Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

UPDATE: K–4 Reading Levels

2023

Authorizing Legislation: RCW 28A.320.203

Deb Came, Ph.D.

Assistant Superintendent of Assessment

and Student Information

Prepared by:

- **Carey Kirkwood**, Associate Director of Elementary English Language Arts and Content Integration
  carey.kirkwood@k12.wa.us | 360-995-3235

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In accordance with state law (RCW 28A.320.203), all schools in Washington are required to report to their school district the number of students in kindergarten through 4th grade who are reading below grade level, as well as the interventions that are being provided to improve reading skills. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is required to submit a report on this data annually to the Legislature.

OSPI received data on 92.3% of elementary students in grades K–4 for the 2022–2023 school year. Of the student counts reported, 36% of students in reporting districts are reading below grade level. This marks an improvement of 2.3 percentage points as compared to the previous year.

The partners involved with the K–4 reading levels are:

- English Language Arts (ELA) office at OSPI

- Learning Assistance Program (LAP) at OSPI

- Assessment and Student Information division at OSPI

- Regional Literacy Coordinators (RLCs) who represent the Association of Educational Service Districts (AESD)

Over the past year, some partners have presented virtually at school, district, and regional learning experiences. These virtual professional learning opportunities focused on:

- Understanding the formative assessment process associated with the implementation of literacy screening and interventions for all students K–2 as part of a Tier 1 (regular classroom) focus

- Elevating ELA Fellows K–4 knowledge in virtual learning

- Deepening the understanding of the science of reading and structured literacy

- Enhancing educators' understanding of the foundational skills for literacy development

- Using evidence-based instructional practices and strategies to improve student outcomes

- Building culturally responsive teaching practices and focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion

BACKGROUND

In 2013, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 5946, which set up a system for using educational support systems for every student in grades K–12.

Educators, schools, and school districts were informed of the legislative requirements through professional development opportunities at regional educational service districts (ESDs), state conferences, personal communications, communications to district offices, and correspondence from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

Strengthening Student Outcomes

OSPI and the Association of Educational Service Districts (AESD) implemented Part 1 of Senate Bill 5946 (2013)—Learning to Read, Reading to Learn—during the 2014–2015 school year. This legislation focused on the importance of collaborative partnerships essential to supporting students. The legislation called for using evidence-and research-based programs for all students, especially in grades K–4, and providing statewide models to support school districts in implementing a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS).

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 28A.320.202 now requires school districts to be responsible for providing a comprehensive system of instruction and services in reading and early literacy that must include annual use of screening assessments to determine the reading levels and areas that need interventions for student in grades K–4.

In addition to supporting students, Part 1 of ESSB 5946 (2013) identified how essential professional learning is necessary for educators to enhance and expand their instructional practices and understanding of early literacy development. Professional development in early literacy is especially important to support the instruction of young readers since reading proficiency is a crucial element for student academic success, as stated by RCW 28A.415.400.

In 2016, the Legislature passed House Bill 1345. To improve student outcomes, this legislation provided a statewide definition of "professional learning" as a comprehensive, sustained, job-embedded, and collaborative approach to improving teachers' and principals' effectiveness in raising student achievement.

For the last six years, including 2022–23, school districts have chosen from 45 interventions based on best practices. A total of 275 individual districts reported intervention data for 2022–23. There were 10 unique interventions listed within Student-Centered Practices; 5 interventions for Extended Time Beyond the School Day; 9 interventions for Educator Practices; 12 interventions for Consultant Teachers; 6 interventions for Outreach and Support for Families; and 3 interventions in Community Engagement.

Identification and Reporting of Students Reading Below Grade Level

Washington State schools and school districts are required to identify students' reading levels according to the evidence-based state and district selected assessments.

School districts must annually report to OSPI ([RCW 28A.320.203](#)):

- The number of students in grades K–4 who are reading below grade level, and

- The intensive reading strategies and/or interventions being provided to improve the reading skills of these students.

The information must be disaggregated by subgroups of continuously enrolled students. To collect the required data, OSPI developed the K–4 Literacy Report, accessible through the Education Data System (EDS) portal. Users identified students reading below grade level from a comprehensive list of disaggregated student groups who were continuously enrolled in the same school during the 2022–2023 school year.

Of the Washington school districts, 272 districts did report K–4 student literacy data; 88.6% of students' scores were reported by their districts. OSPI extended data submission opportunities to support schools with reporting. However, 11.4% of districts did not report student data this year. This represents an increase when compared to the previous year. In 2021–22, 72% of students' scores were reported by their districts; 92.2% of students were represented in the district data submitted to OSPI. In 2018, 96% of students were represented in the district data submitted to OSPI. OSPI recognizes the ongoing implications of the pandemic and employee retention may have impacted data collection and will be intentional to offer additional reminders and support with data reporting.

UPDATE STATUS

Findings

From the data reported by Washington school districts, 36% of K–4 students were not reading on grade level for the 2022–23 school year. The district-reported Students Reading Below Grade Level data is over 88.6% complete.

Table 1: 2022–23 K–4 Students Identified as Reading Below Grade Level by Grade Band

Grade Band	Total K–4 Continuous State Enrollment*	K–4 Enrollment for Reported Districts	Number of Students Identified as Reading Below Grade Level	Percent of Students Reading Below Grade Level	Percent Not Meeting Standard on SBA (Smarter Balance Assessment) ELA Statewide (Level 3 or 4)
Kindergarten	72,731	67,128	18,832	28%	--
Grade 1	75,645	69,857	25,941	37%	--
Grade 2	72,675	67,167	26,508	39%	--
Grade 3	75,939	70,148	25,394	36%	51%
Grade 4	76,789	70,881	28,068	40%	50%
Total	**373,779**	**345,181**	**124,725**	**36%**	

Source: The Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) pulled on 10/13/23 and the 2022–23 K–4 Literacy Report in the Education Data System.
*Thirty-five districts did not report data.

Response Rate

Data included Washington state public school districts and State-Tribal Education Compact schools. Data analysis showed that for the 2021–22 school year, 88.6% of the school districts submitted data; 92.3% of Washington state K–4 students are represented in the data collected here. Thirty-five school districts with 28,598 students did not submit data. However, 272 school districts provided intervention data. The reporting platform was reopened after the reporting window closed to accommodate schools in reporting their data.

Data Disaggregated by Race

Students identified as Hispanic/Latino decreased reading below grade level by 4.6% compared to last school year. Students identified as Two or More Races decreased reading below grade level by 1.3%. Students identified as White decreased reading below grade level by 3.2%. The number of students identified as American Indian/Alaskan Native decreased reading below grade level by 1.5%.

Students identified as Black/African American, Asian, or Hawaiian/Pacific Islander who are reading below grade level remained constant, with changes of less than 1% compared to last school year.

Data Disaggregated by Subgroups

Students identified as Homeless decreased in reading below grade level by 8% compared to last school year. Students identified as Unaccompanied Youth decreased reading below grade level by 7.8%. Students identified as Low Income decreased reading below grade level by 6.5%. Students identified as having a 504 Plan decreased reading below grade level by 1.1%.

Students identified as Title 1 reading below grade level increased by 2.5%. Students identified as Migrant reading below grade level increased by 1.5% compared to last school year. Students identified from the Learning Assistance Program (LAP), Special Education and Multilingual/English Language Learners reading below grade level remained constant, with changes of 1% or less compared to last school year.

Table 2: 2022–23 K–4 Students Identified as Reading Below Grade Level by Subgroups

Student Group	K–4 Enrollment for Reported Districts	Number of Students identified as Reading Below Grade Level	Percent of Students Identified as Reading Below Grade Level
All Students	**345,181**	**124,725**	**36%**
Male	176,950	65,779	**37%**
Female	167,767	58,850	**35%**
Gender X	464	96	**20.6%**
American Indian/Alaskan Native	4,203	2,438	**58%**
Asian	32,532	6,763	**20.7%**
Black/African American	15,609	6,985	**44.7%**
Hispanic/Latino	88,078	44,760	**50.8%**
White	168,850	51,287	**30%**
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	4,422	2,371	**53.6%**
Two or More Races	31,416	10,066	**32%**
Low Income	167,886	79,788	**47.5%**

LAP – Learning Assistance Program	82,320	52,253	**63%**
Title I – Targeted Assistance Program	3,702	2,457	**66%**
Special Education	55,663	31,233	**56%**
Multilingual/English Language Learners	63,757	38,613	**60.5%**
Migrant	6,109	3,733	**61%**
Homeless	9,466	5,612	**59%**
504 Plan	9,829	3,244	**33%**
Unaccompanied Youth	445	216	**48.5%**

Source: The Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) pulled on 10/13/23 and the 2022–23 K–4 Literacy Report in the Education Data System.
*Thirty-five districts did not report data.

Table 3: 2022–23 K–4 Student Trends in Reading Below Grade Level by Subgroup

Subgroup	2022–2023 (n)	2022–2023 (%)	2021–2022 (%)	2020–2021 (%)	2017–2018 (%)
Low-Income	**79,788**	**47.5**	54.0	54.1	44.6
Special Education	**31,233**	**56**	57.7	57.5	57
Multilingual/English Language Learners	**38,613**	**60.5**	60.0	62.3	-
Migrant	**3,733**	**61**	59.5	68.5	59
Homeless	**5,612**	**59**	67.0	61.9	50.1
504 Plan	**3,244**	**33**	34.1	38.3	23.1
LAP	**52,253**	**63**	62.5	67.9	-
Title I	**2,457**	**66**	63.5	69.4	-
Unaccompanied Youth	**216**	**48.5**	56.3	46.4	33.2

Source: The Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) pulled on 10/13/23 and the 2022–23 K–4 Literacy Report in the Education Data System.
*Thirty-five districts did not report data.

Intervention

For the last five years, including 2022–23, school districts report on 45 interventions based on best practices. A total of 272 individual districts reported intervention data for 2022–23. There were 10 unique interventions listed within Student-Centered Practices; 5 interventions for Extended Time Beyond the School Day; 9 interventions for Educator Practices; 12 interventions for Consultant Teachers; 6 interventions for Outreach and Support for Families and 3 interventions in Community Engagement.

CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

In the 2022–23 school year, according to data from 260 school districts, 36% of students in grades K–4 were reading below grade level. This marks an improvement of 2.3 percentage points as compared to the previous year.

The following student groups all saw improvements in the rate of students reading below grade level:

- Students identified as Hispanic/Latino

- Students identified as American Indian/Alaska Native

- Students identified as Two or More Races

- Students identified as White

- Students experiencing homelessness

- Students identified as Unaccompanied Youth

- Students identified as low-income

- Students served by 504 Plans

OSPI will continue to focus on professional learning opportunities to train K–5 teachers in structured literacy and the science of reading, establishing a PK–12 integrated literacy plan for Washington State and, as an equity measure, updating Dyslexia guidance and learning resources to improve literacy in our most disadvantaged schools.

OSPI Elementary ELA and Student Information Services will also plan to contact districts earlier and more frequently next year about mandatory reporting. The OSPI English Language Arts team will work with the Student Information office to review the efficiency of the data collection process.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: 2022–23 Intervention Data

Table 1: Number of Districts Offering Student Centered Tutoring Services in 2022–2023

Tutoring Services	Number of Reported Districts Offering Service	Percent of Reported Districts Offering Service
Group tutoring (Classroom Teacher)	239	86.9%
Group tutoring (Paraeducator)	238	86.5%
Adult Tutoring (Paraeducator)	225	81.8%
Group tutoring (Intervention Specialist)	196	71%
Adult Tutoring (Classroom Teacher)	208	75.6%
Adult Tutoring (Intervention Specialist)	176	64%
Adult Tutoring (Volunteer)	68	24.7%
Peer tutoring (Cross age)	50	18%
Peer tutoring (Same age)	38	13.8%
Group tutoring (Volunteer)	43	15.6%

Source: The Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) pulled on 10/13/23 and the 2022–23 K–4 Literacy Report in the Education Data System. *Thirty-five districts did not report data.

Table 2: Number of Districts Offering Extended Learning Time Services in 2022–2023

Extended Learning Time Service	Number of Reported Districts Offering Service	Percent of Reported Schools Offering Service
Computer-based or online instruction	144	52%
Structured summer programs	137	49.8%
Before/after school instruction	112	40.7%
Book programs	60	21.8%
Homework Club	31	11%

Source: The Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) pulled on 10/13/23 and the 2022–23 K–4 Literacy Report in the Education Data System. *Thirty-five districts did not report data.

Table 3: Number of Districts Offering Interventions for Educator Practice in 2022–2023

Professional Development Type	Number of Reported Districts Offering Service	Percent of Reported Schools Offering Service
Professional learning community	232	84%
School/district training/workshop	228	82.9%
Teacher mentor program	186	67.6%
New teacher induction program	148	53.8%

Professional Development Type	Number of Reported Districts Offering Service	Percent of Reported Schools Offering Service
Regional/state training/workshop	76	27.6%
Co-Teaching	85	30.9%
Regional/state conference	63	22.9%
National training workshop	23	8%
National conference	20	7%

Source: The Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) pulled on 10/13/23 and the 2022–23 K–4 Literacy Report in the Education Data System. *Thirty-five districts did not report data.

Table 4: Number of Districts Utilizing Consultant Teachers in 2022–2023

Consultant Teacher Type	Number of Reported Districts Offering Service	Percent of Reported Schools Offering Service
Instructional coach for schools	83	30%
Instructional coach for teachers	93	33.8%
Literacy coach for teachers	44	16%
Literacy coach for schools	49	17.8%
English Language Development (ELD) coach for schools	46	16.7%
English Language Development (ELD) coach for teachers	49	17.8%
Instructional coach for districts	55	20%
Content coach for schools	38	13.8%
Content coach for teachers	45	16%
English Language Development (ELD) coach for districts	50	18%
Content coach for districts	33	12%
Literacy coach for districts	37	13%

Source: The Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) pulled on 10/13/23 and the 2022–23 K–4 Literacy Report in the Education Data System. *Thirty-five districts did not report data.

Table 5: Number of Districts Providing Outreach/Support for Families in 2022–2023

Outreach/Support for Families Type	Number of Reported Districts Offering Service	Percent of Reported Districts Offering Service
Literacy activities for families to do together at home	202	73%
School associations (PTA, PTSA, PTSO)	180	65%
Family Literacy events	195	70.9%
Home visits	63	22.9%

Outreach/Support for Families Type	Number of Reported Districts Offering Service	Percent of Reported Districts Offering Service
Classes/coaching to families on working on reading skills at home	65	23.6%
Employment of parent and family engagement coordinators	71	25.8%

Source: The Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) pulled on 10/13/23 and the 2022–23 K–4 Literacy Report in the Education Data System. *Thirty-five districts did not report data.

Table 6: Number of Schools Offering Community Engagement in 2022–2023

Extended Learning Time Service	Number of Reported Districts Offering Service	Percent of Reported Schools Offering Service
Reading Partnerships (library, Boys and Girls club reading support)	156	56.7%
Kindergarten Transitions P-4 Community Partnerships Count	94	34%
Mentoring Count	50	18%

Source: The Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) pulled on 10/13/23 and the 2022–23 K–4 Literacy Report in the Education Data System. *Thirty-five districts did not report data.

LEGAL NOTICE

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Chris Reykdal | State Superintendent
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Old Capitol Building | P.O. Box 47200
Olympia, WA 98504-7200