



The Literacy Acceleration Specialists (LAS) program is designed to close systemic gaps in reading achievement by providing targeted, data-driven small-group instruction that meets each student's individual needs. In 2025-26 school year, 69 specialists served students across 55 campuses. The overarching mission of the program is to accelerate students toward grade-level proficiency and foster long-term success. This effort directly supports broader district outcome goals, including elevating state assessment performance and ensuring readiness for college, career, or military pathways.

Key Findings

Implementation

- Literacy Acceleration Specialists delivered targeted small group instruction grounded in the Science of Teaching Reading to address the specific needs of Tier III students, primarily in grades three and eight and extending to other grade levels as needed.
- Instruction was delivered through pull out sessions four days per week, lasting 45 minutes for elementary students and 30 minutes for middle school students, utilizing evidence based resources such as i-Ready Phonics for Reading and Mosaic for bilingual learners.
- Program effectiveness was driven by continuous diagnostic progress monitoring, structured coaching observations, and regular family updates, fully funded through \$6,884,624 in Title I and general operating funds.

Stakeholder Feedback

Staff Members Feedback Surveys

- Principals and specialists overwhelmingly rated the program as high quality, attributing notable improvements in student reading fluency, lesson engagement, and overall academic confidence to specialist interventions.
- Specialists maintained strong communication with teachers and parents, while principals highlighted specialists' valuable role in fostering teacher collaboration and guiding campus instructional decisions.
- Implementation challenges were primarily operational, including testing-related schedule disruptions and administrative workload pressures.

Student Survey

- Students reported significant gains in confidence and classroom lesson understanding, identifying small-group instruction and direct teacher interaction as the primary drivers of their learning.

Student Outcomes

English

- LAS students moved out of the lowest academic tier at more than double the rate of comparison peers, with 36 percent of the furthest-behind students advancing two or more reading grade levels.
- A larger proportion of LAS students fully met their typical annual growth targets and achieved stretch growth targets compared to control peers.
- LAS students achieved higher performance rates on the STAAR Reading assessment at both the Approaches+ and Meets+ standards compared to control peers.

Spanish

- LAS students achieved a greater reduction in the lowest placement tier than control peers, with students starting furthest behind demonstrating higher rates of multi-grade-level growth.
- LAS students outpaced the comparison group across all diagnostic domains - most notably in Phonics and Comprehension - and showed higher rates of simultaneous multi-domain progress.
- Despite showing stronger diagnostic domain growth throughout the year, LAS students trailed the comparison group on the STAAR Reading assessment.



Recommendations

- **Strengthen Scheduling Coordination and Selection Criteria Communication.**

To protect high-dosage tutoring blocks while honoring the program's targeted design, program leadership might consider providing principals and specialists with a brief scheduling protocol to protect dedicated intervention windows throughout the active school year and during future semester planning cycles. Additionally, to address principal questions regarding student eligibility, consider encouraging specialists to utilize routine campus SST or MTSS meetings to review the i-Ready selection criteria and target grade-level focus with school leaders. Clear, upfront communication regarding the district's standardized selection metrics will help align campus expectations, foster collaboration with classroom teachers, and prevent instructional disruptions during upcoming testing periods.

- **Strengthen Language Supports for Multilingual Learners and Refine Referral Pathways.**

While survey data shows strong diagnostic gains in foundational skills, specialists expressed a desire for additional strategies to support emergent bilingual students and navigate students making minimal progress. Program leadership might consider integrating practical, low-prep language acquisition strategies into scheduled specialist meetings, focusing on oral language development and foundational literacy transitions for multilingual learners. Additionally, to protect the program's core focus on literacy acceleration, consider providing clear guidance during routine check-ins to help specialists identify when non-responding students should be referred to specialized support pathways, such as Special Education or Dyslexia intervention, rather than attempting to alter the standard LAS intervention model.

- **Clarify Administrative Workflows and Enhance Resource Accessibility.**

To align specialist practices with the department's intended streamlined design, program leadership might consider providing clear guidance and brief demonstrations on efficient administrative routines, such as copy-pasting lesson plan references and completing quick-check tracking sheets. Establishing a direct communication feedback loop between specialists and department staff would help address perceived redundancies promptly, clarify submission expectations, and continuously refine daily workflows. Additionally, organizing existing family communication flyers and outreach templates within a single, easily accessible shared folder would ensure specialists can quickly locate and deploy these pre-made resources during home outreach.