

INTEROFFICE CORRESPONDENCE
Los Angeles Unified School District
Office of the Superintendent

INFORMATIVE

DATE: May 9, 2023

TO: Members, Board of Education

FROM: Alberto M. Carvalho, Superintendent



SUBJECT: LITERACY AND NUMERACY INTERVENTION MODEL

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the District’s plan to update its current intervention model. Since 2020, LAUSD has been implementing the Primary Promise intervention model which provides targeted schools with designated and trained interventionists to accelerate the development of early literacy and numeracy skills for students in grades kindergarten through second grade. Beginning in the 2023-24 school year, this commitment to student learning will continue as it transitions to a transformational teaching and learning model named “Literacy and Numeracy Intervention Model” which will expand intervention support to include students in grades 3-5 and middle school. Beyond direct intervention, this revised and expanded model will include pedagogical support for classroom teachers to improve small-group instruction methods while providing students with resources for ongoing support in Literacy and Numeracy.

Background

From 2002 through 2007, the District participated in the *Reading First* grant and received funds for staff literacy coaches and experts at every elementary school throughout the District. Literacy Experts provided ongoing professional development where literacy coaches, administrators and teachers learned about effective practices for teaching reading and collaboratively planned to ensure school systems resulted in literacy achievement for all. School site literacy coaches facilitated deeper study at the school site, co-taught lessons, and provided personalized coaching and feedback. Since the end of the *Reading First* grant in 2007, there has not been an investment in literacy of this scale, nor have there been large gains in reading proficiency to match.

Similarly, the District has not invested in widespread pedagogical support, resources, and site-based coaches since 2008 to improve instruction and student outcomes in Math.

The Primary Promise initiative began in the 2020-2021 school year to address the learning loss caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Through one-time Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds, LAUSD piloted this early literacy program. An evaluation report on the implementation of Primary Promise is pending; however, at this time, there is limited data supporting that the current approach has achieved the results as envisioned. As ESSER dollars sunset, we will transition to a more sustainable model, building off the lessons learned from Primary Promise and aligned to well-established research. To address the literacy needs of students in TK-5 in schools with the highest needs, the shift will include an equitable distribution of Interventionists to those schools that did not have the support due to staffing challenges. In addition, expanding to grades 6-8 in Priority Schools will provide an opportunity to utilize Interventionists to help address the literacy gap that grew during the pandemic. To strengthen the professional development model, we will institute an Interventionists Academy to build the capacity of the educators in content and pedagogy.

Updates

In alignment with the LAUSD 2022-26 Strategic Plan, the next phase of the Literacy and Numeracy Intervention model will build upon the learnings from Primary Promise and research in intervention, while prioritizing support for the District's Priority Schools including middle schools. Teachers hired to provide this intensive support will be called Literacy Interventionists or Numeracy Interventionists, widely recognized titles for functions at schools, in place across the country for decades. In addition, the district will further expand and implement a robust professional development plan to build teacher capacity in evidence-based intervention practices.

The following sustainability structure will be used to expand the Literacy and Numeracy Intervention model. A combination of centrally and school-funded positions will yield the following number of Interventionists:

Table 1. Summary of Centrally and School Funded Interventionists for 2023-2024

Position Title	Elementary	Secondary	Total
Interventionist	559	201	760
Instructional Aides	309	13	322
Total	868	214	1,082

Models

Through the Literacy and Numeracy Intervention model, students in high-priority schools performing below grade level will receive daily, small-group instruction to accelerate learning. Additionally, through collaboration with the Interventionists, teachers at Priority Schools will receive modeling, team-teaching, and planning support to enhance whole group and differentiated instruction in the regular classroom. Literacy and Numeracy Intervention Model schools will engage in data inquiry cycles with teachers, administrators, and interventionists working as a team to build instructional coherence across all classrooms as well as review and respond to achievement data.

- **Elementary Literacy Interventionists**

Daily, the Elementary Literacy Interventionists will deliver high-quality, differentiated, small-group instruction to kindergarten through fifth-grade students who need additional support to learn how to read proficiently. Using a Structured Literacy approach, the Interventionist will provide instruction to address foundational literacy skills, including reading connected text with fluency and comprehension. Teachers will participate in professional development focused on building their expertise in reading instruction. Professional development will include the use of a Structured Literacy approach to provide explicit, systematic, and cumulative instruction in word recognition and language comprehension skills. In addition, the literacy Interventionist will complete Orton-Gillingham and Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) training, which focus on how reading develops in the brain, effective use of diagnostic assessments, and evidence-based practices for targeted, small-group instruction. The Instructional Aides will also receive ongoing training on a Structured Literacy approach and will work in tandem with the Interventionist to reinforce and support the instruction. The goal of the Literacy Interventionist model is to ensure all students are fluent readers by the end of third grade.

- **Elementary Numeracy Interventionist**

Daily, the Elementary Numeracy Interventionists will deliver high-quality, differentiated, small-group instruction to identified kindergarten through fifth-grade students who are struggling to develop and apply numerical fluency, conceptual knowledge, and problem-solving skills, within real-world contexts. Using a problem-based approach that balances number sense routines and concept development, the Interventionist will guide students to use a range of progressively sophisticated math strategies. Professional development will build the Interventionists' understanding of the developmental levels and stages within key mathematical domains. In addition, Interventionists will use diagnostic assessments and evidence-based practices to provide targeted instruction that ensures students can explain and apply mathematical concepts as they develop fluency in computational skills. The Instructional Aides will also receive ongoing training and work closely with the Interventionist to provide reinforcement, support, and guided practice. The goal of the Numeracy Interventionist model is to provide all students with critical numeracy skills needed for higher-level mathematics.

- **Middle School Literacy Interventionists**

The Middle School Literacy Interventionist will work directly with students performing below grade level at Priority Middle Schools to support their development of strong literacy skills across the curriculum and social-emotional learning by the end of eighth grade. The Middle School Literacy Interventionist will support the implementation of a Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) that includes direct small-group instruction and intervention, as well as building the capacity of classroom teachers through model lessons and engaging professional development on effective literacy strategies and interventions, including vocabulary development, and reading comprehension, to address the needs of students needing additional support in learning to read proficiently. Professional Development will include training in the Structured Literacy approach, effective use of diagnostic assessments, and evidence-based practices for targeted, small-group instruction. The goal of the Middle School Literacy Interventionist model is to ensure that all students acquire the requisite literacy skills to successfully navigate the rigor of high school literacy across the curriculum.

Interventionist Academy

Districtwide support for all schools will continue to expand in 2023-2024 to enhance teaching and learning in all classrooms. Opportunities to participate in professional development on the Structured Literacy approach and evidence-based math practices will be available for all teachers. In addition, professional learning and coaching on focus literacy and numeracy strategies in whole-group and small-group settings will be provided to classroom teachers, school-purchased interventionists, and school administrators.

For additional information and/or questions, please contact Frances Baez, Chief Academic Officer, at frances.baez@lausd.net or (213) 241- 4822.

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