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Heard in the
Education Interim
Committee meeting
on 6-17-26.

Public Education K-3 Reading Programs:

Analyzing Outcome Measures, Data Quality, and Student Progress

Legislative Audit Subcommittee

June 16, 2026



Chapter 1

Early Literacy Benchmark Was Met, But Lack of Movement Needs Attention

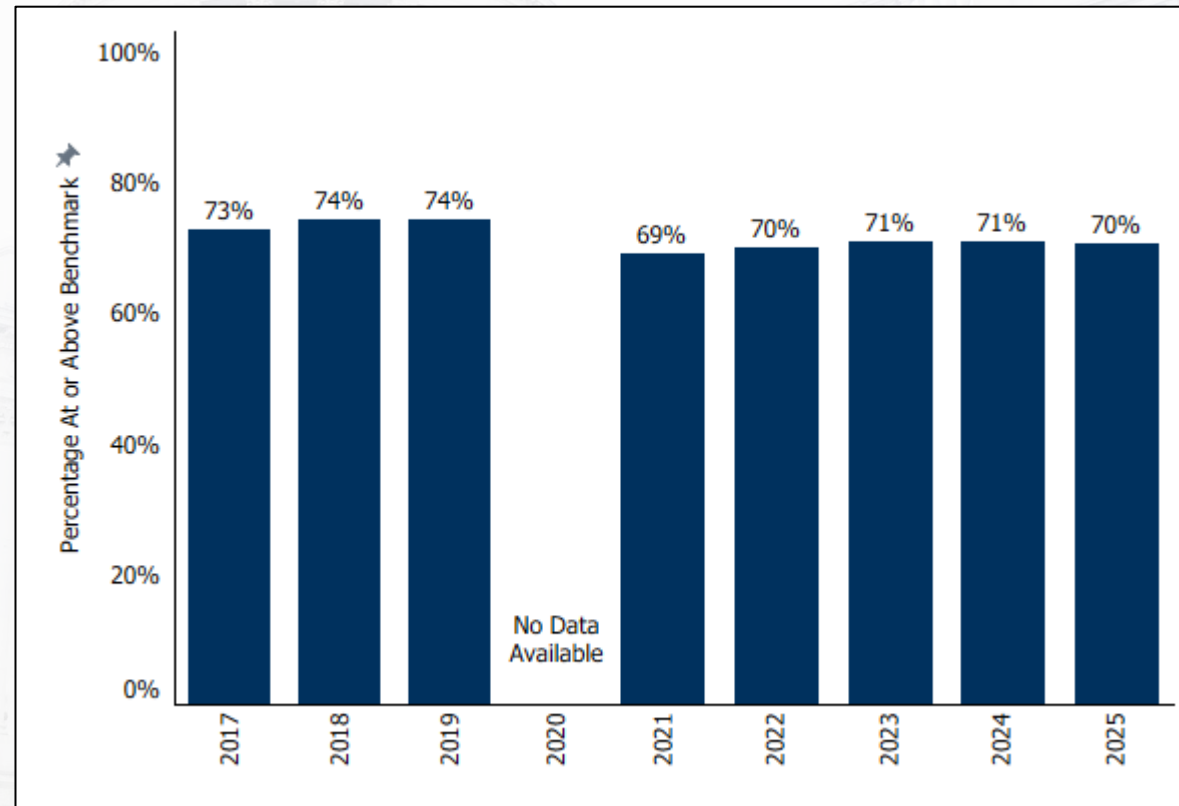


The Percentage of Students Reaching Benchmark Has Lacked Movement

If existing achievement gaps are not closed, the state is at risk of missing the 80% goal of third graders meeting benchmark by 2030.

RECOMMENDATION

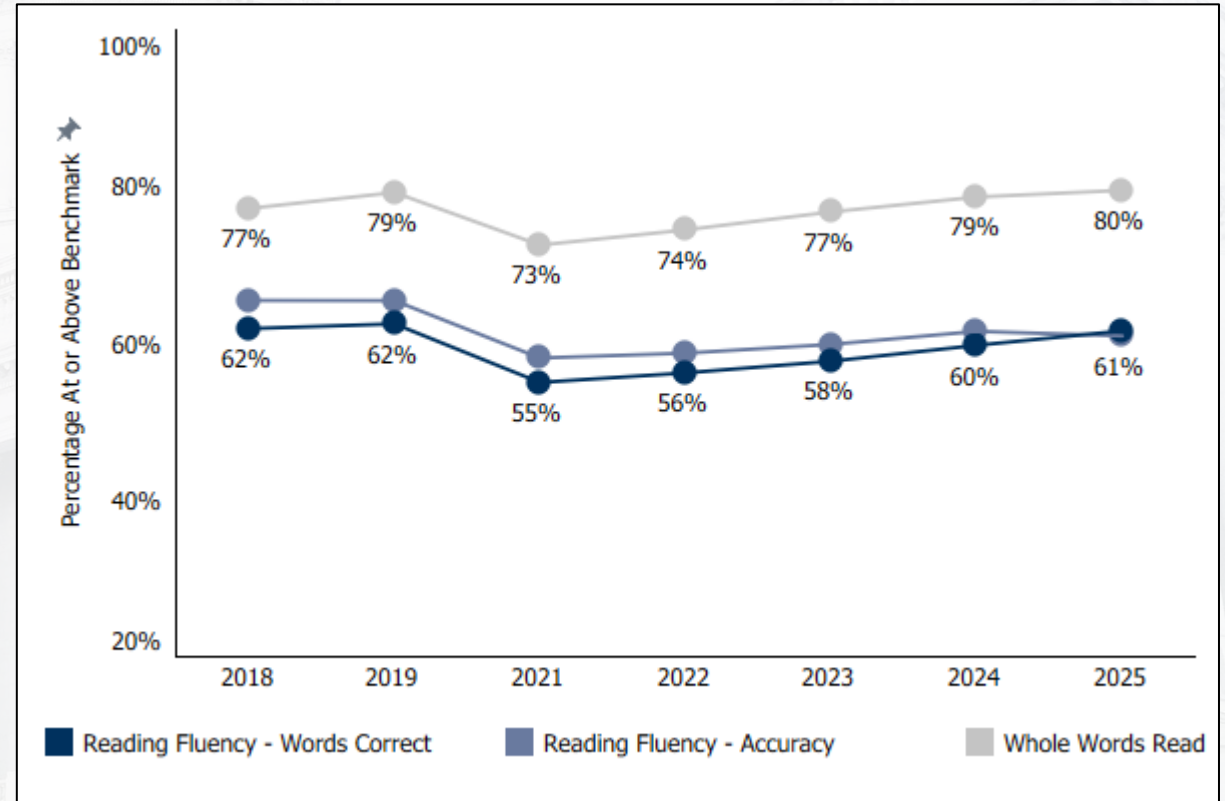
Every local education agency should hold its schools accountable for early literacy goal setting and goal achievement.





Available Data Can Help LEAs Identify and Address Areas of Lower Achievement

- First grade has lowest percentage of students meeting or exceeding benchmark
- Addressing first grade outcomes can help improve the percentage of students meeting benchmarks in second and third grade
- All LEAs should be using data to identify their weak spots

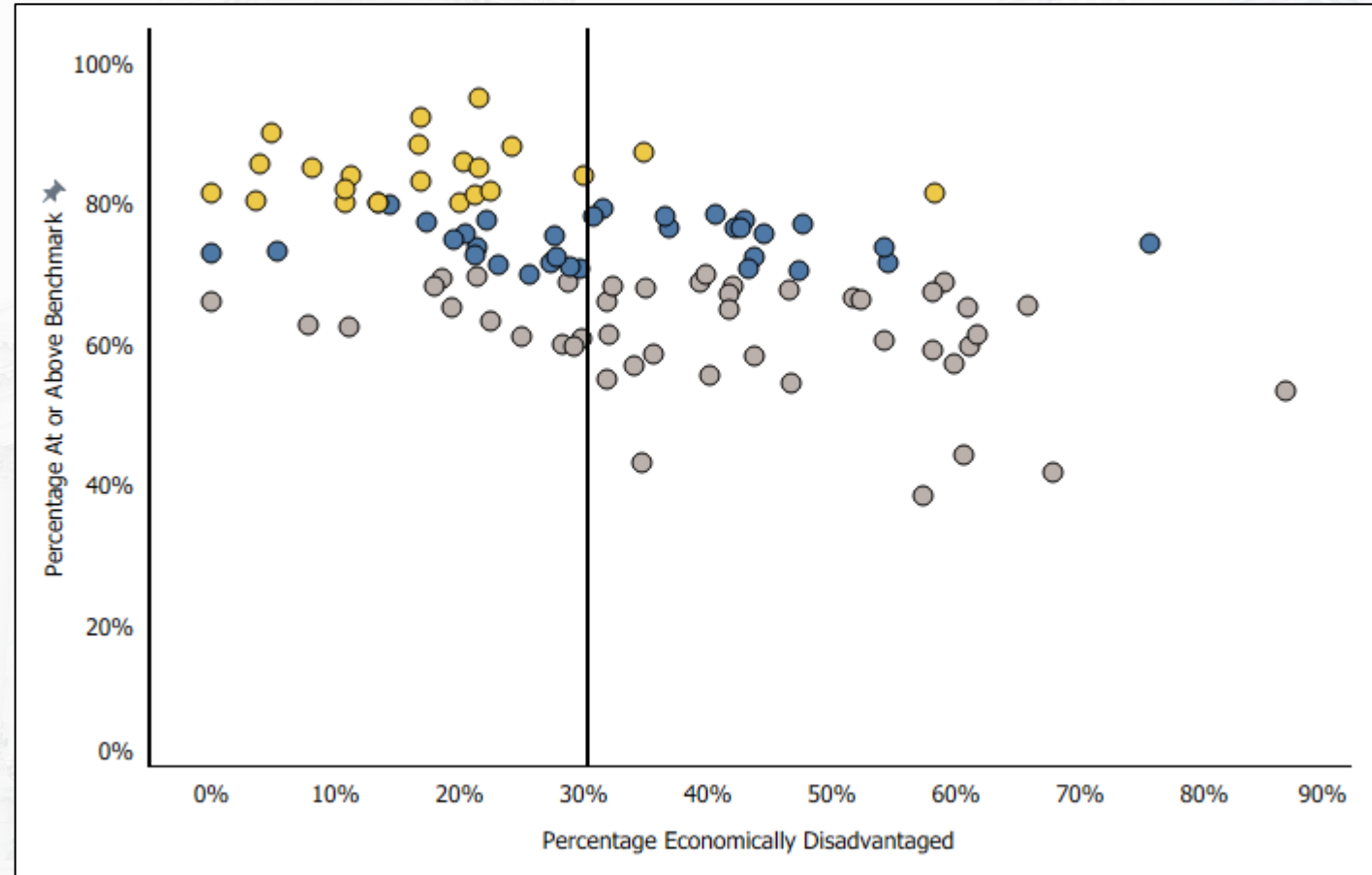


Reading Outcomes Should Be a Factor in Approving Curriculum

High-performing LEAs have shown that their curriculum selections can help students reach the Acadience Reading benchmark.

RECOMMENDATION

Local education agencies should ensure that they are addressing all six science of reading areas through early literacy curriculum(s).





Chapter 2

Science of Reading Investments Should Be Linked to Student Outcomes To Ensure Best Results for Utah Students



Science of Reading Teacher Training Has Not Been Linked to Increased Student Proficiency

- USBE has not established a data infrastructure sufficient to determine whether science of reading training improves student literacy outcomes
- Teacher training had no measurable impact on student proficiency, but the data is flawed



Teachers who **passed** training



**No measurable
impact on student
proficiency**



Teachers who **did not**
pass training

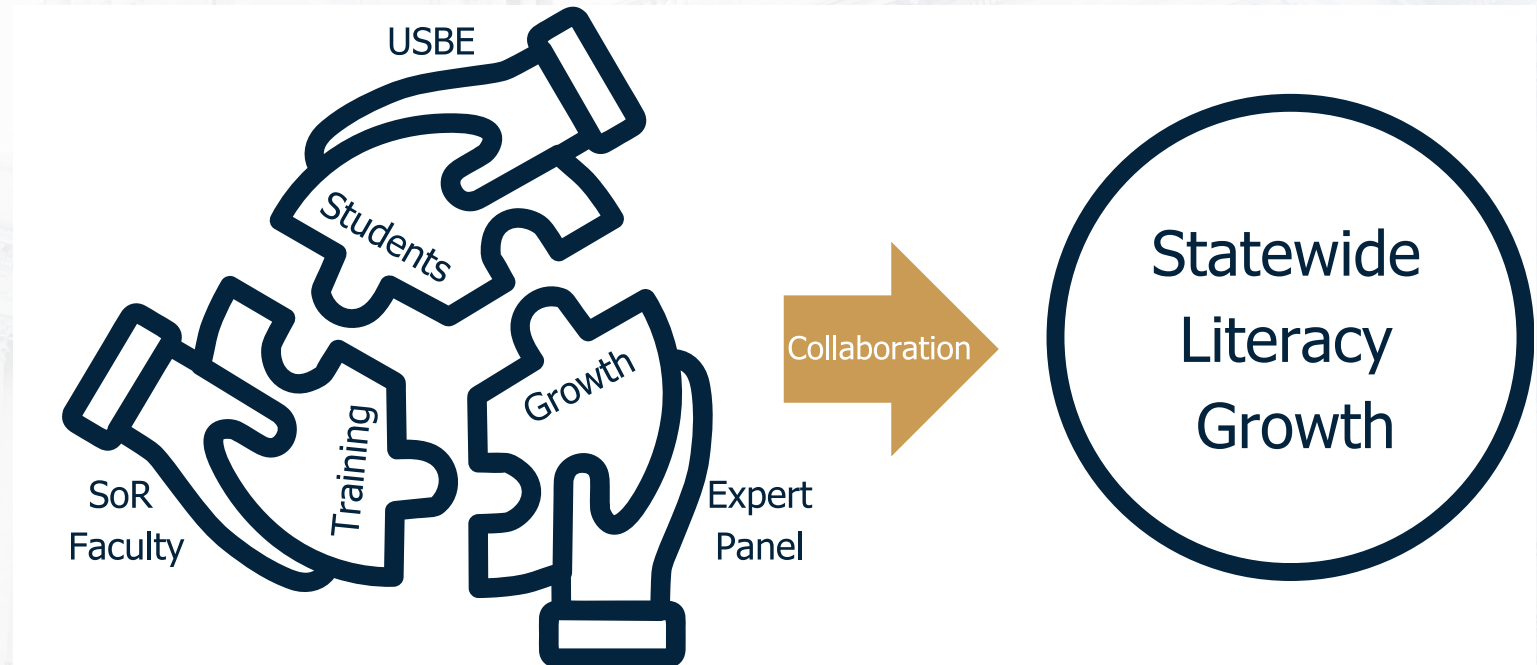
RECOMMENDATION

The Utah State Board of Education, in collaboration with university-based Educator Preparation Programs, should conduct data analysis to measure the impact of science of reading teacher training on K-12 student literacy scores. This analysis should be used to inform program improvements.



Science of Reading Personnel Can Be Better Utilized

- USBE, the expert panel, and science of reading faculty represent valuable resources that can help statewide literacy growth
- The current relationship between these groups is lacking





Chapter 3

Accountability and Outcome Measures Are Needed to Help Improve Student Literacy Achievement



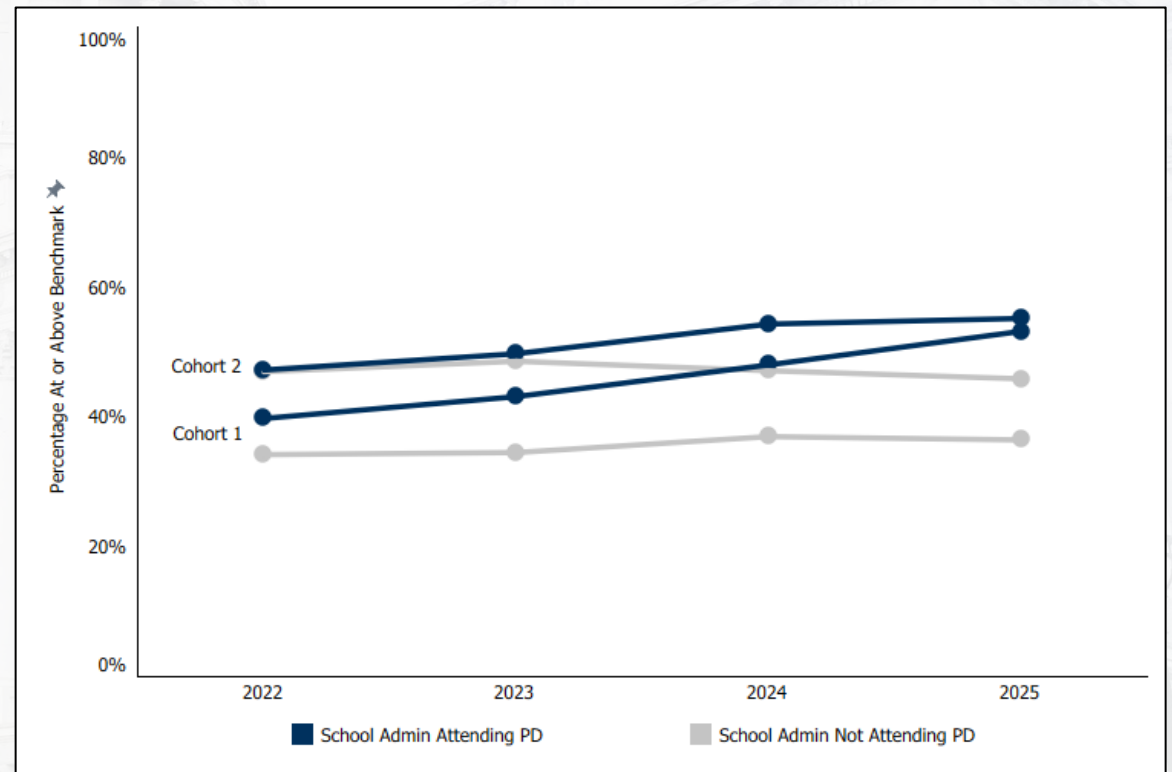
Literacy Coach and School Administrator Impacts

- Results are mixed for schools with S.B. 127 literacy coaches
- When administrators participate in professional development, their schools perform better on average



RECOMMENDATION

Local education agencies should establish clear evidence-based metrics for determining the effectiveness of a school leader and then provide adequate support and accountability in meeting those metrics.



Legislative Oversight



- No direct Legislative recommendations
- Recommendations to USBE, LEAs, and USHE
- We will follow up on recommendation to LEAs through USSA (via a sample of LEAs)
- Area for Legislature to receive follow up:
Recommendation 3.1 – LEAs should establish clear evidence-based metrics for determining the effectiveness of a school leader and then provide adequate support and accountability.



Questions?



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