



Literacy Without Limits

The Next Chapter



**CalSPRA
2026**

**Excellence in Communications
Award Entry**

Problem/Opportunity

As with many districts, Jurupa Unified School District noticed significant learning loss following the pandemic, as was evidenced by the first state assessments taken by students after returning to school. We saw very low scores across the board in 2022-23, and low and very low scores in 2023-24. Because reading is essential to academic success and a strong predictor of students' future success, it was determined that literacy would be an area of focus for our district. This focus is also tied directly to our Vision for the Future strategic plan, implemented in Fall 2022, with the first goal being Achievement and Innovation. Strategic Communications was tasked with helping in the effort through a community education/engagement campaign.

Research

Quantitative (Primary)

- **California School Dashboard**
 - More than two-thirds of the more than 17,000 students we serve come from socioeconomically disadvantaged households.
 - Thirty percent of our students are English learners.
- **Results of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP)**
 - In 2023, our district's overall English Language Arts scores were 56.8 points below standard, and all student groups, with the exception of those of Asian or Filipino ethnicities, scored low or very low. No student groups scored very high.
 - In 2024, our district's overall English Language Arts was 56.6 points below standard, but most subgroups had moved into the orange or low area. Foster youth, Long-term English learners, and students with disabilities remained in the "very low" range.
- **Information about access to libraries within the Jurupa Valley community**
 - Jurupa Valley (42.94 square miles) has only two small county library branches serving a population of 108,154.
 - These libraries are 11 miles apart and not close to all schools and neighborhoods in our semi-rural community.

Quantitative (Secondary)

- Studies connecting family reading to reading proficiency

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6927670>

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED496346.pdf>

Qualitative

- **Focus group** – We met with elementary school librarians twice per year to gain their input on how the campaign would be accepted and how to make it exciting (Prizes, bright colors, surprises). Their input helped us to add a print advertising campaign in Year 2.
- **Key informants** – A small group of individuals were polled regularly – an elementary librarian, a principal, a coordinator, and parents whose children were participating in various reading initiatives.
- **Input from Educational Services** and teachers on engagement strategies that work – Encouraged reading often, even at short intervals.
- **Input from Education-Information Services** on what reading genres resonate most with students to serve as inspiration for the year's theme – students like magic and excitement.
- **Input from families** about their feelings regarding reading with their students – Reading form entries let us know what they love most about reading with their students – most said they liked seeing their students gain fluency and confidence.
- **Input from parents** about whether the campaign had a positive effect on their students' reading skills – many said it did have a positive impact.
- **Personal experience/observation** from having organized a successful literacy event in a former district – Students will enjoy reading when it is highlighted as a fun, desirable practice.

Planning

Note: This is a multi-year campaign. This entry focuses on work done in Year 2 – the 2024-2025 School Year.

Publics:

Based on our research showing where we could have the greatest impact, we determined the following publics would be our primary audiences.

- Families of TK-3 grade students
- TK-3 grade students
- Primary grade teachers/librarians and administrators
- Community partners

Goals:

We will increase awareness of the importance of reading and increase family engagement in reading activities with their students. We will also provide families with greater access to books and literacy opportunities with library events and activities focused on reading.

Objectives:

1. By May 2025, we will increase the number of minutes students read at home by 25 percent over the previous (baseline) year for a total of 96,250 minutes read, as measured on the JUSD Family Reading Challenge log.
2. By May 2025, we will increase participation in the Family Reading Challenge by 25 percent over the baseline year, as measured by the number of reading log entries.
3. By May 2025, we will increase districtwide understanding of and support for Literacy Without Limits by ensuring it is included in Local Control and Accountability Plan goals and budget.
4. By May 2026, we will increase parent understanding of their role in supporting literacy by 25 percent as measured by beginning-of-the-year and end-of-the-year surveys.

Strategies:

- Inform primary-grade families about the importance of reading with their children.
- Engage all elementary school families and students in reading.
- Enlist support from teachers, support staff, and community partners (Call to Action).
- Change attitudes about reading (from “it’s boring” to “it’s fun”).
- Create a culture of readers in support of our Vision for the Future goals.
- Include a variety of cultures and languages in our communications.

Implementation

Key Messages:

- We want all JUSD students to be proficient readers by third grade so that they can be successful in school, in career, and in life (the JUSD Promise).
- JUSD is committed to making books and reading accessible to all students and to making this a fun activity that students will want to pursue.
- Literacy is the most important indicator of future student success.
- Challenges with literacy are a whole-community problem, and we need to work together as a whole community to support literacy for our students.
- When we improve literacy in Jurupa Valley, we can improve the future of not only our students but also our community.

Tactics

Campaign Branding: We continued to use our logo and slogan developed in Year 1: “Literacy Without Limits.” This parallels our district slogan, “Learning Without Limits.”

Social Media Campaign: We highlighted fun reading activities, amplified student voice by letting our students share their favorite books and what they love about reading, featured the fun aspect of reading by showcasing mystery readers (who included the Superintendent and Cabinet, Board of Education members, and other elected officials, and even mascots like McGruff the Crime Dog.

The Superintendent’s Reading Challenge: We included social media leader boards and awards for top classes and schools, as well as “mystery prizes” for students we notice are trying hard (ie: the first student at a school to participate, honesty in reporting minutes (to the second) read, groups of students at one of the lower-socioeconomic schools participating, etc.).

Print campaign: We designed bookmarks in English and Spanish to advertise our Reading Challenge. A QR code on the back directed students to the online reading log. These also served as flyers for our campaign.

District newsletter coverage: We wrote several stories and produced videos to share the campaign with our families. This included articles and videos featuring the Superintendent to emphasize credibility.

California Family and Community Engagement Initiative Newsletter

Video series highlighting students’ favorite books

Community event exposure – Riverside County State of Education Address (2024) and JUSD Back-to-School Resource Fairs (July 2024 and July 2025)

Evaluation

This was an extremely successful campaign, and we hope the momentum continues as we enter year three. Below are some data points from the first two years.

- Between fall 2023 and spring 2024, we saw a 289 percent increase in participation in the JUSD Family Reading challenge – going from 74,393 minutes read in the first year to 289,436 minutes read in 2024-25.
- Between fall of 2023 and spring of 2024, we saw a 204.46 percent increase in the number of Family Reading Challenge entries.
- All 17 JUSD elementary schools had at least one student participate in the Reading Challenge in 2024-25, compared to 12 schools that participated in 2023-24.
- An online survey of families participating in the reading challenge, which is embedded in the Family Reading Challenge log, helped us to determine the following:
 - The majority of student participants (65.2 percent) said they had the books at home. Another 24.2 percent borrowed books from their school libraries; 14.3 percent borrowed books from a public library; 4.2 percent borrowed books from their classroom; 1.9 percent borrowed from a friend, and the remaining 9.1 percent replied that they accessed the books through “other” sources.
 - The vast majority of students (91.1 percent) reported reading with their parent, 10.8 percent read with an older sibling, 7.8 percent read with a grandparent, 2 percent with a family friend, and 6.3 percent marked other.
- **Literacy Without Limits is now included in the Local Control and Accountability Plan**, the blueprint for the district budget – and specifically, funds are set aside for the community engagement piece of this effort. This is a significant policy change that will help the program move forward for many years to come.

Although not a formal objective of the communication campaign, we also saw a boost in student test scores. Formative assessment scores showed that from 2024 to 2025, 16 percent more students had reached the 60th percentile or higher on formative reading proficiency tests, and an additional 15 percent reached the 40th percentile or higher. We have also seen growth in English language arts state assessments, particularly among some of our subgroups. In addition, two of our schools showed significant improvement with 25.9 and 16.9 point increases.

Family Reading Challenge

JUSD Family Reading Challenge

Congrats to our week 8 leaders!

6,595 minutes read this week!
273,874 minutes read this school year!

MOST MINUTES READ BY SCHOOL	MOST MINUTES READ BY CLASS
Sky Country Elementary 4,909 minutes read	Ms. Wilson (Sky Country) 2,231 minutes read
Stone Avenue Elementary 630 minutes read	Ms. Nuñez (Sky Country) 695 minutes read
Pacific Avenue Academy of Music 345 minutes read	Ms. Contreras (Sky Country) 671 minutes read

Families can log reading at:
bit.ly/JUSDReadingChallenge24



Videos



To view more campaign assets, please visit our website at:
<https://bit.ly/LiteracyWithoutLimitsWeb>