A Goal Monitoring Conversation:

PPS 3rd Grade English Language Arts







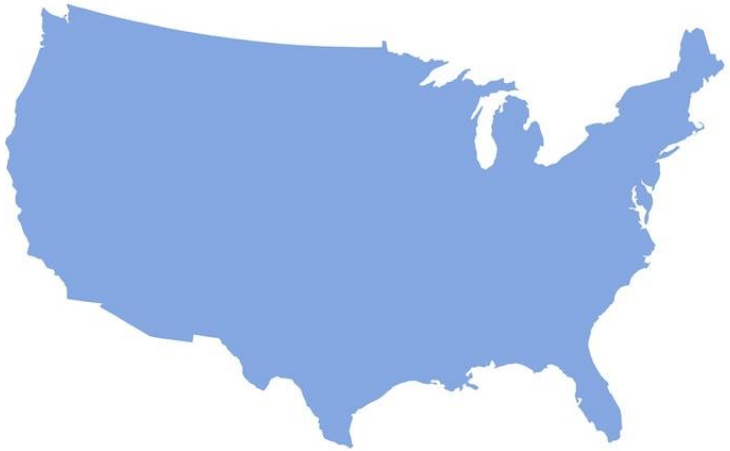
Dr. Wayne N. Walters & Leadership Team

December 9, 2025

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National and State Performance Context

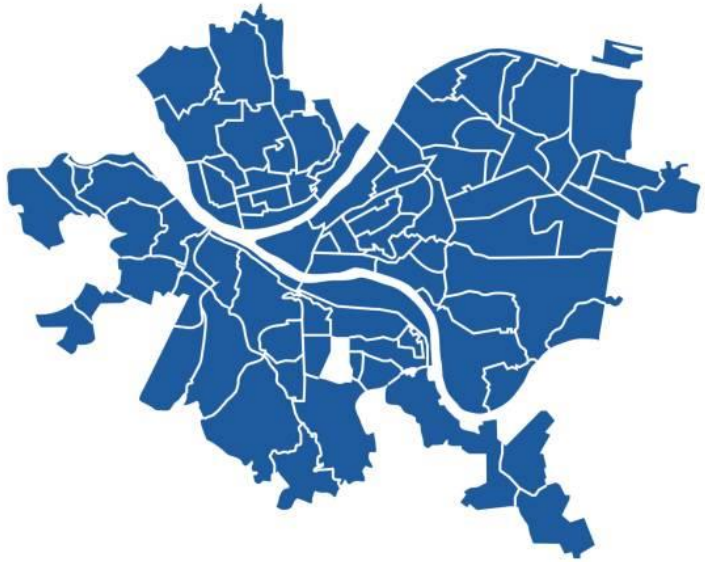


While NAEP (The Nation's Report Card) does *not* test 3rd graders directly, its 2024 4th-grade results show that **31% of students nationally are reading at the 'Proficient' level**.



While NAEP (The Nation's Report Card) does *not* test 3rd graders directly, its 2024 4th-grade results show that **33% of students in PA are reading at the 'Proficient' level.**

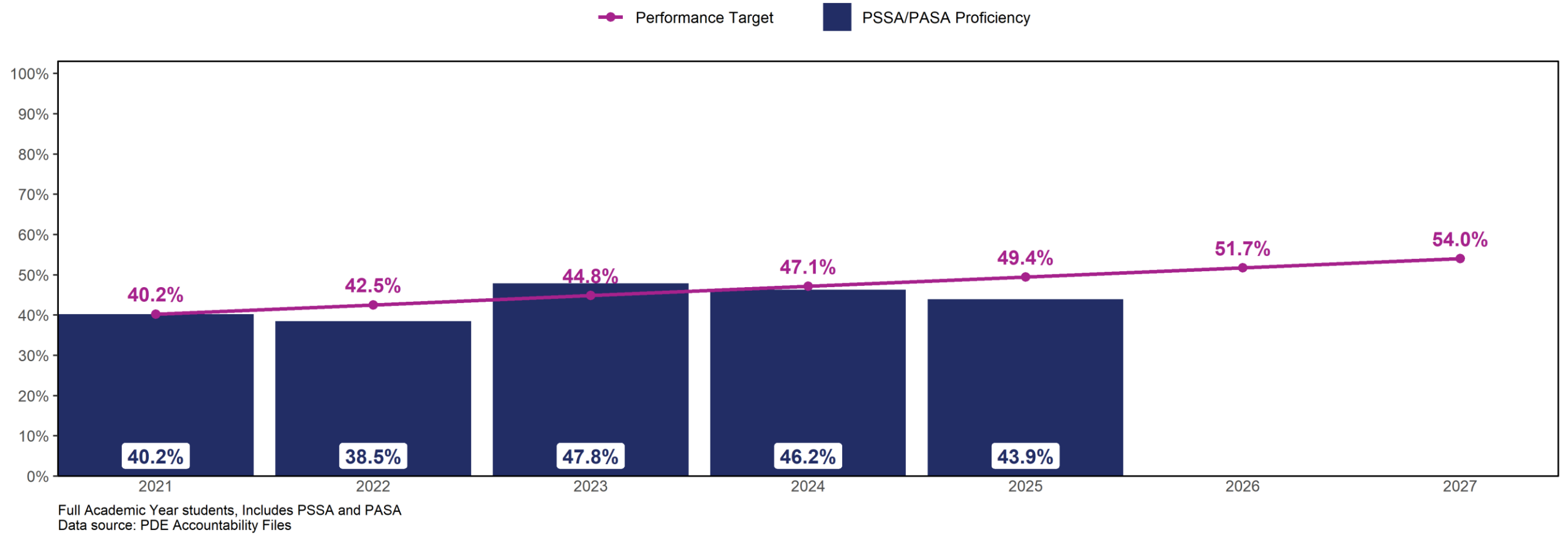
In what ways do national and state benchmarks help us better understand where PPS stands?



3rd Grade ELA Proficiency (By Year)

3rd Grade Reading

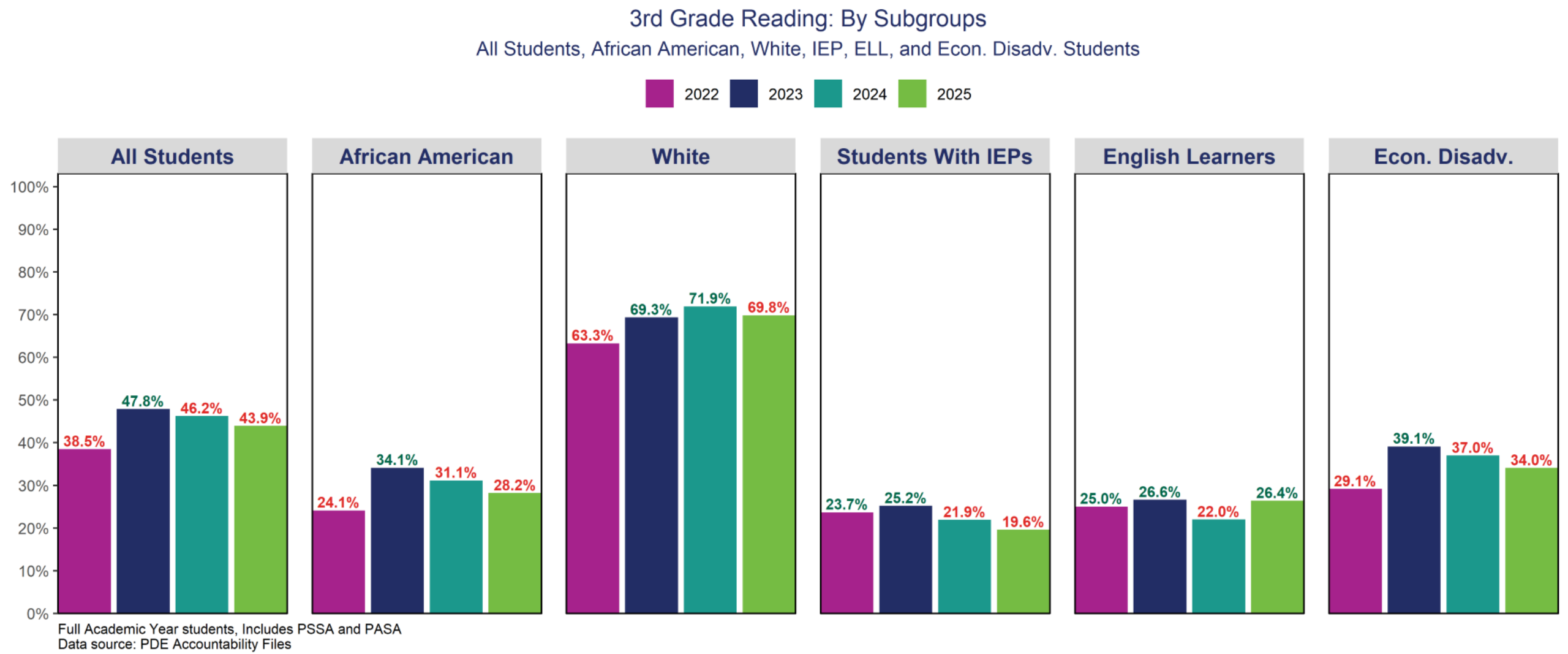
Goal: By the end of the 2026-27 school year, 54% of students in grade 3 will be proficient on the state's PSSA and PASA English Language Arts assessment. At the end of the 2020-21 school year, 40.20% of students in grade 3 were proficient.



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

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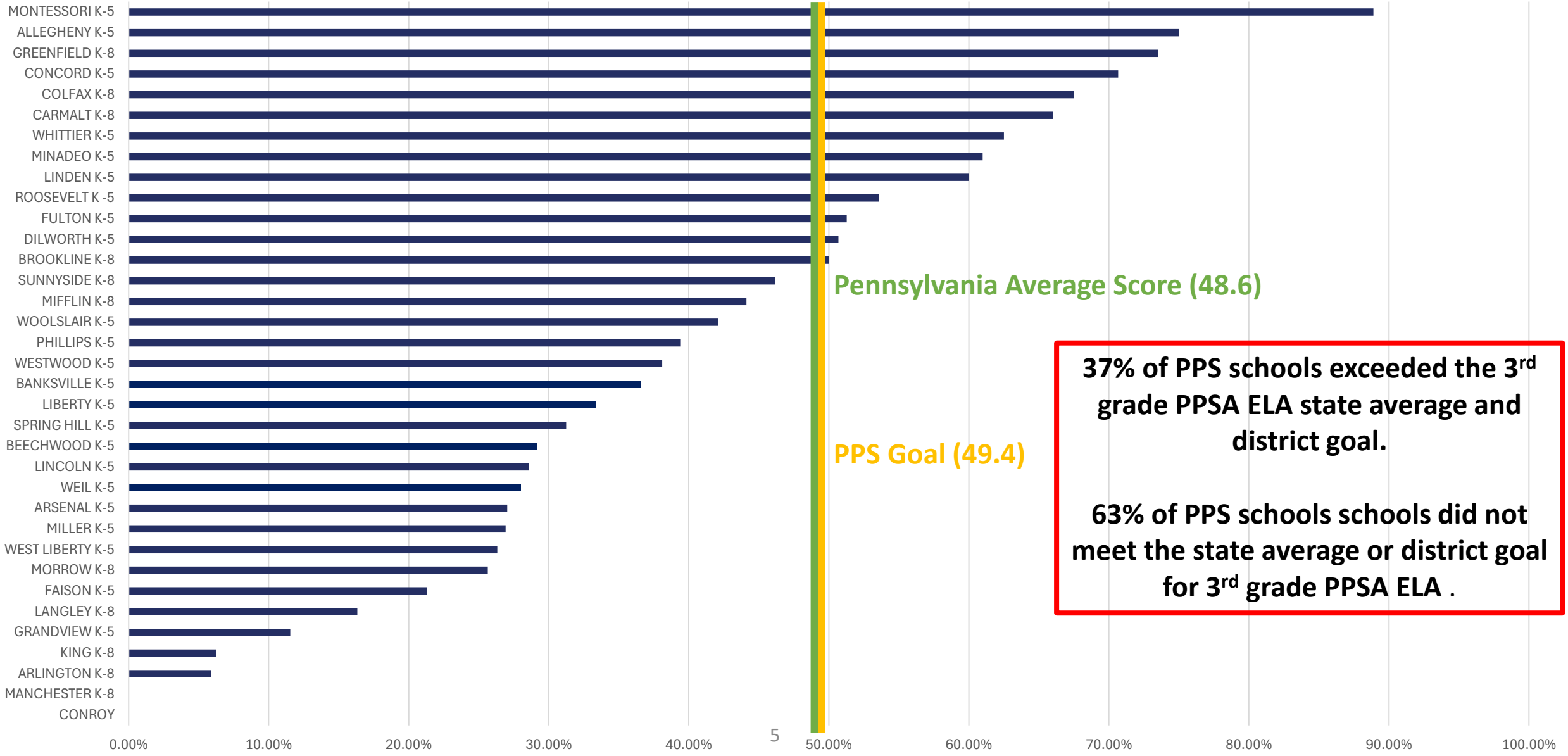
3rd Grade ELA Proficiency (By Subgroups) 22-25



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

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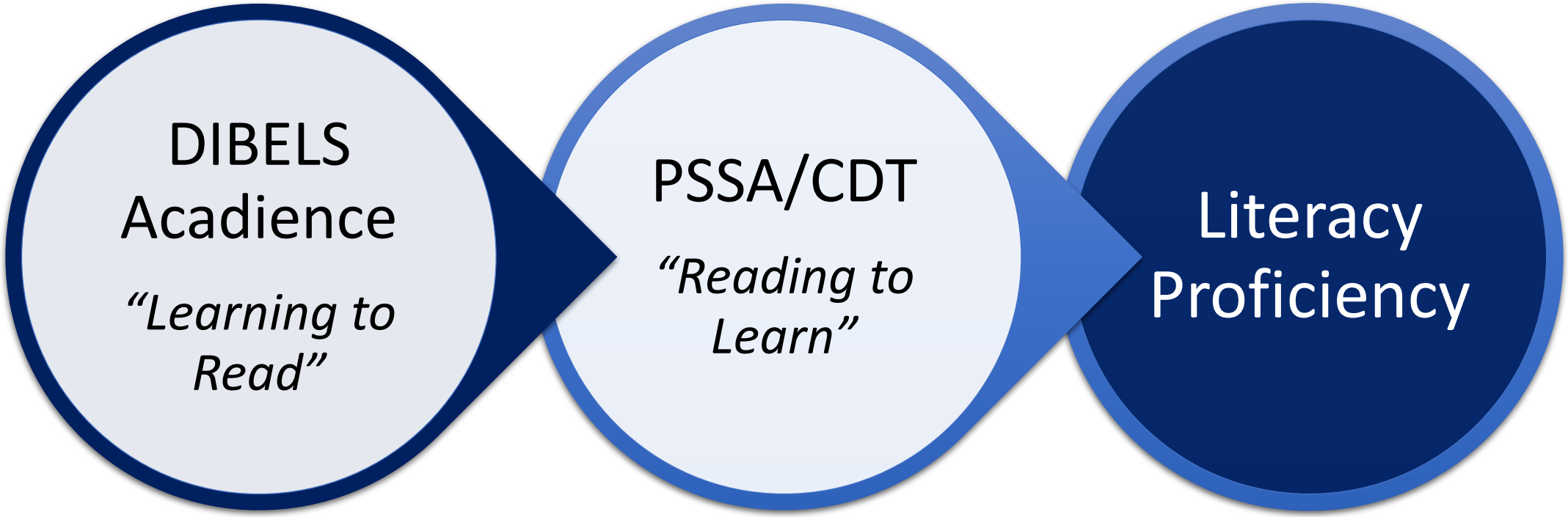
3rd Grade ELA Proficiency (By School) 24-25



37% of PPS schools exceeded the 3rd grade PPSA ELA state average and district goal.

63% of PPS schools schools did not meet the state average or district goal for 3rd grade PPSA ELA .

DIBELS Acadience vs. PSSA by School 24-25

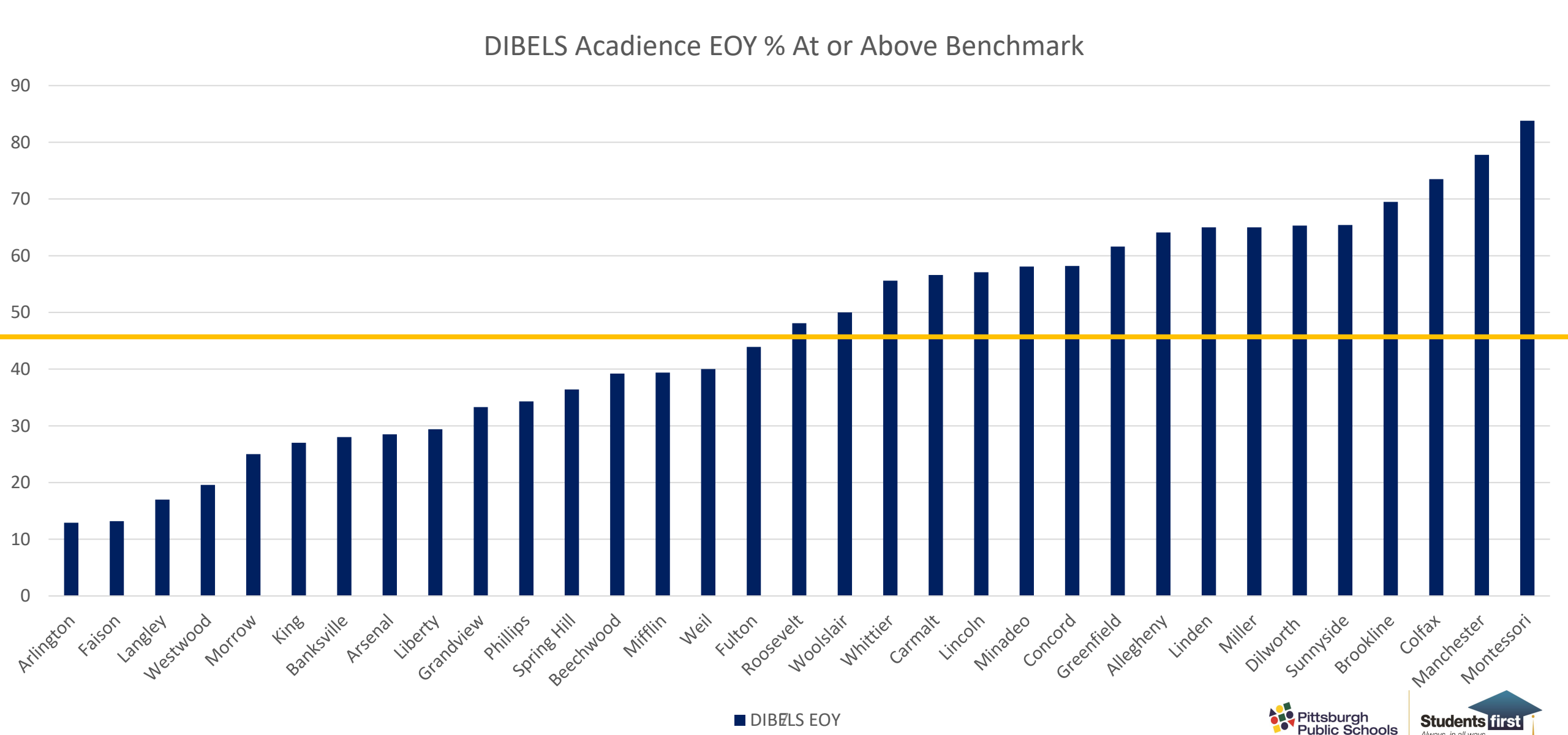


- Oral Reading Fluency—Words Correct
- Oral Reading Fluency—Accuracy
- Oral Reading Fluency—Retell
- Maze

- Key Ideas and Details
- Craft and Structure
- Vocabulary Acquisition
- Conventions of Standard English

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3rd Grade DIBELS Acadience Results by School 24-25



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3rd Grade ELA EOY Proficiency CDT 24-25

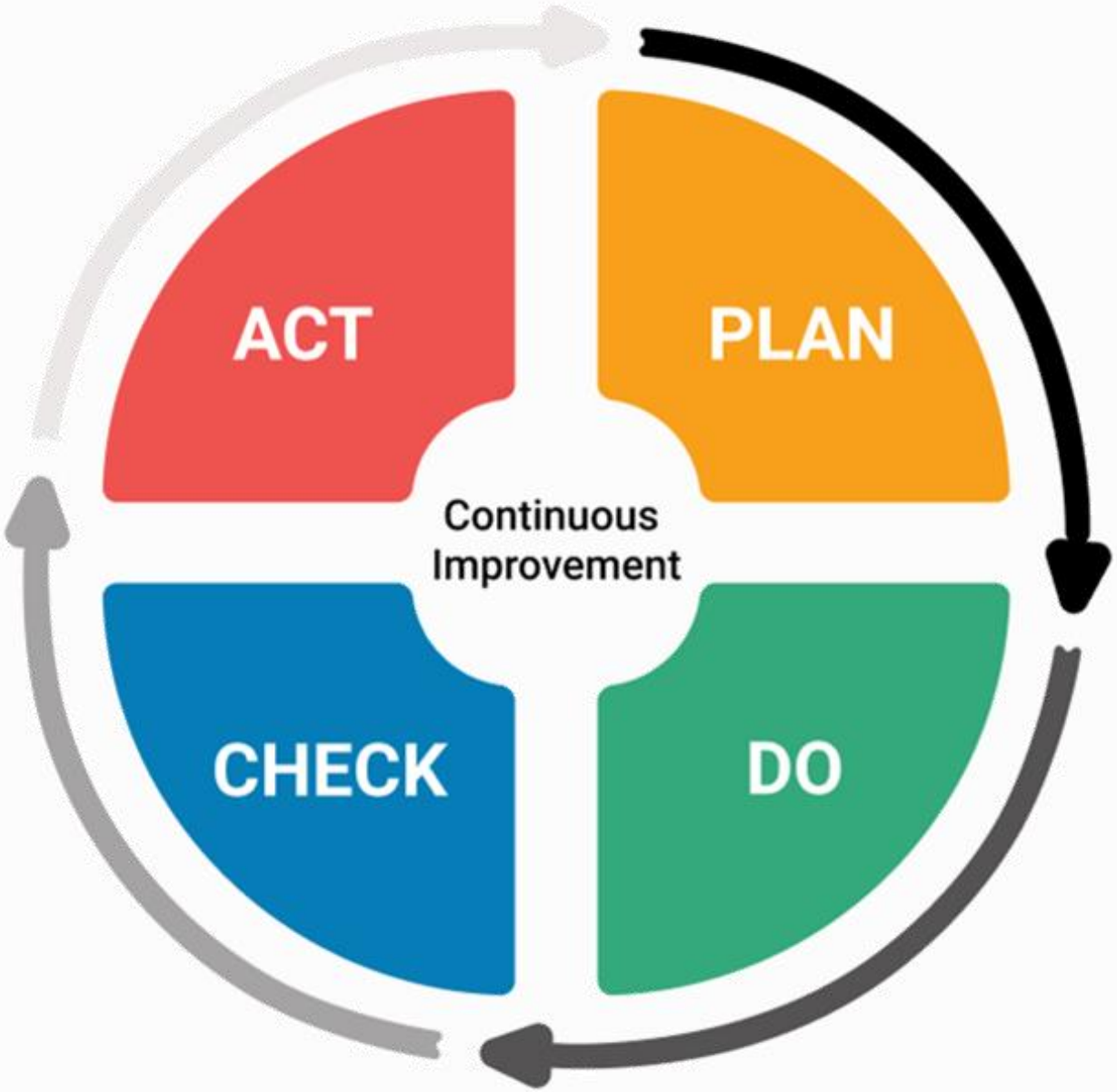
			SY2024-25 CDT Results by Subgroup							
Assessment	Sub Group	Assessment Window	Assessment Completion			Red Range	Green (Below Midpoint)	Green (Above Midpoint)	Blue Range	Likely Proficient or Advanced
			Completed	Required	Rate					
Grade 3 ELA	Black	Spring	635	669	94.9%	77.0%	12.8%	7.6%	2.7%	10.2%
	White	Spring	388	393	98.7%	41.0%	20.4%	21.4%	17.3%	38.7%
	IEP	Spring	321	345	93.0%	86.0%	9.0%	3.1%	1.9%	5.0%
	ELL	Spring	139	144	96.5%	82.0%	10.1%	7.2%	0.7%	7.9%
	Econ. Disadv.	Spring	867	905	95.8%	73.4%	14.6%	9.3%	2.7%	12.0%

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Assessment	Sub Group	Assessment Window	Assessment Completion			Red Range	Green (Below Midpoint)	Green (Above Midpoint)	Blue Range	Likely Proficient or Advanced
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Grade 3 ELA	Black	Spring	635	669	94.9%	77.0%	12.8%	7.6%	2.7%	10.2%
	White	Spring	388	393	98.7%	41.0%	20.4%	21.4%	17.3%	38.7%
	IEP	Spring	321	345	93.0%	86.0%	9.0%	3.1%	1.9%	5.0%
	ELL	Spring	139	144	96.5%	82.0%	10.1%	7.2%	0.7%	7.9%
	Econ. Disadv.	Spring	867	905	95.8%	73.4%	14.6%	9.3%	2.7%	12.0%

Teacher Professional Learning- Active Coaching Minutes 24-25



Strategy and Plan 24-25



- **November 2024:** Implemented three strategies for improved student outcomes
  - **Focus on Lesson Design**
  - **Differentiated Instruction**
  - **Best Practices**
- Despite our efforts, the goal for ELA proficiency for 3rd grade students (49.4%) **was not met**.

Literacy Efforts 24-25

Focus on Lesson Design

- Visual Models
- Principal, Teacher Professional Learning
- Prioritized Coaching Cycles
- Principal Observations and Feedback (Asst. Sup. Support)

Differentiated Instruction (DI)

- Principal, teacher Professional Learning
- Network professional learning on DIBELS Acadience and DI
- DIBELS Acadience data analysis with principals

Best Practices

- Deep Data Analysis
- Principal/Teacher Interviews
- School Visits to Observe Promising practices

Successes

Stronger professional learning systems

Growing culture of data-informed practice

Enhanced teacher focus on core literacy components

Leadership engagement in monitoring instruction

Improved collaboration between teachers and coaches

Increased instructional consistency

Expanded use of differentiated instruction

Literacy Effort Challenges 24-25

Focus on Lesson Design

- Mixed response and compliance
- Varied fidelity and follow through
- Accountability systems inconsistent
- Need for deeper observation and feedback
- Communication gaps
- Limited/split professional learning time
- Data collection to document support varied

Differentiated Instruction

- New DIBELS Acadience Data management system
- Limited/split professional learning time
- Limited evidence of recommended digital DI tools

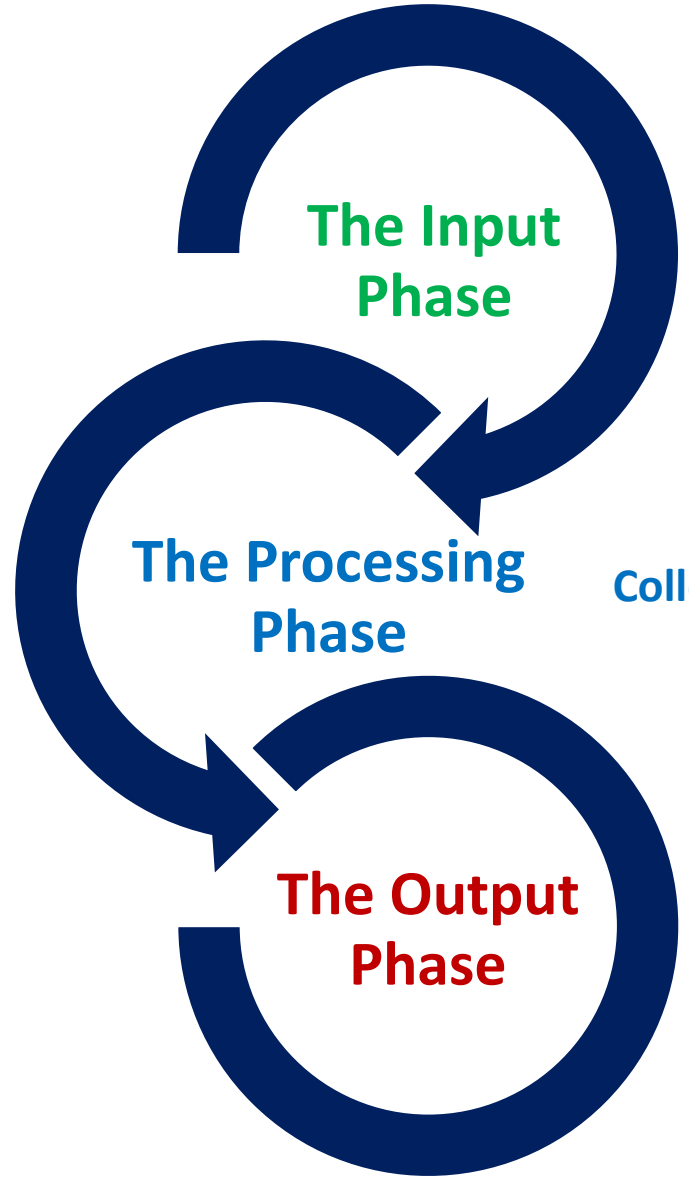
Best Practices

- Inconsistent data trends
- Observed best practices, but unable to transfer to scale

General:
Multiple Priorities (3rd grade Mathematics)

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Literacy Effort Lessons Learned 24-25



Feedback

Multiple role groups

Professional Learning

Leveraging other content areas

Coaching

Collective responsibility

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Progress monitoring

Assessment

Accountability

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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 infused with the Science of Reading to elevate student outcomes and foster liberated, literate learners. Despite overall proficiency rates having improved from the baseline year, we acknowledge that more improvement is needed across the district and that disparities in outcomes by race and for students with disabilities persist across the District

What?

By the end of the 25-26 school year, 51.7% 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

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3rd Grade DIBELS Acadience Results 25-26

Student Group	Assessment Window	Tested Students	Well Below Benchmark	Below Benchmark	At Benchmark	Above Benchmark	Core (At or Above Benchmark)
Grade 03	Beginning of Year	1304	35.4%	11.0%	22.3%	31.4%	53.7%

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	605	40.7%	14.4%	23.8%	21.2%	45.0%
	White	Beginning of Year	383	21.4%	6.0%	21.7%	50.9%	72.6%
	IEP	Beginning of Year	281	62.3%	9.6%	11.4%	16.7%	28.1%
	ELL	Beginning of Year	164	63.4%	9.8%	14.6%	12.2%	26.8%
	Econ. Disadv.	Beginning of Year	866	42.5%	13.7%	23.2%	20.6%	43.8%

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3rd Grade DIBELS Acadience Results BOY 25-26

Oral Reading Fluency—Words Correct: 54%
Oral Reading Fluency—Accuracy: 58%
Oral Reading Fluency—Retell: 53%
Maze: 44%

- The data indicate that a substantial portion of students are not yet reading fluently or comprehending text at grade level. Fluency and comprehension are both areas of need, with comprehension (Maze and Retell) slightly weaker than basic reading accuracy. This points to a need for targeted literacy instruction focusing on decoding, fluency practice, and comprehension strategies.
- The data show that many students are behind in the foundational skills that the Science of Reading identifies as essential for strong literacy outcomes. Strengthening instruction in these areas aligns directly with SoR principles and provides a roadmap for accelerating growth.

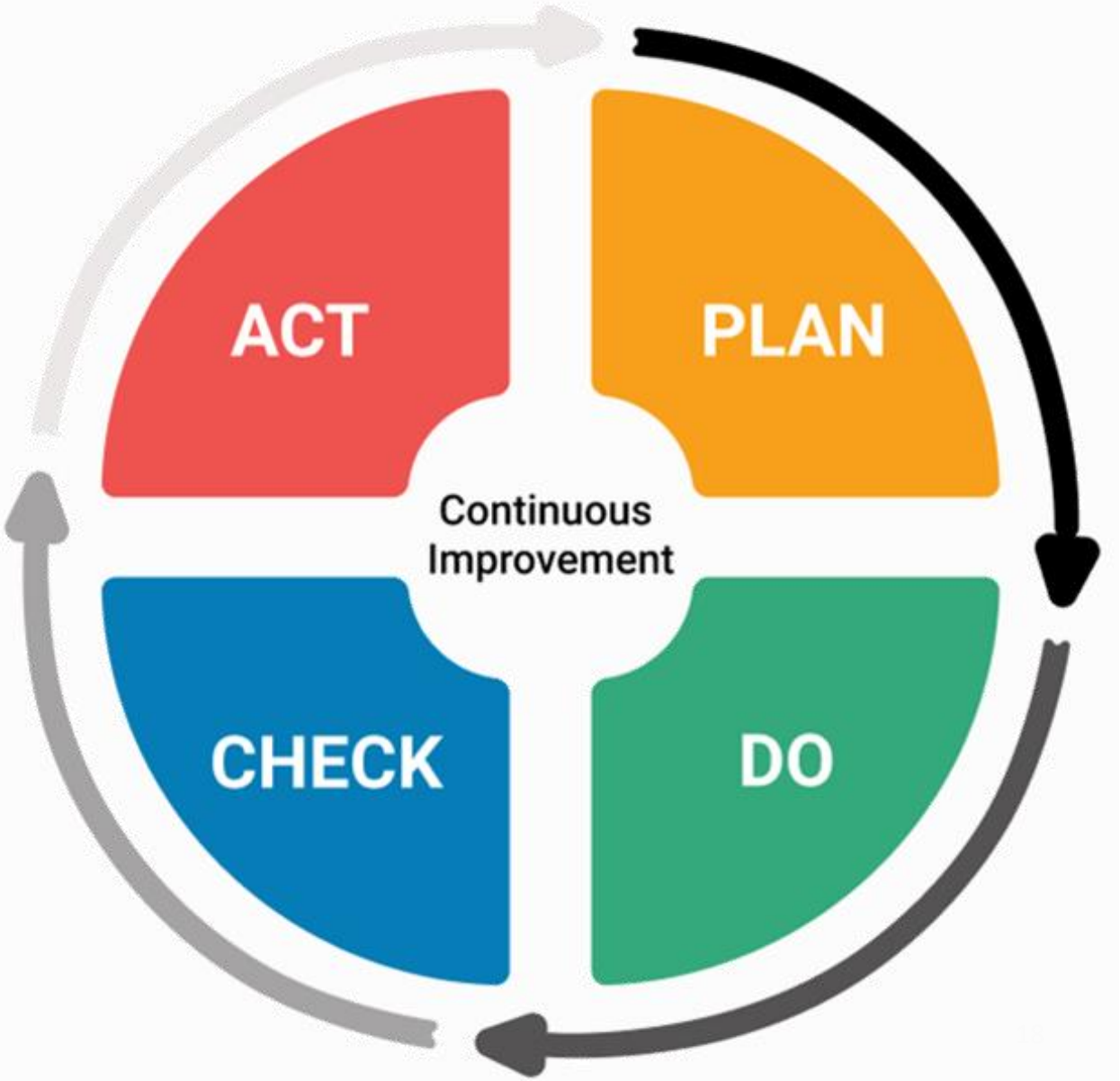
3rd Grade ELA BOY Proficiency CDT 25-26

SY2025-26 CDT Results by Grade									
Assessment	Assessment Window	Assessment Completion			Red Range	Green (Below Midpoint)	Green (Above Midpoint)	Blue Range	Likely Proficient or Advanced
		Completed	Required	Rate					
Grade 3 ELA	Fall	1343	1397	96.1%	79.7%	11.4%	6.1%	2.8%	8.9%

SY2025-26 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
			Completed	Required	Rate					
Grade 3 ELA	Black	Fall	628	663	94.7%	91.6%	5.9%	2.1%	0.5%	2.5%
	White	Fall	387	396	97.7%	59.2%	20.4%	13.2%	7.2%	20.4%
	IEP	Fall	303	332	91.3%	92.4%	4.3%	2.6%	0.7%	3.3%
	ELL	Fall	170	178	95.5%	95.3%	4.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Econ. Disadv.	Fall	877	915	95.8%	90.2%	6.6%	3.1%	0.1%	3.2%

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Strategy and Plan 25-26



1. **Align strategy with Science of Reading Research**
2. **Strengthen return on investment and partnerships**
3. **Establish explicit accountability and support structures**

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Academic Coaching

Active Coaching: Modeling, Co-teaching, Demonstrating, Co-planning, On-the-spot, Focused Visit, PLC, Providing Resources, Data Analysis for Informed Action, Professional Learning, Assessment Support/Administration

Coaches are required to model and demonstrate in classrooms.

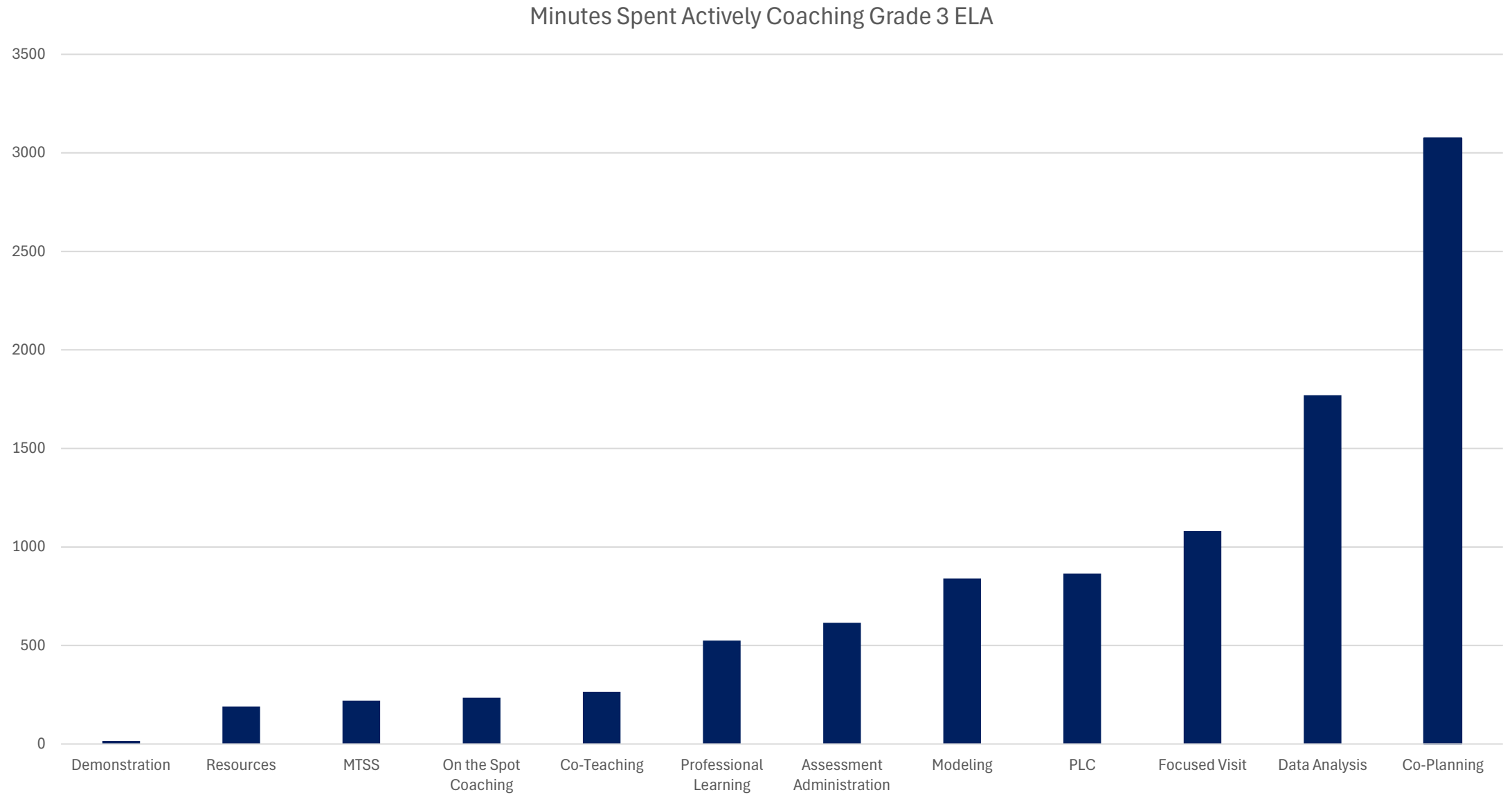
Coaches support the administration of assessments (DIBELS Acadience).

K-5 and K-8 Coaches are split between 3 schools (13).

The beginning-of-year data is consistent with expected trends, including co-planning, data analysis, and focused visits.

Challenges: Incomplete data sets from coaches (5), limited time, teacher absences, etc.

Teacher Professional Learning- Active Coaching Minutes 3rd grade ELA 25-26



Limited/no data for Allegheny K-5, Beechwood, Spring Hill, Weil, Dilworth, King, Langley, Mifflin, Phillips, Manchester, Arsenal K-5.

1. Align Strategy with Science of Reading

To strengthen literacy outcomes and ensure coherence across classrooms, we will implement a district-wide strategy aligned with the Science of Reading. This strategy will focus on lesson design, instructional practice, and professional learning that make the expectations for high-quality literacy instruction visible and actionable in every classroom. Through this alignment, teachers will deliver differentiated, data-informed instruction within the literacy block—encompassing foundational skills (green band), reading and responding (red band), and language arts (blue band)—as part of a continuous improvement process that ensures all students receive targeted support to meet their individual learning needs.

Key Components of the Strategy:
Professional Learning and Support: Teachers will engage in explicit, systematic, and data-driven instructional practices that reflect the evidence base for how students learn to read and write. There will be a mandatory asynchronous Science of Reading professional learning series for all K-3 teachers as a cornerstone for improving literacy outcomes.
Curriculum and Instruction: Develop a Science of Reading Playbook with embedded QR codes linking to exemplary lessons, strategy videos, and classroom look-fors for immediate teacher and principal use.
State Assessment Expectations: Ensure all teachers understand, not only the content of instruction, but also how students are assessed on state assessments. Conduct an item analysis to strengthen alignment between teaching and texted expectations.

Rationale: Recent district data show a decline in reading and language arts performance, highlighting the need for coherent, consistent instruction. By aligning our strategy with the Science of Reading, we ensure all aspects of literacy—from professional learning and lesson design to classroom practice—are evidence-based. This unified framework clarifies expectations, strengthens teacher expertise, and uses data to guide instruction. Through targeted professional learning, coaching, and clear instructional tools, we will build teacher capacity, foster consistency, and accelerate literacy growth for all students.

1. Align Strategy with Science of Reading

Measuring Impact:

Professional Learning and Support

- **Metrics:** Completion rates for the mandatory asynchronous Science of Reading professional learning series, observation data showing increased implementation of evidence-based practices.
- **Evidence of Accountability:** Teacher reflection surveys and post-learning assessments demonstrating understanding and application of Science of Reading principles, principal and coach observation tools aligned to the playbook used to verify practice implementation.

Curriculum and Instruction

- **Metrics:** Completion and districtwide distribution of the Science of Reading Playbook, frequency of use of embedded QR resources (lesson exemplars, videos, classroom look-fors), observation data demonstrating consistent lesson design and instructional coherence across classrooms.
- **Evidence of Accountability:** Lesson plans and classroom walk-through documentation, principal reports verifying alignment of classroom instruction with the Science of Reading.

State Assessment Expectations

- **Metrics:** Completion of item analysis by grade level and content area teams, alignment documentation connecting classroom tasks to state assessment standards, teacher participation in assessment literacy professional learning sessions.
- **Evidence of Accountability:** Use of assessment data in PLCs to inform instruction and target skill gaps, integration of tested skills and question types into daily instruction and formative assessment cycles.

Overall Accountability Measures: Regular **progress monitoring cycles** (quarterly) using student outcome and implementation data. Integration of **Science of Reading-aligned indicators** into teacher observation and coaching tools. Ongoing **data-informed professional learning** to ensure continuous improvement and sustainability.

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2. Strengthen Return on Investment

To maximize the impact of district investments in literacy resources, we will implement a structured strategy that ensures **high-fidelity implementation, measurable student outcomes, and sustainable capacity-building** through strong publisher and research-based partnerships.

Key Components of the Strategy:

Core Resource Evaluation and Response: Leverage a 3rd party evaluation of our recently adopted core resource and its alignment to the Science of Reading research and develop a response for the gaps identified. Identify evidence of student impact.

Publisher Partnerships: Strengthen partnerships with our materials vendors and define how they can support us with ensuring implementation is done with fidelity and impact is observed through school-based coaching, professional learning, and co-analysis of student work and data.

Set Mutual Accountability Expectations: Set expectations with the publishers of our literacy resources to ensure alignment to our PPS outcomes and capacity-building goals.

Leverage Local and Research Backed Partnerships: Partner with universities, literacy organizations, and research-based experts to guide implementation, inform professional learning and coaching, and ensure instructional materials drive improved student outcomes.

Rationale: District investments in literacy resources provide a key opportunity to accelerate learning and strengthen instruction. However, inconsistent implementation limits their impact. By evaluating resources, leveraging expertise, and fostering accountability, the district ensures materials are used strategically to support high-quality instruction, measurable student outcomes, and sustainable teacher capacity—creating equitable learning opportunities for all students.

2. Strengthen Return on Investment

Measuring Impact:

Core Resource Evaluation and Response

- **Metrics:** Completion of the 3rd party evaluation report and documented response plan for gaps.
- **Evidence of Accountability:** Actionable adjustments to curriculum, lesson plans, and teacher supports based on evaluation findings.

Publisher Partnerships

- **Metrics:** Frequency and quality of publisher-supported coaching, professional learning sessions, and joint analysis of student work.
- **Evidence of Accountability:** Signed agreements, meeting logs, and documented follow-up actions from publisher collaborations.

Leverage Local and Research-Backed Partnerships

- **Metrics:** Number and quality of collaborations with universities, literacy organizations, and research partners.
- **Evidence of Accountability:** Incorporation of expert guidance into professional learning, coaching cycles, and continuous improvement plans.

Set Mutual Accountability Expectations

- **Metrics:** Clear documented expectations and benchmarks agreed upon with publishers, including implementation fidelity and outcome measures.
- **Evidence of Accountability:** Regular progress reports, monitoring of resource usage, and documented adherence to agreed-upon standards.

Overall Accountability Measures:

Regular **data review cycles** to track implementation fidelity and student growth.

Observation and feedback protocols for teachers and instructional leaders to ensure **consistent use of evidence-based practices**.

Documentation of professional learning participation, coaching sessions, and alignment of instructional practices to resource recommendations.

3. Explicit Accountability and Support Structures

To ensure consistent, high-quality literacy instruction across the district, this strategy establishes explicit accountability and support structures for both instructional coaches and school leaders. By defining clear expectations, measurable metrics, and non-negotiable practices, we create a framework that strengthens teacher growth, promotes effective use of instructional materials, and drives meaningful student outcomes.

Key Components of the Strategy:
Accountability Metrics: Create clear, measurable accountability metrics for instructional coaches, linking their support to student outcomes, lesson quality, and teacher growth.
Instructional Leader Supports: Define principal supports and feedback structures, equipping school leaders to observe, model, and provide feedback that builds teacher expertise.
Establish Non-negotiables: Establish non-negotiables for materials use and implementation, Professional Learning Communities, using data summary statements, SMART Goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) and KASABs (Knowledge, Attitudes, Skills, Aspirations, and Behaviors) to guide adult learning and collaboration.

Rationale: District data show variability in instruction and outcomes, highlighting the need for clear accountability and structured support for coaches and school leaders. By setting explicit metrics, principal supports, and non-negotiable practices, this strategy links leadership and coaching directly to teacher growth and student achievement, promoting consistent, high-quality literacy instruction and equitable access for all students.

3. Explicit Accountability and Support Structures

Measuring Impact:

Accountability Metrics

- **Metrics:** Implementation of a coaching impact framework that includes measurable, indicators linked to student achievement, teacher practice, and lesson quality, frequency and quality of coaching cycles documented in coaching logs (goal setting, observation, feedback, and reflection), correlation between coaching focus areas and student progress on district literacy assessments.
- **Evidence of Accountability:** Quarterly analysis of coaching data to identify trends in support and instructional growth, documentation showing increased teacher proficiency on literacy instructional rubrics or frameworks.

Instructional Leader Supports

- **Metrics:** Completion rates of principal and assistant principal participation in instructional walkthroughs, feedback sessions, and professional learning tied to literacy, number and quality of feedback cycles completed between principals and teachers focused on lesson design and literacy instruction, documentation of principal-led professional learning or PLC sessions focused on instructional priorities.
- **Evidence of Accountability:** Aggregated school-level feedback data showing increased alignment between observed instruction and district literacy expectations, leader reflection tools and progress reports demonstrating shifts in feedback quality and instructional leadership behaviors, inclusion of instructional leadership goals in administrator evaluations or progress reviews.

Establish Non-Negotiables

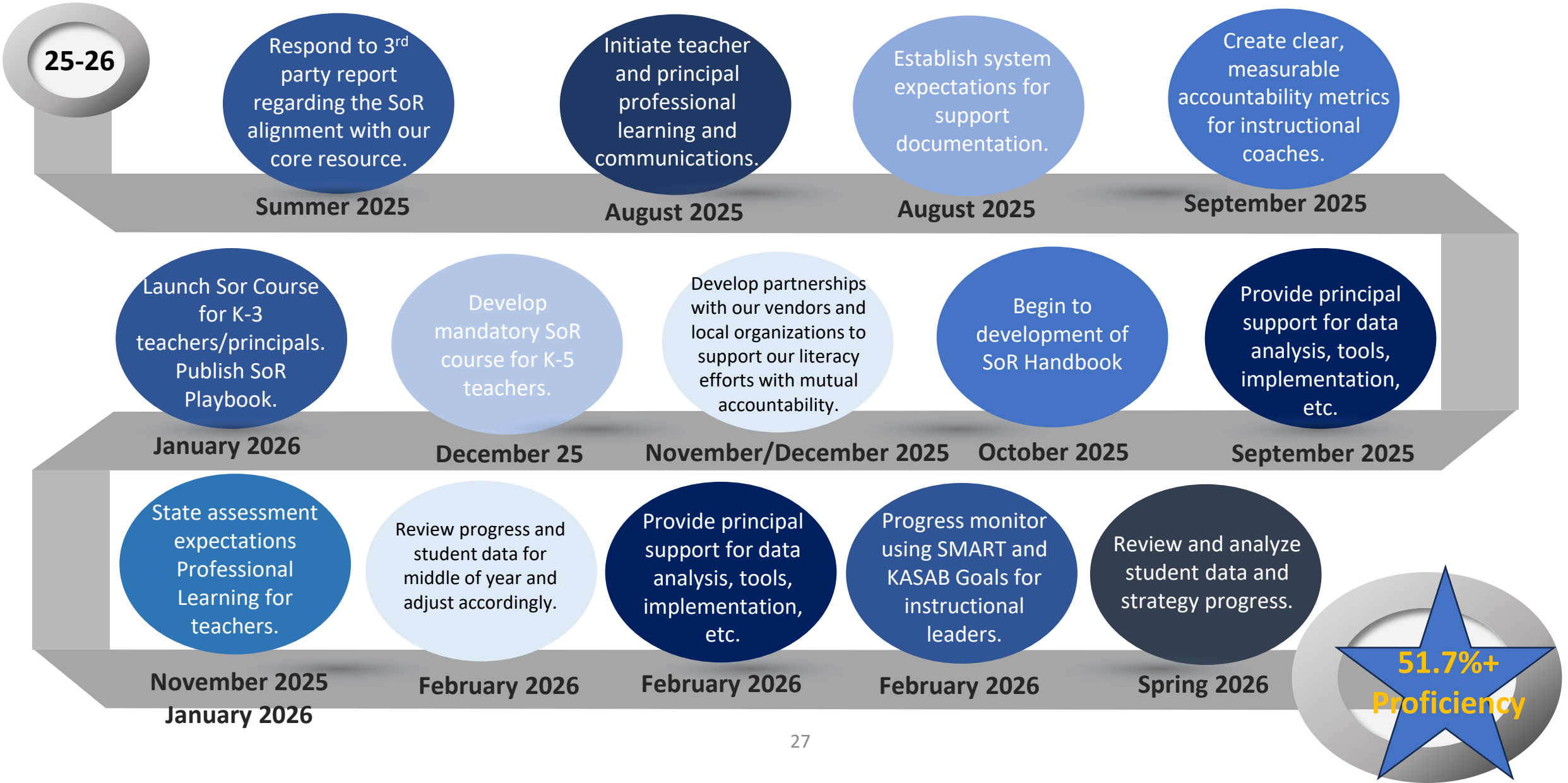
- **Metrics:** Monitoring of classroom implementation of core literacy materials through district and school-based walkthrough tools, documentation of PLCs using data summary statements, SMART Goals, and KASABs to guide planning and reflection.
- **Evidence of Accountability:** PLC meeting notes and artifacts demonstrating the use of non-negotiables in collaborative planning, district and principal walkthrough data showing consistent adherence to agreed-upon literacy routines and materials

Overall Accountability Measures: Quarterly **progress reviews** combining coaching data, leadership walkthroughs, and implementation fidelity reports. Integration of **non-negotiable literacy expectations** into school improvement planning and leadership evaluations. **Continuous improvement cycles** informed by student data, teacher feedback, and leadership reflection to sustain progress and adapt supports.

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Roadmap


25-26
Respond to 3rd party report regarding the SoR alignment with our core resource.
Summer 2025
Initiate teacher and principal professional learning and communications.
August 2025
Establish system expectations for support documentation.
August 2025
Create clear, measurable accountability metrics for instructional coaches.
September 2025
Launch Sor Course for K-3 teachers/principals. Publish SoR Playbook.
January 2026
Develop mandatory SoR course for K-5 teachers.
December 25
Develop partnerships with our vendors and local organizations to support our literacy efforts with mutual accountability.
November/December 2025
Begin to development of SoR Handbook
October 2025
Provide principal support for data analysis, tools, implementation, etc.
September 2025
State assessment expectations Professional Learning for teachers.
November 2025
January 2026
Review progress and student data for middle of year and adjust accordingly.
February 2026
Provide principal support for data analysis, tools, implementation, etc.
February 2026
Progress monitor using SMART and KASAB Goals for instructional leaders.
February 2026
Review and analyze student data and strategy progress.
Spring 2026
51.7%+ Proficiency


Let's
Talk