Evaluation of Project ARISE: Year 2 Brief

Raquel Sanchez, Michaela Gulemetova, Ilana Barach, and Melissa Chavarria

Introduction

The Reading Instruction and Intervention (RII) grant evaluation is examining the implementation of Project Accelerating Reading Intervention for Systemic Excellence (ARISE). The evaluation has three phases—planning, formative, and summative—that began in November 2022 and will conclude in March 2026. This report provides an update on the implementation of Tier I activities through Year 2 of the grant period and recommendations for Year 3 implementation efforts. The report concludes with the next steps for the Year 3 evaluation.

Preliminary Findings

- 1309 participants registered for Project ARISE online courses through Thinkific.
- 49% of participants completed at least one course.
- 20% of participants completed all five courses.
- Participating teachers represent a broad geographic distribution.
- Most participants were located in the three partner counties (Contra Costa, Glen, and San Diego).
- Other regions with large numbers of participants include Fresno, Los Angeles (especially Long Beach), and the San Francisco Bay Area.
- Glenn County participants completed the most courses on average (3.4 courses).
- Approximately half of the participating districts had above average baseline ELA proficiency scores.

Overview of Project ARISE

The purpose of California's RII Grant Program (authorized by Assembly Bill 130) was to generate and disseminate professional learning opportunities for kindergarten through Grade 12 (K–12) educators in the areas of evidence-based literacy instruction, intensive literacy interventions, and support of pupils' executive functioning skills. The California Department of Educational (CDE) awarded the RII Grant to a consortium of county offices of education (COEs,) that includes partners from universities and nonprofit organizations. The consortium consists of three local education agencies (LEAs): Contra Costa County Office of Education, Glenn County Office of Education, and San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE); two institutions of higher education: University of California, San Francisco, and University of La Verne; and three nonprofit organizations: The Center for Whole-Child Education (The Center), TNTP, and National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII).

The consortium's Project ARISE is an example of professional learning efforts to integrate research-based recommendations for practice at scale. Specifically, Project ARISE is designed to build the capacities of California educators to address disparities in reading achievement, requiring specific attention to the needs of diverse learners.

Project ARISE aims to do this through four overarching goals: (a) provide evidence-based reading instruction for diverse learners, (b) develop knowledge and skills for appropriate use of screening strategies and evidence-based literacy instruction for diverse learners, (c) implement intensive intervention strategies for students struggling with literacy, and (d) support the development of executive functioning. Diverse learners include multilingual learners, students with disabilities, and struggling readers (who may not have been identified as having a specific disability).

According to the authorizing legislation[1]:

> *Professional learning opportunities under this grant may include, but are not limited to, professional development for all of the following:*
> *(A) School leaders, including principals and teacher leaders, to lead evidence-based reading instruction for diverse learners, including early learners, English learners, pupils with disabilities, and pupils with dyslexia.*
> *(B) Educators, including teachers and paraprofessionals, to develop knowledge and skills for appropriate use of screening strategies and evidence-based literacy instruction for diverse learners.*

---

[1] https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ps/riigrant.asp

(C) Educators, including teachers and paraprofessionals, to implement intensive intervention strategies for pupils struggling with literacy, including tutoring and small group strategies, and strategies for target pupil groups.
(D) All educators to support the development of pupils' executive functioning skills.

A draft logic model is presented in Exhibit 1. It provides a high-level overview of the ARISE program as we initially understood it. As the Project ARISE consortium partners further articulate the key components of the program and adapt implementation in response to feedback, the evaluation team will revise the logic model to reflect any changes.
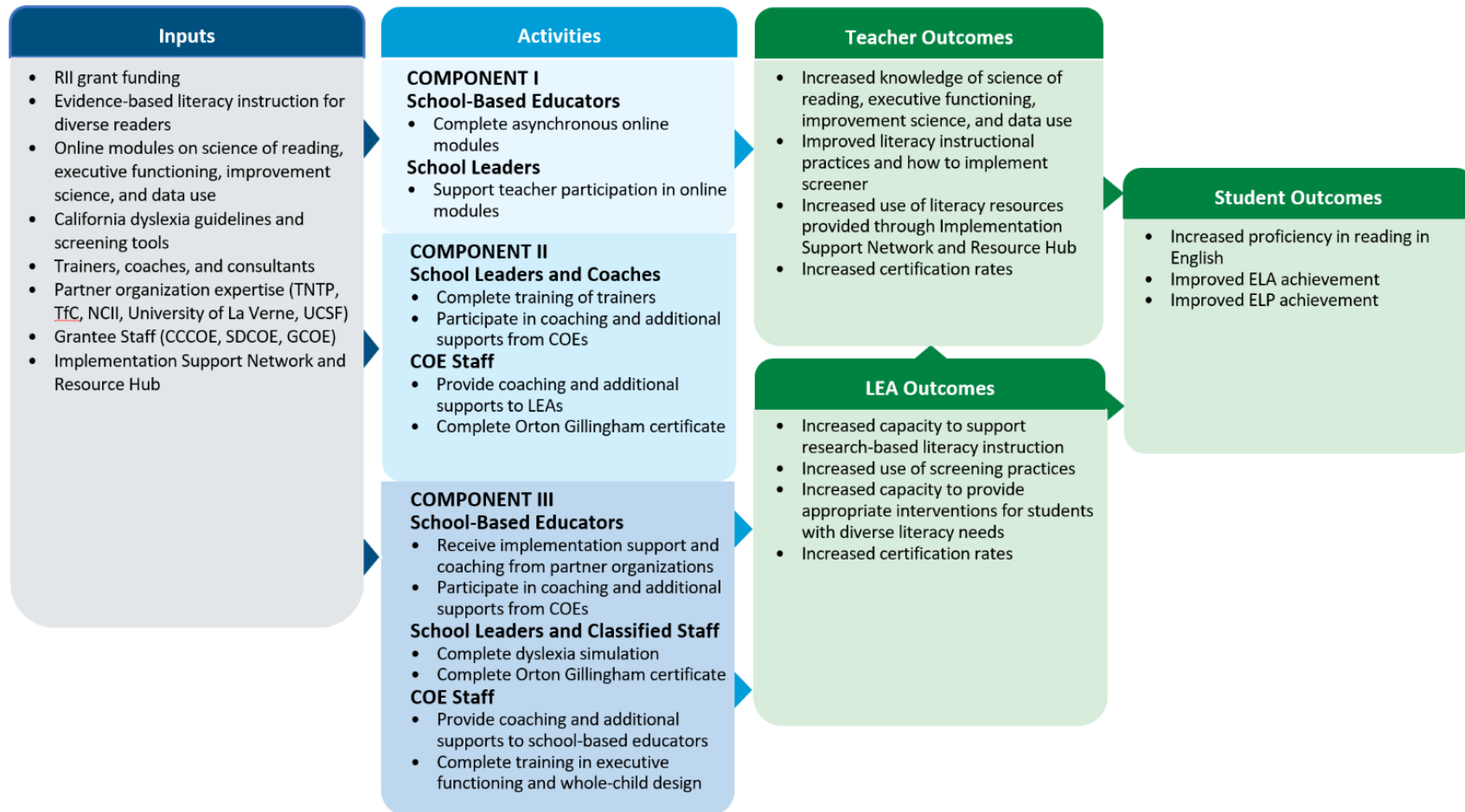
As Exhibit 1 shows, Project ARISE activities are delivered through three tiers of implementation. Exhibit 2 provides working definitions for each of the three tiers, which will undergo refinement based on lessons learned during implementation. Currently, the tiers are organized by intensity of support. Tier I activities are available to all educators in California on demand. These are asynchronous online learning modules that present evidence-based reading instructional practices. The stated recruitment target was to enroll 10,000 California teachers in Tier I. Tier II activities are strategic supports provided to selected LEAs to support planning and implementation of evidence-based reading instruction district-wide. The stated recruitment goal was to engage 10 to 20 LEAs (up to 50 school leaders) per cohort (for a total of approximately 150 school leaders). Tier III activities are intensive supports for leadership teams in a subset of three LEAs per year (one per COE) that demonstrate a need for a customized approach to building local capacity for evidence-based reading instruction. Ultimately nine LEAs will participate in Tier III.[2]

The program logic model will be revised for the Year 3 evaluation plan to reflect any adaptations made based on learnings from implementation with Cohort 1. AIR will work with the grantee organizations to clarify the definition of each program component, participation criteria, as well as expected outputs and outcomes.

---

[2] At the time of this report, there remained a lack of clarity in the distinction between Tier II and Tier III activities and the criteria for LEA participation in each. These issues will be explored in the analysis of the Year 2 partner interviews and Year 3 data collection (from multiple sources) on Tier II and Tier III activities.

Exhibit 1. Initial Project ARISE Program Logic Model

Inputs

- RII grant funding
- Evidence-based literacy instruction for diverse readers
- Online modules on science of reading, executive functioning, improvement science, and data use
- California dyslexia guidelines and screening tools
- Trainers, coaches, and consultants
- Partner organization expertise (TNTP, TfC, NCII, University of La Verne, UCSF)
- Grantee Staff (CCCOE, SDCOE, GCOE)
- Implementation Support Network and Resource Hub

Activities

COMPONENT I
School-Based Educators
- Complete asynchronous online modules

School Leaders
- Support teacher participation in online modules

COMPONENT II
School Leaders and Coaches
- Complete training of trainers
- Participate in coaching and additional supports from COEs

COE Staff
- Provide coaching and additional supports to LEAs
- Complete Orton Gillingham certificate

COMPONENT III
School-Based Educators
- Receive implementation support and coaching from partner organizations
- Participate in coaching and additional supports from COEs

School Leaders and Classified Staff
- Complete dyslexia simulation
- Complete Orton Gillingham certificate

COE Staff
- Provide coaching and additional supports to school-based educators
- Complete training in executive functioning and whole-child design

Teacher Outcomes

- Increased knowledge of science of reading, executive functioning, improvement science, and data use
- Improved literacy instructional practices and how to implement screener
- Increased use of literacy resources provided through Implementation Support Network and Resource Hub
- Increased certification rates

LEA Outcomes

- Increased capacity to support research-based literacy instruction
- Increased use of screening practices
- Increased capacity to provide appropriate interventions for students with diverse literacy needs
- Increased certification rates

Student Outcomes

- Increased proficiency in reading in English
- Improved ELA achievement
- Improved ELP achievement

Note. RII = Reading Instruction and Intervention; TfC = The Center for Whole Child Education; NCII = National Center on Intensive Intervention; UCSF = University of California, San Francisco; CCCOE = Contra Costa County Office of Education; SDCOE = San Diego County Office of Education; GCOE = Glenn County Office of Education; COE = county office of education; LEA = local education agency; ELA = English language arts; ELP = English language proficiency.

Exhibit 2. Project ARISE Components

Component	Description
Tier I: Online Modules	A series of five self-paced online courses that offer a whole-child approach to literacy instruction available to all staff. (Approximately 34.5 hours)
Tier II: Implementation Network	Collaborative sessions for leadership teams (i.e., district administration, school administration, literacy coaches, etc.) at participating districts to discuss and plan for the implementation of the training with their school educators. This includes support(s) for leadership teams to get clarity on content or to develop a mission and vision for their district.
Tier III: Intensive Support	Direct coaching support for participating schools and LEAs. Activities include providing professional learning for teachers, lesson studies, classroom observations and supporting school leadership teams in implementing the modules with their teachers.

Research Design

AIR is conducting a mixed-methods evaluation of Project ARISE, organized into three phases across three cohorts of participants: (1) the planning phase, (2) a formative evaluation, and (3) a summative evaluation. See Exhibit 3 for a timeline of the evaluation phases. **The planning phase** took place from **November 2022** through **June 2023** and was informed by collaborative discussion with the grantee consortium and a review of program documents. This planning phase resulted in the development of the initial program logic model (Exhibit 1), the formal evaluation plan submitted to CCEE in July of 2023, and the development of the participant survey.

The **formative evaluation phase** focused on Cohort 1 and began in **April 2023** and will continue with Cohort 2 through **November 2025**. This phase focuses on (a) the fidelity with which program components are implemented, (b) facilitators and barriers to successful implementation, and (c) lessons learned through the experience of implementing the program in real-world contexts. As part of this formative evaluation, this report provides an update on the program implementation, evaluation data collected to date, and next steps for the external evaluation.

The **summative evaluation phase** began in **September 2023** and will continue through **April 2026**. This phase focuses on the impact of the ARISE program on instructional behaviors and learner outcomes. The impact evaluation of project ARISE on teacher outcomes will use a before-and-after design and will measure outcomes of Cohort 2 teachers using survey data at two points in time (i.e., before joining the program and at the end of each school year). The impact evaluation of project ARISE on student outcomes will use matching techniques to identify schools similar to schools participating in the project. We will use publicly available data on Grade 3 ELA proficiency

rates at the school level in Spring 2025.[3] This report includes a description of the outcome measures and a baseline analysis of those measures.

Exhibit 3. Evaluation Phases

Formative Evaluation Questions

In this report, we provide a progress update on the formative evaluation which is guided by three questions:

1. To what extent was each component of Project ARISE program implemented with fidelity?

2. In what ways does Project ARISE support LEA teachers and leaders to address the needs of diverse learners (e.g., students with disabilities, struggling readers, multilingual learners, and long-term English learners)?

3. How well do the content and structure of Project ARISE activities align with the needs of participating LEA teachers, paraprofessionals and leaders?

Data Sources

To answer these formative research questions, we collected data using the following methods:

- Interviews with grantee consortium partners

- Participation data from the learning management system (Thinkific)

- Participation data from the Implementation Network hubs (COEs)

- Participant survey data[4]

- Focus groups with LEA leaders participating in the Implementation Network[5]

Outputs

---

[3] We focus on Grade 3 as the earliest available standardized measure reading achievement.
[4] The pilot version of the participant survey has been administered to the first cohort of Tier I participants. Survey analysis is in progress and results will be presented in the Year 3 evaluation report (2025)
[5] Focus groups with LEA Leaders will begin Fall 2024. Analysis and findings will be presented in the Year 3 evaluation report (2025).

- 5 open access online courses consisting of 16 modules covering the science of reading, executive functioning, and intensive intervention.

- Implementation Network workshops and resources.

- Participation rates.

Summative Evaluation Questions

1. What are the impacts of ARISE professional learning on educator outcomes, such as teaching practices in reading instruction, mindset, and self-efficacy?

2. What are the impacts of the ARISE intervention on school-level outcomes, such as adoption of a screening assessment[6], putting screening processes in place, and providing support for teachers to implement the intervention?

3. What are the impacts of the ARISE intervention on student outcomes, such as ELA achievement in Grade 3?

4. Do program impacts vary by subgroups of educators or students?

Data Sources

To respond to these summative questions, we collected data using the following methods:

- Educator outcomes survey items (see Participant Survey in Appendix A)

- School outcomes based on a review of literacy plans and professional development plans

- Student outcomes based on Grade 3 ELA achievement scores

- Subgroup variation based on survey demographics and student demographics

Outcomes

- Teacher self-efficacy, growth mindset and use of evidence based instructional practices

- Schoolwide adoption of universal screening practices and support for teacher participation in Project ARISE professional learning activities

- Grade 3 ELA achievement at participating schools

- Grade 3 ELA achievement for students with disabilities, struggling readers and multilingual learners at participating schools

---

[6] The Reading Risk Screener Selection Panel will publish an approved list of universal screeners in December of 2024.

Data Collection and Analysis

Partner Interviews

Participants were recruited from participating COEs and partnering programs. An email was sent to the main point of contact for each partner organization to schedule individual interviews to discuss the implementation of Project ARISE. The following partner organizations were identified by the grant lead organization (Contra Costa County Office of Education or CCCOE) and included in the interview sample:

- San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE)

- Glenn County Office of Education (GCOE)

- TNTP

- The Center for Whole Child Education (The Center)

- University of La Verne

- University of California San Francisco

- National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII)

Individual interviews were conducted with COE members and program partners in February and March. We interviewed seven individuals from the three COEs and seven individuals from the five partner organizations. The interviews focused on perceptions of the implementation of Project ARISE. The conversations with COE members and program partners lasted 60 minutes and were audio recorded (with permission).

Upon completion of the interviews, the audio recordings were professionally transcribed using *REV.com*. The transcript data was de-identified and stored in two secure platforms. The transcript data was then coded qualitatively, using a combination of inductive (emergent) and deductive (a prori) codes[7], leveraging MAXQda software. Each of the 14 transcripts were coded by two analysts who met weekly to discuss coding definitions, check the reliability of their coding efforts and identify emergent themes.

Participation Records

Participation records have been collected from a variety of sources to document the range and depth of participation by different target populations: teachers, leaders, schools, and the students they serve. We describe the participation data by intervention tier below.

Participation data for Tier I activities comes primarily from Thinkific (learning management system) data. The Thinkific platform collects limited information on Project ARISE participants who

---

[7] Maxwell. J.A. (2005). Qualitative Research Desing: An Interactive Approach. Sage: Thousand Oaks.

registered on the site, such as participant county and school district. Using this information, together with domains included in participants' email addresses, we were able to identify which county each participant was from (i.e., Contra Costa, Glenn, San Diego, Fresno, Other).

In addition, we were able to use the IP addresses stored by Thinkific to identify where each participant was physically located when they registered. Using IP addresses enabled us to present geographical participant location across California and to depict the program expansion over time. To monitor participant progress through the courses, Thinkific stores the number of courses or modules each participant has enrolled in as well as their progression in the asynchronous professional learning courses on a scale from 0 to 100 (in terms of how far in the course the participant has progressed). We defined the following key variables for each participant: number of courses started (out of 5), number of courses completed (out of 5), and average completion rate of the courses (out of 100). We then computed descriptive statistics such as averages and examined patterns by subgroups.

Participant Survey

A participant survey was developed to measure constructs such as knowledge of topics covered in the training, growth mindset, and self-efficacy for literacy instruction. The survey also collected information about teacher motivation for participating in Project ARISE; satisfaction with course content and pacing; future plans to use the information learned; and demographics. Taking previous research into account, the team chose to include an established measure used in other research, called the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy for Literacy Instruction (TSELI).[8] Other parts of the survey did not include established measures, as the team did not find any that were a good fit for the evaluation needs. See Appendix A for the final survey.

After undergoing several rounds of edits, the research team shared the survey draft with our partners for feedback. We programmed the survey using the Voxco survey platform. We tested the web survey wording, functionality, and design several times before sharing it with our partners for additional feedback. The survey invitation went out on April 2, 2024, and the survey remained in the field until May 13, 2024. In addition to the survey invitation email, participants who did not respond received up to two reminder emails and an email notifying them of the survey closing date. Due to a low response rate, we extended the survey closing date, and we sent an additional email notifying participants. The final response rate was 16%.

Student Achievement

To measure the ultimate student outcomes being influenced by Project ARISE, as indicated in the logic model in Exhibit 1, we considered the publicly available data for indicators of student

---

[8] Tschannen-Moran, M., & Johnson, D. (2011). Exploring literacy teachers' self-efficacy beliefs: Potential sources at play. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 27*(4), 751–761. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2010.12.005

achievement. As a starting point, we are using Grade 3 ELA achievement which is the earliest standardized measure available for student reading achievement in English. . Examining Grade 3 ELA proficiency rates at the school level at baseline and comparing those with Grade 3 ELA proficiency rates after Project ARISE can provide indication of program effectiveness over time. We acknowledge that Grade 3 ELA proficiency rates at the school level is a proxy measure and has limitations in capturing the true impact of Project ARISE (e.g., Project ARISE serves teachers of all grades). Furthermore, without a valid comparison group, we are not able to specify the effect of other factors that influence ELA proficiency rates.

We downloaded and processed publicly available data files on aggregate results from the administration of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) Smarter Balanced Assessments covering all California students.[9] We limited our analyses to the last three academic years since the pandemic: 2020–21, 2021–22, and 2022–23. We further restricted our analyses to Grade 3 ELA scores and proficiency rates for State of California as a whole and the three target counties. In terms of student groups, we analyzed the data for all students, students with disabilities, socioeconomically disadvantaged, English learner (EL), ever-EL, reclassified fluent English proficient, White, Hispanic or Latino, Asian, and Black.

Analysis

Using program records, we identified the Cohort 1 schools in the three target counties participating in any tier of Project ARISE during 2023–24 allowing us to compare them with county averages and state averages. We conducted descriptive analyses using means, standard deviations, and percentages. We also examined trends over the three year period in terms of changing demographics and proficiency levels.

In the Baseline Findings section below, we describe the three counties in terms of locale and size (e.g., number of districts, schools, and students) using 2022–23 data. We then describe them in terms of student demographics and identify the most salient trends over 2020–23 period. Finally, we present the school-level Grade 3 ELA proficiency rates for Cohort 1 schools together with all other schools in the three counties and compare those with state averages.

Baseline Findings

Elementary Schools in Target Counties

Exhibit 4 shows the population of LEAs, schools, teachers, and students by county to get a sense of the potential direct beneficiaries of the intervention. We restricted the sample to schools for which the intervention was most relevant: elementary schools that served Grade 3, with available

---

[9] https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/caaspp/

ELA scores on CAASPP (referred to as "eligible schools"). This resulting in a total of 698 schools across the three counties. The three counties vary widely in size and urbanicity.

Exhibit 4. Total Elementary Schools with Grade 3, by County

Target beneficiaries	Contra Costa	Glenn	San Diego
Local Education Agencies (LEAs)	17	9	42
Schools	179	12	507
Teachers*	7,679	293	21,149
Students**	40,631	1,952	133,024

Source. National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), CAASPP.

Note. *Number of teachers includes all teachers in the county. **Number of students includes only students with CAASPP scores.

Student Demographics of Third Graders in Target Counties

In all three counties, most third graders were either White or Hispanic (Exhibit 5). Glenn County had a higher rate of Hispanic students than Contra Costa and San Diego Counties, though it matched the state average. Students in Contra Costa County were the most diverse, with a high percentage of Hispanic, White, and Asian students, and those classified as Other (e.g., multiracial students). All three counties had similar rates of English learners and students who have ever been English learners. Most students in Glenn County were socioeconomically disadvantaged (74%), a rate that is higher than the state average. The other two counties had fewer socioeconomically disadvantaged students compared to the state average, with the rate in Contra Costa County being relatively low (42%).

Exhibit 5. Demographics of Third-Grade Students, by County

Race/Ethnicity	Contra Costa	Glenn	San Diego	California
Hispanic or Latino	38%	56%	49%	56%
White	25%	37%	28%	20%
Asian	15%	2%	7%	10%
Black or African American	8%	0%	4%	5%
Other race/ethnicity	14%	5%	12%	9%
Other Demographics				
English Learner	15%	19%	16%	17%
Ever English Learner	30%	35%	34%	36%
Reclassified Fluent English Proficient	15%	16%	18%	19%
Reported Disabilities	12%	12%	14%	12%
Socioeconomically disadvantaged	42%	74%	53%	63%

Source. 2022–23 CAASPP data.
Note. N = 698 elementary schools.

Baseline ELA Proficiency Levels in Target Counties

To assess whether schools in Cohort 1 represent the schools most in need of literacy interventions, we compared ELA proficiency levels of schools participating in Project ARISE with eligible schools that were not participating. In Exhibit 6, Cohort 1 schools are represented by dark blue circles, and eligible, non-participating schools are represented by grey circles. As indicated by the blue circles, ELA proficiency rates in some of Cohort 1 schools were below the state average (represented by the vertical blue line), indicating that large proportions of students in these schools are in need of and could benefit from a literacy intervention, such as Project ARISE. Several other schools had literacy rates above the state average, suggesting a missed opportunity to focus recruitment efforts on schools most in need.

Exhibit 6. School Level ELA Proficiency Rates for Grade 3 in 2023
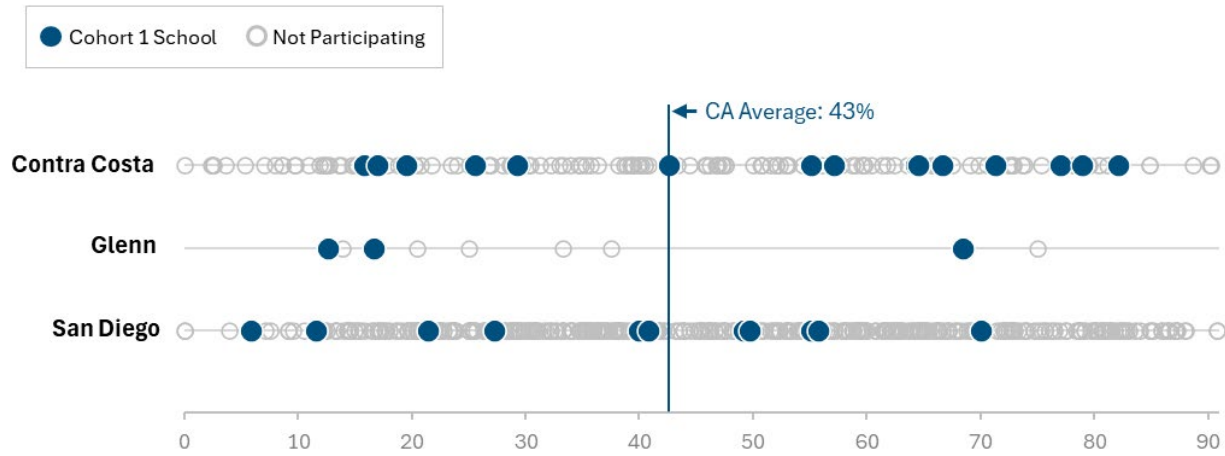
Source. CAASPP data
Note: *N*=698 Elementary Schools

Project ARISE Participation in Target Counties

The first cohort of Project ARISE participants included 30 elementary schools in the three target counties during the school year 2023–24.[10] These participating schools represented 33% of eligible schools in Glenn County, 8% in Contra Costa County, and 2% in San Diego County. Half of Cohort 1 schools received Tier II (mainly in Contra Costa), and the other half received Tier III (mainly in Glenn and San Diego counties).

In addition to direct participation of teachers and school staff from Cohort 1, participants across California have registered to take part in the Project ARISE asynchronous online professional learning on the Thinkific platform (Tier I). As of September 15, 2023, 205 participants enrolled in the courses, and by April 15, 2024, an additional 1,104 new participants registered. Exhibit 7 shows the geographic distribution of participants at the time of registration. Initially, participants were clustered mainly within Contra Costa, Glenn, and San Diego counties. As program implementation partners engaged in outreach activities, additional participants registered across the state. New clusters emerged near the San Francisco Bay Area, Fresno, Los Angeles, and Visalia, while enrollment in the three original counties continued to grow. Just over half of all participants are from the three target counties (25% from Glenn, 14% from Contra Costa, and 13% from San Diego counties). Additionally, 13% are from Fresno, and 35% are from other counties. This speaks to moderately successful program expansion during the year, albeit below the required pace for reaching the target of 10,000 teacher participants.

---

[10] The full list of Cohort 1 schools includes three additional schools (one middle school and one high school from Contra Costa and one K–2 school in Glenn County.

Exhibit 7. Geographic Representation of Participants

As of Sept 15, 2023   **As of Apr 15, 2024**
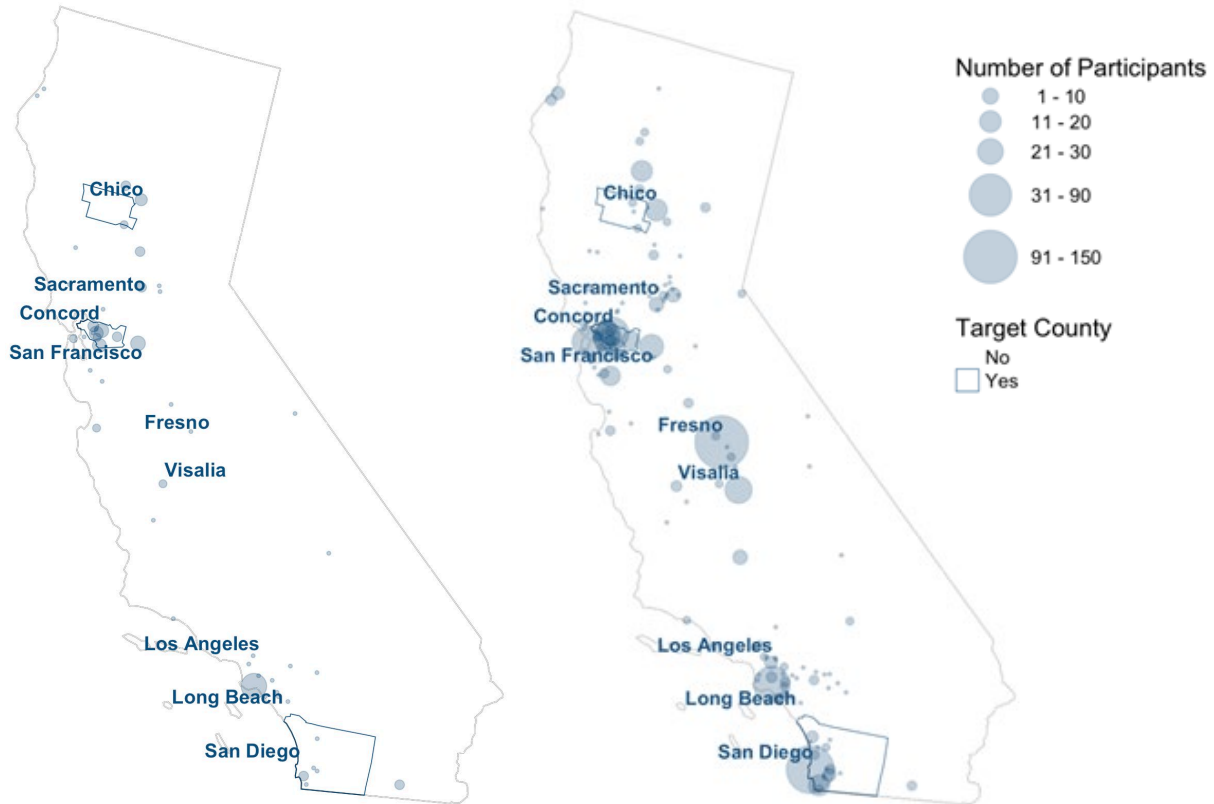
Source. Thinkific.

As of April 15, 2024, most Project ARISE participants enrolled in five online courses (85%). The rest enrolled in only a subset of two to three courses provided by TNTP. Among those enrolled in all five courses, 73% started at least one course, and 49% completed at least one course. Twenty percent of participants completed all five courses. These overall findings mask important regional differences (see Exhibit 8).[11] Glenn County participants completed the most courses and maintained a strong pace across the school year, completing an average of 3.4 courses. Participants in Contra Costa County also started out very strong, but their completion rates decreased over time. They completed an average of 1.6 courses. In San Diego County, participants completed an average of 1.1 courses, and the completion rate of the Executive Functions and Literacy course was the highest. Completion rates were the lowest among participants who lacked the support provided in the three target counties through Tier II and Tier III services. To help

---

[11] Completion rates for participants in the Fresno area are reported separately in Exhibit 8, as these participants have benefited from concerted effort and support from TNTP and district staff (outside of Project ARISE), while participants identified as "Other" have most likely only participated in the online modules but have not benefited from additional supports. Their completion rates are the lowest.

explain the differing completion rates across the five courses, it is important to note that program developers did not intend courses to be taken in a specific sequence; participants can select which courses to take based on their needs.

Exhibit 8. Course Completion Rates completion rates by Participant Group
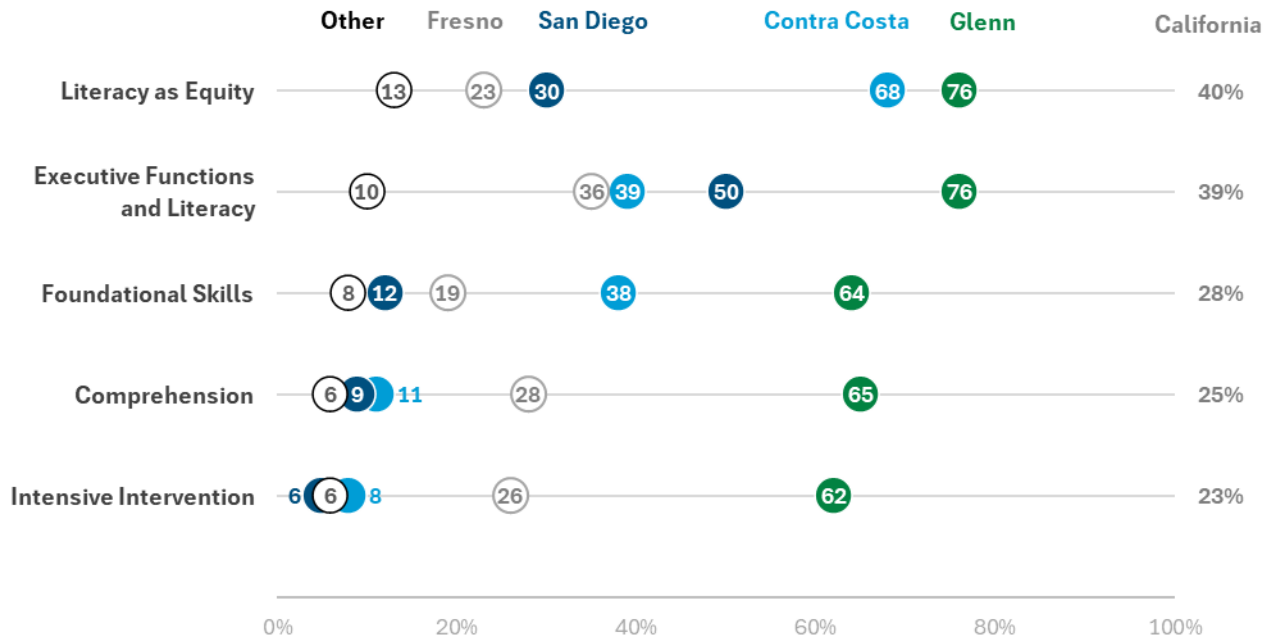
Source. Thinkific.

Recommendations

Based on the preliminary analysis presented in this report, the evaluation team has six recommendations for the RII grant consortium:

- Increase the pace of outreach and recruitment for Tier I services toward the target of 10,000 participants.

- Engage in targeted recruitment of districts below state average in ELA achievement to ensure communities that can most benefit are being served.

- Engage LEAs to provide local support to teacher participation to increase completion rates.

- Leverage lessons learned by Glenn County on how to support teacher completion of the Tier I online modules.

- Clarify criteria for LEA participation in Tier II and Tier III service levels.

- Make the intervention more focused and less "a la carte" to target measurable common outcomes.

The feasibility of the impact study design proposed for the summative evaluation depends upon reaching the target sample sizes and the availability of pre-post comparison data at the teacher level. Failure to achieve recruitment targets and/or administer teacher surveys will jeopardize the evaluation results.

Next Steps

Year 3 of the formative evaluation will focus on documenting the continued implementation of Project ARISE activities. We will also begin documenting the implementation of Tier II and Tier III activities. As part of the summative evaluation, we will establish baseline measures through a participant survey in Fall 2024. A second survey in Spring 2025 along with CAASSP (California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress) ELA performance data will document outcomes at the student, teacher, and school levels.

Data Collection

Tier II Participant Focus Groups. AIR will conduct up to six virtual focus group discussions with leaders from LEAs that are receiving Tier II services through Project ARISE. These discussions will focus on the content and delivery of Tier II services and the perceptions of school leaders of the quality, relevance, and usefulness of those services.

Tier III LEA Interviews. We will conduct up to six virtual/telephone interviews with individual leaders from schools that are receiving Tier III services through Project ARISE. Similar to the focus groups, these interviews will focus on the content and delivery of Tier III services and the perceptions of quality, relevance, and usefulness of those services. In cases where the school leader is not familiar with the content of the services provided, we will ask that leader to nominate a key informant from the school who is directly involved.

Participation Records. We will collect the list of schools participating in Cohort 2 from the implementing partners as well as lists of individual participants maintained in Thinkific. For each participant, we will compile data on course enrollment and completions, and IP addresses.

Tier I Participant Survey. To the extent possible, we will work together with the implementing partners to embed the survey into the registration process so we can collect outcome measures before participants begin the online courses (i.e., pre-test measures). We will then administer the participant survey again in Spring 2025 to collect outcome measures after participation in Project ARISE professional learning (i.e., post-test measures). This will allow us to compare the participant outcomes before and after participation to get a sense of program effectiveness in improving teaching outcomes as compared to a baseline.

Student Achievement. We will collect publicly available data from the California Department of Education and the Common Core of Data at the school level on Grade 3 ELA proficiency levels, student demographic characteristics, and aggregate school information such as locale. Other measures of student outcomes may be added as appropriate. Comparing Grade 3 ELA proficiency rates at the school level before and after participation in Project ARISE will provide evidence of program effectiveness in improving student achievement.

Data Analysis

Qualitative Analysis of Interview and Focus Group Data

The qualitative analysis team will begin the next phase of analysis by querying the Year 2 Partner Interview data and summarize the range of perspectives expressed therein. These summaries will be organized by theme and considered in light of the formative evaluation questions. Once themes have been identified, a qualitative memo will be drafted and shared with the Project ARISE leadership, internal evaluator, CCEE, and CDE for review and discussion. Ultimately, the qualitative findings will be revised in light of the insights from the program team, findings from other qualitative and quantitative data sources, and integrated into a mixed-methods analysis to be included in AIR's Year 3 interim report.

Year 3 Interview and Focus Group data will be analyzed using the same approach described on page 6 of this report and using MAXQda software for management and coding of transcripts. This process includes at least two researchers who collaboratively engage in multiple rounds of inductive and deductive coding. Regular checks of interrater reliability ensure a minimum threshold of 80% agreement prior to moving on to the querying phase of analysis. Internal memos will summarize participant perspectives by theme.

Participation Analysis

The evaluation team will continue to analyze individual participant enrollment and completion rates and will disaggregate the data by county. We will also update the geographical representation of the participant expansion using IP addresses.

Statistical Analysis Year 2 Participant Survey

We will conduct descriptive analyses using the survey data by constructing means and standard deviations. We will also conduct initial psychometric analyses to determine whether the teacher outcome measures related to teacher self-efficacy for literacy instruction and growth mindset are valid and reliable. These preliminary statistical analyses are necessary in order to consider revisions to the survey before conducting the pre-post regression analysis for the summative evaluation in Year 4.

Outcomes Analysis

To assess the effect of the project on student outcomes, we will obtain and process Grade 3 ELA proficiency data for the 2023–24 school year and begin with descriptive analyses at the school level. Once the Cohort 2 schools are identified, the evaluation team will use matching techniques to identify up to 3 observationally similar schools for each participating school to serve as the comparison group in the summative evaluation. Main outcome analyses will be conducted in Year 4, after ELA proficiency data for Spring 2025 becomes publicly available. To match schools, the evaluation team will use publicly available school-level data provided by CAASPP from 3 previous school years (i.e., 2020–23).

We will use a before-and-after comparison to assess the effect of the project on Tier I participant outcomes by tracking changes in their outcomes over time. This approach requires that we have collected two outcome measures for each participant: a pre-test and a post-test on measure constructs such as knowledge of topics covered in the training, growth mindset, and self-efficacy for literacy instruction. We will conduct regression analysis of survey data in Year 4.

Reporting

AIR will submit a Year 3 Interim Evaluation Report by June of 2025. This report will summarize all data collection and analysis to date. The next report will also include recommendations based on stated goals and objectives and highlights of next steps to be completed in Year 4 of the evaluation.

Appendix A: Participant Survey

INTRO PAGE

American Institutes for Research (AIR) has partnered with the California Collaborative for Excellence in Education (CCEE) to conduct an independent evaluation of Project ARISE. As part of this effort, you are invited to complete a survey.

- **Purpose**: This survey will be conducted to gather details, perceptions and feedback. The survey will take 15 minutes. The information you provide will help us assess the effectiveness of Project ARISE in improving literacy instruction.

- **Confidentiality**: We will keep the information you share with us confidential. We will only report findings in aggregate and will not identify you by name. The survey data will be securely stored and accessed only by AIR staff.

- **Risks or Benefits**: There are no anticipated risks or benefits to participating in this survey. Your responses will help improve Project ARISE to the benefit of future participants like you.

- **Participation is Voluntary**: We encourage you to participate. However, your participation in this survey is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate without penalty.
- **Funding**: Funding for this study is provided by the California Department of Education.

- **Contact Information**:
  - For technical support or other problems with the survey, please contact Ilana Barach, ibarach@air.org.
  - If you have questions about this study, please contact the project director, Dr. Raquel Sanchez, rsanchez@air.org.
  - If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a research participant, contact AIR's Institutional Review Board (IRB)—which is responsible for the protection of project participants—at IRB@air.org, or toll-free at 1-800-634-0797.

Thank you for participating!

If you opened the survey from a mobile device, please close the survey and open from a desktop or laptop. The survey requires the larger screen for complete functionality.

Click "Next" below if you agree to participate in the survey.

[ELIG_Q1] Which of the following best describes your current role?
Select all that apply.

1. General Education Teacher
2. Special Education Teacher
3. ELD/Dual Language Teacher
4. Paraprofessional
5. Teacher on Special Assignment/Resource Teacher
6. Site Administrator → *if at least 1 of 1-5 are not also selected, Ineligible (skip to end)*
7. District Administrator → *if at least 1 of 1-5 are not also selected, Ineligible (skip to end)*
8. County Administrator → *if at least 1 of 1-5 are not also selected, Ineligible (skip to end)*
9. Other Non-Instructional Role → *if at least 1 of 1-5 are not also selected, Ineligible (skip to end)*

Skip pattern:
[Only teachers will be allowed to complete the survey; exit here if one or more of the roles from 1-5 is not among the selected responses.]

[SE_Q] SELF-EFFICACY OF LITERACY INSTRUCTION
Please consider your *current* ability, resources, and opportunity to do each of the following in your current role.

To what extent can you…?	Not at All	Very Little	Somewhat	To a great Extent
use a student's oral reading mistakes as an opportunity to teach effective reading strategies?	o	o	o	o
use a variety of informal and formal reading assessment strategies?	o	o	o	o
adjust reading strategies based on ongoing informal assessments of your students?	o	o	o	o
provide specific, targeted feedback to students during oral reading?	o	o	o	o
adjust writing strategies based on ongoing informal assessments of your students?	o	o	o	o
meet the needs of struggling readers?	o	o	o	o
help your students monitor their own use of reading strategies?	o	o	o	o
provide your students with opportunities to apply their prior knowledge to reading tasks?	o	o	o	o
get students to read fluently during oral reading?	o	o	o	o
model effective reading strategies?	o	o	o	o
implement effective reading strategies in your classroom?	o	o	o	o
help your students figure out unknown words when they are reading?	o	o	o	o
implement word study strategies to teach spelling?	o	o	o	o
use students' writing to teach grammar and spelling strategies?	o	o	o	o
Model effective writing strategies?	o	o	o	o
use flexible grouping to meet individual student needs for reading instruction?	o	o	o	o

To what extent can you…?	Not at All	Very Little	Somewhat	To a great Extent
get children to talk with each other in class about books they are reading?	o	o	o	o
recommend a variety of quality children's literature to your students?	o	o	o	o
provide children with writing opportunities in response to reading?	o	o	o	o
adjust your reading materials to the proper level for individual students?	o	o	o	o
motivate students who show low interest in reading?	o	o	o	o

Note: The above section on Self Efficacy of Literacy is the TSELI (a validated measure of teacher self-efficacy for literacy instruction). Because of the methods used to validate the entire measure, we do not want to remove any questions, even if they are not specifically relevant to the ARISE PD.

[MINDQ] GROWTH MINDSET
To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
All students in my class can improve their reading skills.	o	o	o	o
(-) Students who have not mastered grade level literacy standards will probably always struggle to master them.	o	o	o	o
With a good teacher, students who are struggling to read can make a great deal of progress.	o	o	o	o
I believe if I advance my literacy instruction skills, my students will improve their reading.	o	o	o	o
(-) Students can learn new reading strategies, but they can't really change their basic reading abilities much.	o	o	o	o

[KNOW_Q] KNOWLEDGE
How well can you do each of the following?

	Not at All	Slightly	Moderately Well	Very Well
I understand why it is important to provide students with texts that reflect their social identities and experiences.	o	o	o	o
I can describe what text-centered instruction looks like in action and how to scaffold text to support all students in accessing them.	o	o	o	o
I can apply the research on executive function to help students effectively build and use their skills.	o	o	o	o
I understand that all my students come to the classroom with language assets regardless of their home language(s), dialect, or culture.	o	o	o	o
I can explain the five steps of the DBI process.	o	o	o	o

I can define the four components of reading foundational skills (i.e., print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, and fluency).	o	o	o	o
I understand the research on how students' internal and external contexts affect their executive functions and therefore literacy.	o	o	o	o
I can define the concepts of building knowledge, schema, vocabulary, and the relationship between the concepts.	o	o	o	o
I can define the four elements of effective foundational skills instruction (i.e., systematic, explicitly, practice, and assessment).	o	o	o	o
I can explain what the Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity is.	o	o	o	o

Questions for Treatment ONLY:

[PD_Q1] PROFESSIONAL LEARNING
Please select all the online Project ARISE courses that you participated in during the 2023–24 school year.
Please select all that apply.

1. Executive Functions and Literacy
2. Literacy as Equity
3. Foundational Skills
4. Comprehension and Knowledge Building
5. Intensive Intervention and Data-Based Individualization
6. None of the above

[PD_Q2] MOTIVATION TO COMPLETE THE COURSES
Why did you decide to participate in the ARISE professional learning course(s)? *Please select all that apply.*
1. I was required to participate. *[PROGRAMMING-choosing this restricts all other options.]*
2. The administration at my school encouraged me to participate.
3. I needed continuing education hours.
4. I wanted to learn strategies to improve my literacy instruction.
5. Other _____

[PD_Q3] PERCEIVED HELPFULNESS, CONTENT RELEVANCE, SATISFACTION WITH CONTENT AND PACING
To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The content of the course(s) helped me understand the needs of multilingual learners.	o	o	o	o
The content of the course(s) helped me understand the needs of	o	o	o	o

students with dyslexia.				
The content of the course(s) helped me understand the needs of students who are struggling with learning to read, but are not identified as SPED.	o	o	o	o
The content of the course(s) helped me better support all of my students.	o	o	o	o
The pacing of the course(s) met my learning needs.	o	o	o	o
The asynchronous format of the course(s) suited my learning style.	o	o	o	o
The amount of content presented in the course(s) was manageable.	o	o	o	o
I would recommend the course(s) to colleagues who have the same role as me.	o	o	o	o

[PRACQ] CLASSROOM PRACTICES
How often do you do the following in your core academic classes?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently
I use the new practices and techniques I learned with all students in my classroom.	O	O	O	O
I use the new practices and techniques with specific students (e.g., students with disabilities, struggling readers, multilingual learners, and long-term English learners).	O	O	O	O
When designing my lessons, I use an asset-based lens and considering my students' individual strengths.	O	O	O	O
I think holistically about the skills and experiences my students need to become successful readers.	O	O	O	O

[SUSQ] PLANS TO CONTINUE USING INFORMATION LEARNED
To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following statements?

I plan to …	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. use the information I learned through ARISE in the future.	o	o	o	o
b. continue to implement the strategies learned through ARISE in my classroom next year.	o	o	o	o
c. share what I have learned with other teachers at my school.	o	o	o	o
d. seek out additional professional learning opportunities about literacy instruction.	o	o	o	o

Treatment and Control continue here:

DEMOGRAPHICS & TEACHING BACKGROUND

[DEMOG_Q1] How many years have you been in your current role (at least half time)?

Count this year as 1.

 [Numeric response]

[DEMOG_Q2] What grade level do you primarily work with this year?

Please select all that apply.

1. PK – 2
2. 3 – 5
3. 6 – 8
4. 9 – 12
5. Other [please specify]

[DEMOG_Q3] What core academic subject(s) are you teaching during the 2023-24 school year?

Please select all that apply.

1. Self-contained/Multiple subjects
2. English Language Arts
3. English Language Development
4. Academic Content in a Language other than English (Dual Language)
5. Mathematics
6. Sciences
7. Social Sciences
8. Other:_____

[DEMOG_Q4] Do you work directly with students on reading skills in any capacity?*

1. Yes
2. No

 [DEMOG_Q5] Do you have a certification as a reading or literacy specialist?

3. Yes
4. No

[DEMOG_Q6-8] Where did you primarily work during the 2023–2024 school year?*

Please type your school name in the search bar and choose the one that accurately identifies your county, district, and school

- For example, for Washington Elementary School in West Contra Costa Unified School District, type in "Washington" and select the 5th result below.
- Search only by school name. Do not type the words "school", "county", or "district" in the search bar.

County: [lookup]

District: [lookup]

School: [lookup]

[DEMOG_Q9] What is the highest level of education you have completed?
Please choose one of the following:

1. Bachelor's degree
2. Master's degree
3. Educational specialist or professional diploma
4. Doctorate
5. Other: ____[please specify]_____

[DEMOG_Q10] How would you describe your ethnic and/or racial identity?
Please select all that apply.

1. Asian or Asian American
2. American Indian or Alaska Native
3. Black or African American
4. Hispanic or Latino
5. Middle Eastern or North African
6. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
7. White or Caucasian
8. Prefer not to say
9. Something else: ____[please specify]_____

[DEMOG_Q11] What is your gender?
Please choose one of the following:

1. Female
2. Male
3. Non-binary, genderqueer, or not exclusively female or male
4. I describe my gender in a different way: ____[please specify]_____
5. Prefer not to answer