



Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

UPDATE: K–4 Reading Levels 2025

Authorizing Legislation: RCW 28A.320.203

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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 56% of elementary students in grades K–4 for the 2024–2025 school year. Of the student counts reported, 35% of students in reporting districts are reading below grade level.

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, structured literacy, and dyslexia
- 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

INTRODUCTION

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
- Which intensive reading strategies and/or interventions were 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 2024–2025 school year.

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 eight years, including 2024–25, school districts have chosen from 45 interventions based on best practices. A total of 275 individual districts reported intervention data for 2024–25. 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.

UPDATE STATUS

FINDINGS

From the data reported by Washington school districts, 35% of K–4 students were not reading on grade level for the 2024–25 school year. Of the Washington school districts, **165** districts did report K–4 student literacy data; **56%** of students’ scores were reported by their districts. OSPI extended data submission opportunities to support schools with reporting. However, **46%** of districts did not report student data this year. The following table below report the counts show how many are reading below grade level for each grade level.

Table 1: 2024–25 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	Smarter Balance Assessment ELA Statewide (Level 1)
Transition to Kindergarten	5,101	2781	--	--	--
Kindergarten	66,804	37,047	10,669	29%	--
Grade 1	70,328	39,103	14,334	37%	--
Grade 2	75,089	42,074	15,252	36%	--

Grade 3	78,834	44,191	15,985	36%	28%
Grade 4	75,669	42,855	16,899	39%	30%
Total	371,825	208,051	73,139	35%	

Source: Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) extracted on 10/29/25 and the 2024–25 K–4 Literacy Report in the Education Data System.

RESPONSE RATE

To assist districts, OSPI extended the reporting window into October 2025. OSPI worked proactively to prepare the data reporting systems well in advance to ensure districts can complete their reporting within the typically expected time frame. Additionally, OSPI will continue to provide reminders and technical support to districts regarding data reporting.

In 2023-24, 55% of student scores were reported by their districts. In 2022-23, 88.6% of student scores were reported by their districts. 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.

Data included Washington state public school districts and State-Tribal Education Compact schools. Data analysis showed that for the 2024-25 school year, 54% of the school districts submitted data; 56% of Washington state K–4 students are represented in the data collected here. 142 school districts with 163,774 students did not submit data. 165 school districts provided intervention data. 54% of districts reported intervention data. The reporting platform was reopened after the reporting window closed to accommodate schools in reporting their data.

DATA DISAGGREGATED BY RACE

- The percentage of **Black/African American** students reading below grade level **decreased by 3%** compared to last school year, indicating improvement.
- The percentage of **White** students reading below grade level **decreased by 3%** compared to last school year, indicating improvement.
- The percentage of **American Indian/Alaskan Native** students reading below grade level **decreased by 2%** compared to last school year, indicating improvement.
- The percentage of **Hispanic/Latino** students reading below grade level **increased by 6%** compared to last school year.
- The percentage of **Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander** students reading below grade level **increased by 3%** compared to last school year.
- The percentage of **Asian** students reading below grade level **increased by 2%** compared to last school year.
- The percentage of **Two or More Race** students reading below grade level **increased by 2%** compared to last school year.

DATA DISAGGREGATED BY SUBGROUPS

The following describes trends for subgroups that **improved with decreased counts** in reading below grade level:

- The percentage of **Title 1 (Targeted Assistance Program)** students reading below grade level **decreased by 16%** compared to last school year, indicating significant improvement.
- The percentage of **Gender X** students reading below grade level **decreased by 6%** compared to last school year, indicating improvement.
- The percentage of **Female** students reading below grade level **decreased by 2%** compared to last school year, indicating improvement.
- The percentage of **Male** students reading below grade level **decreased by 2%** compared to last school year, indicating improvement.
- The percentage of **Migrant** students reading below grade level **decreased by 2%** compared to last school year, indicating improvement.
- The percentage of **LAP (Learning Assistance Program)** students reading below grade level **decreased by 2%** compared to last school year, indicating improvement.
- The percentage of **Low Income** students reading below grade level **decreased by 2%** compared to last school year, indicating improvement.
- The percentage of **Homeless** students reading below grade level **decreased by 2%** compared to last school year, indicating improvement.

The following describes trends for subgroups that **remained constant** in reading below grade level:

- The percentage of **Multilingual** students reading below grade level **remained constant**, with changes of 1% or less reading below grade level.
- The percentage of **Special Education** students reading below grade level **remained constant**, with changes of 1% or less reading below grade level.
- The percentage of **504** students reading below grade level **remained constant**, with changes of 1% or less reading below grade level.

The following described trends for subgroups that **increased counts** in reading below grade level:

- The percentage of **Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander** students reading below grade level **increased by 3%** compared to last school year.
- The percentage of **Unaccompanied Youth** students reading below grade level **increased by 2%** compared to last school year.

Table 2: 2024–2025 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	208,051	73,139	35%
Male	106,931	38,856	36%
Female	100,845	34,194	34%
Gender X	275	89	32%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	2,508	1,434	57%
Asian	23,281	4,717	20%
Black/African American	8,135	3,351	41%
Hispanic/Latino	57,006	28,283	50%
White	95,872	27,798	29%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	2,845	1,536	54%
Two or More Races	18,404	6,039	33%
Low Income	10,0087	45,810	46%
LAP – Learning Assistance Program	46,806	28,176	60%
Title I – Targeted Assistance Program	1,614	891	55%
Special Education	36,569	20,414	56%
Multilingual/English Language Learners	40,924	23,282	57%
Migrant	3,393	2,063	61%

Homeless	6,264	3,517	56%
504 Plan	6,903	2,307	33%
Unaccompanied Youth	329	175	53%

Source: Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) extracted on 10/29/25 and the 2024–25 K–4 Literacy Report in the Education Data System.

Table 3: 2024–2025 K–4 Student Trends in Reading Below Grade Level by Subgroup

Subgroup	2024--2025 (n)	2024--2025 (%)	2023--2024 (%)	2022--2023 (%)	2021--2022 (%)	2020--2021 (%)	2017--2018 (%)
Low-Income	45,810	46%	48.8%	47.5	54.0	54.1	44.6
Special Education	20,414	56%	56%	56	57.7	57.5	57
Multilingual/English Language Learners	23,282	57%	56%	60.5	60.0	62.3	-
Migrant	2,063	61%	63%	61	59.5	68.5	59
Homeless	3517	56%	57.8%	59	67.0	61.9	50.1
504 Plan	2,307	33%	34%	33	34.1	38.3	23.1
LAP	28,176	61%	61.8%	63	62.5	67.9	-
Title I	891	55%	71%	66	63.5	69.4	-
Unaccompanied Youth	175	53%	48.9%	48.5	56.3	46.4	33.2

Source: Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) extracted on 10/29/25 and the 2024–25 K–4 Literacy Report in the Education Data System.

INTERVENTION

For the last seven years, including 2024–25, school districts report on 45 interventions based on best practices. A total of 165 individual districts reported intervention data for 2024–25. Districts provided data on 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. Data reported by districts can be found in the appendix's tables at the end of this report.

The analysis of intervention strategies across Washington school districts reveals a clear preference for collaborative and locally-driven approaches to supporting early literacy. **The most widely adopted strategies include professional learning communities (PLC) and school or district-based training workshops**, each utilized by 85% of reporting districts. These approaches foster ongoing educator collaboration and skill development within familiar settings. **Group tutoring**, whether led by paraeducators or classroom teachers, also ranks among the top strategies, with over 80% of districts leveraging these supports to provide targeted assistance directly to students who need intervention.

In contrast, the least utilized interventions tend to be those requiring external resources or specialized expertise. **National training workshops and national conferences are among the least leveraged**, with only 4% and 8% of districts, respectively, reporting their use. Similarly, **the role of content coaches at the district level is limited**, with just 11% of districts employing this strategy. These findings suggest that while districts value professional development, they are more likely to invest in accessible, community-based models rather than external or specialized programs.

Overall, the data highlights a strong commitment to building internal capacity and fostering collaborative learning environments, while also pointing to potential barriers such as cost, logistics, or relevance that may limit the adoption of less common interventions.

CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

In the 2024–25 school year, according to data from **165** school districts, **35%** of students in grades K–4 were reading below grade level. This remained constant, with changes of 1% or less reading below grade level compared to last school year.

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

- Students identified as Black/African American
- Students identified as White
- Students identified as American Indian/Alaska Native
- Students identified as Title 1 (Targeted Assistance Program)
- Students identified as Male, Female, and Gender X.
- Students identified as Migrant.
- Students identified as LAP – Learning Assistance Program
- Students identified as Low Income
- Students identified as Homeless.

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 inform literacy systems in schools.

OSPI Elementary ELA and Student Information Services will also plan to prepare the data reporting system well in advance to avoid a technical delay in the opening of the reporting window. Additionally, OSPI plans 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: 2024–25 INTERVENTION DATA

Table 1: Number of Districts Offering Student Centered Tutoring Services in 2024–2025

Tutoring Services	Number of Reported Districts Offering Service	Percent of Reported Districts Offering Service
Group tutoring (Paraeducator)	138	84%
Group tutoring (Classroom Teacher)	137	83%
Group tutoring (Intervention Specialist)	123	75%
Adult Tutoring (Paraeducator)	119	72%
Adult Tutoring (Classroom Teacher)	111	67%
Adult Tutoring (Intervention Specialist)	104	63%
Adult Tutoring (Volunteer)	36	22%
Group tutoring (Volunteer)	31	19%
Peer tutoring (Cross age)	19	12%
Peer tutoring (Same age)	19	12%

Source: Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) extracted on 10/29/25 and the 2024–25 K–4 Literacy Report in the Education Data System.

Table 2: Number of Districts Offering Extended Learning Time Services in 2024–2025

Extended Learning Time Service	Number of Reported Districts Offering Service	Percent of Reported Schools Offering Service
Computer-based or online instruction	87	53%
Structured summer programs	58	35%

Extended Learning Time Service	Number of Reported Districts Offering Service	Percent of Reported Schools Offering Service
Before/after school instruction	50	30%
Book programs	39	24%
Homework Club	36	22%

Source: Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) extracted on 10/29/25 and the 2024–25 K–4 Literacy Report in the Education Data System.

Table 3: Number of Districts Offering Interventions for Educator Practice in 2024–2025

Professional Development Type	Number of Reported Districts Offering Service	Percent of Reported Schools Offering Service
Professional learning community	140	85%
School/district training/workshop	140	85%
Teacher mentor program	110	67%
New teacher induction program	87	53%
Co-Teaching	63	38%
Regional/state training/workshop	45	27%
Regional/state conference	37	22%
National conference	14	8%
National training workshop	7	4%

Source: Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) extracted on 10/29/25 and the 2024–25 K–4 Literacy Report in the Education Data System.

Table 4: Number of Districts Utilizing Consultant Teachers in 2024–2025

Consultant Teacher Type	Number of Reported Districts Offering Service	Percent of Reported Schools Offering Service
Instructional coach for teachers	54	33%
Instructional coach for schools	53	32%
English Language Development (ELD) coach for schools	39	24%
Literacy coach for schools	38	23%
English Language Development (ELD) coach for teachers	37	22%
Literacy coach for teachers	33	20%
English Language Development (ELD) coach for districts	33	20%
Instructional coach for districts	26	16%
Literacy coach for districts	22	13%
Content coach for schools	21	13%
Content coach for teachers	20	12%
Content coach for districts	18	11%

Source: Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) extracted on 10/29/25 and the 2024–25 K–4 Literacy Report in the Education Data System.

Table 5: Number of Districts Providing Outreach/Support for Families in 2024–2025

Outreach/Support for Families Type	Number of Reported Districts Offering Service	Percent of Reported Districts Offering Service
Family Literacy events	121	73%
Literacy activities for families to do together at home	115	70%
School associations (PTA, PTSA, PTSO)	113	68%
Employment of parent and family engagement coordinators	48	29%
Classes/coaching to families on working on reading skills at home	44	27%
Home visits	33	20%

Source: Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) extracted on 10/29/25 and the 2024–25 K–4 Literacy Report in the Education Data System.

Table 6: Number of Schools Offering Community Engagement in 2024–2025

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)	88	53%
Kindergarten Transitions P-4 Community Partnerships	46	28%
Mentoring	31	19%

Source: Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) extracted on 10/29/25 and the 2024–25 K–4 Literacy Report in the Education Data System.

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