

Berkeley Unified School District
Literacy Improvement Program Monitoring Report 4
June 2024
Prepared by [George Ellis](#) - University of California, Berkeley

INTRODUCTION

Program Monitoring Report 4 is the fourth in a series of seven semi-annual reports evaluating the ongoing progress on the Literacy Improvement Program (LIP) implemented by the Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD) in accordance with the Class Action Settlement Agreement ([Appendix A](#)) executed on December 11, 2020 in the United States District Court for the Northern District of California (Case No. 3:17-cv-02510). The primary purpose of this document is to monitor and report on BUSD's compliance with the Literacy Improvement Program and review progress toward implementation of the four major goals of the LIP:

- **Goal 1:** Develop Programs to Improve General Education Reading and Language Arts Achievement for all Students, especially those Students with or at risk for Reading Disabilities, including Dyslexia.
- **Goal 2:** Increase the Systematicity and Intensity of Tier 2 and 3 Reading and Language Arts Intervention of the MTSS Framework to Reduce the Achievement Gap for Students at risk for Reading Disabilities.
- **Goal 3:** Ensure Fidelity of Literacy Improvement Program Implementation through District Monitoring of Literacy Improvement Program and Staff Engagement.
- **Goal 4:** Special Education Programs: Increase Reading Achievement by Improving the Quality of IEP Goals and Section 504 Plan Development, Progress Monitoring, and use of appropriately intensive, Research-based Interventions.

This Monitoring Report is based largely on the second and third quarterly reports from BUSD for 2023-2024 ([Appendix G](#) and [Appendix H](#)), in addition to a thorough review of meeting notes from Accountability Teams for the 4 LIP Goals. The evidence in this document is also drawn from hours of formal and informal data collected from multiple site visits to each of the 14 elementary and middle schools at Berkeley Unified by the Program Monitor.

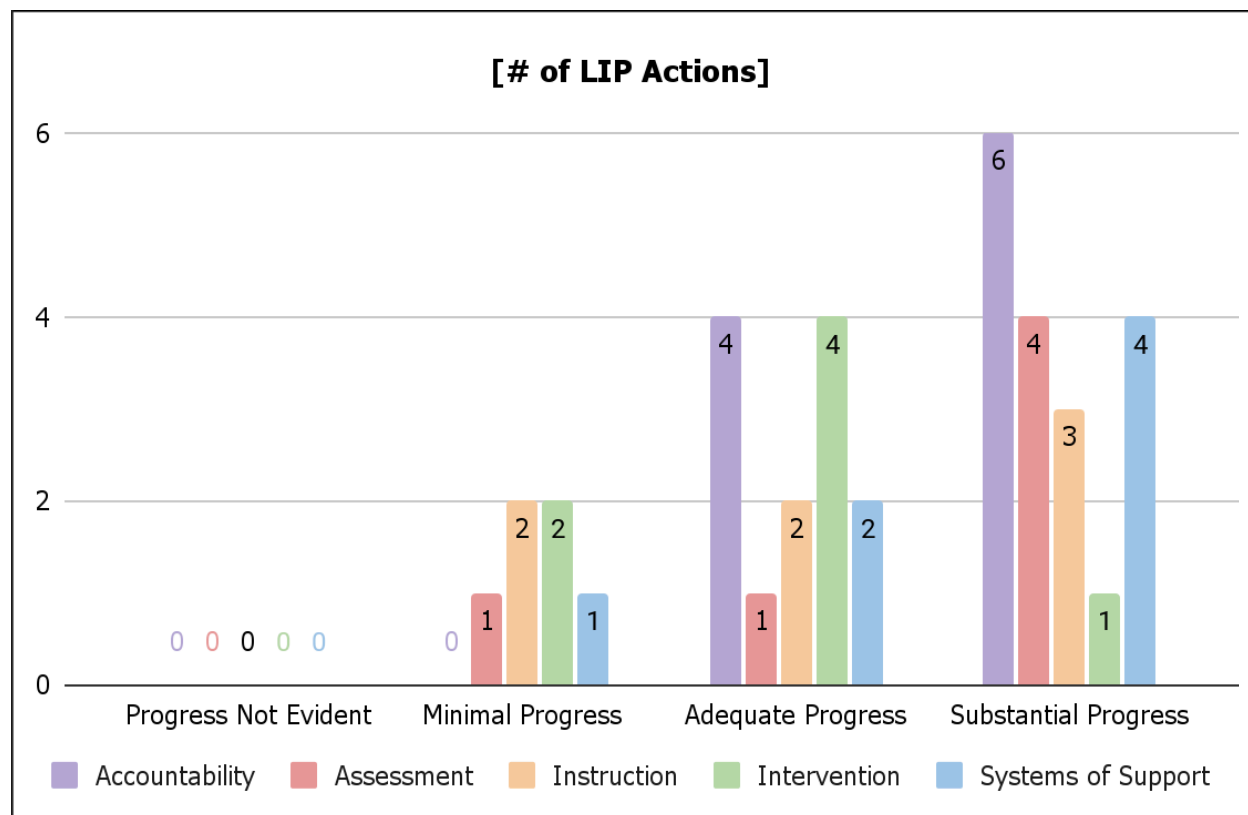
Additional data for this report have been gathered through the following sources:

- Attendance at Implementation Team Meetings
- Analysis of Star and DIBELS scores from the EduClimber data integration system
- Individual meetings with Accountability Teams and BUSD's Literacy Consultant
- Informal interviews with BUSD staff and community members
- Meetings with BUSD District Administration and individual meetings with BUSD Principals
- Attendance at the district's Professional Learning series through CORE Learning
- Participation in Literacy Community Listening Session # 1 and #2
- Attendance at the 2024 Language Arts Curriculum Adoption Team Meetings

The next section of this review includes the Progress Report component of the monitoring plan. In an effort to make this document more comprehensive to parents, caregivers, and community members, five Cross-Cutting Themes have been identified to create explicit connections between the 37 LIP Actions, and to more clearly connect the dots across the overall Literacy Improvement Program. These cross-cutting themes are: **1) Accountability, 2) Assessment, 3) Instruction, 4, Intervention, and 5) Systems of Support.** Each of the five cross-cutting themes is evaluated in a separate section, using a leveled rubric of progress-to-date, based on expectations for actions considering the recommendations from the Implementation Science framework detailed in the final section of this report. The rubric consists of four evaluative bands: **substantial progress, adequate progress, minimal progress, and progress not evident**, with the goal of celebrating *substantial* and *adequate* advancements in the implementation, while providing recommendations for next steps related to any LIP Actions where *minimal* or *no progress* has been observed.

The chart in **Figure 1** below provides a summary of progress on the 37 Actions across the five Cross-Cutting Themes featured in this report as of June 2024, and a more detailed description of progress on individual Actions can be found in the next session of this document: Progress Report- June 2024.

Figure 1 - Progress on LIP Actions by Cross-Cutting Theme (June 2024)



PROGRESS REPORT - JUNE 2024

Cross-Cutting Theme 1: Accountability

The success of any long-term literacy plan is based in large part by the structures created by the school district to ensure a high level of **Accountability** among the Implementation Team and with the outside community as well. Establishing a clearly articulated and publicly available plan, along with frequent community updates, is necessary for monitoring progress and for an effective implementation of the literacy plan. This theme of Accountability surfaces throughout the specific actions listed in the Literacy Improvement Program and is essential for establishing transparency in the implementation process that leads to trust among all stakeholders.

The table below captures the progress to date on the cross-cutting theme of **Accountability**. **[Actions in bold represent movement across bands of progress]**

Substantial Progress
<p>6. Evaluate staff perceptions about changes in general and special education research-based reading practices and MTSS-RDS. <i>II.B.2.c.i</i></p> <p>24. Provide the Monitor with implementation reports. <i>II.C.1.d</i></p> <p>26. Monitor will provide a Monitoring Plan to the School Board, and BUSD Implementation Team. <i>II.C.1.c</i></p> <p>28. Review and assess feedback to refine the Literacy Improvement Program as needed to accomplish stated goals in consultation with the Outside Consultants. <i>II.A.1.b.vi</i></p> <p>33. Implement policies, procedures, and practices to ensure that all students with IEP reading goals will have their progress monitored appropriately according to the student’s stated IEP goals. <i>II.B.2.d.iii</i></p> <p>34. Implement policies, procedures, and practices to ensure that when current students with disabilities’ IEPs are subject to review, new goals will be written on a case-by-case basis using the MTSS-RDS. Special education teachers will monitor progress according to the students’ stated IEP goals. <i>II.B.2.d.iii</i></p>
Adequate Progress
<p>7. Consult with the Outside Consultants with regard to development of appropriate and measurable literacy goals. <i>II.A.1.b.iii</i></p> <p>25. Monitor will issue Monitoring Reports on a semi-annual basis addressing progress on Literacy Improvement Program implementation to the School Board and BUSD Implementation Team. <i>II.C.1.e</i></p> <p>27. Develop and implement a monitoring component to the Literacy Improvement Program. <i>II.B.2.c.i</i></p> <p>29. Provide the Literacy Improvement Program to the Monitor, Outside Consultants, and Plaintiffs’ Counsel. <i>II.C.1.b</i></p>
Minimal Progress
-
Progress Not Evident
-

Summary of Findings - Accountability

As the previous three Monitoring Reports have documented, the cross-cutting theme of **Accountability** continues to be an area where BUSD consistently demonstrates growth. In the second half of the 2023-2024 academic year, Berkeley Unified has continued to transform how it writes IEP reading goals using the DIBELS Reading Data System (RDS), and has also increased two-way communication efforts with the larger Berkeley community around how it shares progress towards achieving the goals of the Literacy Improvement Program coupled with how it elicits feedback from community members.

Beginning in August, the BUSD Special Education team of TSAs (Teachers on Special Assignment) began to overhaul the process of writing IEP reading goals using valid and reliable assessment data from the district's RDS, along with the guidance and support from Dr. Kim Gibbons (Outside Literacy Consultant from the University of Minnesota). This work began in September 2023 with elementary case managers reviewing the IEPs of all students with reading goals and finding that only 3% of K-5 IEP reading goals were grounded in the DIBELS progress monitoring assessments. As of April 2024, this number has increased to 63% of IEP reading goals, and the scope of this work has expanded to include IEP reading goals for Grades 6-8.

Berkeley Unified has also continued to provide the community with updates on the LIP via multiple communications channels. BUSD has utilized its social media accounts on both Twitter and Facebook to advertise upcoming literacy-related events (ex: Virtual Literacy Roundtable - 2/23/24) and to share meeting notes from past events (ex: Reporting Out on Literacy Learning Session #1 - 2/29/24). The district also co-hosted a screening of the Hopeville documentary (1/31/24) with the North Region SELPA Community Advisory Committee to raise awareness around dyslexia and the importance of evidence-based literacy instruction. In addition to this one-way communication, the district has also engaged in multiple two-way Community Listening and Learning Sessions, and has put together affinity sub-groups for caregivers of African American and Spanish-Speaking English Learners to express their opinions on the literacy needs of their students.

As suggested in Monitoring Report 3, for the area of **Accountability**, it is recommended that BUSD publicly share its new Diagnostic Reading Plans which define the district's MTSS Universal Screening process for each grade level from K-5, and that these guides be readily available for parents and caregivers to view and download.

Recommendations - Accountability

1. Ensure that new and continuing IEP Reading Goals for students in Grades 6-8 are using DIBELS and/or STAR data, when applicable, beginning in Fall 2024.
2. Post final version of MTSS Reading Diagnostic Plans on BUSD Literacy Website and disseminate across additional communication channels by Fall of 2024.

Cross-Cutting Theme 2: Assessment

The use of **Assessment** data to drive instruction, track student progress, and identify students at risk for reading difficulties is the second cross-cutting theme that arises among the LIP tasks. The Settlement Agreement calls for students’ progress in the acquisition of foundational reading skills to be monitored carefully. When used correctly, a valid and reliable Reading Data System (RDS) can identify the correct instructional supports individual students need in the general education classroom in order to become proficient readers. Screening assessments should occur at least three times a year, and identification of students’ existing skills and knowledge should drive instructional planning.

The RDS can also be used in the universal screening process to identify which students would benefit from supplemental Tier 2 and Tier 3 early intervention, both within the general education setting and with support from outside specialists. The data obtained from the assessment system, along with targeted progress monitoring, can also be considered when determining eligibility for special education under the category of specific learning disability. Reports from the RDS are also important for providing parents with timely information regarding their child’s progress in reading, and how the school district is monitoring their child’s growth.

The table below captures the progress to date on the cross-cutting theme of **Assessments**.

Substantial Progress
2. Select a reading data system that uses a single, time and cost efficient, and research-based authentic reading testing system (DIBELS and Star) for use in Grades K-8. <i>II.B.2.a.i</i> 5. Conduct Benchmark Assessments in the fall, winter, and spring to ensure reading growth for all students and support early intervention through universal screening. <i>II.B.2.a.i</i> 8. Train grade-level teams and Tier 2 and Tier 3 service providers to use their screening and progress monitoring data. <i>II.B.2.b.i</i> 32. Provide IEP and Section 504 teams training on use of the MTSS-RDS (DIBELS or Star), and other relevant information, including diagnostic surveys of academic skills, and student goal-setting practices. <i>II.B.2.d.iii</i>
Adequate Progress
9a. Provide <i>K-5 general education teachers</i> and special education teachers professional development in how to use the Benchmark Assessments system for screening and progress monitoring, and for reports to parents/guardians. <i>II.B.2.a.i</i>
Minimal Progress
9b. Provide <i>Grades 6-8 Reading and Language Arts teachers</i> , and 6-8 special education teachers professional development in how to use the Benchmark Assessments system for screening and progress monitoring, and for reports to parents/guardians. <i>II.B.2.a.i</i>
Progress Not Evident
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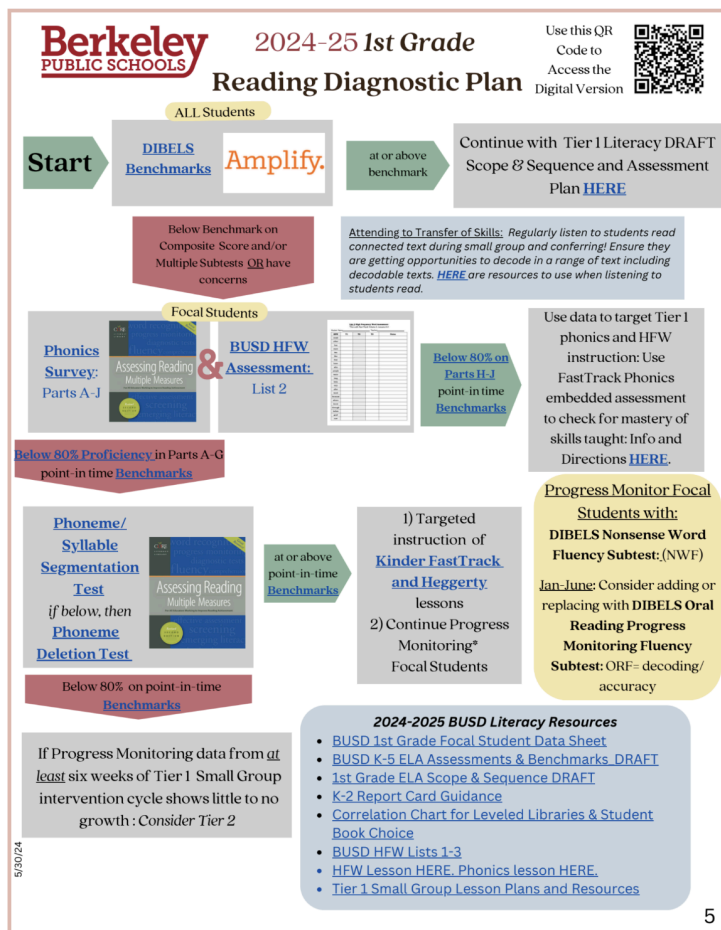
Summary of Findings - Assessments

During the final half of this 2023-2024 academic year, the Implementation Team focused much of its efforts on deepening the use of both the Star and DIBELS assessments for universal screening, progress monitoring, and student goal-setting. Under the leadership of the new Curriculum and Instruction Team led by Chris Albeck, Rose James and Erica Carter, BUSD has enacted substantial changes to the district’s protocols for administering **Assessments**, culminating in two major shifts: the discontinuation of running records as a tool for screening and progress monitoring, and the restructuring of assessment guidelines at the elementary grades.

The most substantial progress around **Assessments** occurred in the late Spring with the creation of Comprehensive Diagnostic Reading Plans (Figure 2) for each K-5 grade level- detailing the district’s MTSS Universal Screening process. These grade-level Diagnostic Reading Plans provide guidance for teachers on how to integrate Star and DIBELS assessments along with the diagnostic assessments from the CORE Reading Academy to more systematically define best practices to identify and provide individualized instruction for students at, above, and below grade level.

Figure 2 below provides an example of how this process will be used to support 1st Grade students in the 2024-2025 school year. Starting at the top-left corner [green “Start” arrow], all first grade students will receive the DIBELS screening assessments at the beginning of the year to identify possible difficulties in the skills of Letter Recognition, Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words. Following this flowchart, any student with a composite score at or above benchmark [green arrow] will continue receiving Tier 1 instruction with regular progress monitoring checks at the end of each trimester. However, if a student receives a composite score below benchmark, and/or has difficulty on multiple subtests [red arrow], teachers will administer additional CORE diagnostic assessments to pinpoint potential causes of this reading difficulty (Phonics, Sight Words, or Phonemic Awareness). The data from these diagnostic assessments will inform classroom teachers in choosing an appropriate, targeted, small-group intervention (ex: FastTrack Phonics or Heggerty Phonemic Awareness), and in creating specific and measurable reading goals for progress monitoring. After receiving this targeted, Tier 1 intervention, student growth will be

Figure 2 - BUSD Screening and Diagnostic Assessment Plan (1st Grade)



monitored in six weeks to determine if the student is in need of additional Tier 2 support using a more intensive intervention (IMSE Orton Gillingham), or whether the small-group, targeted instruction has been effective, and the student can exit the intervention and continue with Tier 1 general instruction.

Another important feature of these Diagnostic Reading Plans for MTSS Universal Screening is that they no longer include the use of running records from the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (F&P BAS) and Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP). During site visits this Fall it was evident that although all elementary school sites had started to administer the Star and DIBELS as a *screening* tool, several sites were still relying on F&P and TCRWP running records as their primary *progress monitoring* tool. This practice changed towards the onset of the third trimester testing window in January, when the decision to discontinue the use of running record was communicated at a joint meeting of key elementary school staff: Principals, Literacy Coaches, and Response to Intervention (RtI) teachers, coupled with a follow up communication from district administration to all elementary teachers. In addition to this clear directive, the district provided multiple professional learning opportunities for site leaders and literacy teachers to understand why running records lack validity and reliability, led by both the outside literacy consultant (Dr. Gibbons) and BUSD's Licensed Educational Psychologist (Shayna Stuempfig). To provide an additional layer of accountability in this change management process, Berkeley Unified also began requiring DIBELS progress monitoring data to be entered in the EduClimber data management system for reading intervention groups, and eliminated the option of entering running record data in this database.

Another significant advancement in the cross-cutting theme of **Assessments** has been the scheduling of regular data reviews during district-wide Principal Meetings. In January, all Principals participated in a middle of year (MOY) data review in collaboration with site RTI teachers and Literacy Coaches to study Star and DIBELS data to track student progress and growth rates over the course of the year. This same process was repeated in May with end of year (EOY) progress monitoring data after the end of the third screening window. These higher-level data reviews by site Principals are a key component for sustaining the new data protocols outlined in the Diagnostic Reading Plans, and for maintaining a culture of data-informed decision making. Based on the significant progress in the restructuring of BUSD's systems for **Assessment**, the only new recommendation in this section is to expand this data-informed decision making process to include Language Arts teachers at the middle school level.

Recommendations - Assessments

1. Provide training for middle school Language Arts teachers in using Star and/or DIBELS as part of a comprehensive diagnostic assessment plan for screening and progress monitoring during the 2024-2025 school year.
2. Provide training for K-5th teachers, administrators, and COS Teams on how to use the new, grade-level Diagnostic Reading Plans by October 2024.
3. Create a system to identify and train new K-5th teachers in the DIBELS assessment system by December 2024.

Cross-Cutting Theme 3: Instruction

Improving the scope and quality of general education Reading and Language Arts programs (**Tier 1 Instruction**) is key to the success of the Literacy Improvement Program. As per the Settlement Agreement, BUSD aims to provide effective and appropriate core reading programs to all general education students to enable them to become successful readers, at the same time reducing the district's opportunity and achievement gap in student performance for students with or at risk for reading disabilities, African American students, and Spanish-Speaking English Learners. The goal is that students receive high quality, comprehensive, and standards-aligned instruction that meets the full range of student needs determined by the RDS. This all begins with the implementation of an evidence-based reading curriculum that is in alignment with the California ELA Curriculum Framework and addresses the key components of the Common Core State Standards for ELA: meaning making, language development, effective expression, content knowledge, and foundational reading skills.

The table below captures the progress to date on the cross-cutting theme of **Instruction**.

Substantial Progress
<p>12a. Provide <i>K-5 general education teachers</i> professional development in research and practice of Reading and Language Arts instruction consistent with the curriculum framework. <i>II.B.2.a.ii</i></p> <p>16. BUSD will assess and monitor the success of the FastTrack phonics program along with K-3 benchmark data to ensure FastTrack is an appropriately intensive, research-based phonics program, aligned with the needs of BUSD students and reading science. <i>II.B.2.a.iii</i></p> <p>15a. Conduct a review and assessment of BUSD K-5 core reading program in conjunction with school site principals, teachers, school personnel and bargaining units. <i>II.B.2.a.i</i></p>
Adequate Progress
<p>12b. Provide <i>Grades 6-8 Reading and Language Arts teachers</i> professional development in research and practice of Reading and Language Arts instruction consistent with the curriculum framework. <i>II.B.2.a.ii</i></p> <p>14. Identify supports to Tier 1 curriculum for Grades 4-8 in consultation with the Outside Consultants. <i>II.B.2.a.iii</i></p>
Minimal Progress
<p>13a. Begin implementation of the Targeted PDP to provide <i>Grades K-5 general education teachers</i> professional development in how to use their chosen Reading and Language Arts Tier 1 curriculum through coaching and observations to provide feedback on implementation. <i>II.B.2.a.iii</i></p> <p>13b. Begin implementation of the Targeted PDP to provide <i>Grades 6-8 Reading and Language Arts teachers</i> professional development in how to use their chosen Reading and Language Arts Tier 1 curriculum through coaching and observations to provide feedback on implementation. <i>II.B.2.a.iii</i></p>
Progress Not Evident
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Summary of Findings - Instruction

For the second half of this academic year, the cross-cutting theme of **Instruction** has been the second major focal point for the Implementation Team. The new Curriculum and Instruction Department has dedicated a majority of their time and efforts these past few months on leading the curriculum review process to adopt a new English Language Arts program.

BUSD initiated the process of adopting a new elementary Language Arts curriculum, starting with an overview of the curriculum adoption process for principals and site-based leaders in early February of 2024. BUSD staff collaborated with literacy consultant Kim Gibbons to examine the findings of a comprehensive curriculum review conducted by Dr. Gibbons' Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI) at the University of Minnesota. The results of this review, along with an additional deep dive into reviews from the Knowledge Matters Campaign and EdReports, were the starting point for BUSD's curriculum adoption process.

Later in February, BUSD conducted its first Community Listening and Learning Session aimed at disseminating plans for the elementary ELA curriculum adoption to the broader Berkeley community, while also providing time and space to receive feedback regarding the district's literacy adoption process. This session was attended by over 40 participants, including parents, caregivers, community members, and BUSD district and site-level staff. A second Community Listening and Learning Session was held in mid May to provide the community with an update on the short list of curricula being considered for the adoption, and a third Community Session is being planned for early Fall to provide details and receive feedback on the pilot process for the 2024-2025 school year.

After this initial phase of the adoption process, beginning in March, BUSD assembled a Language Arts adoption committee, consisting of classroom teachers from all grade levels and academic support staff (RtI, SpEd, and Literacy Coaches), as well as district and site leadership. Beginning in April, this Language Arts pilot committee convened for three full-day sessions to determine which ELA curricula to pilot for 2024-2025. The short list of programs reviewed included three knowledge building curricula (*EL Education*, *Wit & Wisdom*, and *Fishtank Learning*), along with four foundational reading skills programs taken directly from the CAREI review list (*EL Education*, *UFLI Foundations*, *Magnetic Reading*, and *Functional Phonics & Functional Morphology*).

After the third curriculum adoption meeting in late May, the Curriculum and Instruction department began to align the scope and sequence for selected pilot programs and is currently working on scheduling comprehensive training sessions on the pilot process to begin before the start of the upcoming school year. The next steps for this curriculum adoption committee are to organize the pilot process for the chosen ELA curricula in early August, beginning with training on the first curriculum pilot cycle, with an anticipated pilot launching in late August. More specific updates on the ELA adoption process developed over the summer will be detailed in BUSD's internal 2023-2024 fourth quarterly report to be released in August 2024.

While much progress has been made with respect to the cross-cutting theme of **Instruction** through the curriculum adoption process, there is still work to be done in the area of implementing instructional practices learned from the Core Reading Academy. Evaluation data from BUSD teachers reveals that the professional learning sessions provided by CORE were generally well

received, nonetheless there has been little evidence that the CORE instructional practices have been implemented across most general education classrooms. This may be due to the limited amount of instructional coaching that BUSD provides to its general education teachers. Although each school has an on-site teacher with the title of “Literacy Coach” who is an expert in reading instruction, the majority of their daily schedules are dedicated to providing direct instruction to students, and very little time is dedicated to providing coaching for teachers. From an outside perspective, it appears that the BUSD Literacy Coaches are functioning in effect as a second Intervention teacher, and less like a true instructional Coach. The major shifts in reading instruction and assessment required by the Literacy Improvement Program (including the implementation of a new curriculum in 2025-2026) will require considerable instructional coaching. Therefore it is recommended that Berkeley Unified work with its current Literacy Coaches to review the district’s instructional coaching model, including exploring and learning from other school districts on how to best structure their language arts coaching model to better support Tier 1 instruction in the general education classroom.

Recommendations - Instruction

1. Develop an Instructional Coaching Plan for K-5 General Education teachers and 6-8 Language Arts teachers by December 2024.
2. Complete K-5 English Language Arts curriculum pilot to replace Teachers College Units of Study in Reading and Writing with an evidence-based ELA curriculum by Spring of 2025.

Cross-Cutting Theme 4: Intervention

The fourth theme that is integrated across the actions of the Literacy Improvement Program is how **Interventions** are provided for students within the larger Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) model. As BUSD is simultaneously strengthening its use of assessment data to strengthen Tier 1 Instruction, it is important to consider how this process can also lead to improvements in supplemental services for Tier 2 and Tier 3 Interventions. In the original Settlement Agreement, BUSD agreed to provide appropriately intensive and early research-based reading intervention services, related services, supplementary aids and services, accommodations, and modifications to students with reading disabilities, including dyslexia.

The table below captures the progress to date on the cross-cutting theme of **Intervention**.

Substantial Progress
20. Consult with the Outside Consultants with regard to development and implementation of progress monitoring guidelines for Tier 2 and Tier 3 students. <i>II.A.1.b.v</i>
Adequate Progress
10. Provide professional development to school-based teams to use of Benchmark Assessment data the MTSS-Reading Data System (“MTSS-RDS”) to triage students into appropriately intensive Tier 2 or Tier 3 reading interventions, write reading goals that meaningfully reduce the reading achievement gap, and monitor progress and report progress to parents/guardians to ensure growth and development. <i>II.B.2.b.i</i>

<p>15b. Conduct a review and assessment of BUSD’s Grades 6-8 reading intervention programs in conjunction with school site principals, teachers, school personnel and bargaining units. II.B.2.a.i</p> <p>21. Implement the Wilson Reading System. <i>II.B.2.d.ii</i></p> <p>35. Develop and implement an MTSS staffing plan that supports Tier 3 service delivery by special education personnel with input from the Outside Consultants. <i>II.B.2.b.iii</i></p>
Minimal Progress
<p>19. Develop and implement an MTSS staffing plan that supports Tier 2 service delivery model by coordinating available remedial programs such as Title 1, English Learner, and reading specialists with input from the Outside Consultants. <i>II.B.2.b.iii</i></p> <p>23. Consult with the Outside Consultants regarding proposed changes to District-wide reading intervention and special education policies, procedures and practices as outlined in the Literacy Improvement Program before presentation by the Implementation Team to the School Board for approval. <i>II.A.1.b.i</i></p>
Progress Not Evident
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Summary of Findings - Intervention

A primary objective of this fourth Monitoring Report has been to investigate how Tier 2 and Tier 3 **Interventions** are being delivered across Berkeley’s elementary and middle school sites. Given that the most substantial changes to the BUSD literacy program to date have taken place in the area of reading intervention, the bulk of the evidence collection in this Monitoring Report was focused on visiting and observing the delivery of Tier 2 and Tier 3 reading interventions across all eleven Berkeley elementary school sites and its three middle schools. These site visits have revealed that BUSD has successfully navigated a large-scale shift over these past five months towards providing IMSE Orton Gillingham and the Wilson Reading System structured literacy interventions at all BUSD schools.

In the 2023-2024 academic year, BUSD restructured its elementary reading intervention program to provide structured literacy interventions for students receiving Tier 2 and Tier 3 reading support. As of June 2024, 100% of Literacy Coaches and 100% of RtI teachers providing Tier 2 reading interventions have been trained in the Comprehensive IMSE Orton Gillingham training system. While it is necessary to receive professional development as the first step in changing practice, the more crucial step is ensuring that these practices are being used in the intervention classroom with the children in need of these services. After multiple classroom visits across school sites, it is evident that intervention teachers have incorporated these new strategies into their everyday teaching- it was observed that 91% of RtI teachers and Literacy Coaches were teaching OG structured literacy lessons using IMSE materials during site visits by the Program Monitor. These site visits have provided ample evidence that high-quality, evidence-based instruction is taking place in K-5 Tier 2 classrooms. To build on this asset of high-quality Tier 2 interventions at Berkeley elementary schools, it is highly recommended that peer observations and lesson study take place across school sites to more easily share best practices in reading intervention across the district.

In terms of Tier 3 professional learning offered by elementary special education staff, 86% of Mild/Moderate (M/M) Education Specialists and 77% of Extensive Support Needs (ESN) Education Specialists have received training in the Wilson Reading System, while the remaining Special Education teachers in need of Wilson training are scheduled to receive their PD in the Fall of 2024. With regard to how the Wilson system is being implemented, it was difficult to gather concrete data around the percentage of teachers implementing this curriculum with fidelity during school observations this Spring; as a result, additional observations will be scheduled in Fall 2024 to provide more clarity on implementation in this area.

With respect to **Interventions** at Grades 6-8, although overall progress is far behind where it stands for Grades K-5 literacy, noteworthy advancements have taken place in this area. Over the past few months, BUSD has conducted a review and assessment of its Tier 2 reading intervention programs for middle school, discontinued the use of Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) and Read180 (due to a lack of documented efficacy for our striving readers in 6-8th grade), and worked with Dr. Gibbons to identify evidence-based reading interventions with high effect sizes on student outcomes to pilot for Tier 2 middle school intervention in the Fall of 2024.

To improve transparency with students and parents regarding literacy supports, it is recommended that BUSD collaborate with its middle school literacy teams to develop a general Course Description of its Tier 2 and Tier 3 classes, detailing the instructional focus of these classes- including curriculum (ex: Wilson, IMSE, REWARDS, etc.), reading components taught (ex: fluency, polysyllabic decoding), and the time and structure of these course offerings.

Recommendations - Intervention

1. Adopt evidence-based Tier 2 Reading Intervention curriculum at the middle schools to complement the Wilson Reading System Tier 3 intervention by January 2025.
2. Create a Course Description for Tier 2 and Tier 3 Reading Support and Reading Intervention courses at Middle School for Fall 2024.
3. Provide additional coaching for Tier 2 and Tier 3 Interventionists (ex: model lessons, lesson study, peer observations) to improve the delivery of their structured literacy programs.

Cross-Cutting Theme 5: Systems of Support

Similar to the first cross-cutting theme of Accountability introduced in this report, **Systems of Support** is a critical piece of the Literacy Improvement Program to ensure that Berkeley Unified is able to *sustain* changes in literacy instruction, intervention, and assessment well beyond the scope of this plan. The CA ELA/ELD Framework identifies three critical components of an effective implementation model that are also relevant to the success of the LIP: “professional learning, leadership, and program supports”. Effective program supports create a learning community in which teachers, administrators, and support staff are engaged in an ongoing cycle of learning, reflecting on, and improving their own practice, thus encouraging innovation of new ideas to lead to sustainable change.

Clear and consistent communication is another principal tenet of effective program supports. Implementing new assessment systems, high-quality instructional materials, and evidence-based instructional practices and intervention are not enough for sustaining these changes long-term. It is also imperative that the school district successfully integrate program components across complementary initiatives, in order to sustain these program shifts to ensure high-quality teaching and learning experiences for all students. Explicitly connecting the dots between multiple district initiatives can help lead to greater implementation efficiency and also encourage cross-departmental collaboration. The final key component of effective **Systems of Support** is the school district’s ability to demonstrate flexibility. By allowing space for the LIP to evolve and by capturing these innovations back into the larger LIP, the district will be more responsive to unforeseen areas of concern that may emerge at a later stage of the implementation process.

The table below captures the progress to date on the cross-cutting theme of **Systems of Support**.

Substantial Progress
<p>1. Form a District Implementation Team <i>II.A.1.a</i></p> <p>3. Consult with the Outside Consultants with regard to development of the Targeted Professional Development Plan (PDP). <i>II.A.1.b.ii</i></p> <p>17. BUSD will consult with the Outside Consultant with regard to development of guidelines and criteria used to place at-risk students into Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions. <i>II.A.1.b.iv</i></p> <p>22. Identify and secure the services of an impartial outside Monitor to monitor and report on BUSD’s compliance with the Literacy Improvement Program. <i>II.C.1.a</i></p>
Adequate Progress
<p>4. Review and implement reforms to District policies, procedures and practices as needed to fulfill the goals of the Literacy Improvement Program, including RTI. <i>II.B.1.a</i></p> <p>31. Develop corollary Section 504 goal development and progress monitoring standards. <i>II.B.2.d.iii</i></p>
Minimal Progress
<p>30. Develop a plan with the Outside Consultants to increase use of the MTSS as part of the comprehensive evaluation to identify students with SLD, including dyslexia. <i>II.B.2.d.i</i></p>
Progress Not Evident
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Summary of Findings - Systems of Support

In the final cross-cutting theme of **Systems Support**, Berkeley Unified continues to sustain growth around strengthening the underlying protocols and policies to connect and support the long-term changes resulting from the Literacy Improvement Program for the future that lies beyond this Settlement Agreement.

The most notable progress around **Systems of Support** has taken place in the revision of guidelines and criteria used in Grades 6-8 to place at-risk students into Tier 2 and 3 interventions related to LIP Action 17. One of the most meaningful advancements has been the expansion of the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) assessment for use with students in Grades 6-8 in an effort to more accurately diagnose the root causes of adolescent reading difficulties. In early Spring, literacy leaders from Willard, Longfellow, and King middle schools reviewed ORF data for over 500 students scoring below proficient on Star and participated in a data-based decision making process to more effectively triage these students into the most beneficial reading supports.

Using the Four-Box Model described below in **Figure 3**, middle school literacy teams analyzed DIBELS ORF data to group students into one of four categories (Fluent and Accurate, Accurate with Slow Rate, Inaccurate with Slow Rate, and Inaccurate with High Rate) to begin to match student needs to the most appropriate type of literacy intervention. The next step in this diagnostic decision-making process included the identification of specific instructional strategies for the student profile of each quadrant, investigating best practices for progress monitoring, and defining clear exit criteria for each group. It is recommended that this Four-Box triage process be integrated into the upcoming BUSD Grades 6-8 Reading Diagnostic Plan for next year, along with the use of DIBELS ORF for setting goals and monitoring progress across middle school sites and reading interventions. It is also recommended that when planning initial intervention placements and matches for incoming 6th grade students, 5th grade Oral Reading Fluency data from the elementary sites be used to most quickly and accurately identify new middle school students in need of additional reading support.

Organizing ORF Data and Making the Instructional Match

<i>Group 1: Fluent and Accurate</i>	<i>Group 2: Accurate but Slow Rate</i>
<i>Group 3: Inaccurate and Slow Rate</i>	<i>Group 4: Inaccurate but High Rate</i>

Figure 3 - Four-Box Model for Curriculum-Based Evaluation (Howell and Nolet 2000)

As the many policies, procedures and practices from the LIP continue to take effect, Berkeley Unified is getting closer to reaching one of the more ambitious goals of the settlement agreement: to use “MTSS as part of the comprehensive evaluation to identify students with SLD, including dyslexia” [Action 30]. While these MTSS procedures are being implemented across school sites next year, it is recommended that BUSD reach out to other California school districts to investigate how they have successfully navigated this shift in policy to learn from their success and to avoid their mistakes.

Recommendations - Systems of Support

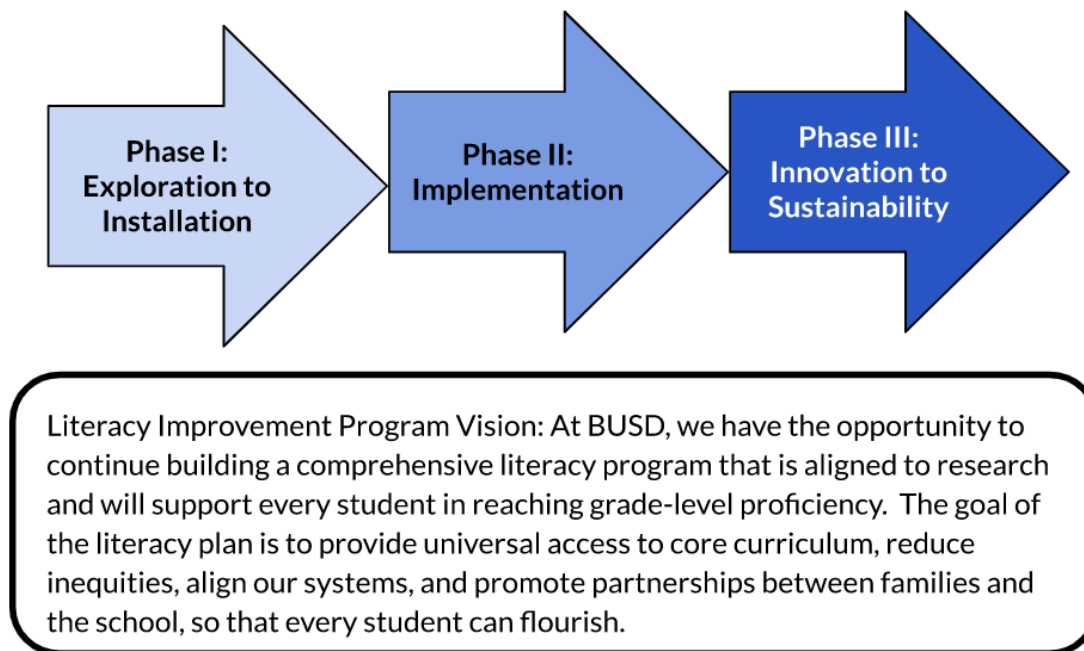
1. Investigate California districts using an MTSS method for identifying the determination of a Specific Learning Disability (SLD) by December 2024.

METHODOLOGY - IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE

The logic model on which this report has been created is taken from the *California English Language Arts/ English Language Development Framework* (CDE, 2014). Chapter 11 of this framework details the phases of Implementation Science, comprising distinct stages that an organization will experience when attempting to fully implement a new set of strategies or innovations across multiple schools and departments. These stages are identified as “exploration, installation, initial implementation, full implementation, innovation, and sustainability”. In the context of the BUSD Literacy Improvement Program, these phases can be useful for evaluating the amount of progress expected over the life of the long-term change initiative set into effect by the Settlement Agreement. While the Science of Reading figured prominently in the creation of the 37 Actions in the LIP (defining “what” changes should be implemented and “why”), it is helpful to use Implementation Science and Change Theory (“how” and “when” we can expect these changes to take place) to best determine what full implementation will entail, and to set realistic expectations for the appropriate rate of change for a successful translation of these evidence-based theories and models into practice.

The image in **Figure 4** below illustrating the effective Phases of Implementation can help approximate where Berkeley Unified currently falls in its implementation of the Literacy Improvement Program, and is useful for determining if sufficient progress has been made to date.

Figure 4 - Effective Phases of Implementation (Fixsen and Blase, 2009)



Based on the earlier June 2024 Progress Report section of this report, it is now more than likely that Berkeley Unified has entered into the beginning of **Phase III: Innovation and Sustainability**. It is at this point in the process of implementing a large-scale literacy plan where the focus of the

work begins to shift from how this work is being implemented at each individual school site to how this work can be sustained over the long-term, and how the changes in structures and practice become part of the larger district culture. At this juncture, creating policies and procedures to ensure that all new employees are onboarded in these new systems is key to the enduring success of the broader Literacy Improvement Program.

CONCLUSION

The primary purpose of this fourth Monitoring Report is to evaluate progress on the BUSD Literacy Improvement Program from January -June 2024 in an effort to: a) hold the district accountable to the terms it has accepted from the Dyslexia Settlement Agreement, b) provide concrete next steps for the Implementation Team, and c) serve as an update for original Settlement Plaintiffs and current BUSD parents, caregivers, and members of the larger Berkeley community.

As of June 2024, adequate progress on the LIP has been identified in all five of the cross-cutting areas of **Accountability, Assessments, Instruction, Intervention, and Systems of Support**. This progress is commendable, but by no means signifies that the work of the LIP is complete. The difficult work of solidifying and systematizing the structural changes from these new district policies can present new challenges in 2024-2025, and it is imperative that the same level of intensity and focus brought to Year 1 and 2 of the Literacy Improvement Program remains in Year 3. Ensuring that these larger program shifts outlive the broader Dyslexia Settlement Agreement is essential to achieving the primary goal of this work: to create and maintain a high-quality, evidence-based reading program for future generations of Berkeley students.

The next Monitoring Report, evaluating progress during the first half of the 2024-2025 academic year, will include more specific reporting on the implementation of the Literacy Improvement Program in general education classrooms, starting with Berkeley middle schools. This fifth Monitoring Report in the series will be based on the findings from BUSD's internal 2023-2024 Quarter 4 and 2024-2025 Quarter 1 Reports, and will be shared in December of 2024.

Program Monitor Contact Information: George Ellis, georgeellis@partner.berkeley.net.

Appendices

- A) [Full Class Action Settlement Agreement](#)
- B) [2022 Q1 Report on Status of Required Actions](#)
- C) [2022 Q2 Report on Status of Required Actions](#)
- D) [2022 Q3 Report on Status of Required Actions](#)
- E) [2022 Q4 Report on Status of Required Actions](#)
- F) [2023 Q1 Report on Status of Required Actions](#)
- G) [2023 Q2 Report on Status of Required Actions](#)
- H) [2023 Q3 Report on Status of Required Actions](#)
- I) [Literacy at BUSD Website](#)
- J) [CORE Reading Academy Scope and Sequence](#)

References

California Department of Education (2014). *English language arts/English language development framework for California public schools: kindergarten through grade twelve*. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Education Press

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