sere un modelo linguistico para conservar mi lengua materna. — Parent

I found how important it is to continue using your home language so that there isn't language loss. — Teacher

Una cosa importante que he aprendido hoy fue cómo apoyar mejor el idioma nativo y no presionar. Incentivar a que siga aprendiendo de manera divertida. — Parent

Our students and families who speak a different language are assets to our school and community. — Teacher

In the age of so many standardized tests, it is a powerful tool to utilize vocabulary development strategies that could be helpful to all of our learners. — Teacher

UPLIFT LITERACY DISTRICTS

BONSALL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Participating Schools: Bonsall Elementary and Vivian Banks Elementary



2023-2024 MILESTONES

- Added a school, Vivian Banks Elementary, and continued funding and CLSD support for Bonsall Elementary
- Hired an additional coach for Vivian Banks and continued funding for the coach at Bonsall Elementary
- Increased library funding to include for Vivian Banks and Bonsall Elementary
- Provided 12 hours of professional learning for the coaches, the Student-Centered Coaching Institute in addition to eight “coaching for the coaches” sessions specific to the BUSD coaching team.
- Continued to refine the EL Master Plan
- Provided professional learning teachers on Native Ways of Knowing
- All teachers at Vivian Banks Elementary and 21 teachers at Bonsall Elementary have participated in coaching

Spotlight On Celebration of Diversity and an Asset-Based Approach

English Learner Master Plan Development

This year, SDCOE provided support to BUSD to create the English Learner Master Plan that follows the EL Roadmap and articulates a vision of integrated and designated ELD. The goals of the plan are to: provide the district and schools with a clear statement of policies related to multilingual learners, uphold equity and excellence for all multilingual learners in every area of their education, and align policies and procedures with current state and federal mandates.

“Creating our EL Roadmap Master plan helped our educators this year align our policies and practices to support our multilingual learners, not only in academics, but in all areas. Because we used the EL Roadmap as our guide, we were able to affirm our students’ lives by promoting a culturally sustaining educational program for our multilingual learners. We look forward to having consistent procedures in place to support our students at all levels. — Anonymous

Spotlight On The Whole Child

Equity Team

This year, Bonsall sent a team to SDCOE’s Equity Conference: “Equity is Love in Action.” As a result, BUSD formed an Equity team comprised of teachers, principals, a board member, the executive director of Educational Services and a community leader from the Pala Tribe. SDCOE supported the team in grounding their equity work within California’s historical educational context, and in facilitating equity-focused data conversations.

Library Media Services

CLSD funds were used to increase access to books and promote literacy success and enjoyment in students. Over the two years of the grant, over \$28K grant funding was spent to purchase current and diverse elementary and early literacy books for Vivian Banks Elementary and Bonsall Elementary. Over 650 books were added to Bonsall Elementary school library collections and many of those new titles are award-winning. Funds were also used to give away dozens of books for home libraries. SDCOE also provided guidance for updating administrative regulations regarding Bonsall’s book challenge policy.

Spotlight On Well-Prepared and Supported Teachers and Leaders

Teacher Leadership Academy

CLSD funds were used to hire a new literacy

coach for Bonsall Elementary, to provide professional learning on effective coaching practices through SDCOE’s Teacher Leadership Academy, and to support the coach through monthly one-on-one meetings between the coach and an Uplift Literacy point of contact. The coach reported on how she was able to use the new learning to build upon the foundation of trust that she already had with her coachees and how the Academy helped her feel more confident in her new role.

“This workshop allowed me to think deeper into myself as an educator and to reflect on ways I’ve been ‘coaching’ throughout my career. It does not take much to make the people you are working with feel appreciated and valued.” — BUSD Coach

Student Centered Coaching Institute

CLSD paid for Diane Sweeney to facilitate the Student-Centered Coaching Institute, a two-day professional learning opportunity for coaches, principals, and district administrators. The institute focused on the importance of the coach and principal working together to communicate a unified message on coaching, guiding principles of student-centered coaching, and strategies for organizing formal coaching cycles.

UPLIFT LITERACY DISTRICTS CONT.

Educator Academy

Participating teachers from Bonsall Elementary along with their coach participated in the Educator Academy. The goals of the academy were to: cultivate connections by sharing aspects of the teacher’s identities, values, and experiences; build understanding of the multilingual and American Indian learners; experience and reflect upon culturally and linguistically responsive practices; and try on new practices with a multilingual focal student in mind to support meaningful engagement in an upcoming learning. Professional learning led by our partners, the California Reading and Literature Project who focused on meeting multilingual learner needs, and American Indian scholars Nicole Lim, Joley Proudfit, and Debbie Reese.

“I would like to celebrate my continual growth and awareness in my focal student’s family and life at home. I have built trust with his family and am proud to see his accomplishments.”
— BUSD Teacher



VALLEY CENTER PAUMA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Participating Schools:

Lilac Elementary, Pauma Elementary, Valley Center Elementary, Valley Center Primary



2023-2024 MILESTONES

- Conducted bi-monthly meetings with the district champion
- Conducted monthly check-ins with the leadership team
- Conducted six communities of practice to design the District Literacy Plan
- Finalized the District Literacy Plan, which will continue to be revisited and refined
- Provided professional learning for:
 - Teachers, coaches, and administrators on asset-based culturally responsive instructional practices, evidence-based practices in reading instruction, second-language acquisition research, and the use of informal diagnostic measures to differentiate instruction
 - Library staff on diverse and inclusive library collections
 - Teachers, coaches and administrators on leadership and student-centered coaching practices, including the use of coaching logs to reflect on impact

- Conducted three family literacy events in English and three family literacy events in Spanish
- Updated their library collections
- Strengthened a partnership with their COE partner!

Spotlight on Family and Community Engagement

Uplift Literacy supported in the planning and facilitation of four family and community engagement events for the purpose of inviting and embracing families as partners in students’ literacy development. Through acts of reading and discussing together, children and their families had the opportunity to build bonds through literacy as they experienced strategies that can be used at home for reading, thinking, and talking about text together. Grant funds were also used to purchase hundreds of books that families had time to explore at the event to take home for further enjoyment. In Year 3, Uplift Literacy collaborated with all site administrators to co-design and facilitate six Family Literacy Nights, three in English and three in Spanish. Grant funds were used to purchase resources for families to use at home, including books in English and Spanish.

“It is so great that this was done in both English and Spanish and that book giveaways are in both languages. I just posted about it on Facebook!” — VCPUSD Parent

Library Media Services

CLSD funds were used to increase access to books and promote literacy success and enjoyment in students. Over \$56K in grant funding was spent to purchase current and diverse elementary and early literacy books. This meant that thousands of books were added to participating school library collections and many of those books are award-winning. Uplift Literacy also facilitated quarterly library staff meetings and hosted professional learning workshops with Deborah Salyer, an award-winning library media specialist. Library staff reflected on the diversity present in their collections and were empowered to make refinements as needed. In addition, library staff began to reimagine the physical design of school libraries to enhance the student experience by creating inviting spaces where students are able to more easily locate books that reflect and uplift their appearance, lived experience, and culture. Valley Center gave away 30 boxes of Scholastic books during their summer school program. In Year 3 CLSD continued to provide funding for the refinement and expansion of school and classroom libraries. One professional learning day was dedicated to becoming familiar with the Native Ways of Knowing website and books that were purchased from the recommended list. Supports included resources for using the books in classrooms. Throughout the year during grade level collaboration and planning, time was allotted for the exploration of new book titles and planning for use in the classroom.

UPLIFT LITERACY DISTRICTS CONT.

Spotlight on Well-Prepared and Supported Teachers and Leaders

Teacher Leadership Academy

Uplift Literacy provided professional learning on effective leadership and coaching practices through SDCOE's Teacher Leadership Academy. VCPUSD sent a team of coaches, principals, central office staff and teachers to the academy. The Teacher Leadership Academy emphasized the importance of approaching a coaching or leadership role by building trusting relationships and focusing on staff and student strengths. As a result of the professional learning, there was a 20-25% average growth reported in learning how to engage in student-centered coaching and 20-35% average growth reported in integrating knowledge of leadership practices into their role. In Year 3 Uplift Literacy provided a Student-Centered Coaching Institute with educational consultant and author Diane Sweeney. VCPUSD sent their team of coaches and two district administrators to hone their understanding of and capacity to facilitate student-centered coaching. Each coach developed a website for establishing connections and maintaining communication with the teachers they work with. The goal for Year 3 was that coaches spend the majority of their time engaged in student-centered coaching. All coaches keep a "coaching log" to monitor their activities, progress, and assess their impact on teacher self-efficacy and student progress. The coaching team meets weekly with the district champion to collaborate, learn together, celebrate

successes and share challenges. In September 2024 the VCPUSD coaching team will attend a Year Two Student-Centered Coaching Institute with Diane Sweeney to network, further their learning, and strengthen their student-centered coaching skills with coaches from neighboring districts and counties.

“ I learned a lot from ‘working below the green line.’ This is something I have seen destroy a school community due to relationships and trust. — VCPUSD Teacher

“ I would like to celebrate my growth in students working together collaboratively because student engagement has really increased! — VCPUSD Teacher



NATIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Participating Schools:
Central, El Toyon, Lincoln
Acres, Palmer Way



2023-2024 MILESTONES

- Assembled their Literacy Team
- Identified participating schools, principals and teachers for the CLSD Grant
- Hired/Identified participating coaches
- Conducted four communities of practice to investigate their system
- Provided professional learning for
 - Teachers on culturally responsive practices
 - Administrators on the English Learner Roadmap
 - Coaches on leadership and coaching practices
- Updated library collections
- Continued to strengthen a partnership with their COE partner!

Spotlight on Celebration of Diversity and an Asset-Based Approach

Educator Academy

Uplift Literacy provided funding for teachers and coaches to participate in the Educator Academy led by our partner, the California

Reading and Literature Project. The four-day professional learning series supported teachers in their commitment to affirming students' lives, promoting social-emotional development, and developing literacy competency. This year, CLSD participating teachers selected focal students to gather data and gain a deeper understanding of their needs. Teachers conducted interviews to learn about their individual identities and cultural backgrounds, and increased opportunities for collaborative learning and observed growth in building community among students. By investing time in affirming their lives, teachers created a classroom environment that respects and embraces diverse cultural backgrounds and identities.

“ I would like to celebrate my growth in explicitly teaching collaborative discussions because I see students engaging in discourse throughout the entire school day! — Anonymous

Spotlight on Whole Child

Library Media Services

CLSD funds were used to increase access to books and promote literacy success and enjoyment in students. Over \$56K in grant funding was spent to purchase current and diverse elementary books. National provided their non-grant school matching funds so there was equity in the district. This meant that thousands of new books were added to participating school library collections.

UPLIFT LITERACY DISTRICTS CONT.

Uplift Literacy support also included monthly library staff meetings and participation in a professional learning workshop with Deborah Salyer, an award-winning library media specialist where library staff reflected on the diversity present in their collections and made refinements as needed. In addition, library staff began to reimagine the physical design of school libraries to enhance the student experience by creating warm, inviting spaces where students can more easily locate books that reflect and uplift their appearance, lived experience, and culture.

Spotlight on Well-Prepared and Supported Teachers and Leaders

Teacher Leadership Academy

Uplift Literacy provided professional learning on effective leadership and coaching practices through SDCOE's Teacher Leadership Academy with all NSD coaches and the literacy coordinator in attendance. The Teacher Leadership Academy emphasized the importance of approaching a coaching or leadership role by building trusting relationships and focusing on staff and student strengths. Administrators and coaches appreciated learning about the difference between coaching that gets stuck in relationship building and student-centered coaching that centers the coaching on student-learning.

“This training has helped me understand all the aspects and components of coaching and how they all work together. I learned the value of trust and building relationships with teachers that will in turn allow me to better support them as a coach. — NSD Coach

Spotlight on MTSS and First Best Instruction

Literacy Plan Development

Uplift Literacy convened a Literacy Program community of practice (CoP) that included principals and central office staff and met four times to begin to draft the district's literacy plan. Following the phases of literacy plan development that was designed by the Uplift Literacy Regional Team, the NSD CoP completed a literacy plan design process that is aligned to EL Roadmap Principles. Additionally, they identified how the district currently demonstrates its commitment to affirming the lives of multilingual learners, promotes social-emotional development, and develops literacy competency through their implementation of MTSS.

The CoP finished the year by reflecting on strengths of their literacy program, identifying potential barriers that may contribute to students making expected progress, and clarifying equity challenges the literacy plan will need to address.

SANTA ANA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Participating Schools:

Jackson Elementary, Heroes Elementary School, Franklin Elementary School, Abraham Lincoln Elementary School, Garfield Elementary School



2023-2024 MILESTONES

- Stronger collaboration with the Literacy Team
- Promoted cross-content literacy
- Continued implementing literacy interventions
- Strengthened family engagement activities
- Enhanced the coaching program across the district
- Broadened participation in professional learning across the district

Spotlight on Family and Community Engagement

Community Literacy Nights

Uplift Literacy provided funding and support for the organization of Community Literacy Nights aimed to help the community better understand what literacy skills look like and how caregivers can support literacy skill development at home. Each CLSD participating

school hosted a Community Literacy Night where families and community partners were welcomed onto campus to participate in literacy learning with their students and engage in motivating activities that can be recreated at home. The aim was to strengthen home-to-school partnerships by growing supportive environments that encourage literacy development for all.

Spotlight on Whole Child

The Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) grant initiatives seamlessly integrate with the MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) framework to bolster educational outcomes by addressing the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of all students. These efforts ensure equitable access to literacy resources and targeted interventions, fostering an inclusive environment where the whole child—cognitive, physical, social, and emotional domains—is nurtured. By embedding evidence-based literacy practices within the MTSS framework, the CLSD grant enhances support structures, promoting holistic student development and success.

Library Media Services

Uplift Literacy funds were used to update and diversify library collections, promote reading, and strengthen family and community literacy engagement. Over 1,453 books were added to library collections at four elementary schools. The library and media services support helped library staff reflect on the diversity present in

UPLIFT LITERACY DISTRICTS CONT.

their collections and expand in areas of need. Time during library staff meetings were also dedicated to exploring approaches to creating inviting book displays and ways for staff to book talk new culturally relevant titles. Library staff participated in a professional learning workshop with Deborah Salyer, an award-winning library media specialist. Students across the district are now able to more easily locate books which reflect and uplift their appearance, lived experience, and culture.

“One of my students just checked out *Blended and My Heart is so Full!!* She said, ‘This is about a girl like me!’ and I teared up. — *SUSD Library Technician*

Spotlight on Well-Prepared and Supported Teachers and Leaders

Educator Academies and Learning How English Works

Teachers in Santa Ana USD have been actively engaged in several professional development initiatives aimed at enhancing instructional practices and student outcomes. They participated in multiple Educator Academies focused on the EL Roadmap, specifically addressing Principle One: Assets-Oriented and Needs Responsive Schools, and Principle Two: Intellectual Quality of Instruction and Meaningful Access. Both academies were facilitated by the California Reading and Literature Project (CRLP) and covered key

areas such as Focal Student Inquiry, Structured Partner Interactions, Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Routines, and EL Roadmap Reflection and Application.

Additionally, teachers took part in the Learning How English Works (LHEW) professional development through CRLP and UCI. This training helped educators identify the language demands of classroom tasks and student language production, explore linguistically responsive routines aligned with ELD standards, and engage students in both content and language learning. Teachers also collaboratively analyzed student work and considered instructional responses based on their use of language.

These efforts have empowered teachers to support student learning more effectively and contribute to a collaborative educational environment.

Coaching for Excellence

Grant funding was provided for 41 coaches throughout Santa Ana USD to participate in the Orange County Department of Education’s 2022-2023 Coaching for Excellence series. This included coaches from participating CLSD schools and Future Ready and Certified Learning and Achievement Specialists (CLAS) coaches. Participants in Coaching for Excellence established a common understanding of the foundations of coaching and coaching cycles. In addition, they explored tools for facilitating in-class coaching and approaches for formative assessment gathering that can be used as the basis for coaching cycles.

Coaching efforts in Santa Ana USD continued as Future Ready Coaches participated in the Orange County Department of Education’s Coaching for Excellence Year 2, the Student-Centered Coaching Institute, and customized coaching support for Future Ready Coaches. This support included meetings to plan coach collaboration and set agendas for the monthly meetings. Participants included coaches from participating CLSD schools as well as Future Ready Coaches and Certified Learning and Achievement Specialists (CLAS) coaches. Through this professional learning, participants established a common understanding of coaching foundations and coaching cycles, explored tools for facilitating in-class coaching, and learned approaches for formative assessment gathering to support coaching cycles.

“I have so many resources and ideas about how to implement a strong coaching program at my site. This will be difficult work, but it has the potential to shift the culture on the site and improve outcomes for students. — *Participant from SAUSD*



CALEXICO SCHOOL DISTRICT

Participating Schools:

Kennedy Gardens, Jefferson, Balance Charles, Mains, Dool



2023-2024 MILESTONES

- Re-assembled and updated the District Literacy Team
- Sites had participation from schools, principals, coaches, and teachers
- Site-based literacy teams have been assembled
- Four COPs around CILM, Liberatory Design, ELA/ELD FW Themes, and Literacy Plan input
- Provided professional learning for
 - Teachers on culturally responsive practices and engaging multilingual learners in complex text
 - Library staff on diverse and inclusive library collections
 - Administrators on the EL Roadmap and Instructional Leadership
 - Coaches on coaching practices and the Art of Coaching
- Conducted family engagement activities and participated in TOT for POLL
- Updated library collections and purchased classroom library materials for grade level teams
- Continued partnership with their COE partner

UPLIFT LITERACY DISTRICTS CONT

Spotlight on Whole Child

Library Media Services

Uplift Literacy provided funding to add more than 4,000 books to library collections, and approximately 300 books were given away to students for home libraries. This year, newly instituted district-wide library staff meetings began to provide support in best practices designed to get books into the hands of children that are identity affirming and celebrate language and cultural diversity. Uplift Literacy also provided additional professional learning to library staff. Staff attended the “What’s New In Children’s Literature” training, the Equity Conference and CSLA conference. All professional learning this year focused on the value of culturally responsive texts. They engaged in evaluating titles that they had not been exposed to before, learned how to promote their collections and create engaging activities for our students. The Calexico library staff has gained confidence to develop their library collection as well as promoting library services in creative ways.



“There have been positive practices added to our library. More students are checking out diverse books that are available and coming in throughout their lunch time and after school to check out books or socialize amongst each other. Book displays and book clubs are at a positive level nowadays. Students feel comfortable knowing that the library is a safe place for them to read, work on class work/ homework.”
 — Calexico Librarian Technician

Spotlight on Well-Prepared and Supported Teachers and Leaders

Teacher Leadership Academy

CLSD funds provided professional learning on effective coaching practices through SDCOE’s Teacher Leadership Academy for Calexico’s ASTs, coaches, principals, and district leaders. The Teacher Leadership Academy emphasized the importance of approaching a coaching or leadership role by building trusting relationships and focusing on staff and student strengths. Administrators and coaches appreciated learning about the difference between coaching that stays solely within relationship building and student-centered coaching that impacts student learning.

“I really value the fact that I was given the opportunity to experience these leadership sessions, to better understand our roles in helping teachers work through areas that will help improve their teaching practices. The biggest takeaway for me is the importance of being in the classrooms more regularly to have the greatest impact on learners. I strongly believe in building relationships so that teachers and students can feel safe with me. I will put into practice what I have learned today. Thank you! — Calexico Coach

Educator Academy

Uplift Literacy funds provided professional learning lead by our partner, the California Reading and Literature Project for teachers, coaches and educational specialists that focused on culturally responsive teaching. Educators explored what it means to affirm students’ lives, promote social emotional development, develop literacy competency, and provide first-best culturally sustaining instruction geared toward meeting the needs of multilingual learners. Participants selected a multilingual focal student with the intention to support them in feeling safe, connected, and confident both academically and socially.

“I attribute the increase in my knowledge through the Academy to being more conscious of the impact that I make on my students’ lives by accepting their identity and using their culture and backgrounds as an asset in our class environment.”
 — CUSD Teacher

“My goal is to get to know my students’ needs better.”
 — CUSD Teacher

English Learner Roadmap Training

The Uplift Literacy team in Imperial County in partnership with ELRISE! facilitated professional learning on the English Learner Roadmap (ELR) for all Calexico administrators. Leaders were introduced to all four principles of the ELR to establish a foundational understanding, reflect on current beliefs about English learners, understand EL typologies, experience high quality instruction that is in support of ELS, and explore implications for leading implementation.

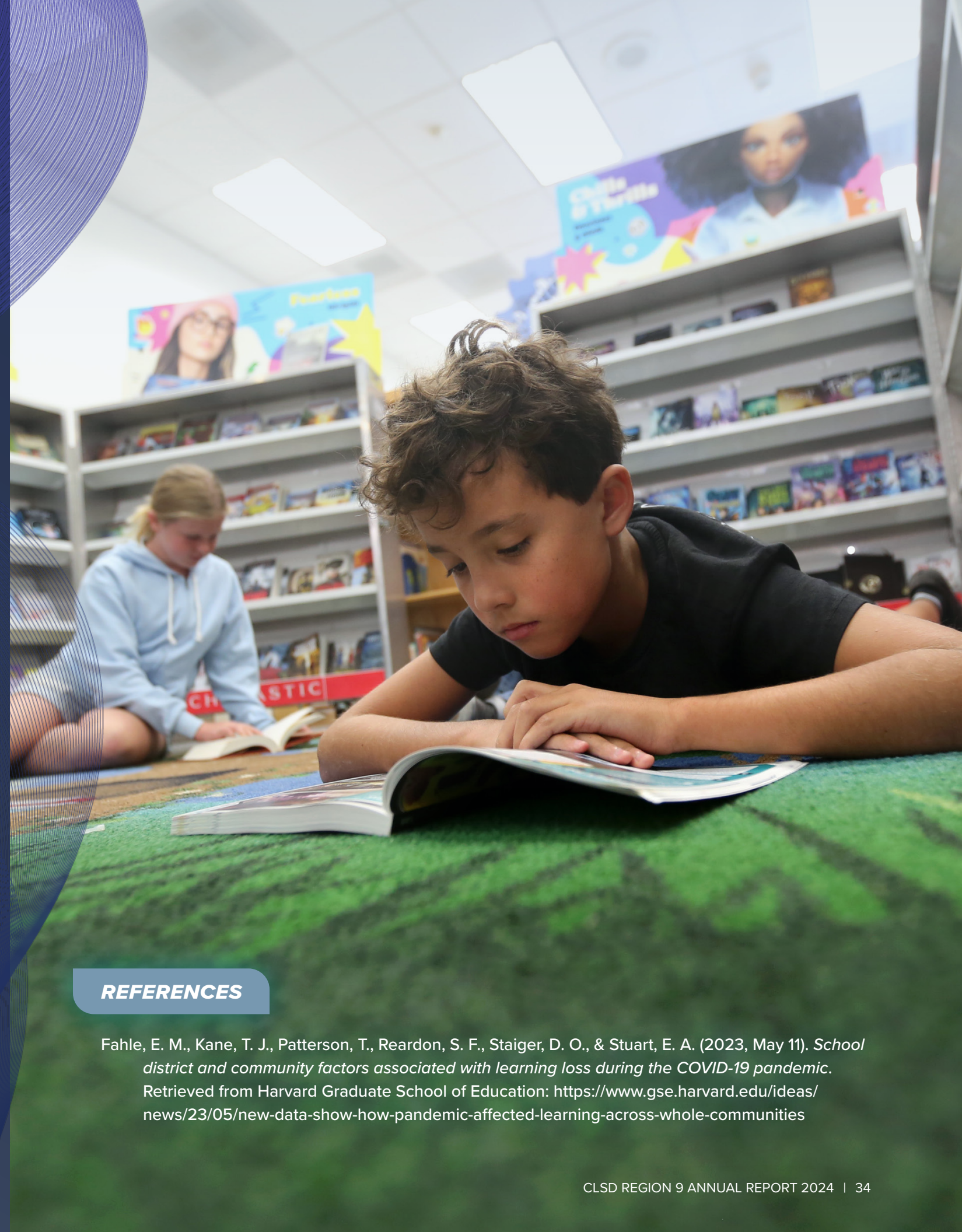


CLOSING

The overarching goal of *Uplift Literacy* is to improve literacy outcomes for all students through the improvement of equity-centered literacy implementation in schools by engaging stakeholders at all levels. Uplift Literacy responds to the urgent need to design asset-based systems intentionally focused on the needs of historically underserved students, including EL/AI students in traditional and DL settings.

Foci of the project include:

- 1. Improving Tier 1 Instruction, including comprehensive ELD, assessment, and data practices**
- 2. Understanding and implementing culturally and linguistically responsive instructional resources and practices**
- 3. Improving LEAs' capacity, including stakeholders from across the system, to implement asset-based literacy leadership and instructional practices (i.e., foster equity mindsets and exhibit high expectations)**
- 4. Improving LEAs' capacity to implement evidence-based family literacy practices and strengthen family and student agency.**



REFERENCES

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CONTACT US

The San Diego County Office of Education *Uplift Literacy* project team in partnership with Imperial County Office of Education (ICOE), Orange County Department of Education (OCDE), and California Reading and Literature Project (CRLP) builds the capacity of CLSD participating LEAs in improving literacy outcomes for TK-5 English learner and American Indian students in traditional and dual language settings; increase teacher capacity to align and implement asset-based instructional practices; and increase educators' capacity to implement asset-based literacy leadership practices, including evidence-based family engagement and literacy programs.

To learn more about this work, please contact any of our *Uplift Literacy* team members.

		
<p>Jorge Cuevas Antillón SDCOE District Advisor for Multilingual Education and Global Achievement jorge.cuevasantillon@sdcoe.net</p>	<p>Jennifer Upham SDCOE Multilingual Education and Global Achievement Coordinator and CLSD Grant Program Lead jcurrie@sdcoe.net</p>	<p>Maria Cordero SDCOE Multilingual Education and Global Achievement Executive Leadership Coach and CLSD Grant Administration Lead maria.cordero@sdcoe.net</p>
		
<p>Audra Mesa OCDE Literacy and Language Coordinator amesa@ocde.us</p>	<p>Abel Juarez ICOE Curriculum Coordinator abel.juarez@icoe.org</p>	<p>Sarah Peterson CRLP Regional Director sgpeterson@ucsd.edu</p>
<p>Cherissa Beck SDCOE Curriculum and Instruction Coordinator cherissa.beck@sdcoe.net</p>		<p>Jonathan Hunt SDCOE Library Media Services Coordinator jonathan.hunt@sdcoe.net</p>
<p>Gabriela Luna SDCOE Early Education Quality Improvement Support Coach gluna@sdcoe.net</p>		<p>Juan Carlos Torres SDCOE Assessment, Accountability, and Evaluation Coordinator jtorres@sdcoe.net</p>

PARTNER AGENCIES



RESOURCES



Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant Resource Repository



