

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Texas Legislature House Bill 3 (HB 3), passed by the 86th Texas Legislature in June of 2019, requires all Texas Kindergarten (K) through grade-three teachers and principals to attend Texas Reading Academies. The goal of the Texas Reading Academies is to “increase teacher knowledge and implementation of evidence-based practices to positively impact student literacy achievement.” (TEA, 2019). The Texas Commission on Public School Finance final report (2018) noted that student outcome shortfalls were evident in early childhood education. The report further noted that “the most effective and financially efficient way to close educational attainment gaps [...] is through focusing investment on improving student outcomes in early childhood education, before the gaps compound over subsequent years.” (p. 19). To address these issues, Texas Reading Academies were implemented to provide school districts with the flexibility to meet local needs and priorities, such as the selection of study model (comprehensive in-person vs blended), choice of Authorized Provider, and implementation level (local vs direct service).

Starting in 2020-21, the Dallas Independent School District (ISD) became an authorized provider of Texas Reading Academies through the Texas Education Agency (TEA), allowing the district to conduct training using Early Learning specialists as cohort leaders. All elementary campuses will participate in Texas Reading Academies over three-years (2020-2023). Texas Reading Academies plays a critical role in meeting the Dallas ISD Board Goal that 56 percent of students score at the Meets Grade Level or Above (Meets+) standard on grade-three *State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR)* reading by 2025.

The total ESSER¹ budget for the 2022-23 Texas Reading Academies program was \$2,280,925, an increase of 10.2 percent from last year (\$2,068,977). The total budget included:

- \$1,700,000 for stipends, \$425,000 for personnel, and \$115,000 for training materials,
- \$40,925 for supplemental pay for cohort leaders, reading CICs, and cohort leaders training for March 2023.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS/OUTCOMES

How was Texas Reading Academies implemented in 2022-23?

In 2022-23, there were 52 elementary campuses that participated in Texas Reading Academies in Dallas ISD. The program targeted 56 high-priority elementary campuses at Year 1 in 2020-21, and 46 elementary campuses at Year 2 in 2021-22. In 2022-23, Cohort Three of the Texas Reading Academy program included 811 teachers in the English Language Arts pathway, 471 teachers in the Biliteracy pathway, and 194 administrators in the Administrator pathway. Texas Reading Academy Cohort Three included 811 teachers in the English Language Arts pathway, 471 teachers in the Biliteracy pathway, and 194 administrators in the Administrator pathway.²

- Most Texas Reading Academies teachers were female (86%) and had obtained a bachelor's degree (72%). About 51 percent of teachers were Hispanic and 24 percent were African American. The Cohort Three teachers had taught, on average, 9.5 years in the state of Texas. Administrators were predominantly female (74%) and less than one third were African American (31%). About 72 percent had obtained a master's degree or higher.
- Out of the 1,465 Cohort Three learners (i.e., teachers and administrators) participated in Texas Reading Academies in 2022-23, 99.8 percent of learners ($n=1,462$) completed the Texas Reading Academy program³.
- Texas Reading Academies implemented two different PD models in 2022-23: comprehensive and blended. Comprehensive models were live and in-person sessions with a minimum of four coaching touchpoints by the cohort leader, and it was provided to 60 teachers and administrators, while blended models were online self-paced models following a pacing guide with the support of a blended learning facilitator for up to 100 teachers and administrators.

¹ Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund

² Participant list dated 01/11/23 and district personnel file dated 01/05/23. Three teachers were not included in analyses because characteristic data could not be matched.

³ Data were obtained from TXRA staff member 07/12/23. $n=1,465$ excluding 11 participants withdrawing from the program.

What were the perceptions of the Texas Reading Academies Participants?⁴

Teacher Survey

Nearly eighty percent of Cohort Three teachers ($n=233$) responded to the BOY survey. Overall, the percentage of positive responses (i.e., agreed to a moderate or great extent) either remained consistent or increased from BOY to EOY for Cohort Three teachers.

- The percentage of respondents who agreed that their administration strongly supported the HB 3 changes increased from BOY (82%) to EOY (86%). The overall rate increased from BOY (86%) to EOY (92%) when respondents were asked if they valued the changes by the HB 3 Reading Academies.
- There were positive responses when teachers were asked if they felt capable of making the kinds of changes needed for HB 3 Reading Academies, the overall rate increased from BOY (79%) to EOY (88%).
- The rate of positive responses gradually increased from BOY to EOY when respondents were asked if (a) the HB 3 changes helped their students reach higher levels of achievements (86% to 92%) and (b) teachers at their school strongly supported the HB 3 changes (76% to 87%).

While teacher perceptions regarding campus collaboration and coach increased from EOY to BOY.

- The rate of positive responses increased from BOY to EOY when respondents were asked if (a) weekly teacher meetings were a valuable opportunity to collaborate with colleagues (59% to 68%) and (b) there was a strong building level communication around teaching reading (55% to 68%).
- Teachers' rating that they had frequent opportunities to share ideas about how to teach reading better increased from BOY (58%) to EOY (69%).
- The rate of positive responses increased from BOY (59%) to EOY (61%) when teachers were asked whether the CIC provided effective assistance in teaching reading, and it increased from BOY (58%) to EOY (70%) when asked if the early learning instructional specialist provided effective assistance in reading.

At EOY survey, teachers were asked to identify the best parts of their Reading Academy experience. Of the 493 respondents who answered this question (68% of sample), they most often reported that that "everything of Reading Academies" (18%) was the best part of the program,

followed by "learning experience" (15%), "reading strategies" (13%), "collaboration with peers and teachers" (6%), "support in learning and teaching" (6%), "implementation of strategies and ideas" (5%), and "teaching and learning ideas" (4%). At EOY, teachers also responded that their experience could have been improved by "having fewer modules and assignments" (8%), "having more time to complete modules/being less time consuming" (6%), "having it on weekdays" (6%), and "making sessions shorter/less time consuming" (4%).

Administrator Survey

Of the 33 Cohort Three administrators who received a BOY survey invitation, 24 (73%) completed the survey and were included in the analyses. Additionally, 109 Cohort Three administrators received an EOY survey invitation and 100 (92%) completed at least part of the survey. Overall, the rate of positive responses (i.e., agree to a moderate or great extent) increased from BOY to EOY.

- The rate of positive responses increased from BOY to EOY when respondents were asked if (a) teachers at their schools strongly supported HB 3 changes (83% to 91%) and (b) HB 3 changes helped their student reach higher levels of achievement (88% to 93%).
- The percentage of administrators who reported that they valued the kind of changes called for by the HB3 Reading Academies increased from BOY (88%) to EOY (94%).
- The rate of administrators who agreed that they were capable of supporting the kinds of changes called for by the HB3 reading academies increased by one percentage point from BOY to EOY (79% to 88%).

Overall, administrators' responses to campus collaboration and coach effectiveness items were positive at both BOY and EOY.

- The rate of administrators who agreed that the instructional specialist provided effective assistance in teaching reading increased from BOY (71%) to EOY (80%).
- The rate of positive responses also increased from BOY (79%) to EOY (84%) when respondents were asked if there were frequent opportunities to share the ideas about better teaching.
- The rate of administrators who agreed that they had been able to integrate HB3 reading academies into their work increased from BOY (75%) to EOY (83%).
- However, the positive responses decreased from BOY to EOY when respondents were asked if (a) weekly

⁴ As HB 3 was used in the surveys in lieu of Texas Reading Academies, the survey results report HB 3 instead of Texas Reading Academies to accurately reflect the wording of the surveys.

teacher meetings were a valuable opportunity to collaborate with colleagues (92% to 86%) and (b) there was a strong building level communication around teaching reading (92% to 80%).

P.D. Survey

The PD survey was conducted in May 2023. Teachers and administrators rated the organization and quality of presentation after session participation.

- Most participants somewhat agreed or strongly agreed that the sessions were well organized and effectively presented (97.6%) and that the presenter or presenters effectively communicated the session content (98%).
- Most participants indicated that that the session content was relevant (94.6%) and they would incorporate elements of the session in their teaching (95%).

What were the student academic outcomes at Texas Reading Academies campuses?

Results should be viewed with caution because Texas Reading Academies Cohort One, Cohort Two and Cohort Three campuses were selected due to previous low performance and Cohort Three teachers may not have received all PD in time to implement it in the 2022-23 school year. Assessment results are presented in Table 1.

TX-KEA

The ESSER-related goal that at least 63 percent of students would score at or above grade level (*On Track*) on TX-KEA Blending was met.

Sixty-six percent of Cohort One, Cohort Two, and district overall scored *On Track* on TX-KEA Blending (66%, respectively), and 65 percent of K students at Cohort Three scored *On Track*.

- For Cohort One, the one-year change in the percentage of students scoring *On Track* on TX-KEA Blending increased by four percentage points from 62% in 2021-22 to 66% in 2022-23.

MAP

The program goals that 32 percent of grade one and 35 percent of grade two students scoring at or above the 50th percentile on MAP were met, respectively.

- For grade one, a slightly higher proportion of students in Cohort Three (43%) scored at or above the 50th percentile than Cohort One and Cohort Two ad district overall (42%, respectively).
- For grade two, the rates of students in Cohort One, Cohort Three and district overall (44%, respectively) were slightly higher than Cohort Two (43%).

- For Cohort One, the one-year change (2021-22 to 2022-23) in the percentage of students scoring at or above the 50th percentile on MAP increased by nine percentage points for K students (38% to 47%), increased by six percentage points for grade-one (36% to 42%), and increased by four percentage points for grade-two (40% to 44%).
- This trend was also evident in the overall district data from 2021-22 to 2022-23: Grade K (38% to 47%), Grade One (36% to 42%), and Grade Two (40% to 44%).

STAAR

The ESSER-related goal that at least 41 percent of grade three students would meet the standard of Meeting+ on the STAAR reading for cohort three was met. Overall, a higher proportion of Grade-Three Texas Reading Academies Cohort Three students met the standard (Approaches+: 68%), than Cohort One, Cohort Two, and district overall (67%, respectively).

- For Cohort One grade-three students, the one-year change in the percentage of students scoring at STAAR standards slightly decreased by 0.5 percentage points for Meets+ (41.5% to 41.0%).

Table 1: 2021-22 to 2022-23 Percentage of Students Performing At or Above Grade Level on Reading Assessments by Year, Cohort, Grade, and Assessment

Exam	2021-22			2022-23			
	RA1 %	RA2 %	DISD %	RA1 %	RA2 %	RA3 %	DISD %
Kindergarten							
TX-KEA	62	61	61	66	66	65	66
MAP	38	41	38	46	48	48	47
Grade One							
MAP	36	35	36	42	42	43	42
Grade Two							
MAP	41	40	40	44	43	44	44
Grade Three							
S-Appr+	69	64	67	67	67	68	67
S-Meet+	42	38	40	41	41	41	41
S-Mast	25	23	24	18	18	18	18

Source: Public Education Information Management System district database: 11/01/21 (2021-22) and 05/12/23 (2022-23). TX-KEA: 06/17/22 (2021-22) and 07/21/23 (2022-23). MAP: 06/22/22 (2021-22) and 06/25/23 (2022-23). STAAR: 06/26/22 (2021-22) and 08/12/23 (2022-23).

Note: % = Percentage of students at standard. DISD = Dallas ISD. Appr+ = Approaches+. Meet+ = Meets+. Mast = Masters. RA = Reading Academies. S = STAAR.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue monitoring the performance of students at Cohort One, Cohort Two, and Cohort Three Texas Reading Academies campuses. The academic achievement of students at Texas Reading Academies campuses (Cohort One, Cohort Two, and Cohort Three)

was similar to or slightly higher than students at district overall on *TX-KEA* Blending, *MAP* and *STAAR* reading. While the program ended at the conclusion of the 2022-23 school year, it is helpful to continue to keep track of student reading achievement progress in future years in order to monitor progress toward the district's goal that 56 percent of students attain the Meets Grade Level or Above (Meets+) performance standard on grade-three *STAAR* reading by 2025.

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