

A Goal Monitoring Conversation:

PPS 3rd Grade English Language Arts

Status Update



Dr. Wayne N. Walters & Leadership Team
March 12, 2025



Goal – 3rd Grade English Language Arts Proficiency

Why?

3rd grade marks the critical transition from “learning to read” to “reading to learn.” It is also the first year of statewide assessment in English Language Arts. We have implemented a new curriculum guided by the Science of Reading to elevate student outcomes and foster liberated, literate learners. However, we acknowledge the racial and disability disparities in English Language Arts outcomes and recognize that overall proficiency needs improvement across the District.

What?

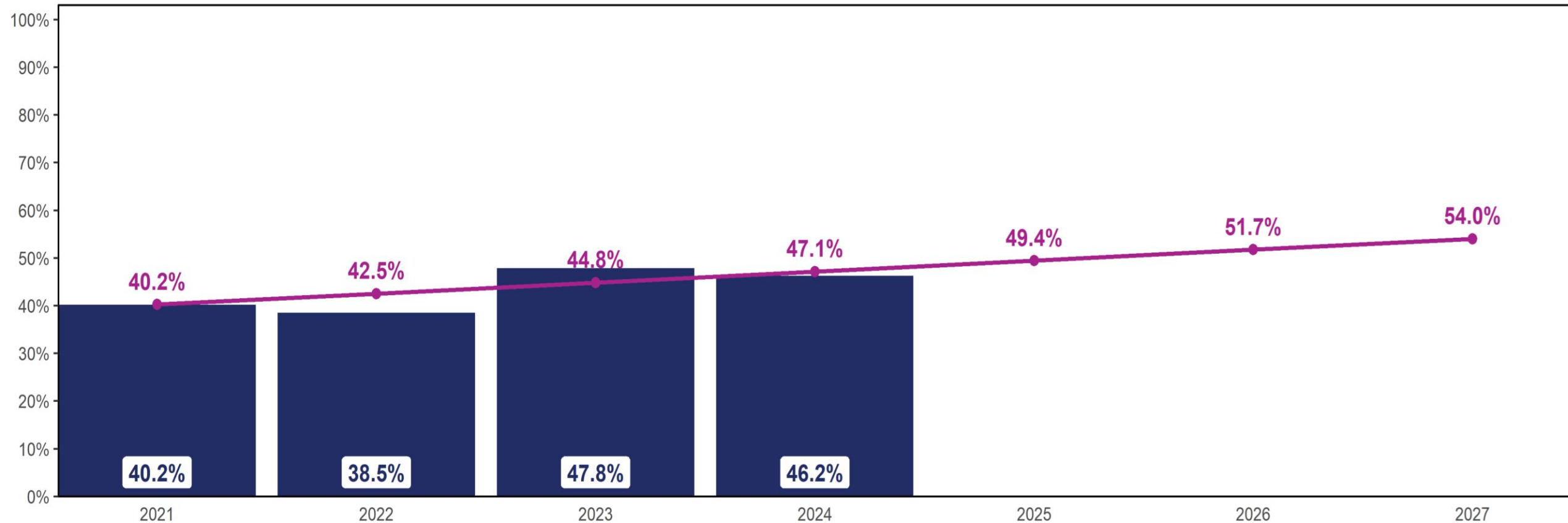
By the end of the 24-25 school year, 49.4% of students in grade 3 will be proficient on the state’s PSSA and PASA English Language Arts assessment. At the end of the 20-21 school year, 40.20% of third-grade students were proficient, establishing the baseline for our 5-year goal of achieving 54% by 2027.

How?

PA Classroom Diagnostic Tool (CDT), DIBELS Acadience

Goal 1 – 3rd Grade ELA Proficiency (By Year)

PSSA/PASA Proficiency Goal

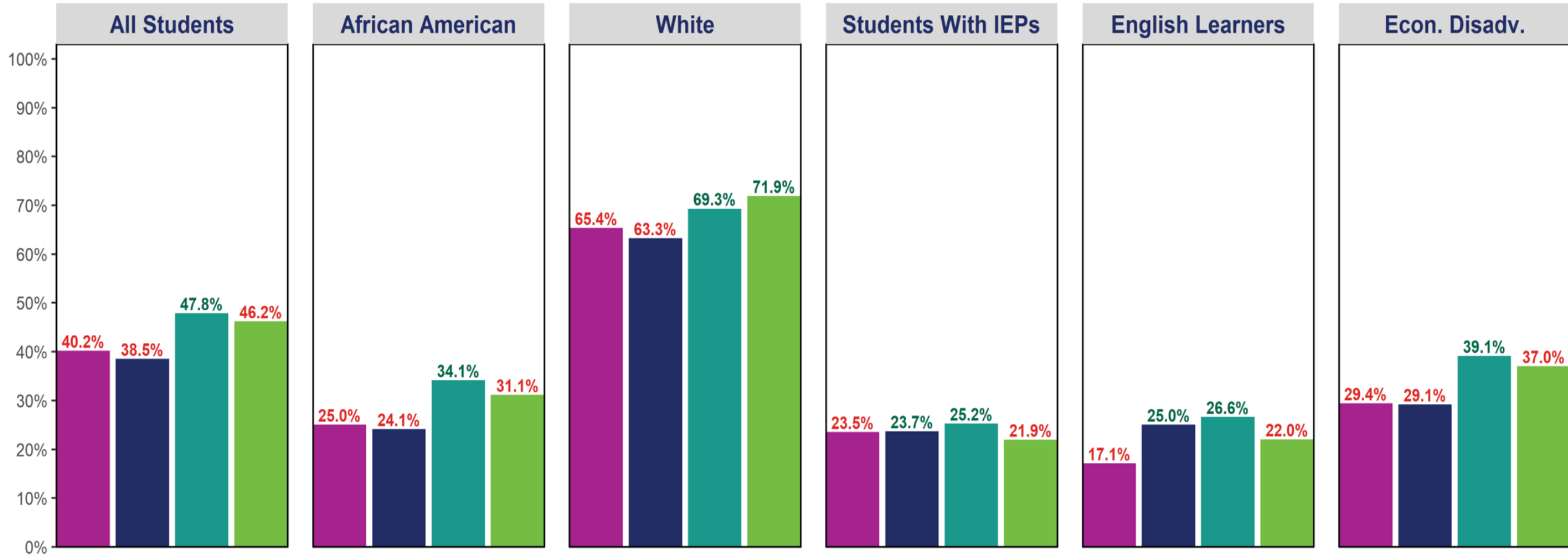


Full Academic Year students, Includes PSSA and PASA
Data source: PDE Accountability Files

3rd Grade Reading: By Subgroups

All Students, African American, White, IEP, ELL, and Econ. Disadv. Students

2021 2022 2023 2024



Full Academic Year students, Includes PSSA and PASA
Data source: PDE Accountability Files

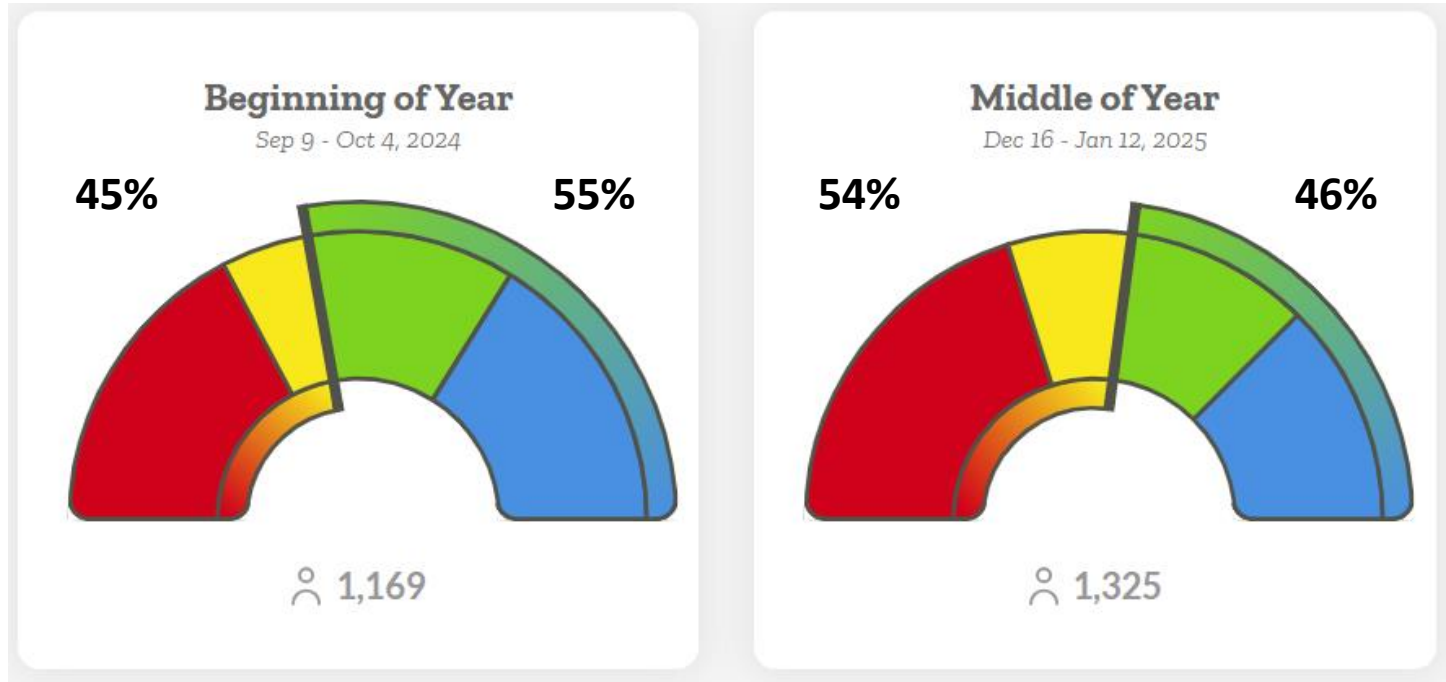
3rd Grade ELA CDT Results – Fall & Winter

CDT Results by Grade										
Assessment	Assessment Window	Assessment Completion			Red Range	Green (Below Midpoint)	Green (Above Midpoint)	Blue Range	Likely Proficient or Advanced	Increase/Decrease in % of Students Performing At/Above Grade Level
		Completed	Required	Rate						
Grade 3 ELA	Fall	1303	1350	96.5%	79%	11%	6.8%	3.2%	10%	
	Winter	1318	1371	96.1%	69.7%	14.9%	10.4%	4.9%	15.3%	9.3%

3rd Grade ELA CDT Subgroup Results – Fall & Winter

CDT Results by Subgroup											
Assessment	Sub Group	Assessment Window	Assessment Completion			Red Range	Green (Below Midpoint)	Green (Above Midpoint)	Blue Range	Likely Proficient or Advanced	Increase/Decrease in % of Students Performing At/Above Grade Level
			Completed	Required	Rate						
Grade 3 ELA	Black	Fall	637	662	96.2%	91.2%	5.0%	2.7%	1.1%	3.8%	
	Black	Winter	646	674	95.8%	84.1%	9.4%	4.6%	1.9%	6.5%	7.2%
	White	Fall	392	396	99%	59.4%	17.9%	15.1%	7.7%	22.7%	
	White	Winter	394	402	98%	46.2%	22.8%	20.3%	10.7%	31%	13.2%
	IEP	Fall	319	339	94.1%	93.4%	4.1%	2.2%	0.3%	2.5%	
	IEP	Winter	320	346	92.5%	90.3%	5.6%	2.5%	1.6%	4.1%	3.1%
	ELL	Fall	137	151	90.7%	94.2%	3.6%	2.2%	0%	2.2%	
	ELL	Winter	138	151	91.4%	89.1%	7.2%	2.9%	0.7%	3.6%	5%
	Econ Dis	Fall	860	895	96.1%	89.8%	6.7%	2.6%	0.9%	3.5%	
	Econ Dis	Winter	878	914	96.1%	80.3%	12.4%	5.5%	1.8%	7.3%	9.5%

3rd Grade DIBELS Acadience Results (2nd administration)



Completion Rate: 91%

- Oral Reading Fluency: Words Correct
- Oral Reading Fluency: Accuracy
- Oral Reading Fluency: Retell
- Maze

	Above Benchmark
	At Benchmark
	Below Benchmark
	Well Below Benchmark

3rd Grade DIBELS Results by Subgroup (Beginning & Middle of Year)

Grade	Student Group	Assessment Window	Tested Students	Well Below Benchmark	Below Benchmark	At Benchmark	Above Benchmark	Core (At or Above Benchmark)
Grade 03	Black	Beginning of Year	519	40.5%	12.9%	24.7%	22.0%	46.6%
		Middle of Year	519	46.2%	16.6%	20%	17.1%	37.2%
	White	Beginning of Year	363	20.7%	6.9%	22.3%	50.1%	72.5%
		Middle of Year	363	19.8%	11.3%	22.9%	46%	68.9%
	IEP	Beginning of Year	256	66%	7.4%	15.6%	10.9%	26.6%
		Middle of Year	256	68.8%	11.7%	11.7%	7.8%	19.5%
	ELL	Beginning of Year	142	64.1%	7%	18.3%	10.6%	28.9%
		Middle of Year	142	60.6%	14.1%	16.2%	9.2%	25.4%
	Econ. Disadv.	Beginning of Year	748	40.5%	10.4%	25.9%	23.1%	49.1%
		Middle of Year	748	44.3%	15.5%	22.6%	17.6%	40.2%
	All Grade 3	Beginning of Year	1140	33.9%	9.7%	23.6%	32.8%	56.4%
		Middle of Year	1140	36.8%	13.6%	22%	27.6%	49.6%

Superintendent's Evaluation of the Data

Are We on Track to Meet This Year's Goal?

- The 2nd CDT results (15.2% Likely Proficient or Advanced) are consistent with the past two years (15.3% in 2022-23, 15.4% in 2023-24).
- The 3rd CDT results we anticipate will be aligned with prior years (20.9% in 2022-23, 19.6% in 2023-24), suggesting stable performance trends.

Trends in Students Performing on Grade Level

- 2nd CDT "On Grade Level" rates (30.4%) are consistent with past years (30.7% in 2023-24, 29.8% in 2022-23).
- 3rd CDT "On Grade Level" we anticipate may be below last year's (38.3%) but align with the previous trend (37.7% in 2022-23).

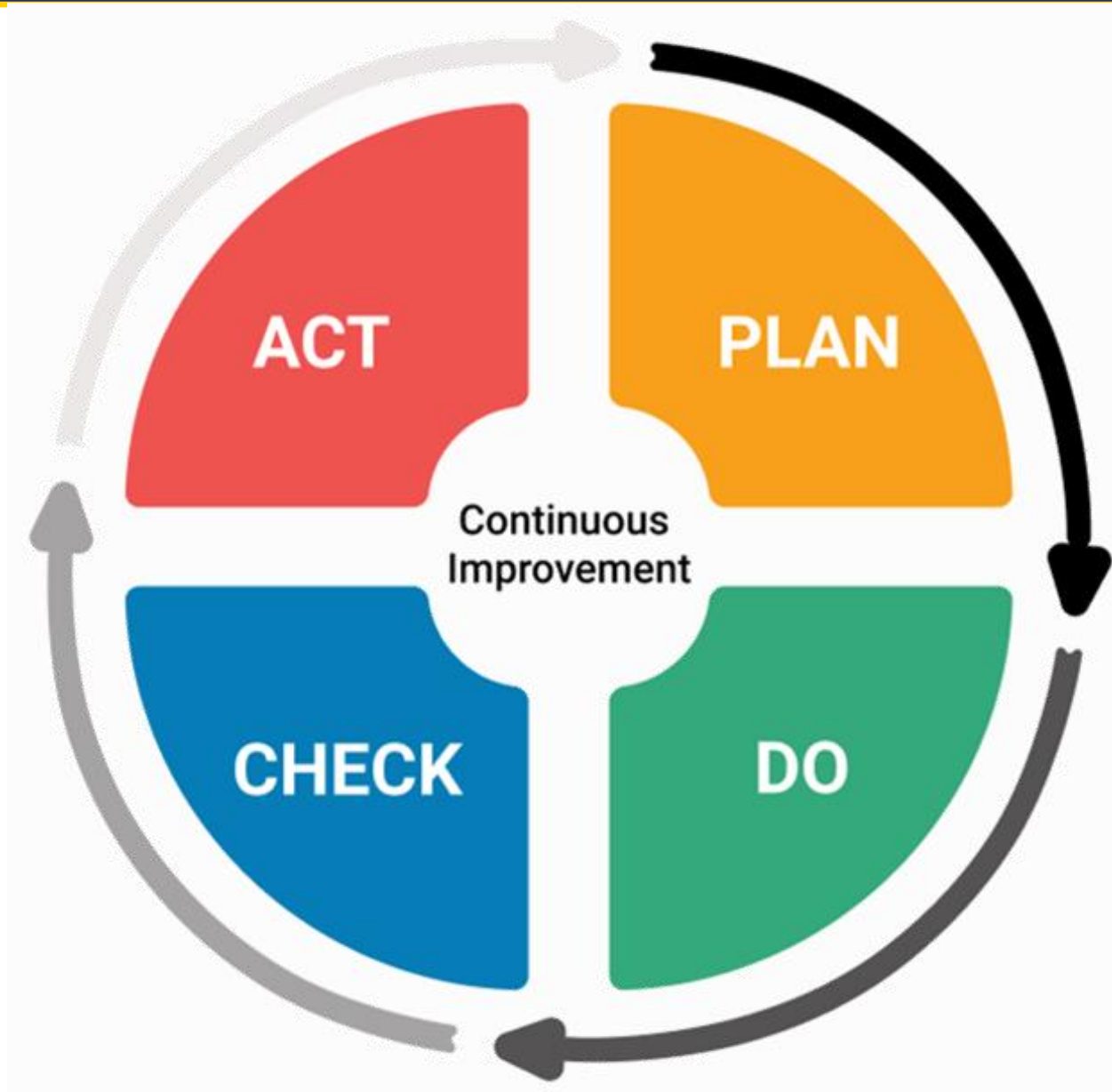
Key Takeaways:

- The diagnostic assessment data indicates stability rather than significant growth, aligning closely with past performance.
- While there is some fluctuation, trends suggest that we are tracking similarly to last year's results leading into the PSSA.
- Given prior years' trends, achieving this year's PSSA goal (49.4% proficiency) will require continued efforts in the remaining months to support growth.

School Year	2 nd CDT Likely Prof/Adv	3 rd CDT Likely Prof/Adv	PSSA Proficiency
22-23	15.3%	20.9%	47.8%
23-24	15.4%	19.6%	46.2%
24-25	15.2%		Goal-49.4%

School Year	2 nd CDT Grade Level and Above	3 rd CDT Grade Level and Above	PSSA Proficiency
22-23	29.8%	37.7%	47.8%
23-24	30.7%	38.3%	46.2%
24-25	30.4%		Goal-49.4%

Strategy and Plan



Strategies

**Best
Practices**

**Focus on
Lesson
Design**



Implementation Timeline

November 2024

11/5/2024
District Professional Learning

11/12/2024
Presentation to the Board of Directors

11/12/2024-12/12/2024
MOY Administration of CDT

11/20/2024
Meeting with Coaches to share expectations

December 2024

12/6/2024
Visual Models Delivered to Schools

12/10-12/2024
Leading and Learning Institute: PL for Principals

12/16/24-1/20/2025
MOY DIBELS Acadience Administration

12/3-19/2024
Prioritized Coaching Cycles Begin Documentation Conferences

January 2025

1/2025
Principal Observations and Feedback

1/13-17/2025
School Visits to Observe Promising Practices

1/24/2025
District Professional Learning

APRIL ASSESSMENTS:

EOY DIBELS Accidence:

Grades 3-5 4/1-4/2025

Grades K-2 4/21-25/2025

PSSA Reading:

Grades 3-5 4/21-25/2025

February 2025

2/11-13/2025
Learning and Leadership Institute for Principals-Addressing challenges

2/13/2025 (on-going)
Assistant Superintendents provide feedback to principals on observations

2/19/2025
Network Session for Principals on DIBELS Acadience and Differentiated Instruction

2/14-24/2025
DIBELS Accidence MOY Data Analysis to Principals

March 2025

2/24/2025 –3/7/2025
EOY Administration of CDT

3/12/2025
Presentation to the Board of Directors

3/21/2025
Teacher Professional Learning-ELA Only

Board Meetings

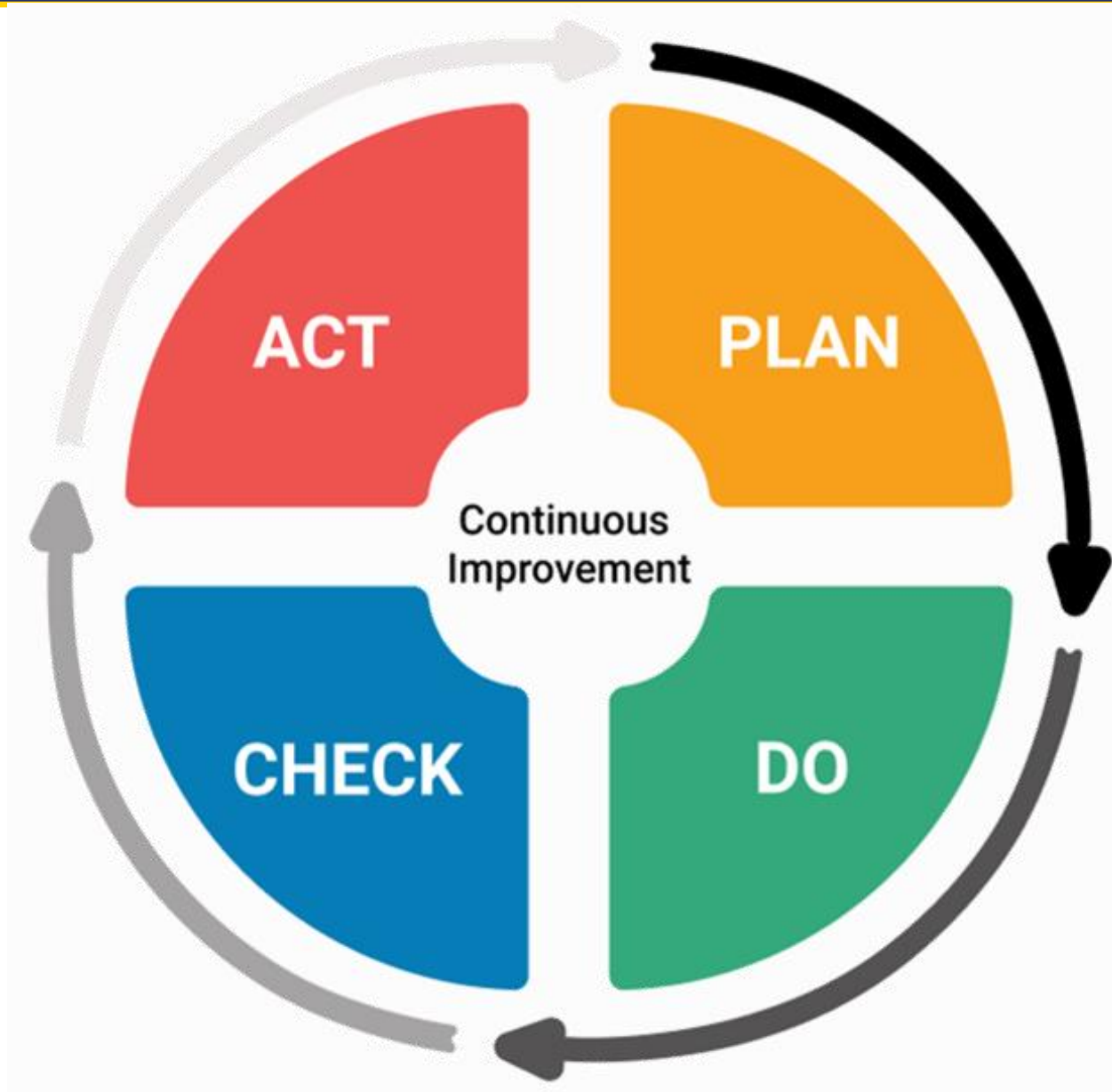
Administration of Assessments

Strategy 1

Strategy 2

Strategy 3

Strategy and Plan



Strategy 1 – Focus on Lesson Design



To support the effective implementation of our new curriculum aligned with the Science of Reading, we will invest in a comprehensive district-wide strategy focused on lesson design that visualizes expectations for all classrooms. This approach aims to empower teachers to effectively execute instructional block periods, encompassing the **foundational skills (green band)**, **reading and responding (red band)**, and **language arts (blue band)** sections utilizing a continuous improvement approach.

Key Components of the Strategy:

Design and Share Visual Models: Create clear, accessible visual models outlining expectations for lesson design. These models will be posted in every classroom, serving as a guide for teachers and a reference to ensure consistency and adherence to the instructional blocks.

Professional Learning and Support: Deploy literacy academic coaches to provide ongoing professional learning opportunities and individualized support. Coaches will collaborate with teachers to deepen understanding and refine lesson planning that adheres to Science of Reading principles.

Teacher Observations: Conduct classroom observations to support teacher practice. These observations will identify areas of strength and opportunities for growth in lesson design and execution. The feedback loop will help reinforce effective teaching practices and ensure alignment with the curriculum's structure.

Rationale: Initial anecdotal evidence suggests varied levels of implementation fidelity. This structured approach to visualizing and supporting lesson design will create clarity, strengthen teachers' instructional practices, and align with the district's objective of consistent, high-quality education. This strategic investment in professional learning, visual guides, and targeted observations will help drive effective instruction across all classrooms, fostering improved student outcomes in reading and language arts.

Strategy 1 – Focus on Lesson Design



Visual Model

Professional Learning & Support



Teacher Observations

Strategy 1 – Focus on Lesson Design Next Steps



Strategy #1: (Do)

- Visuals were created and distributed in December to serve as a guide for lesson design and implementation.
- Professional learning was facilitated for Literacy Academic Coaches, School Leaders, and Teachers. Literacy Academic Coaches also provided job-embedded professional learning for teachers around lesson design.
- Principals have conducted observations and have provided feedback to teachers focusing on lesson design.
- Assistant Superintendents reviewed all principal observations and provided written feedback to principals.

Strategy 1 – Focus on Lesson Design Next Steps



Strategy #1: (Check) Challenges

A key part of this strategy was ensuring teachers consistently followed a structured lesson design to support literacy development. To reinforce expectations, quality control emails were sent to principals, reminding them to ensure that visual lesson progression posters were displayed in a location where both teachers and students could consistently reference them as an incidental learning tool to shape expectations. While many schools successfully integrated lesson progression posters as instructional tools, some faced challenges in positioning them for optimal visibility, which impacted their effectiveness. In addition, time for professional learning with teachers is limited and must be used strategically to maximize its impact on lesson design, ensuring that teachers can effectively implement best practices, differentiate instruction, and respond to student needs.

Strategy #1: (Act) Next Steps

Coaching support will be refined to prioritize direct, real-time feedback for teachers on how to integrate structured lesson design effectively. On-going conferences will be held with coaches to review their instructional support. Additionally, professional learning sessions will be job-embedded to reinforce lesson planning and execution expectations, allowing for sustained engagement. The district will also ensure that school leaders are actively monitoring the implementation of lesson design during their formal observations. This means that principals must commit to observing the entire lesson for at least 90 minutes. Assistant Superintendents will ensure school leaders are actively reviewing observations and providing additional feedback to support principal growth with actionable feedback.

Strategy 2 – Differentiated Instruction



To enhance classroom instruction, we will invest in data-informed differentiated instruction, rooted in Carol Ann Tomlinson's framework of differentiating through content, process, product, and environment, while integrating Culturally Responsive Pedagogy utilizing a continuous improvement approach.

Key Components of the Strategy:

Comprehensive Data Analysis: Create and offer a structured data analysis protocol that analyzes DIBELS and CDT data to inform instructional decisions tailored to diverse student needs.

Professional Learning and Principal Support: Engage principals in providing ongoing professional development on differentiated instruction, including training on Culturally Responsive Pedagogy to support diverse learners.

Technology-Based Tools: Orient teachers and paraprofessionals to digital resources that facilitate individualized student differentiation and include culturally responsive content.

Teacher Observations: Conduct classroom observations to support teacher growth in differentiated instruction, ensuring that practices are culturally inclusive and responsive.

Rationale: This approach aims to address outcome disparities, support student growth in foundational skills, reading, and responding, and foster an inclusive environment that values cultural diversity.

Strategy 2 – Differentiated Instruction



Tech Based Tools



Data Analysis Protocol



Professional Learning & Support



Teacher Observations

Strategy 2 – Differentiated Instruction



Strategy #2: (Do)

- Data collection tools using CDT and DIBELS Acadience data identified trends in growth and areas for support.
- Professional learning was facilitated for coaches, teachers, and principals on differentiated instruction.
- The “6 Step Lesson Plan” from The Reading League was shared with examples and applicable resources to support teachers with planning for data-driven small group instruction within the instructional block (90 minutes) on the districtwide professional learning (January 24, 2025) with 80% attendance.
- Supplemental, technology-based tools, such as Imagine Learning, My Path and Achieve 3000, should be utilized to address students’ individual literacy needs. Professional learning was provided for literacy academic coaches, principals, and teachers.

Strategy 2 – Differentiated Instruction



Strategy #2: (Check) Challenges

To strengthen school leaders' ability to monitor differentiated instruction, an initial LLI session trained principals on providing meaningful, observation-based feedback. They practiced delivering feedback, emphasizing structured coaching. However, many later conducted informal rather than full-period observations, limiting their ability to assess lesson progression and differentiation. A follow-up LLI session reinforced the expectation of full-period observations to ensure fidelity and actionable feedback. Additionally, ongoing efforts focus on developing a data analysis tool that streamlines assessment data while enabling teachers to focus on analysis, goal setting, and strategy development within professional learning communities.

Strategy #2: (Act) Next Steps

To strengthen instructional leadership, PPS is prioritizing formal, structured classroom observations as a key practice. Principals will engage in ongoing training to enhance their ability to assess lesson progression and differentiation effectively. PPS has reinforced the expectation that formal, structured classroom observations are a non-negotiable component of instructional leadership. Principals will receive additional training on conducting in-depth observations that specifically assess lesson progression and differentiation. Additionally, to support accountability, school leaders will be required to submit observation reports detailing their findings and action steps. The district will also create a system for tracking the impact of these observations, ensuring that differentiated instruction practices are consistently monitored and refined.

Strategy 3 – Identify Best Practices



We will study our highest-performing schools to identify best practices based on CDT data. Research indicates that studying these schools can provide valuable insights into successful instructional strategies, leadership, and student engagement methods that can be applied district-wide. This continuous improvement approach would create a data-driven roadmap for school improvement that is both effective and relevant to the district's context.

Key Components of the Strategy:

Data Collection and Analysis: Gather and analyze CDT data from high-performing schools to identify patterns and successful instructional approaches.

Observations: Conduct on-site observations of schools that show strong outcomes to understand practices in real-time.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs): Utilize PLCs for educators to share findings, discuss strategies, and collaborate on best practices informed by the study of effective schools.

Principal Engagement: Involve principals in cross-school partnerships to learn and adopt proven strategies in their own contexts via principal networks.

Professional Learning: Develop training sessions that highlight effective methods from high-performing schools, focusing on how these can be adapted district-wide.

Monitoring and Support: Implement a feedback loop with targeted teacher observations and follow-up support to ensure new practices are effectively integrated.

Rationale: By investing in this strategy, the district can foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement, supporting schools in leveraging data-driven insights and proven methodologies to boost student achievement.

Strategy 3 – Identify Best Practices



Data Collection & Analysis



PLCs



Professional Learning



Observations



Principal Network Engagement

Strategy 3 – Identify Best Practices Next Steps



Strategy #3: (Do)

- Schools with promising practices were identified based on initial performance data.
- Students in these schools are achieving at higher levels with recognized smaller sub-group gaps in achievement compared to other schools.

Strategy 3 – Identify Best Practices Next Steps



Strategy #3: (Check) Challenges

While the district aimed to identify high-impact literacy practices through school visits and data analysis, the findings were inconclusive due to inconsistencies in implementation across schools. The mid-year data from high-performing schools did not align with initial projections, making it more difficult to pinpoint which practices were yielding the strongest results. Additionally, professional learning focused on best practices was deprioritized in some schools as the district worked to first establish consistent implementation of lesson design and differentiated instruction. Furthermore, while strong instructional practices were observed in select classrooms, they largely mirrored existing district guidance rather than revealing new strategies for broader replication.

Strategy #3: (Act) Next Steps

To address these challenges, coaching support will remain focused on solidifying lesson design and differentiated instruction before expanding to broader best practices, ensuring a strong foundation for instructional improvement. Professional learning will be strategically designed to reinforce implementation consistency, providing targeted support for teachers and school leaders. Additionally, we will leverage insights from school visits to refine coaching and professional learning efforts, emphasizing not just knowledge of effective literacy instruction but also the conditions and supports necessary for consistent execution across schools. Finally, we will develop a structured approach to monitoring implementation fidelity and addressing barriers to ensure alignment between instructional practices and student outcomes.

