

DRLN Implementation Phase: Summary Brief

INTRODUCTION

In January 2023, the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) launched the Data Research Learning Network (DRLN) to support districts and counties in transforming their data and assessment practices, programs and policies. In [Phase 1 \(Planning\)](#), seven select school districts and county offices of education conducted data dives to identify problems of practice and develop innovation ideas that turned into action plans with aligned strategies to improve measurable outcomes.



In 2023-24, the DRLN welcomed three new LEAs as it entered Phase 2 Implementation, bringing the total to six school districts and four county offices of education (see [23-24 cohort](#)). This brief provides an overview of the emerging practices and shareable resources that came out of the DRLN's three pronged approach to data and assessment by promoting Deeper Learning through formative assessment practices, addressing the ongoing need for improved Data Literacy & Leadership, and communicating success with Data Dashboards.

DATA LITERACY & LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

In Fall 2024, CCEE launched the new Data Literacy & Leadership Academy, informed by the work of the DRLN. The purpose of the Academy is to create a pipeline of TK-12 education professionals proficient in data literacy and leadership to better serve California's students. We are thrilled to announce that our very own DRLN members will be serving as faculty and fellows in this Academy to support LEAs increase their data capacity and proficiency to drive instructional change. John Massie and Krystal Ramirez from San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools will be supporting the Data Literacy course, while Hilary Kjaer from Rincon Valley Union School District and Kit Bragg from San Ramon Valley Unified School District will be supporting the Data Leadership course.





STRAND
SPOTLIGHT

Taft City School District (TCSD) has made significant strides in the Deeper Learning strand as part of the Data Research Learning Network (DRLN). Focusing on improving literacy outcomes, TCSD implemented a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework, conducted a district-wide [teacher survey](#) with follow-up school-based focus groups, and leveraged data to drive instructional practices. Their collaborative, data-driven approach has led to notable improvements and set the stage for future success.

TCSD developed and implemented a MTSS framework, which became the foundation for systematic interventions across the district. Common formative assessment results were discussed collaboratively with school site principals, Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSAs), and classroom teachers, leading to actionable strategies for improvement. The district collected and analyzed interim assessment results (e.g. iReady ELA and math data), revealing the effectiveness of Tier 2 interventions and the need for stronger Tier 1 supports. This analysis informed their decision to provide professional development on the Science of Reading from CORE, aiming to enhance foundational reading instruction.



DEEPER LEARNING

The Deeper Learning strand focuses on improving teaching and learning through formative assessment practices. Three key takeaways district implementation are:

- Engaging staff in focused discussions of assessment data fostered shared meaning-making and common understanding, enabling agreed-upon decisions. This practice of coming together to discuss results throughout the school year on a monthly basis leads to clarity throughout the system.
- Identifying specific metrics to measure the impact of action steps are important for effective progress monitoring. This approach helps uncover areas of need and emphasizes the necessity of measuring to support continuous improvement and make timely adjustments to actions steps.
- Creating conditions for formative assessment practices to flourish in the classroom is critical. District leaders are in the position to foster more Balanced Assessment systems where assessments are weighted towards instruction rather than for evaluation and predictive purposes at the system level. This finding resulted in the newest strand on Balanced Assessment Systems.



DATA LITERACY & LEADERSHIP

The Data Literacy & Leadership strand provides an opportunity for districts to assess current data practices and programs for opportunities to implement more innovative, data-driven strategies for continuous improvement. Highlights of Phase 2 Implementation are:

- Articulating a clear theory of action for programs and practices in order to identify appropriate measures along the continuum of implementation and impact.
- Facilitating early-phase discussions to provide clarity on the system processes to collect, analyze, report and utilize collected measures.
- Fostering a continuous improvement mindset to explore how tools/processes are being utilized, identify what kind of supports are needed, and make necessary refinements to data tools and/or processes.



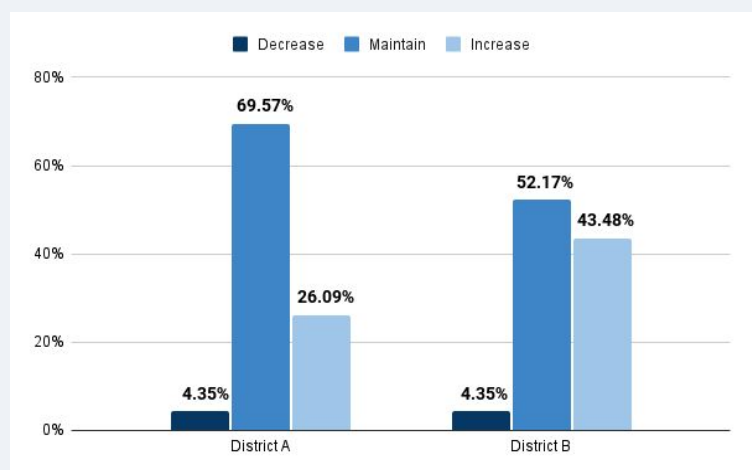
STRAND
SPOTLIGHT

Santa Clara COE (SCCOE) designed and piloted a Local Control & Accountability Plan (LCAP) tool in two school districts to support their year-long LCAP implementation and process monitoring. Intended to be used in conjunction with their LCAP trainings and services, this prototype not only guides the data collection process, but also allows districts to reflect on the final evaluation, resource allocation, and educational partner feedback of each strategic action to determine if LCAP actions will be adopted, adapted, or abandoned for the following school year.

SCCOE administered a pre- and post-[Data Use Self-Assessment](#) (DUSA) to measure how the use of the LCAP tool and process impacted districts' data culture and use, specifically in the areas of data systems, knowledge, practice, and leadership. For both districts, 95.65% of participants maintained or increased their capacity in 23 elements of the DUSA.

For the 2024-25 school year, SCCOE will be scaling this LCAP tool and process, building the capacity of their districts to lead this work internally without outside facilitation support.

Pilot Districts' DUSA Results Following the Use of the LCAP Tool & Process





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Prior to the start of this project, San Bernardino county districts regularly commented that it was not easy to access or use the reports provided by their local assessment vendors. Comments like, “there are too many reports” and “I don’t know which ones to look at” were heard from both teachers and administrators.

In response, the county Data and Assessment team started the Local Assessment Project. They decided to collect local assessment data directly from iReady, NWEA, and STAR. Their innovation idea was to create easily interpretable reports offering a countywide view of student progress. Each report is meticulously crafted to minimize friction between districts and their data, prioritizing focus, interactivity, and actionable insights.

These reports serve as a gateway to deeper exploration on chosen platforms, supported by roadmaps developed in collaboration with iReady, NWEA, and Renaissance. The roadmaps offer detailed guidance that help teachers and administrators find the right, detailed report to get school, teacher, and student-level information.

Interested in learning more about this work? Check out San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools [Open Door session](#) and [Spotlight](#).



DATA DASHBOARDS

The Data Dashboard strand focuses on enhancing real-time data, discussions, and decisions by end-users. Action research conducted by participating districts highlight the need for the following to fulfill the promise of dashboards:

- Developing data dashboards that allow users to create customized data visualizations to track performance, monitor interventions, and clearly delineated desired achievement outcomes, including student-level intervention data such as dosage (i.e., time spent in intervention)
- Including real-time data across a variety of cognitive and non-cognitive measures allows the district to make instructional decisions to support students and help them accelerate learning. This also allows support staff and school sites to more closely monitor progress and make shifts in practices, programs and policies to ensure that students are receiving the appropriate interventions
- Building data dashboards is necessary but not sufficient to promote data literacy. Despite their promise, oftentimes, data dashboards may be intimidating and confusing for users. Ongoing attention must be made to building data literacy.



BALANCED ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS

In January 2024, the CCEE launched a Balanced Assessment System pilot, in partnership with the [Center for Assessment](#), with the goal of creating resources that support the evaluation of local assessment system quality in a variety of local California contexts. Bakersfield City School District, Coachella Valley Unified School District, and Leggett Valley Unified School District conducted a review of their assessment systems to determine the quantity and quality of assessment by the intended user, answering the question of are we overtesting?

We are excited to announce that these three school districts are expanding on their pilot work in 2024-25 as the newest strand of the DRLN — the Balanced Assessment System strand. This strand will focus on assessing the the coherence, comprehensiveness, and continuity of assessment systems for instructionally useful assessments, aligned with the LEA's vision of teaching and learning.

Interested in conducting your own assessment system review?



Designed in partnership with the Center for Assessment, the [Assessment System Review learning path](#) contains seven modules of multimedia content with tools to facilitate the evaluation of whether the assessment system is meeting the differing needs of classroom teachers and administrators.



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Bakersfield City School District (BCSD) wanted to identify a systematic approach to evaluating and streamlining their assessment system to ensure that their district-required assessments were serving their intended purposes. In the six-month pilot, the district conducted an assessment inventory and learned the following:



An inclusive approach to gathering feedback on the proposed changes to the early literacy assessments was central to the successful reduction in testing.



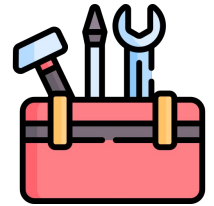
Ongoing professional development on formative assessment strategies for teachers is crucial.

This work has informed their DRLN Innovation Idea which will focus on building data literacy to strengthen the common formative assessment (CFA) cycle within grade-level professional learning communities (PLCs).

Interested in learning more about BCSD's work? Check out the [blog post](#) published by the Center for Assessment!

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024-25

In Phase 2 Implementation, we also hoped to address the statewide need for data-specific resources that focus on both the technical and culture-building practices. With this in mind, the DRLN launched an open-access [Resource Hub](#) to curate tools that came out of LEAs' learning journeys, providing statewide access to these valuable resources. These resources are exemplars of districts and counties data practices in action and are continuously being adjusted based on their implementation data. On this hub, you will find examples of data chats, instructional walkthroughs, teachers surveys, infographics and videos in use at variety of small and medium urban, suburban and rural public education contexts. In 2024-25, the DRLN will be entering Phase 3 Sustainability where LEAs will continue building their capacity, knowledge, practice, and mindsets to sustain and scale their innovation ideas within their local contexts. Aligned with CCEE's



organizational focus on data for impact, the DRLN will be placing an emphasis on collecting and documenting LEAs' impact stories, as measured by large-, medium-, and fine-grain sized data. In doing so, LEAs will be able to communicate the throughline from innovation ideas to impact on students, teachers, leaders, and systems.

AMPLIFYING DRLN INNOVATIONS & INSIGHTS

The DRLN will be continuing its efforts around state-level amplification by documenting and disseminating innovative learning experiences to help other districts and counties start their own innovation journeys. For the upcoming 2024-25 school year, CCEE will be partnering with select DRLN LEAs to present at the following conferences:



- [National Council on Measurement in Education \(NCME\) Conference](#) (September 19-20, 2024)
- [California Assessment Conference](#) (October 15-17, 2024)
- [California Educational Research Association \(CERA\) Conference](#) (November 6-8, 2024)
- [CSBA's Annual Education Conference](#) (December 5-7, 2024)