UpswingLabs

# **Dynamic Districts & States:** Where and How Literacy Is Improving (2025)

**By David Scarlett Wakelyn**

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## About the Author

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## About Upswing Labs

*Upswing Labs works with states, school districts, and public charter schools to improve literacy achievement.*

## Usage

# Table Of Contents

# Executive Summary (TL; DR)

Early literacy achievement in America has remained stagnant since the pandemic, with fourth grade reading scores half a grade level below 2019 levels. While the average for third grade reading proficiency has grown less than 1% over the last three years, and hovers at 44.7% across states, a select group of education systems are defying this trend:

- *Four states—Mississippi, Louisiana, West Virginia, and South Carolina—and 260 school districts have increased third-grade proficiency rates by 3-4% annually for three consecutive years.*
- *The successful districts span diverse settings - urban centers like New Orleans and Cincinnati, suburban districts like Elgin U-46, and a surprising number of rural communities.*

Initial conversations with leaders three dynamic districts (Marietta City, Allegany County, and DC Prep) reveal several common practices:

- *Implementation of intensive, multi-year professional development focused on evidence-based reading practices.*
- *Expansion and restructuring of time dedicated to literacy instruction*
- *Strategic staffing changes to support literacy growth*
- *Adoption of high-quality curricula In Allegany & Marietta City) that integrate grade-level reading and writing*
- *Careful selection of assessments to identify student needs and track progress*

Superintendents and instructional leaders looking to accelerate literacy improvement should consider three actions:

*1.* Learn systematically from dynamic districts through detailed case studies

*2.* Set meaningful literacy goals aligned to workforce needs (70-72% proficiency by 2031-32)

*3.* Join a network of districts committed to ambitious but achievable improvement. We aim to support districts working their way through similar challenges & obstacles as they grow literacy achievement.

Exciting improvements are happening all around us in sectors such as aerospace and biomedicine. Education can see the same progress in literacy if we learn from the dynamic states and districts.

# Introduction

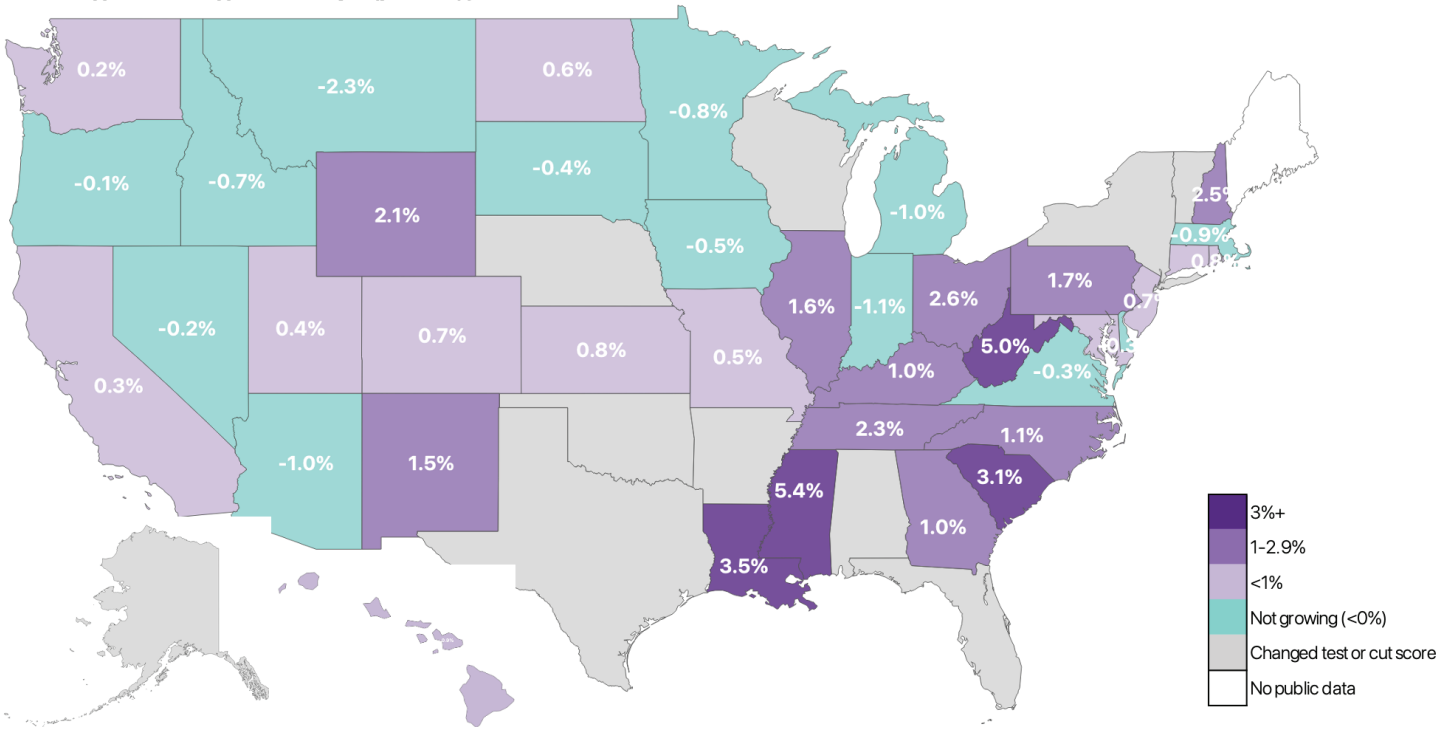
A dismal picture of learning recovery emerged with the recent release of the 2024 Nation's Report Card. Fourth grade reading scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) are half a grade level below where they were in 2019. Only one state, Louisiana, has students reading significantly better than before the pandemic.

The federal data confirms what we've also seen in state test results: early reading achievement has been stagnant since the pandemic ended. Over the last three years, third grade reading scores have grown on average less than one percent. In 2022, the average third grade reading proficiency was 44.3%. In 2024, it was 44.7%. However, four states and 260 school districts stand out as getting more students off to a better start, growing third-grade proficiency rates by 3-4% annually for the last three years. The four successful states are also some of the least advantaged in the nation. Mississippi and Louisiana rank first and second in the United States in child poverty, while the other two—West Virginia and South Carolina—are in the top ten.

MAP 1

**States Where 3rd Grade Reading is Rising & Where It's Not**

*Average annual growth in proficiency, 2022-2024*




This report—first in an annual series-- locates the dynamic districts and states, suggests a path for how we might rigorously learn from what they are doing well, and makes a case for how school leaders should think about setting goals for reading achievement in the future. The full list of districts is visible in the appendix.

# Successful States

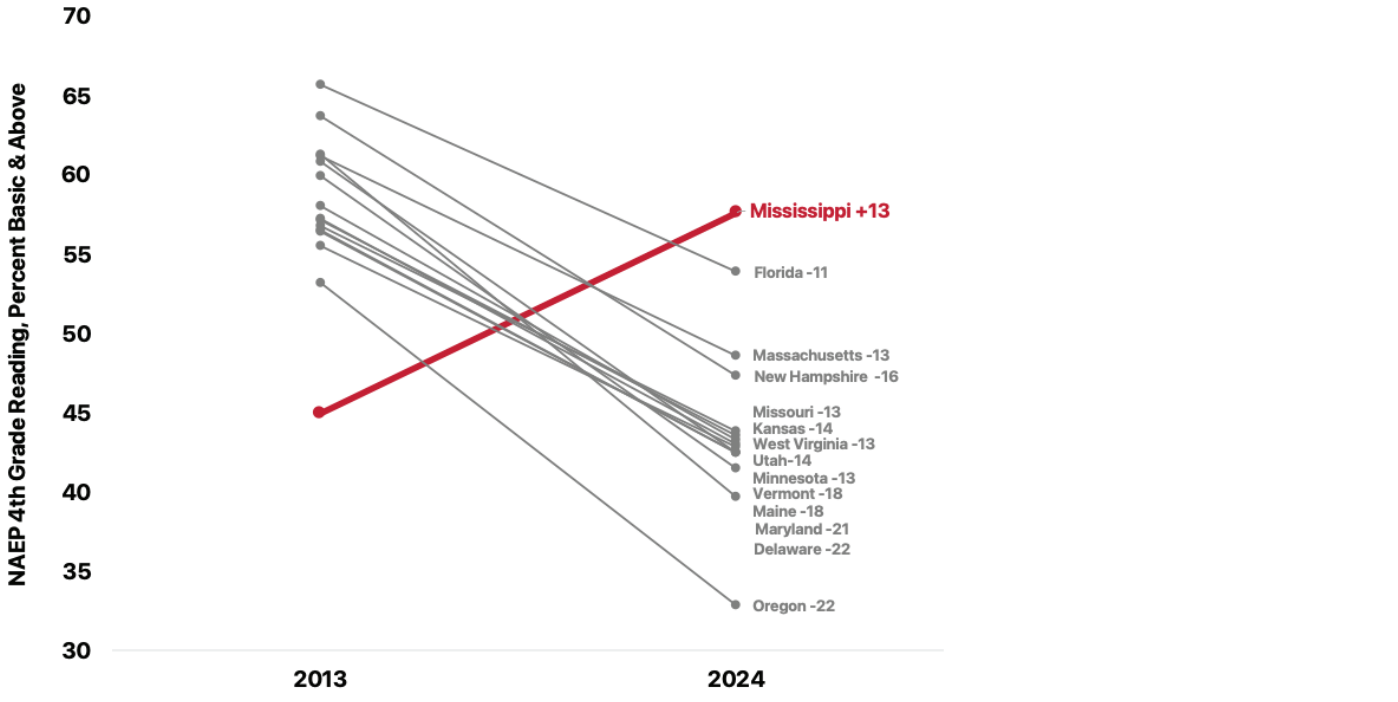
Mississippi's steady progress since enacting comprehensive state legislation in 2013 has been well documented.[1] The 2024 NAEP data shows that over the last decade, Mississippi is the only state with a double digit increase in the percentage of fourth grade students from low-income families reading at NAEP Basic and Above.

Along the way, Mississippi's policy has encountered its share of critics and skeptics. State leaders and have refuted the claim that their literacy gains are a result of retaining students in third grade.[2]

The state has also chosen to focus solely on proficiency levels, a practice many testing experts discourage. But at the same time, the state's accountability system includes a score for how much growth made by the students who start in the bottom quartile of reading results. Mississippi's data in Figure 2 shows improvement in achievement at all five performance levels. A rising tide is lifting all boats.

FIGURE 1

**States with Double Digit Changes in Teaching Kids from Poor Families to Read**

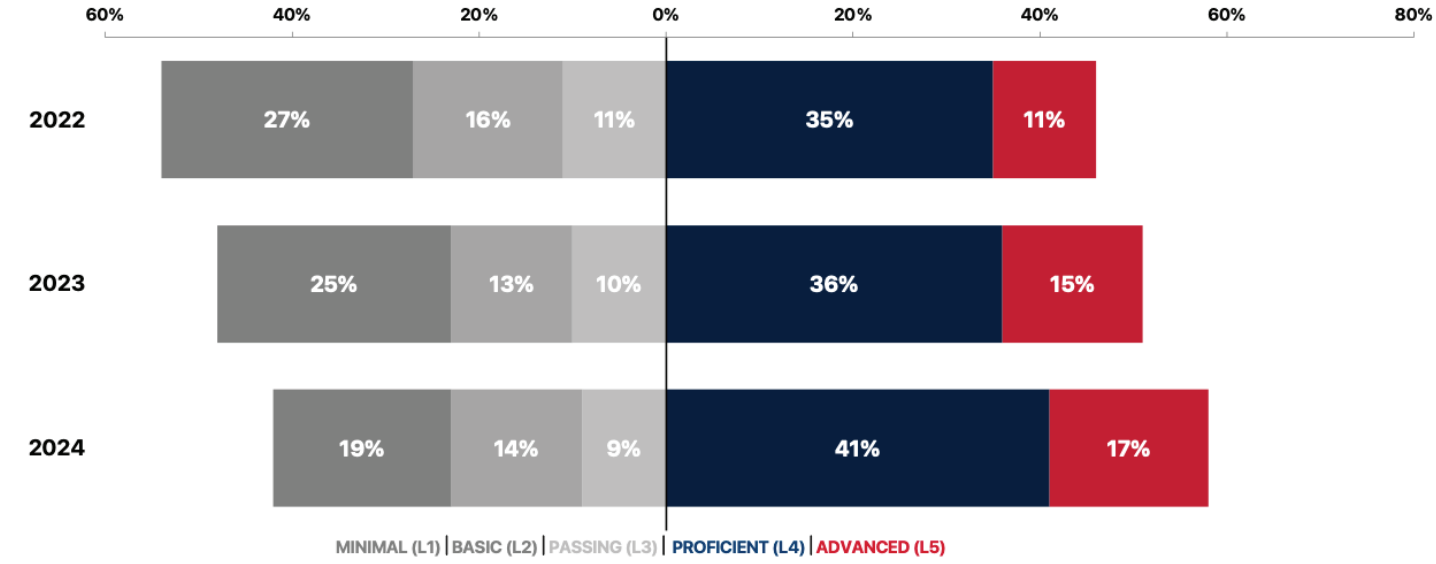



Note: According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), "economically disadvantaged" is defined as a student who is eligible for free or reduced-price lunch under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).
Data Source: The Nation's Report Card, NAEP Data Explorer

FIGURE 2

## Improvement at All Levels in Mississippi

**More 3rd graders becoming better readers each year; 5,800 students are newly proficient.**




Data Source: Mississippi Department of Education (https://www.mdek12.org/OPR/Reporting/Assessment/2023-24)

Two implementation features are worth calling out. First, Mississippi's leaders, from governors to district superintendents, have articulated a common mission to improve reading achievement. In 2013, Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant set a reading improvement goal for the state. His successor, Tate Reeves, continues to discuss early reading scores in his annual state of the state speech. Few governors do this in any year. Mississippi's leaders have done it for a decade.

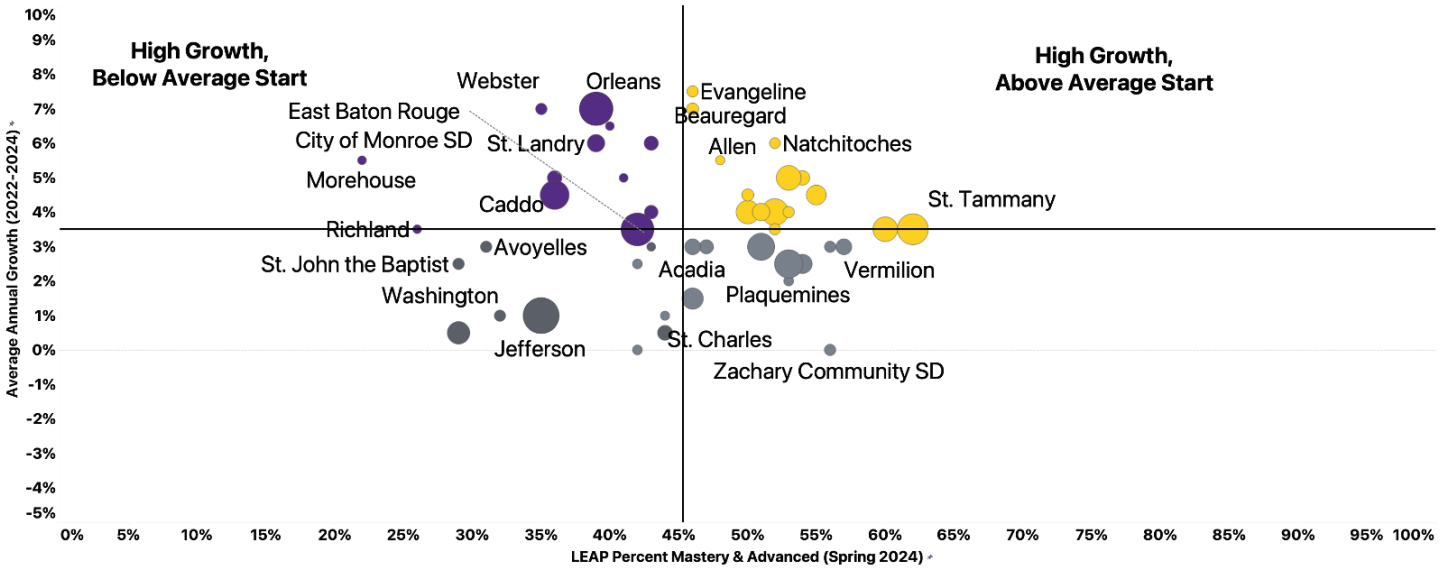
Second, the state hired reading coaches to work in the 75 lowest performing schools, but it kept a strong hand on ensuring quality. In the first year, the state only placed 24 coaches they knew were fully qualified tostep into the role, even though 600 applied for the job. Once the state had people fully ready for the job, it eventually expanded coaches into 86 schools. The coaches are assigned to classrooms to work with teachers a few days a week for the entire school year, building relationships with instructors and providing consistent job-embedded learning.

Louisiana's dynamic districts include a mix of urban, suburban, and rural areas. As shown in Figure 3, this includes the state's second and third-largest districts, Orleans and East Baton Rouge Parishes. Unlike Mississippi, Louisiana did not begin its efforts by passing wide-ranging laws to support the science of reading. But it has made considerable efforts to ensure the adoption and use of high-quality curriculum.

FIGURE 3

**Dynamic Districts in Louisiana**

**Sixteen see average annual growth of 3-4% since 2022**




Data Source: Louisiana Department of Education (https://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/)

In his book Beyond Standards, USC Professor Morgan Polikoff highlights Louisiana as a model of deep commitment to using high-quality curriculum. The state has rated six ELA curricula as Tier I (the best) on a three tier scales. Ratings are accompanied by annotated rubrics that explain the reason for each score. The state supports purchasing of the Tier 1 materials through statewide contracts, making it cheaper and easier for districts to purchase them.[3]

Louisiana has also built its own curriculum, the Louisiana Guidebooks, which are free to districts. They are the most-used materials in the state and twice have been revised and improved based on implementation feedback. In addition, the state has done much to encourage districts to adopt the Hochman Writing Method and incorporated sentence writing activities into the Guidebooks curriculum.[4] Finally, the state provides a list of vendors who offer extended professional development to support curriculum implementation.

# An Initial Look At Dynamic Districts

We've had initial conversations with three of the dynamic districts in this report: Marietta City in the suburbs of Atlanta, Georgia, Allegany County, at the edge of the Appalachian Mountains in Maryland, and DC Prep, a K-8 public charter school network. The top line practices all three have in common is that they were deeply dissatisfied with their current performance, diagnosed their internal challenges, and over several years began implementing a coherent set of responses to them.

In essence, leaders in all three districts asked, "What's our most important problem and how do we solve it?" The answer they landed on is that most teachers don't have a deep enough grasp of all the elements of evidence-based reading instruction.

FIGURE 4

## Three Dynamic Districts

| School District | Locale | Meeting & Exceeding Standards 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | Average Annual Change | Number Tested (2024) | Poverty Rate (%) | Students of Color (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Marietta City (GA) | Small City | 35.6 | 48.4 | 44.8 | 4.6 | 685 | 17 | 73 |
| Allegany County (MD) | Small City | 41.3 | 48.3 | 51.0 | 4.9 | 537 | 21 | 6 |
| DC Prep | Large City | 14.0 | 18.0 | 21.0 | 3.5 | 208 | 25 | 96 |

After analyzing their test results, all three districts embarked on deep, extended professional learning for all elementary teachers. Marietta City engaged in a two-year effort to train teachers with Top Ten Tools, followed by a year-long engagement to train teachers with Writing Revolution.[5] In 2020, Allegany County began a two-year engagement with LETRS to improve elementary teachers' foundational knowledge and skills. Dr. Carol Tolman, co-founder of LETRS, delivered some of this training herself. State funding allowed Allegany County to transition using TNTP's course, the Science of Reading. DC Prep has all teachers spend two weeks in the summer learning about literacy and professional development days each quarter.

All three districts have both reconfigured and expanded the amount of time available for literacy instruction. DC Prep added an extra 15 minutes, now teaching literacy in a 1:45 block, with push-in support for struggling students. Allegany went from an hour and a half to two hours and added an extra 30 minutes for small group interventions and enrichment. As part of its regular literacy block, Marietta reconfigured its literacy schedule to include a 90- minute whole class block that integrates science and social studies with their Tier 1 literacy curriculum, plus a 20–30-minute phonics/morphology block, plus 30-60-minutes of small group instruction, for a total of 140-180 minutes dedicated each day to early literacy.

Closely related to these efforts, the districts realized they needed to change how they staff schools to support literacy growth.

Marietta hired reading specialists to do the pullouts, with a staff of 38 across 8 schools and now reduced to 25 as students improved. They also created a new role, a Science of Reading Facilitator, each of whom works with two schools. Allegany redefined the role of its literacy coaches to provide teachers with more direct feedback about how to improve their instruction. DC Prep redefined the job of its assistant principals to serve primarily as instructional coaches, who lead collaborative planning meetings and provide teachers feedback on their instruction.

Both Marietta City and Allegany County realized they needed to improve the quality of their K-5 language arts curricula. Marietta City dropped the leveled readers approach suggested in Guided Reading and switched to Wit and Wisdom and a skills-based foundational class. Allegany stopped using Treasures and has evolved to using Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA).

DC Prep stopped using leveled readers and shifted to using decodable, controlled texts. They use a homegrown curriculum emphasizing novel study, but they are exploring how a change might help provide more structure to the way they currently teach students to write. All three districts deeply integrate on-grade level reading and writing in their whole-class blocks.

The districts have also given careful thought to which assessments they give to students and how schools use the results. Both DC Prep and Allegany added a DIBELS screener three times a year to gauge student progress and identify students who need extra support.

*Leaders in all three districts asked a simple but profound question: 'What's our most important problem, and how do we solve it?*

DC Prep layers in biweekly progress monitoring as well. Marietta City does the same for students in their skill-based foundational groups. And with support from the Cox Campus, Marietta City added an Informal Decoding Inventory as well as a quick assessment of oral reading fluency (ORF).

In their analyses of data though, these districts were clear that not every problem was a phonics problem. At DC Prep, their interim assessment data showed that some of their small groups were overdoing it on foundational skills practice and that they needed more instruction in close reading. In Allegany, the DIBELS data showed that students were reading accurately but pointed to a need to work more carefully on students' fluency.

Finally, the districts receive expert advice from external partners. In the case of Marietta City, the Cox Campus continues to offer the district's new teachers online literacy modules. A partnership with the University of Georgia also helps them to see how well teachers are implementing what they've learned in professional development. Allegany partners with TNTP for monthly implementation support. DC Prep is planning on partnering with an outside organization to continue to build capacity for leaders on literacy instruction.

# Recommendations On What To Do Next

## 1. Learn More Thoroughly from Dynamic Districts

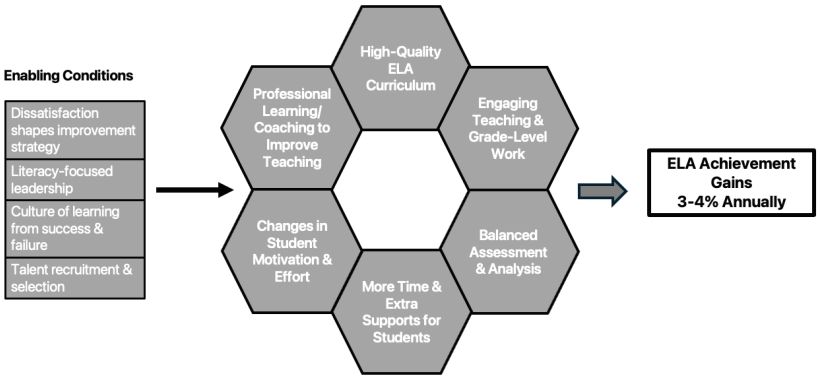
Some may wonder, "Don't we already know what to do to improve?" Yes, there's a deep tradition of Effective Schools research that started with Ron Edmonds in the late 1970s, continued into this century by Tony Bryk and colleagues at the UChicago Consortium on School Research, with their book Organizing Schools for Improvement.

While there's a coalescing of findings in this research— schools need organizational practices such as strong leadership and an orderly climate—this is too generic. What superintendents and instructional leaders need now are recommendations precisely matched to what it takes to raise literacy achievement.

We envision researching and writing detailed case studies of dynamic schools and districts in the late spring and summer of 2025. Our inquiry will be guided by the hypotheses in the framework in Figure 5 below. Understanding how successful organizations improve performance can provide needed evidence for those that are struggling. It can generate useful evidence on implementation lessons, how to deal with setbacks, and how to navigate around obstacles as they emerge.

FIGURE 5

**What's Necessary for Improved Literacy Achievement? An Initial Hypothesis:**



These case studies at first would be descriptive. In winter of 2025-2026, we envision adding quantitative studies to test the degree to which the initial findings are statistically associated with improvement. This allows us to remedy a shortcoming of case studies in the field.[6] Previous efforts have looked exclusively at positive outliers but never compare them to a group of similarly matched districts that are stuck.

Superintendents and instructional leaders also need implementation guidance on connecting what to do with how to do it. We recently heard a chief academic officer of a medium-sized district discuss their multiyear effort to improve literacy. District leaders were greatly influenced by listening to the Sold a Story podcast and began professional learning in evidence-based reading practices, first for principals in the Spring of 2023 and then for teachers in the summer. They have adopted a high-quality, knowledge building curriculum. They have required that all students receive Tier 1 instruction and restructured their intervention resources at both elementary and middle schools. With all these efforts over the last two years, they've only grown ELA achievement by 1% a year.

Most instructional leaders are going to know what they need to do. They might start with a high -quality curriculum, paired with professional learning, that helps teachers improve their knowledge and skills around evidence-based reading. But to train all a district's teachers in a sequence such as LETRS is an enormous, multiyear undertaking whose success or failure depends on several small, cumulative factors. An advantage of the case studies is they will offer implementation advice on how to enact changes in each component that shapes student achievement.

District leaders, principals, and literacy coaches are also going to need guidance that's specific to their improvement trajectory. That is, the smart practices implemented to move a district from 30 to 40% of students reading at grade level are likely to differ from the practices needed to get from 40 to 50%, 50 to 60%, and so on.

In addition, districts need guidance tailored to their demographics and size. For districts with high percentages of English learners, we're currently blind on what they're doing to be successful. On the list of dynamic districts are an interesting mix of urban schools: New Orleans, Cincinnati, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. There are also several large suburban districts, such as Elgin U-46, a suburb of Chicago, and DeSoto County Mississippi, a suburb of Memphis.

There are also more rural districts on the list than one would expect. Nationally, a quarter of students are in rural districts, but here, they represent one-third of all students in the dynamic districts.

The rural districts are not demographically uniform but fall into three types. Forty-one of them are ethnically diverse, with high concentrations of African American and Hispanic students. Some of these—like Baldwin County, Georgia or Lowndes Country, Mississippi are in the Black Belt of the American South. Others, like Alice ISD, Texas or Sanger Unified, California, are border towns or agricultural centers.

Another 22 rural districts have high concentrations of evangelical church goers who are mostly Southern Baptists. These districts, like Pike County, Kentucky and Pulaski County, West Virginia are also politically conservative, with 75-80% voting for Republicans in the last three elections. Twenty-five of the rural dynamic districts are in solidly working-class counties. They don't rely on agriculture but exist as small service economies with some small manufacturing. The rural districts need guidance that recognizes factors distinctive in their setting.

In his new book *Reset,* Dan Heath spends a chapter looking at outliers in a variety of industries. "By studying bright spots, we can identify the circumstances that allow us to succeed," he writes. "And if we can understand these circumstances, we can replicate them, allowing our success to spread."[7]

## 2. Set Meaningful & Difficult, But Achievable Goals

One superintendent in a large California district was upset at not being on the dynamic districts list and protested, "But we're above the state average." Another state leader proudly pointed out that their ranking among states has moved from 42nd to 14th.

Our field lacks clarity on its goals. We don't have a clear direction of where we should be headed. What should be the ultimate destination? What are the right markers of achievement progress? How good is good enough?

Edwin Locke and Gary Latham are two scholars who've spent nearly 50 years studying goal setting. In the most comprehensive summary of their research, they advise organizations to set goals that are meaningful and difficult, but achievable.[8]

Locke and Latham find that individuals are more likely to commit to goals they see as meaningful or important. They also find that performance is considerably higher when striving for harder rather than easier goals. It's also crucial the goals are seen as achievable. If employees believe the goals set for them are unreachable, Locke and Latham warn that the entire organization can easily become demoralized and stop trying.

One meaningful goal for school leaders and teachers would be to **ensure that the number of proficient readers matches the number of people who need to be college and career ready in the next decade.**

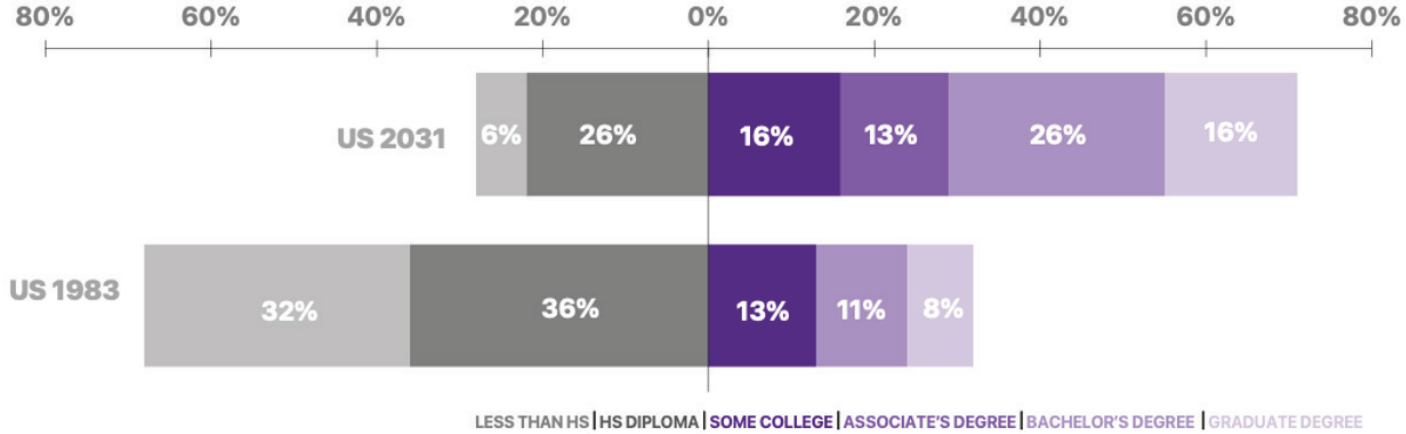
In their report After Everything: Projections of Jobs, Education, and Training Requirements, economists at Georgetown University project that by 2031, 72% of jobs in the United States will require at least some college, while 55% will seek applicants with an associate degree or more. This is the reverse of the educational requirements of 40 years ago, when 70% of jobs required a high school diploma or less.[9]

At this moment, policymakers in both parties have expressed doubt about the value of a college degree. But the Georgetown analysis is clear: our workforce continues to upskill rapidly. Postsecondary education—including certificates and industry-recognized credentials— is the only pathway to middle-class jobs and earnings.

FIGURE 6

**Seventy-Two Percent of Future Jobs Will Require Some College+**

**55% Will Require at Least an Associate's Degree; Only 28% to Workers with a High School Diploma or Less**




Data Source: *After Everything: Projections of Jobs, Education and Training Requirements through 2031.* Georgetown University Center on Education & Work (https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/projections2031/)

Students and their families sense this too. Ninety-four percent of students surveyed by TNTP in its study on opportunity expressed a desire to go to college. Seventy percent of high schoolers have career goals that require at least a college degree. Sixty-two percent of those who most recently completed high school went on to college nine months later.

It's worth repeating: we recommend that a state or district's literacy goals align to the proportion of students who need to be prepared to succeed in college and careers. A few states, Maryland and Utah, have done this, setting 70% as their goal for literacy, but with a shorter timeline than 2031. But for most, finding the meaningful sweet spot has been elusive.

Why not set a goal of 100%? Isn't it OK to be "hairy and audacious", to aim high, even if districts miss?

American school leaders have a long track record of aiming extremely high and failing to come close to the target. The Goals 2000 Act aspired for the U.S. to become first in the world in math and science. A decade later, our ranking on international math assessments had grown worse compared to other countries.[10]

No Child Left Behind famously asked schools to get 100% of students proficient by 2014. Not even the wealthiest districts in America managed to achieve the goal. Some states responded to the policy by lowering their standards. Georgia and Wisconsin made it look as if nearly 100 percent of students were reading at grade level, a phenomenon the Thomas B. Fordham Institute dubbed "the proficiency illusion."

It's crucial that literacy goals are seen in a sweet spot of difficult, but achievable. Locke and Latham warn leaders that if a goal is too difficult, set at a level no one has shown they can reach, it eventually undermines individual motivation and effort. Superintendents and instructional leaders want to avoid teachers becoming demoralized, which can easily happen if the goals set for them are seen as impossible.

Peter Drucker, the father of modern management theory who developed the concept of management by objectives, reinforces this view: "The results should be hard to achieve—they should require "stretching," to use the current buzzword. But also, they should be within reach. To aim at results that cannot be achieved—or that can be only under the most unlikely circumstances—is not being ambitious; it is being foolish."[11]

Better for district leaders to treat 72% as the floor for all and raise it once they have experience on what it takes to get there.

For districts whose communities insist on 100% proficiency, they might consider the approach the United Nations uses with its sustainability goals, which aim for Zero Hunger. In schools, this would mean getting the numberof students at the lowest performance level, usually the "below standard" category, down to zero. Then insist that all students eventually score as "partially proficient" or higher.

Is 70-72% achievable? This is where learning from the dynamic districts becomes essential. They are proof points on that path, growing achievement at a rate of 3-4% a year for the last three years. If the typical district or state— now at 45% proficient—can learn from its dynamic counterparts and grow at a similar rate, it will be at 70% by 2031.

*It's crucial that literacy goals are seen in a sweet spot of difficult, but achievable... To aim at results that cannot be achieved... is not being ambitious; it is being foolish.*

## *This Is Not About Beating The Odds*

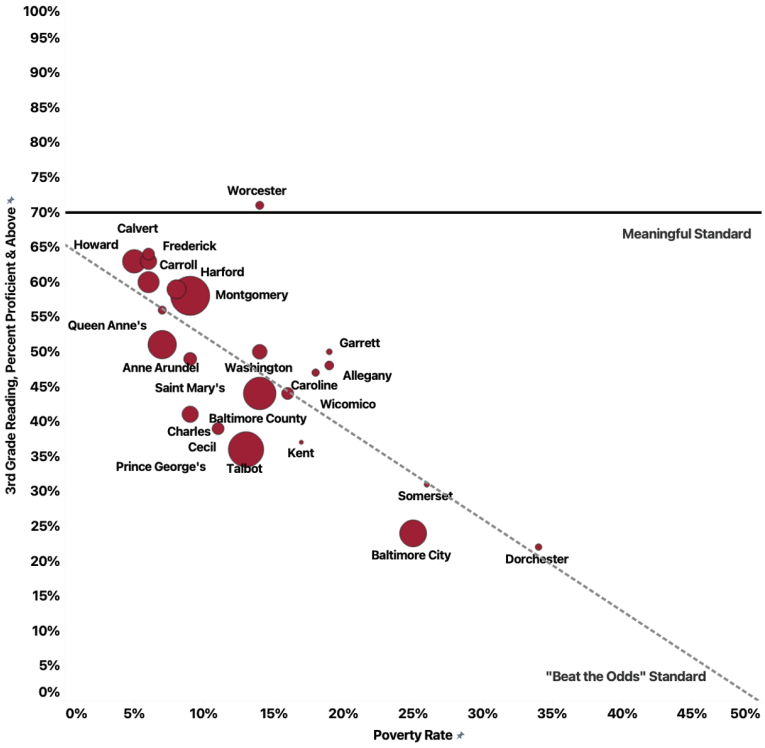
One thing missing from this recommendation is any recognition of school districts for "beating the odds". Such acknowledgement is built on a statistical analysis that shows the correlation of third grade reading achievement and family income. For instance, in Montgomery County, Maryland, the largest district in Figure 7 below, their "expected" achievement on the regression line is 54%, while their actual proficiency level is 58%.

These analyses are an attempt to be fair and to encourage growth from various starting points. But the research from Georgetown University cited earlier doesn't say that only 58% of students in one of America's most prosperous suburbs need to have some college attainment, it says at least 72% need to be there.

FIGURE 7

**The Standard is the Same for Everyone**

**"Beating the Odds" implies lower expectations for kids from high poverty families**




And the research doesn't say that 72% of students from high-income families need to have "some college" but that only 36% of students from low-income families need degrees and certificates. The end goal needs to bethe same for everyone.

Comer Yates, the executive director of the Atlanta Speech School is fond of saying that poverty is a result of a lack of educational opportunity, but it is not a cause of low reading achievement. It's up to us to provide that opportunity for all.

### *Remembering Our Ultimate Purpose*

While achievement goals are important, we need to regularly return to our purposes. In his book, *How to Run a Government* -Michael Barber writes "a certain percentage passing a literacy test at age 11 is worthwhile—but it's not the point. The point is that children should leave primary education able to read and write well because those skills are essential—and because being able to do so will change their lives."[12]

Maryanne Wolf of the UCLA School of Education, writes in her book *Proust & the Squid,* that our ultimate purpose is to foster deep reading. What we're really trying to cultivate are students who can evaluate arguments, understand others' perspectives, reason inferentially, and stay immersed in great stories.[13]

## 3. Join A Network Of Like-Minded Districts

This summer, we are creating a network of districts who formally commit to reaching at least 70% of their elementary school students reading and writing proficiently in the next six years. While there are lots of meetings of district membership organizations, we believe that as more districts commit to reaching a shared goal, the value of coming together to solve common learning problems increases exponentially.

Districts need opportunities to learn from peers in similar situations trying to respond to similar obstacles. The districts hoping to move from 40 to 50% proficiency have a lot to learn from each other. Similarly, the districts trying to ensure more success with English language learners, or any population of interest, also have a lot to learn from each other about how they are navigating implementation challenges.

Superintendents and instructional leaders who want to learn more can sign up at www.upswinglabs.org

# Conclusion

Early literacy achievement in most states and districts has been stuck for the last three years. This report identifies four dynamic states and 260 districts, offering an initial glimpse into what some of them are doing to achieve steady growth.

Much is known about what effective schools generically do, but if we're to get unstuck, we need specific guidance on improving reading and writing. This spring and summer, we hope to write detailed case studies about what—and how—the dynamic districts are doing differently.

Here's why the case study work matters: In an experiment, a Harvard Business School study asked participants to solve two problems. After solving the first, they're told whether they succeeded or failed. Those who succeeded on the first problem and spent less time reflecting on their strategies were more likely to fail on the second problem.[14]

After experiencing success, superintendents and instructional leaders need to inquire why. If they skip studying success, this slows us all down in the future.

Improvements are happening in fields all around us. The aerospace industry is creating new supersonic planes that will fly from New York to London in 3 ½ hours instead of 7. In biomedicine, scientists have created drugs reducing the number of deaths caused by the most historically stubborn cancers.[15] Education can see the same widespread progress, but only if we learn what strategies and practices are making dynamic districts and states excel.

# Appendix 1: Dynamic Districts, By State

## Percent Meeting & Exceeding Standards

| State | School District | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | Average Annual Change(%) | Number Tested (2024) | Poverty Rate(%) | Diversit (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Louisiana** | Assumption Parish | 27.0 | 36.0 | 40.0 | 6.5 | 6.5 | 220 | 44 |
| | Bossier Parish | 43.0 | 500 | 53.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 1,724 | 42 |
| | City of Moreoe School District | 26.0 | 300 | 36.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 583 | 83 |
| | Desoto Parish | 45.0 | 47.0 | 52.0 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 339 | 44 |
| | East Baton Rouge Parish | 350 | 39.0 | 42.0 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3,045 | 83 |
| | Livingston Parish | 440 | 45.0 | 52.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2,028 | 25 |
| | Morehouse Parish | 11.0 | 16.0 | 22.0 | 5.5 | 5.5 | 219 | 65 |
| | Natchitoches Parish | 40.0 | 500 | 52.0 | 6.0 | 6.0 | 334 | 60 |
| | Orleans Parish | 250 | 31.0 | 39.0 | 7.0 | 7.0 | 183 | 97 |
| | Rapides Parish | 42.0 | 47.0 | 50.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 1,543 | 48 |
| | St. Martin Parish | 350 | 40.0 | 43.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 518 | 49 |
| | St. Mary Parish | 31.0 | 32.0 | 43.0 | 6.0 | 6.0 | 568 | 55 |
| | St. Tammany Parish | 550 | 61.0 | 62.0 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 2,712 | 32 |
| | Terreborne Parish | 46.0 | 48.0 | 55.0 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 1,111 | 44 |
| | Webster Parish | 210 | 26.0 | 35.0 | 7.0 | 7.0 | 367 | 45 |
| **South Carolina** | Anderson 04 | 55.6 | 65.3 | 70.9 | 10.5 | 234 | 19 | 20 |
| | Beaufort 01 | 48.2 | 50.6 | 63.2 | 3.8 | 1,612 | 19 | 56 |
| | Colleton 01 | 23.5 | 31.4 | 33.5 | 6.1 | 352 | 30 | 55 |
| | Darlington 01 | 36.1 | 42.7 | 46.1 | 6.7 | 648 | 26 | 55 |
| | Edgefield 01 | 37.4 | 43.6 | 46.5 | 60 | 254 | 19 | 47 |
| | Florence 01 | 47.9 | 56.6 | 60.2 | 8.0 | 1,127 | 20 | 60 |
| | Porence Osis | 29.4 | 41.6 | 44.1 | 8.6 | 204 | 28 | 69 |
| | Georgetown 01 | 41.8 | 45.7 | 50.0 | 6.3 | 554 | 24 | 49 |
| | Greenwood 50 | 42.8 | 52.7 | 62.0 | 14.3 | 606 | 21 | 59 |
| | Horry Ot | 54.0 | 60.7 | 62.1 | 4.7 | 3,434 | 17 | 34 |
| | Marion 10 | 19.5 | 23.0 | 30.9 | 9.7 | 288 | 35 | 81 |
| | Newberry 01 | 37.0 | 39.6 | 52.5 | 14.2 | 404 | 22 | 52 |
| | Spartanburg 06 | 38.8 | 44.5 | 46.6 | 5.0 | 849 | 17 | 52 |
| | Spartanburg 07 | 44.1 | 48.5 | 52.3 | 6.0 | 511 | 24 | 61 |
| | Sumter 01 | 34.2 | 35.6 | 41.3 | 6.4 | 945 | 28 | 70 |
| | Willamsburg 01 | 21.8 | 26.2 | 37.6 | 13.6 | 210 | 32 | 91 |
| | York 02 | 62.6 | 66.2 | 68.3 | 3.9 | 662 | 9 | 20 |
| | York 03 | 48.1 | 50.4 | 53.2 | 4.0 | 1,144 | 15 | 55 |
| **Mississippi** | Brookhaven School District | 32.9 | 42.5 | 53.1 | 10.1 | 207 | 28 | 65 |
| | Columbus Municipal School District | 25.9 | 32.2 | 39.4 | 6.8 | 246 | 33 | 95 |
| | Desato County School District | 54.0 | 56.2 | 62.2 | 4.1 | 2,580 | 13 | 47 |
| | George County School District | 48.5 | 52.0 | 66.2 | 8.8 | 311 | 20 | 11 |
| | Grenada School District | 60.6 | 72.5 | 77.0 | 8.2 | 269 | 34 | 50 |
| | Hancock County School District | 59.7 | 65.8 | 74.6 | 7.4 | 315 | 21 | 11 |
| | Itawamba County School District | 46.9 | 52.6 | 66.0 | 9.5 | 247 | 16 | 8 |
| | Jackson County School District | 61.6 | 66.4 | 74.4 | 6.4 | 637 | 15 | 14 |
| | Jones County School District | 43.1 | 51.7 | 59.3 | 8.1 | 651 | 21 | 32 |
| | Lafayette County School District | 50.0 | 52.4 | 63.3 | 6.7 | 210 | 16 | 22 |
| | Lamar ounty School District | 58.6 | 63.1 | 73.0 | 7.2 | 736 | 17 | 33 |
| | Lee Colnty School District | 45.3 | 47.9 | 56.9 | 5.8 | 499 | 20 | 32 |
| | Lowndes County School District | 52.7 | 60.0 | 73.5 | 10.4 | 359 | 18 | 40 |
| | Madison County School District | 68.0 | 72.6 | 78.7 | 5.3 | 895 | 10 | 47 |
| | Marshall County School District | 20.7 | 23.0 | 39.7 | 9.5 | 239 | 28 | 60 |
| | Natchez-Adams School District | 23.2 | 32.0 | 37.3 | 7.0 | 228 | 36 | 90 |
| | Ocean Springs School District | 67.6 | 80.1 | 82.7 | 7.6 | 423 | 11 | 18 |
| | Oxford School District | 55.6 | 64.2 | 65.8 | 5.1 | 389 | 15 | 43 |
| | Pearl Public School District | 56.7 | 71.5 | 74.2 | 8.8 | 291 | 20 | 47 |
| | Picayune School District | 35.3 | 42.8 | 58.7 | 11.7 | 225 | 26 | 35 |
| | Pontotoc County School District | 48.6 | 58.1 | 59.8 | 5.6 | 266 | 21 | 21 |
| | Rankin County School District | 58.4 | 65.3 | 72.6 | 7.1 | 1,276 | 12 | 28 |
| | Scott County School District | 35.0 | 38.5 | 51.0 | 8.0 | 304 | 27 | 50 |
| | South Panola School District | 44.0 | 56.9 | 56.7 | 5.9 | 305 | 33 | 58 |
| | Stone County School District | 49.5 | 59.8 | 69.3 | 9.9 | 202 | 23 | 20 |
| | Tishomingo County School District | 45.3 | 57.8 | 60.3 | 7.5 | 214 | 19 | 6 |
| | Tupelo Public School District | 44.0 | 51.1 | 56.7 | 5.8 | 528 | 21 | 60 |
| | Vicksburg Warren School District | 42.8 | 50.3 | 56.6 | 6.9 | 509 | 33 | 65 |
| | Wayne County School District | 40.3 | 51.7 | 60.1 | 9.9 | 218 | 32 | 56 |

# Appendix 1: Dynamic Districts, By State

## Percent Meeting & Exceeding Standards

| State | School District | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | Average Annual Change(%) | Number Tested (2024) | Poverty Rate(%) | Diversity (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Illinois** | Alton CUSD 11 | 9.9 | 11.6 | 19.6 | 4.9 | 384 | 20 | 36 |
| | Arlington Heights SD 25 | 39.3 | 45.2 | 52.2 | 6.5 | 596 | 4 | 11 |
| | Ball Chatham CUSD 5 | 29.6 | 38 | 39.7 | 5.1 | 302 | 6 | 11 |
| | Berwyn North SD 98 | 13.6 | 19.9 | 23.9 | 5.2 | 275 | 22 | 93 |
| | Burbank SD 111 | 13.8 | 23.8 | 22.4 | 4.3 | 347 | 21 | 62 |
| | Cary CCSD 26 | 24.1 | 33 | 36 | 6.0 | 262 | 5 | 23 |
| | CCSD 89 | 46 | 44.9 | 56.9 | 5.5 | 242 | 6 | 22 |
| | CUSD 200 | 47.9 | 51.9 | 55.8 | 4.0 | 862 | 6 | 25 |
| | Deerfield SD 109 | 51.3 | 58.3 | 60.7 | 4.7 | 284 | 3 | 6 |
| | East St Louis SD 189 | 12.6 | 12.3 | 20.1 | 3.8 | 242 | 45 | 98 |
| | Fremont SD 79 | 28.3 | 36.8 | 37.7 | 4.7 | 209 | 3 | 20 |
| | Geneva CUSD 304 | 40.2 | 46.9 | 51.5 | 5.7 | 344 | 3 | 12 |
| | Glenview CCSD 34 | 37.1 | 55.6 | 59.3 | 11.1 | 428 | 8 | 16 |
| | Indian Springs SD 109 | 21.4 | 19.9 | 34.9 | 6.8 | 220 | 25 | 45 |
| | Kirby SD 140 | 32.7 | 27.2 | 41.3 | 4.3 | 339 | 11 | 19 |
| | Lake Zurich CUSD 95 | 50.5 | 62.4 | 62.9 | 6.2 | 437 | 4 | 11 |
| | Lemonit-Bromberek C:SO 113A | 40.3 | 46.8 | 50.4 | 5.1 | 296 | 5 | 11 |
| | Mannheim SD 83 | 13 | 17.8 | 23.6 | 5.3 | 230 | 17 | 89 |
| | Marion CUSD 2 | 34.5 | 52.4 | 55 | 10.3 | 263 | 19 | 55 |
| | Maywood-Melrose Park-Broadview 89 | 15 | 18.8 | 28.7 | 6.9 | 468 | 24 | 82 |
| | Mount Prospect SD 57 | 31.5 | 36.3 | 45.1 | 6.8 | 205 | 5 | 10 |
| | New Lenox SD 122 | 32.6 | 43.2 | 43.5 | 5.5 | 522 | 4 | 13 |
| | Pekin PSD 108 | 17.6 | 22.8 | 27.4 | 4.9 | 308 | 18 | 7 |
| | Ridgeland SD 122 | 28.8 | 32.4 | 37 | 4.1 | 240 | 24 | 41 |
| | SD U-46 | 16.9 | 17.4 | 24.2 | 3.7 | 2,390 | 13 | 65 |
| | St Charles CUSD 303 | 44.3 | 50.4 | 55 | 5.4 | 850 | 4 | 16 |
| | Sterling CUSD 5 | 24.2 | 28.2 | 31.2 | 3.5 | 217 | 18 | 37 |
| | Summit Hill SD 161 | 47.9 | 52 | 60 | 6.1 | 227 | 5 | 22 |
| | Waterico CUSD 5 | 48 | 62 | 62.7 | 7.4 | 205 | 3 | 3 |
| | Waucanda CUSD 118 | 29.6 | 38.5 | 40.5 | 5.5 | 308 | 7 | 34 |
| | Winnetka SD 36 | 53.5 | 65.8 | 69.7 | 8.1 | 211 | 2 | 4 |
| | Woodridge SD 68 | 35.5 | 41 | 42.7 | 3.6 | 290 | 10 | 41 |
| | Weodstock CUSD 200 | 32.7 | 30.6 | 40.6 | 4.0 | 437 | 8 | 41 |
| **California** | Barring Unified | 19.4 | 31.5 | 29.4 | 6.0 | 303 | 21 | 83 |
| | Benicia Unified | 50.0 | 64.2 | 69.4 | 4.7 | 331 | 5 | 31 |
| | Compton Urified | 34.9 | 36.5 | 42.8 | 4.0 | 1,276 | 24 | 99 |
| | Delano Union Elementary | 30.6 | 33.3 | 42.3 | 5.9 | 643 | 28 | 88 |
| | Dinuba Unified | 31.6 | 35.3 | 41.6 | 5.0 | 436 | 22 | 94 |
| | Dixon Unified | 29.2 | 33.7 | 36.5 | 3.6 | 221 | 10 | 64 |
| | Empire Union Elementary | 23.8 | 27.7 | 31.1 | 3.6 | 316 | 19 | 74 |
| | Enterprise Elementary | 39.3 | 38.6 | 46.6 | 3.6 | 350 | 19 | 23 |
| | Fallbrook Union Elemerkary | 46.4 | 49.6 | 54.6 | 4.1 | 565 | 12 | 67 |
| | Fountain Valley Elementary | 69.3 | 78.7 | 78.3 | 4.5 | 626 | 8 | 20 |
| | Fowler Unified | 33.5 | 37.6 | 42.2 | 4.3 | 170 | 22 | 83 |
| | La Habra City Elementary | 32.2 | 34.6 | 40.2 | 4.0 | 447 | 12 | 88 |
| | Little Lake City Elementary | 45.1 | 57.5 | 57.1 | 6.0 | 359 | 11 | 91 |
| | Morongo Unified | 25.7 | 31.1 | 34.9 | 4.6 | 596 | 21 | 47 |
| | Norris Elementary | 46.6 | 47.0 | 58.7 | 6.0 | 390 | 8 | 41 |
| | Oakdale Joint Unified | 37.3 | 45.5 | 48.4 | 5.6 | 358 | 13 | 43 |
| | Parier Unified | 17.7 | 23.1 | 26.5 | 4.4 | 220 | 34 | 99 |
| | Pleasant Valley | 55.6 | 55.4 | 63.0 | 3.7 | 593 | 7 | 45 |
| | Richland Union Elementary | 16.4 | 23.7 | 35.7 | 9.7 | 260 | 25 | 94 |
| | Rosernead Elementary | 43.8 | 53.1 | 52.3 | 4.3 | 269 | 23 | 39 |
| | Salida Union Elementary | 27.6 | 40.7 | 34.7 | 3.6 | 217 | 15 | 72 |
| | Sanger Unified | 44.9 | 46.3 | 52.6 | 3.8 | 1,006 | 18 | 71 |
| | Santa Cruz City Elementary | 46.7 | 54.3 | 59.9 | 6.6 | 283 | 8 | 41 |
| | Sierra Sands Undied | 33.9 | 38.3 | 42.2 | 4.1 | 374 | 16 | 40 |
| | South Whittier Elementary | 17.6 | 29.3 | 27.6 | 5.0 | 247 | 18 | 96 |
| | Southern Kem Unified | 20.7 | 29.2 | 31.4 | 5.4 | 26B | 21 | 72 |
| | Weaver Union | 25.3 | 34.5 | 33.9 | 4.3 | 325 | 3 | 74 |
| | Yucaipa-Calimesa Joint Unified | 32.6 | 28.2 | 39.9 | 3.7 | 595 | 6 | 53 |

# Appendix 1: Dynamic Districts, By State

## Percent Meeting & Exceeding Standards

| State | School District | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | Average Annual Change(%) | Number Tested (2024) | Poverty Rate(%) | Diversit (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Ohio** | Akron City | 37.7 | 42.8 | 48.1 | 5.2 | 1,394 | 29 | 53 |
| | Canton City | 32.8 | 35.1 | 44.2 | 5.7 | 537 | 35 | 47 |
| | Cincinnati Public Schools | 44.7 | 47.5 | 57.0 | 6.2 | 2,491 | 32 | 71 |
| | Cleveland Heights-University Heights City | 59.4 | 65.5 | 68.4 | 4.5 | 326 | 19 | 76 |
| | Elyria City Schools | 41.4 | 45.8 | 51.0 | 4.8 | 414 | 26 | 36 |
| | Lakewood City | 73.1 | 80.3 | 81.9 | 4.4 | 277 | 15 | 13 |
| | Maylield Cily | 73.2 | 80.4 | 87.9 | 7.4 | 282 | 8 | 26 |
| | Miamisburg City | 54.2 | 61.7 | 67.1 | 6.5 | 348 | 14 | 15 |
| | Northwest Local | 53.3 | 56.3 | 63.2 | 5.0 | 606 | 16 | 42 |
| | Shaker Heights City | 67.2 | 70.9 | 75.3 | 4.1 | 303 | 11 | 50 |
| | Toledo City | 28.6 | 36.0 | 38.8 | 5.1 | 1,385 | 32 | 60 |
| | Tray City | 66.0 | 68.0 | 81.1 | 7.6 | 320 | 11 | 10 |
| | West Clermont Local | 60.9 | 67.5 | 69.1 | 4.1 | 584 | 9 | 9 |
| **Pennsylvania** | Alloona Area SD | 44.5 | 51.1 | 57.2 | 6.3 | 484 | 19 | 12 |
| | Bristl Township SD | 26.9 | 33.3 | 36.3 | 4.7 | 444 | 15 | 32 |
| | Central York SD | 54.0 | 59 | 61.1 | 3.6 | 401 | 7 | 25 |
| | Cheltenham SD | 54.4 | 60.6 | 61.4 | 3.5 | 290 | 9 | 63 |
| | Conewago Valey SD | 57.2 | 58.7 | 69.5 | 6.2 | 249 | 11 | 19 |
| | Connellsville Area SD | 40.8 | 42.4 | 54 | 6.7 | 272 | 18 | 4 |
| | Daniel Boone Area SD | 52.0 | 59.1 | 73.9 | 11.0 | 203 | 8 | 15 |
| | East Stroudsburg Area SD | 45.8 | 53.8 | 57.5 | 5.8 | 374 | 17 | 46 |
| | Ephrata Area SD | 47.4 | 67.5 | 66.3 | 9.5 | 282 | 8 | 15 |
| | Hempfield Area SD | 62.4 | 69.1 | 70.2 | 3.9 | 356 | 10 | 3 |
| | Lebanon SD | 28.0 | 35 | 42.7 | 7.3 | 337 | 21 | 77 |
| | Mecharicsburg Area SD | 59.2 | 61 | 72.5 | 6.6 | 295 | 9 | 18 |
| | Muhlenberg SD | 37.2 | 38.5 | 44.8 | 3.8 | 259 | 15 | 64 |
| | New Castle Area SD | 10.7 | 27.4 | 37.2 | 13.3 | 207 | 31 | 27 |
| | Penn Manor SD | 62.3 | 64.5 | 69.7 | 3.7 | 380 | 9 | 23 |
| | Penniridge SD | 58.8 | 67.4 | 70.6 | 5.9 | 456 | 6 | 12 |
| | Pittsburgh SD | 39.1 | 48.2 | 46.8 | 3.9 | 1,170 | 24 | 56 |
| | Pottstown SD | 28.9 | 35 | 38.4 | 4.7 | 224 | 25 | 55 |
| | Quakertown Community SO | 36.6 | 43.5 | 47.6 | 5.5 | 311 | 8 | 15 |
| | Scranton SD | 23.7 | 36.6 | 37.4 | 6.9 | 564 | 28 | 53 |
| | Shaler Area SD | 74.9 | 80.6 | 83.8 | 4.4 | 271 | 9 | 5 |
| | Solanco SD | 53.1 | 55.9 | 60.5 | 3.7 | 233 | 15 | 12 |
| | Waresboro Area SD | 48.8 | 51.6 | 58.7 | 4.9 | 305 | 13 | 9 |
| | Willamsport Area SD | 45.6 | 42.3 | 55.1 | 4.8 | 316 | 20 | 23 |
| **West Virginia** | Cabell County Schools | 40.6 | 45.6 | 51.2 | 5.3 | 783 | 41 | 8 |
| | Kanawha County Schools | 35.5 | 36.5 | 45.1 | 48 | 1,561 | 19 | 11 |
| | Logan County Schools | 27.8 | 39.7 | 42.7 | 7.4 | 318 | 28 | 2 |
| | Marion County Schools | 40.5 | 41.2 | 48.3 | 3.9 | 500 | 17 | 5 |
| | Mercer County Schools | 29.3 | 35.6 | 46.1 | 8.4 | 614 | 24 | 10 |
| | Monongalia County Schools | 46.1 | 49.4 | 55.6 | 47 | 813 | 14 | 6 |
| | Ohio County Schools | 48.7 | 56.5 | 65.2 | 82 | 358 | 17 | 9 |
| | Putnam Courty Schools | 44.9 | 49.6 | 60.0 | 7.6 | 639 | 11 | 3 |
| | Raleigh County Schools | 40.1 | 45.3 | 51.6 | 5.7 | 716 | 23 | 9 |
| **Kentucky** | Clay Courty | 52 | 64 | 68 | 8 | 230 | 42 | 3 |
| | Covington Independent | 37 | 40 | 51 | 7 | 348 | 40 | 51 |
| | Daviess County | 44 | 46 | 53 | 4.5 | B65 | 13 | 12 |
| | Harlan County | 42 | 52 | 66 | 12 | 268 | 42 | 3 |
| | Hopkins County | 44 | 55 | 58 | 7 | 488 | 22 | 14 |
| | Jahnson County | 48 | 51 | 56 | 4 | 245 | 26 | 2 |
| | Knox County | 38 | 42 | 62 | 12 | 306 | 37 | 3 |
| | Lincoln County | 34 | 43 | 46 | 6 | 260 | 23 | 6 |
| | Marion County | 40 | 45 | 53 | 6.5 | 217 | 17 | 14 |
| | Mercer County | 30 | 34 | 46 | 8 | 206 | 17 | 11 |
| | Nelson County | 24 | 26 | 39 | 7.5 | 320 | 10 | 5 |
| | Owensbora independent | 38 | 47 | 48 | 5 | 395 | 25 | 27 |
| | Pike County | 50 | 57 | 61 | 5.5 | 531 | 36 | 2 |
| | Pulaski County | 57 | 59 | 64 | 3.5 | 542 | 22 | 7 |
| | Rawan County | 42 | 45 | 50 | 4 | 268 | 23 | 5 |

# Appendix 1: Dynamic Districts, By State

## Percent Meeting & Exceeding Standards

| State | School District | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | Average Annual Change(%) | Number Tested (2024) | Poverty Rate(%) | Diversit (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Georgia** | Baldwin County | 16.0 | 21.2 | 26.0 | 4.5 | 324 | 26 | 70 |
| | Buford City | 63.3 | 65.3 | 71.2 | 4.0 | 434 | 13 | 38 |
| | Burke County | 17.5 | 20.3 | 25.0 | 3.7 | 276 | 28 | 67 |
| | Elbert County | 14.4 | 37.6 | 42.7 | 14.1 | 206 | 29 | 47 |
| | Jones County | 33.5 | 42.5 | 45.6 | 6.1 | 344 | 16 | 29 |
| | Laurens County | 32.7 | 37.9 | 40.5 | 3.9 | 464 | 24 | 36 |
| | Marietta City | 35.8 | 48.4 | 44.8 | 4.6 | 685 | 17 | 73 |
| | Sumter County | 10.1 | 16.5 | 20.7 | 5.3 | 241 | 38 | 91 |
| | Thomas County | 29.9 | 33.2 | 41.8 | 6.0 | 380 | 24 | 42 |
| | Walker County | 26.7 | 33.2 | 36.6 | 4.9 | 640 | 19 | 10 |
| | Ware County | 26.0 | 30.6 | 37 3 | 5.7 | 415 | 34 | 45 |
| **Taxas** | Alice ISD | 35.8 | 40.2 | 44.5 | 4.4 | 321 | 29 | 92 |
| | Big Spring ISO | 36.7 | 37.7 | 45.0 | 4.2 | 222 | 20 | 73 |
| | Harmory Public Schools - Houston West | 58.3 | 69.9 | 69.3 | 5.5 | 449 | NA | 50 |
| | Harmory Public Schools - South Texas | 29.4 | 37.1 | 42.7 | 6.6 | 279 | NA | 93 |
| | Henderson ISD | 30.5 | 34.8 | 41.1 | 53 | 207 | 23 | 53 |
| | Rio Grande City Grulla ISD | 37.2 | 37.6 | 46 8 | 4.8 | 634 | 35 | 99 |
| | Roma ISO | 68.3 | 80.0 | 81.1 | 6.4 | 387 | 42 | 99 |
| | School of Science and Technology | 49.2 | 58.9 | 62.6 | 6.7 | 519 | NA | 75 |
| | Valey View ISD | 50.6 | 54.3 | 59.1 | 4.2 | 215 | 36 | 100 |
| | Vanguard Acaderry | 49.6 | 57.7 | 60.5 | 5.4 | 463 | NA | 99 |
| **New Jersey** | Berkeley Township | 30.6 | 33.8 | 37 8 | 3.6 | 289 | 12 | 26 |
| | Cherry Hill | 56.0 | 59.2 | 63.1 | 3.5 | 768 | 7 | 24 |
| | Flemington-Raritan Regional | 28.8 | 35.3 | 454 | 8.3 | 324 | 5 | 26 |
| | Mastery Schools Of Camden, Inc. | 11.4 | 13.5 | 22.3 | 5.5 | 211 | NA | 97 |
| | Old Bridge Township | 51.0 | 52.8 | 58.3 | 3.7 | 558 | 6 | 26 |
| | Piscataway Township | 44.7 | 47.7 | 53.4 | 4.4 | 511 | 7 | 50 |
| | Rahway | 22.6 | 25.9 | 29.7 | 3.6 | 256 | 12 | 80 |
| | Wall Township | 48.5 | 51.3 | 614 | 6.5 | 225 | 4 | 12 |
| | Wayne Township | 51.9 | 56.5 | 63.4 | 6.8 | 525 | 6 | 18 |
| **Tennessee** | Bartlett | 44.4 | 48.3 | 52.3 | 4.0 | 637 | 8 | 35 |
| | Blourt County | 29.7 | 37.0 | 40.3 | 5.3 | 737 | 14 | 11 |
| | Dickson County | 36.8 | 42.2 | 46.7 | 4.9 | 555 | 17 | 13 |
| | Kingsport | 41.2 | 45.4 | 48.6 | 3.7 | 566 | 25 | 13 |
| | Sullvan County | 31.5 | 37.9 | 42.9 | 5.7 | 548 | 22 | 4 |
| | Washington County | 39.7 | 49.6 | 51.9 | 6.1 | 566 | 14 | 6 |

# Appendix 1: Dynamic Districts, By State

## Percent Meeting & Exceeding Standards

| State | School District | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | Average Annual Change(%) | Number Tested (2024) | Poverty Rate(%) | Diversit (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **North Carolina** | Lenoir County | 33.3 | 36.7 | 49.0 | 7.9 | 555 | 28 | 62 |
| | Martin County Schools | 25.4 | 39.3 | 44.6 | 9.6 | 222 | 29 | 62 |
| | Nash Courty | 28.8 | 32.8 | 35.9 | 3.6 | 967 | 23 | 68 |
| | Orange County Schools | 41.2 | 48.8 | 51.1 | 5.0 | 503 | 11 | 41 |
| | Rutherford County Schools | 44.8 | 49.5 | 54.9 | 5.1 | 554 | 26 | 22 |
| **New Hampshire** | Concord | 40.0 | 39.0 | 51.0 | 5.5 | 270 | 10 | 13 |
| | Landonderry | 47.0 | 53.0 | 59.0 | 6.0 | 280 | 4 | 27 |
| | Manchester | 20.0 | 22.0 | 29.0 | 4.5 | 820 | 17 | 92 |
| | Nashus | 36.0 | 40.0 | 43.4 | 3.5 | 623 | 11 | 68 |
| | Rochester | 22.0 | 34.0 | 39.0 | 8.5 | 250 | 14 | 26 |
| | Salem | 48.0 | 54.0 | 56.0 | 4.0 | 255 | 4 | 27 |
| **Colorado** | Durango 9-R | 44.8 | 43.6 | 56.9 | 6.1 | 339 | 10 | 28 |
| | Jannstown-Milliken RE- 5J | 27.3 | 29.7 | 39.0 | 6.0 | 279 | 7 | 32 |
| | Pueblo City 60 | 20.1 | 229 | 27.6 | 3.8 | 946 | 20 | 74 |
| | Roaring Fork RE-1 | 28.7 | 28.4 | 38.2 | 4.8 | 314 | 9 | 57 |
| **Indiana** | Concord Community Schools | 24.0 | 26.2 | 33.8 | 4.9 | 370 | 16 | 56 |
| | Middlebury Community Schools | 41.9 | 45.3 | 60.9 | 9.5 | 299 | 8 | 13 |
| | MED Warren Township | 13.8 | 16.8 | 21.5 | 3.8 | 810 | 20 | 76 |
| | Plymouth Community Schod Corp | 26.6 | 33.8 | 37.4 | 5.4 | 230 | 11 | 31 |
| **Hawaii** | Kau-Keaau-Pahoa Complex | 26.0 | 29.0 | 34.3 | 4.2 | 408 | 0 | 0 |
| | Castle-Kahuku Complex | 46.0 | 50.0 | 53.6 | 3.8 | 542 | 0 | 0 |
| **Delaware** | Brandywine School Distriet | 35.0 | 39.0 | 42.0 | 4.0 | 408 | 12 | 47 |
| | Woodbridge School District | 30.0 | 42.0 | 44.0 | 7.0 | 542 | 20 | 49 |
| **wyoming** | Natrona #1 | 41.9 | 43.9 | 52.9 | 5.5 | 935 | 11 | 16 |
| **Maryland** | Allegarry County | 41.3 | 48.3 | 51.0 | 4.9 | 537 | 21 | 6 |
| | Talbot County | 37.4 | 35.0 | 47.9 | 5.2 | 239 | 14 | 40 |
| **Minnesota** | St. Francis Area School | 44.1 | 46.6 | 55.1 | 5.5 | 274 | 6 | 7 |
| | Willmar | 27.0 | 26.8 | 35.3 | 4.1 | 278 | 17 | 58 |
| **Washington** | Shelton | 25.4 | 27.4 | 42.5 | 8.5 | 259 | 19 | 44 |
| | Steilacoom Historical | 46.5 | 58.9 | 61.5 | 7.3 | 216 | 6 | 30 |
| **Arizona** | Chinle Unified District | 23.0 | 28.0 | 40.0 | 8.5 | 201 | 34 | 100 |
| | Osborn Elementary District | 19.0 | 26.0 | 27.0 | 4 | 257 | 24 | 82 |
| **Oregon** | Hermiston SD 8 | 32.6 | 31.4 | 40.4 | 3.9 | 395 | 13 | 60 |
| **Rhode Island** | Coventry | 40.0 | 44.6 | 49.0 | 4.5 | 290 | 8 | 9 |
| **Nevada** | Humbalat | 31.0 | 31.0 | 40.0 | 5.0 | 237 | 13 | 42 |
| **South Dakota** | Pierre 32-2 | 45.9 | 51.8 | 54.6 | 4.3 | 209 | 9 | 21 |
| **Direct of Columbia** | DC Prep | 14.0 | 18.0 | 21.0 | 3.5 | 208 | NA | 96 |

# Data Notes

Third grade reading achievement data was obtained, when publicly available, from thirty-five state department of education websites.

Ten states—Florida, New York, Wisconsin, Alabama, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Nebraska, Maine, Alaska, and Vermont—have revised their English Language Arts tests and/or proficiency cut scores and lack three years of consistent data to be included at this time.

District-level achievement data—in aggregated lists-— was not publicly accessible in five states: Missouri, Iowa, New Mexico, North Dakota, and Utah.

Six states—Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia—have state proficiency standards that are half a grade-level or more below the midpoint of NAEP Basic (225).[16] Data for these states and districts is included in this report but should be interpreted with caution.

Massachusetts data was publicly available. It is the only state that does not have any districts meeting the criteria of growing 3-4% a year for the last three years. The state of Hawaii is usually considered one school district, but we can identify two clusters of schools known as complex areas that meet our dynamic district criteria.

Districts smaller than 200 students tested in third grade are not included in this report, as their small size makes them prone to large changes in test scores that have little to do with underlying changes in teaching and learning. For example, Steubenville, Ohio, the focus of the latest episodes in Emily Hanford's Sold a Story podcast, is not included here because of its small size.

There is some overlap between the dynamic districts identified here and the district success stories in the Education Recovery Scorecard. But this report has a different focus: growth in third grade literacy achievement since the pandemic ended, examining scores from 2021-22 to 2023-24. The ERS report is focused on the extent to which all elementary and middle school reading and math achievement has recovered to pre-pandemic levels (2019).

# Endnotes

[1]See for instance, Elizabeth Heubeck, "Mississippi Students Surged in Reading Over the Last Decade. Here's How Schools Got Them There," Education Week, June 19, 2023, https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/mississippi-students-surged-in-reading-over-the-last-decade-heres-how-schools-got-them-there/2023/06. See also: Amanda Wicks and Will McKenzie, "The Best Way to Teach Reading Is Proven — What Mississippi, Colorado Get Right," The 74 Million, December 19, 2023, https://www.the74million.org/article/the-best-way-to-teach-reading-is-proven-what-mississippi-colorado-get-right/.

[2]Kymyona Burk and Carey Wright, "New Study: Holding Kids Back One Key Factor in Mississippi's Reading Revolution," The 74, February 15, 2023, https://www.the74million.org/article/new-study-holding-kids-back-one-key-factor-in-mississippis-reading-revolution/.

[3]Morgan Polikoff, Beyond Standards: The Fragmentation of Education Governance and the Promise of Curriculum Reform (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, 2021).

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[5]For more detail on Marietta City's approach, especially their educator coaching cycle, see Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education, "CARES District Case Study: Rewriting How Reading is Taught." (Atlanta, GA: Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education, 2024). https://gpee.org

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[9]Anthony P. Carnevale, Nicole Smith, Martin Van Der Werf, and Michael C. Quinn, "After Everything: Projections of Jobs, Education, and Training Requirements through 2031" (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2023), cew.georgetown.edu/Projections2031.

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[14]Amy C. Edmondson, The Fearless Organization (New York: Wiley, 2018).

[15]American Cancer Society. Cancer Facts & Figures 2025. Atlanta: American Cancer Society; 2025.
[16]The most recent, and probably last, mapping of state proficiency standards onto the NAEP scales occurred in 2022. For more, see https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/studies/statemapping/%5C%5C