

Literacy and Numeracy Goals: Year Two Progress Report

LAUSD Board of Education Independent Analysis Unit
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March 17, 2025

In 2021, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) established four specific, measurable District goals that were integrated into its 2022-26 Strategic Plan. While the District has not yet achieved its ambitious literacy and numeracy goals, its performance surpasses that of the state, suggesting that the current approach has yielded positive outcomes.

This report equips Board members to make informed decisions on resource allocations, adjust policy, and advocate for successful school transformation strategies. It highlights that some schools have exceeded expectations, which points to an opportunity to study and replicate successful models. It also compares LAUSD with other districts, demonstrating that while goals may currently seem unattainable, they are part of a strategy that has produced results given the challenges that the District and other comparable districts face.

For this report, the IAU analyzed the literacy and numeracy goals, describing how they were developed, the District's progress on them, and school-level performance—noting that some LAUSD schools surpass expectations while the District lags. Comparisons with other districts follow, as well as goal-adaptation strategies.

GOAL DEVELOPMENT

In spring 2021, the L.A. Unified Board of Education, under the leadership of President Kelly Gonez, developed four guiding goals for the District. These goals, including goals for literacy

Report Highlights

1. Progress towards goals is positive but lagging:

Two years into the strategic plan, the District is about a quarter of the way to its elementary literacy and secondary numeracy goals and slightly further along in elementary math (one-third).

2. Progress outpaces the state and most comparable districts:

LAUSD outperforms the state and most large districts in progress overall and for most student groups.

3. English learners grew substantially in elementary numeracy and literacy:

L.A. Unified's English learners made 40% progress in grade 3 ELA and 51% progress in grades 3-5 math, though progress lags in grades 6-8 math (30%). Across the board, English learners' growth in DFS far exceeded the state and comparison districts.

4. Some schools have exceeded their goals already:

As of 2024, 186 schools are on track to reach their targets, and 54 already reached at least goal, most in elementary literacy (41).

5. School initiatives and investments are associated with success in elementary grades:

Compared to the district overall, larger shares of priority schools, BSAP schools, and SENI schools showed progress ($\geq 25\%$ of goal) in grade 3 ELA and grades 3-5 Math

6. The IAU recommends considering increasing targets for some schools alongside continued monitoring:

The IAU recommends considering new "stretch" goals for schools that have met targets alongside watching for repeat successes with English learners and Black students and more schools reaching their targets.

Historical and Organizational Context for Goal Development

The goal development process in spring 2021—initiated by Board President Gonez, led by CGCS, and supported by District staff—came at a significant juncture for L.A. Unified. The COVID-19 pandemic-related school closures were ending, superintendent Austin Beutner had departed, interim superintendent Megan Reilly was leading, the District had been without an operative strategic plan for several years, and a national search for a new superintendent was imminent. Moreover, a substantial influx of temporary funds from the federal government to address pandemic-related challenges was imminent.

and numeracy, aligned to the overall priorities of Board members and District leadership, the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), and statutory requirements, and were subsequently incorporated into the District’s 2022-2026 Strategic Plan.

How the District goals were set

The goal-setting process, led by the Council of Great City Schools (CGCS),¹ adhered to the Council’s philosophy of setting a few focused, clear, and achievable objectives. The goal development timeline was as follows:

- **March 2021:** CGCS began leading the Board through the goal-setting process via multiple meetings through June.
- **June 2021:** the Board approved four goals: post-secondary readiness, literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills.
- **February 2022:** Superintendent Alberto Carvalho began his tenure in L.A. Unified and initiated a comprehensive strategic planning process.²
- **June 2022:** District staff presented the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan to the Board, which included explicit numerical objectives for literacy and numeracy for all students and priority subgroups.

In considering how to measure the literacy and numeracy goals, the Board opted to use the Distance from Standard (DFS) metric, which aligns with the California School Dashboard (Dashboard).³ Analysis of student performance data and consideration of post-COVID resources informed the selection of 30- and 40-point numerical targets for

literacy and numeracy, respectively. These targets translate to ~8 or 10 points growth per year, on average, aligning with midpoint for the standard of improvement set by Dashboard methodology, which defines an “increase” as a DFS change of at least 3 (and less than 15, color-coded green in its 5-by-5 grid).⁴ For targeted student groups, accelerated targets were set (plus 10 points per goal).

The Board understood that the goals were ambitious but considered them achievable at the time the goals were adopted. Though the District’s average growth in literacy and numeracy prior to the pandemic fell short of the growth needed to reach the 2026 targets, the District exhibited substantial growth in some years (e.g., there was an 11-point increase in ELA DFS from 2017 to 2018), and comparable districts also exhibited significant growth prior to the pandemic.⁵

Goal 2: Literacy

- All 3rd graders should advance 30 points closer to standard.
- Third-grade students with disabilities, English learners, low-income students, foster youth, Latino/a students, and Black students should advance 40 points closer to standard

Goal 3: Numeracy

- All students in grade-spans 3-5 and 6-8 should advance 40 points closer to standard
- Students in these grade spans with disabilities, English learners, low-income students, foster youth, Latino/a students, and Black students should advance 50 points closer to standard

How the goals were set by school

In addition to setting Districtwide measurable objectives, District staff also set four-year goals for each school with annual targets. The Office of Data and Accountability (ODA) developed an algorithm that set school goals to achieve by 2025-26 based on each school’s average DFS (“School Baseline DFS”) relative to the District’s average DFS (“District Baseline DFS”) in the baseline year of 2022, summarized below.

Schools at or above the District average:
The school’s goal mirrors the District’s goals.

Literacy Goal = School Baseline DFS + 30

Numeracy Goal = School Baseline DFS + 40

Schools below the District average:
The school has accelerated targets, aiming to halve the gap between the school and the District average by 2026.

Gap = District Baseline DFS - School Baseline DFS

Literacy Goal = School Baseline DFS + 30 + ½ × Gap

Numeracy Goal = School Baseline DFS + 40 + ½ × Gap

The Business Intelligence (BI) dashboard on the District’s Whole Child data monitoring platform allows District and school leaders to view individual school goals, including accelerated subgroup targets (i.e., an additional 10 points growth), their progress, and possible growth trajectories.

PROGRESS DISTRICTWIDE

While the District has made positive strides in literacy and numeracy since 2022, to meet its goals within the next two years, it would need to accelerate progress dramatically. Still, some groups are excelling—notably

elementary English Learners—either exceeding their pre-pandemic achievement levels or on track to reach their 2026 targets.

This section describes the progress needed—both overall and by student groups—for the District to meet its goals (detailed tables accompanying Figure 1 are in the Appendix). This analysis lays the foundation for the following sections, which will demonstrate that, while the District is not on track to reach its overall goals, there is still progress to celebrate: dozens of schools have already met their targets, and the District’s score growth surpasses the state and many other districts.

Literacy Progress

Since 2022, LAUSD students have improved their DFS on average by about 8 points, which represents 27% progress toward the goal, averaging 4 points per year. To meet the goal by 2026, the District would need to more than double this growth rate, advancing 22 additional points over the next two school years (Figure 1).

However, Black students and English learners have shown more progress towards their respective goals, and both groups exceeded their respective pre-pandemic (2019) DFS scores in 2024:

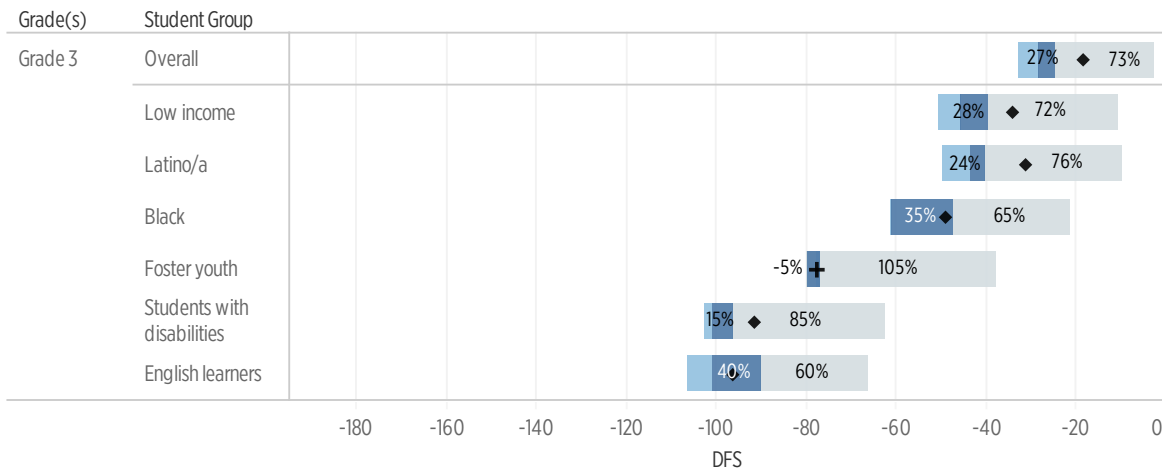
- Black students showed ~14 points growth, almost all in the past year, achieving 35% progress. If the 2024 growth (13.6 points) can be replicated over the next two years, the 2026 target will be reached.
- English learners have made 40% progress with 15.9 points growth since 2022. However, to reach the goal for English

Literacy: Where LAUSD 3rd graders stand in 2024

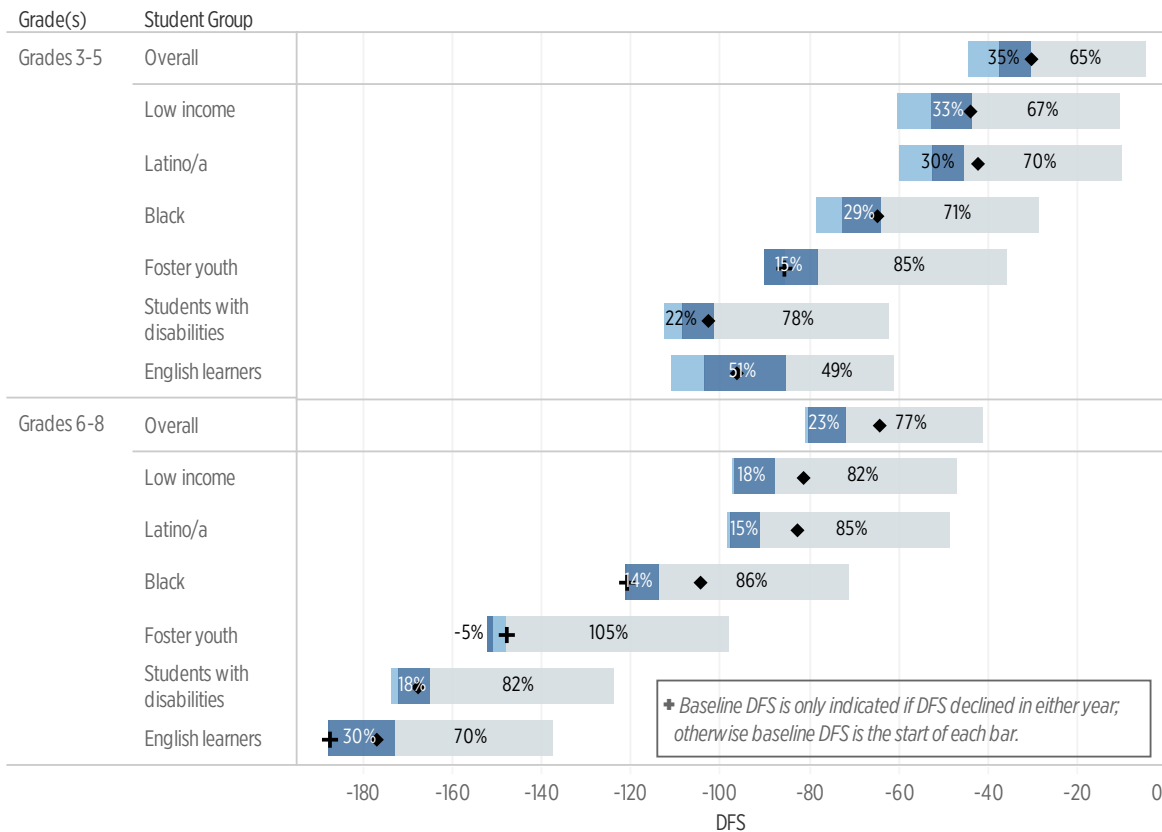
L.A. Unified’s grade 3 average ELA DFS score for all students in 2024 was 24.9 points below standard.

Figure 1. Smarter Balanced Assessment Distance from Standard (DFS) Progress by Goal, Grade and Student Group

Goal 2 Literacy: Smarter Balanced Assessment (ELA/Literacy) - Grade 3 DFS



Goal 3 Numeracy: Smarter Balanced Assessment (Math) - Grades 3-5, 6-8 DFS



Progress
 Year 2
 Year 1
 Distance to Target
 Pre-COVID DFS
 Baseline DFS

Source: CAASPP Researcher File for Smarter Balanced Assessments. Rounding may result in slight discrepancies in results across platforms.
<https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/> Notes: DFS for foster youth unavailable for 2019. Data reflects all tested students per student group in the district.
 Data also includes affiliated charters (unlike the California School Dashboard) but not independent charters.

learners by 2026, average annual growth must exceed 12 points (24 points total), surpassing the growth in 2023 (5.0 points) or 2024 (10.9 points).

In contrast, progress for students with disabilities is behind, with only a 6.1-point increase as of 2024 (15% of the goal). Further, foster youth have fallen behind 2 points instead of growing.

Numeracy Progress

For grades 3-5, Math DFS scores have grown 14.1 points, equivalent to 35% progress towards the 2026 goal and have matched their level from before the pandemic (Figure 1). To meet the goal of a 40-point increase by 2026, two years of 13-point increases are required, a rate of increase almost double the growth of the past two years (7 points per year, on average).

For grades 6-8, scores have grown by 9.1 points, equivalent to only 23% progress. To meet the goal of a 40-point increase by 2026, two years of 15-point increases are required, a rate of increase almost twice the growth of the past two years (8 points per year, on average).

English learners in grades 3-5 demonstrated notable progress in numeracy, more than halfway (51%) towards realizing a 50-point increase. On average, scores for elementary English learners grew 12.9 points per year, which, if sustained for the next two years, will

surpass the remaining 24.3 points needed to reach the 2026 target.

Several student groups in grades 3-5 are approaching or have surpassed 30% progress towards their respective goals: low income (33%), Latino/a (30%), and Black students (29%). English learners in grades 6-8 have also made 30% progress after a 15.2-point increase in 2024. However, the average growth rate for these student groups would be insufficient to reach the goal of a 50-point increase by 2026. For most student groups, the average growth rate would have to double in the remaining two-years.

Student groups with 15% or less progress towards the respective goals halfway through the strategic plan implementation include foster youth and grades 6-8 Latino/a and Black students.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

Since 2022, individual schools have made varying levels of progress toward their literacy and numeracy goals. As of 2024, 54 schools met at least one of their goals, including 2 schools that met both goals, and an additional 186 schools are on track to reach their goals by 2026.

The school-level analysis summarized in this section help indicate where efforts are working (regarding growth in DFS) and bear further investigation, as well as schools where more support is needed. Disaggregating the data by school characteristics indicates a positive association between District initiatives and investments and school progress—though not universally, indicating additional challenges faced by some schools.

Detailed tables accompanying Figure 2 are linked in the Appendix.

**Numeracy: Where LAUSD 3rd-5th and 6th-8th grad-
ers stand in 2024**

L.A. Unified’s grades 3-5 average Math DFS score for all students in 2024 was 30.5 points below standard.

L.A. Unified’s grades 6-8 average Math DFS score for all students in 2024 was 72.0 points below standard.

Figure 2. Distribution of School Performance (% Progress) on School Goals for All Students as of 2024, by School Characteristic, Goal and Grade(s)

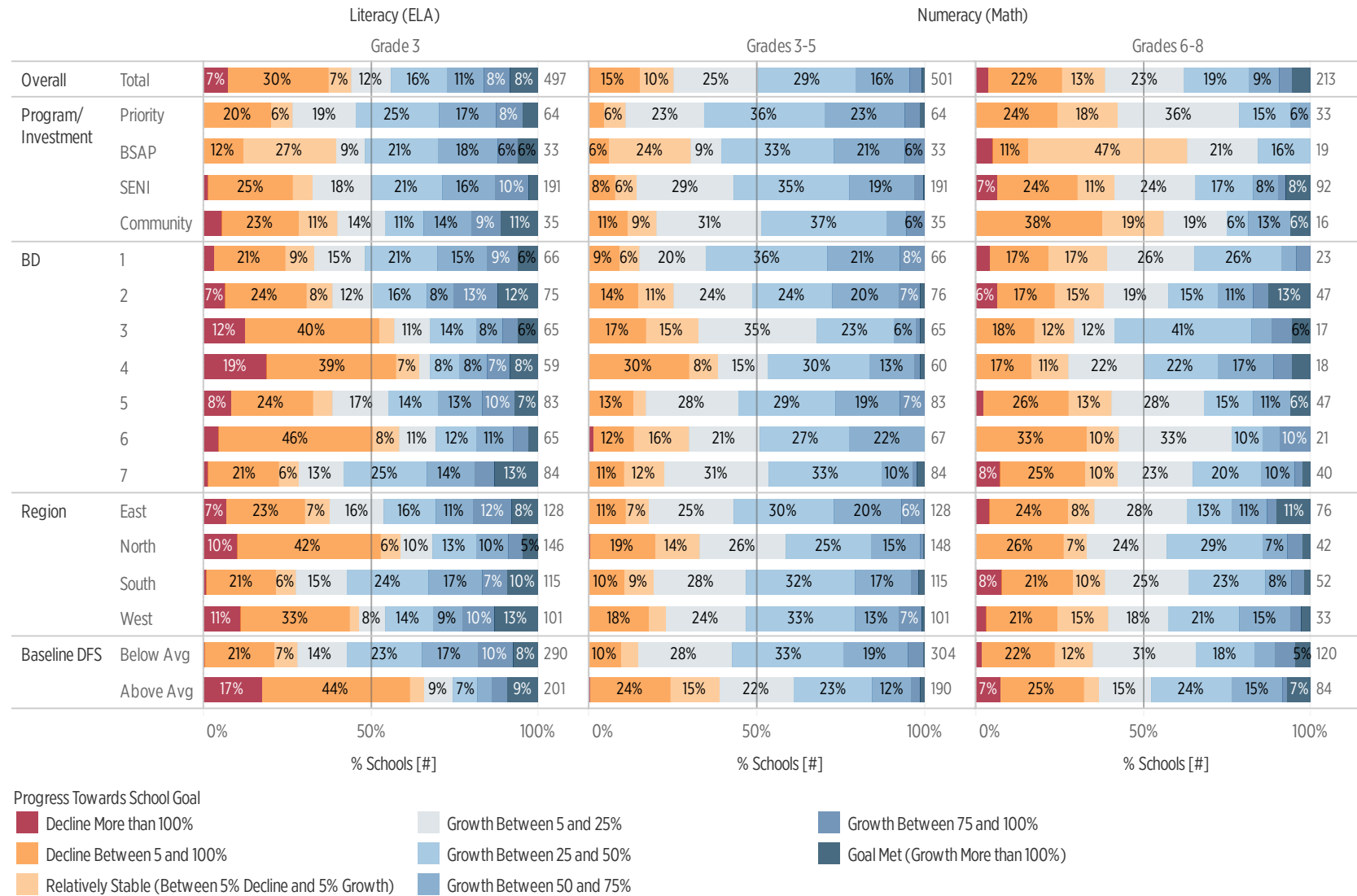


Figure notes and sources provided on the next page.

Figure 2 Notes and Sources

Notes: BSAP = Black Student Achievement Plan; SENI = Student Equity Needs Index (SENI) High and Highest Needs ranked schools. Below/Above Avg = School DFS for all students was above/below the District in 2022, the baseline year.

Source: L.A. Unified Enterprise Reporting System SBAC ELA and Math DFS Data, 2022-2024; LAUSD Open Data Catalog (Student Equity Needs Index (SENI) Rankings, 2022-2024; District provided lists of BSAP Schools and Community Schools, also available here: Group 1 BSAP Directory (<https://www.lausd.org/Page/18114>); Community Schools Initiative Cohorts (<https://www.lausd.org/Page/20562>)

School Performance by Goal

As illustrated in Figure 2, the District's strongest performance is in Math Grades 3–5, with half the schools showing at least 25% improvement (color-coded blue) and nearly 80% showing some progress (color-coded gray and blue)—375 schools in total. A few schools (5, or 1%) have already met their elementary numeracy goals.

Meanwhile, 41 schools (8%) have already met their literacy goal. Despite this achievement, school-level progress in literacy is mixed:

- 183 schools (37%) have seen almost no growth or regressed in grade 3 ELA DFS since 2022 (color-coded orange), and
- 37 schools (7%) showed a substantial drop of 30+ points in grade 3 ELA DFS (i.e., declined more than the minimum growth goal) (color-coded red)

Moreover, a larger share of schools remained stable or regressed in ELA DFS compared to math (as indicated by the larger orange and red color-coded segments for ELA than for either math goal).

Performance by School Attribute

As shown in Figure 2, a larger percentage of Priority schools, BSAP schools, SENI high-needs schools, and schools below the District's baseline average DFS have made at least 25% progress toward their goals in Grade 3 ELA and Grades 3–5 Math since 2022, compared to the District as a whole. However, this trend reverses when looking at progress toward goals in Grades 6–8 Math.

COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE

Comparing L.A. Unified's growth to other districts highlights the broad challenges all districts must overcome as they seek to improve achievement, like socioeconomic disparities and post-pandemic learning gaps. The comparison contextualizes the District's progress, demonstrating the effectiveness of current strategies relative to what other districts are doing.

For all three goals, the District's *growth* surpasses the state overall and most comparison districts—even districts with students performing at higher achievement levels. Further, L.A. Unified's progress with English learners in both literacy and numeracy tops the state and all comparison districts—and by large margins.

For the comparative analysis summarized in this section, the IAU selected ten districts, composed of two sets of five districts each. The first set was the five urban districts with comparable demographics that District staff members used in developing the numerical targets for the goals (Fresno Unified, Oakland Unified, San Bernardino City Unified, Santa Ana Unified, and Stockton Unified). As in 2019 and through today, the District's DFS in Grade 3 ELA, Grades 3–5 Math and Grades 6–8 Math was closer to standard compared to these other districts for all student groups,⁶ indicating higher achievement levels, though some of these comparison districts exhibited greater annual growth in DFS prior to 2022.

The second set included five of the state’s ten largest districts (Long Beach Unified, San Diego Unified, San Francisco Unified, Corona-Norco Unified, Elk Grove Unified), all of which have higher DFS scores than LAUSD and the state for all students and nearly all student groups.⁷

Elementary Literacy

Since 2022, L.A. Unified has shown greater progress in improving third grade literacy scores than the state and other comparison districts.

District DFS vs. California:

- In 2024, L.A. Unified’s average DFS score was just 2.8 points below the state’s level—24.9 versus the state’s 22.1 points below standard.
- By comparison, in 2019, the District’s average DFS lagged the state by ~12 points (and by ~10 points in 2022).

Table 1. GOAL 2 LITERACY - Grade 3 DFS ELA Comparative Progress: LAUSD vs. Ten Comparison Districts

	LAUSD Progress Ranking	
	2024-2022 △in DFS	2024-2019 △in DFS
Overall	3	1
Low income	3	1
Latino/a	3	2
Black	2	2
Students with disabilities	3	2*
English learners	1	1*

* District(s) had higher scores post-COVID in 2022 than in 2019.

Notes: DFS for foster youth unavailable for 2019, and few districts had data for foster youth (given small population), so these data are excluded from this table. Data reflects all tested students per student group in the district. Data also includes affiliated charters but not independent charters.

Source: CAASPP Researcher File for Smarter Balanced Assessments. Rounding may result in slight discrepancies in results across platforms. <https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/>

District Progress vs. California:

- L.A. Unified’s growth since 2022 is more than four times the state’s—8 versus 1.3 points.

District Progress vs. Comparison Districts:

- L.A. Unified ranked first or second in closing the gap with or exceeding its own 2019 DFS for all student groups (Table 1).
- LAUSD ranked in the top three for growth (two-year change) for all student groups, including exhibiting the greatest growth for English learners (ranked first).

Elementary Numeracy

As with third-grade literacy, L.A. Unified’s growth in elementary math DFS scores is noteworthy compared to the state. For all student groups, the District’s growth in grades 3-5 Math DFS since 2022 exceeded the state’s, often by a factor of two or more. Moreover, the District outpaced most comparison districts in both overall growth and the recovery of gains lost during the pandemic.

District DFS vs. California:

- L.A. Unified’s average grade 3-5 Math scores in 2024 were 30.5 points below standard, about 4 points behind the state.
- This gap has narrowed since 2022 and further since 2019 (from ~11 points in 2022 and ~14 points in 2019).

District Progress vs. California:

- L.A. Unified’s growth in grades 3-5 Math DFS scores exceeded the state’s growth since 2022—14.1 points versus 6.5 points.

District Progress vs. Comparison Districts:

- The District exhibited the greatest total positive change in DFS scores since 2022 and ranked first or second among

comparison districts for nearly all targeted student groups in terms of two-year growth (Table 2).

- The District also ranked first among comparison districts with respect to closing the gap with or exceeding 2019 DFS scores for most student groups.

Secondary Numeracy

While progress in grades 6-8 math lags grades 3-5 math and grade 3 ELA, L.A. Unified has shown notable improvement in this area as well compared to the state,

Table 2. GOAL 3 NUMERACY - Grades 3-5 and 6-8 Math Comparative Progress: LAUSD vs. Comparison Districts

	LAUSD Progress Ranking	
	△ in DFS (2024-2022)	△ in DFS (2024-2019)
Grades 3-5		
Overall	1	1
Low income	2	1
Latino/a	1	1
Black	2	1
Students with disabilities	4	2*
English learners	1	1
Grades 6-8		
Overall	3	1
Low income	4	2
Latino/a	2	2
Black	4	2*
Students with disabilities	4	3*
English learners	1	1

* District(s) had higher scores post-COVID in 2022 than in 2019.

Notes: DFS for foster youth unavailable for 2019, and few districts had data for foster youth (given small population), so these data are excluded from this table. Data reflects all tested students per student group in the district. Data also includes affiliated charters but not independent charters.

Source: CAASPP Researcher File for Smarter Balanced Assessments. Rounding may result in slight discrepancies in results across platforms. <https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/>

particularly in recovering gains lost due to the pandemic.

District DFS vs. California:

- L.A. Unified's grade 6-8 math DFS scores for all students in 2024 were 72 points below standard, 16 points below the state average. This gap has narrowed from about 21 points in 2022.

District Progress vs. California:

- Since 2022, L.A. Unified's progress was twice as large as the state's growth in DFS, on average—9.1 versus 4.2 points.

District Progress vs. Comparison Districts:

- The District ranked in the top four among comparison districts for overall growth since 2022 for most targeted student groups and ranked first for English learners (Table 2).
- The District also came closer to exceeding pre-pandemic scores than the state and all comparison districts for all students and English learners and ranked in the top three for all other student groups.

Goal Adaptation Strategies

Given accelerated progress is needed to meet ambitious 2026 targets, Board members may wish to understand potential options for adjusting the goals. Table 3 outlines four options—maintaining goals, adjusting District targets, extending timelines and differentiated goals. Further, it highlights the pros and cons of each with respect to principles of change management (e.g., motivational impact on educators).

Even though a differentiated goal strategy is more complex, the Board may be interested in requesting a modification to the District's

school-level goal-setting approach since some schools already exceeded their targets.

A possible model to request or acknowledge publicly could be as follows:

For schools that have already hit their targets:

- Set new “stretch” goals that challenge them to push even further
- Offer additional incentives or recognition for continued improvement

For schools making steady progress:

- Maintain their current goals, with minor adjustments if needed
- Provide targeted support to help them accelerate their progress

For underperforming schools:

- Revise goals to be more attainable while still ambitious
- Continue to implement intensive support and intervention strategies, possibly with specifications for priority learners

Table 3. Summary of Goal Adjustment Strategies

	Description	Pros	Cons
Goal Maintenance	Keep the existing goals in place Districtwide and continue working towards them.	Maintains consistency and long-term vision Demonstrates commitment to ambitious targets Allows for continued progress towards original objectives	May lead to demotivation if goals seem increasingly unattainable Lack of incentives for schools if targets are already hit Might not reflect current circumstances or progress
Goal Adjustment	Modify the Districtwide goals to be more realistic based on current progress and circumstances.	Aligns goals with actual progress and capabilities Boosts motivation by setting achievable goals Represents growth more accurately	May be perceived as lowering standards or expectations Could potentially slow overall progress Might require additional explanation to stakeholders
Timeline Extension	Keep the original goals but allow more time for achieving them.	Maintains ambitious targets while acknowledging the need for more time Allows progress without changing ultimate objectives Provides flexibility for unforeseen challenges	Could reduce urgency or lead to complacency Might not address underlying issues preventing success
Differentiated Goals	Tailor school-level goals based on the varying levels of advancement	Accommodates varying levels of progress and capabilities Enhances engagement and motivation for all participants Promotes equity and inclusivity in goal	Can be complex to implement and manage Could potentially create perceptions of unfairness if not communicated properly

INSIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Though LAUSD's ambitious 2026 goals may not be fully realized at the current rate of progress, the District's achievements are noteworthy. The school-level analysis and comparative data suggests that LAUSD's strategies may be effective at increasing achievement, even if ultimate targets are not met. Key insights from the IAU's analysis are:

Areas of Strength: LAUSD's greatest strength related to these goals is in grades 3-5 math, followed closely by 3rd grade literacy. Of the three areas, the District is weakest in grades 6-8 math.

English Learner Progress: LAUSD has made substantial strides with English learners, ranking first among comparison districts in growth for this crucial demographic across multiple metrics. They have also made substantial progress towards their 2026 literacy and 3-5 numeracy goals and may achieve them.

Black Student Progress: Black students made a giant leap in performance in 3rd grade literacy in 2024. If that level of improvement is sustained, they will achieve their 2026 target.

School Success Stories: While district-wide goals remain ambitious, 41 schools have already surpassed their literacy targets, and 17 have exceeded their math targets (54 in total surpassed at least one). Examining these success stories could offer valuable insights into replication across the district.

Growth in District Programs/Investments: The District's investments in priority schools, BSAP and SENI high-needs schools are associated with more growth compared to the District overall in elementary grades.

Moving forward, the Board may consider how to leverage successes, address remaining challenges, and potentially recalibrate goals to maintain motivation and drive continued improvement across all schools and student groups. Recommendations include:

1. Advocate for differentiated goal setting at school level:
 - Maintain current ambitious 2026 goals as aspirational targets.
 - Set new "stretch" goals for schools that have exceeded targets.
 - Keep current goals for schools making steady progress.
 - Revise goals for underperforming schools.
2. Advocate to replicate successful practices
 - Identify schools with positive outcomes (e.g. on track to meeting targets)
 - Investigate programs, practices, or policies that differentiate these schools from lower-performing schools
 - Scale successful practices to other schools where applicable
3. Advocate to increase support for schools that need it
 - Investigate schools with negative outcomes (e.g., scores moving further away from standard)
 - Diagnose areas of greatest need
 - Provide additional, targeted support
4. Continue to monitor progress in 2025 results
 - Watch for English learners and Black students to repeat successes and possibly achieve targets
 - Watch for numeracy growth rates to accelerate
 - Watch for more schools to meet both goals

APPENDIX

Additional data is provided for each of the following sections of the report.

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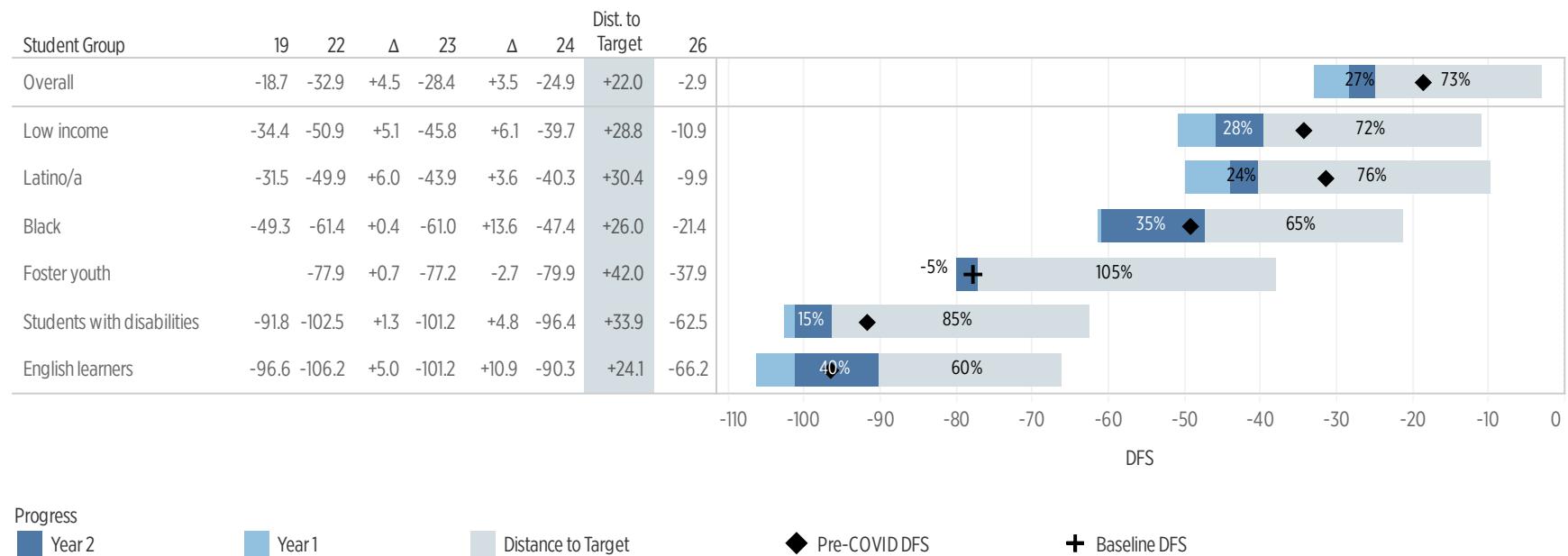
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A-I. Progress Districtwide

Figure A1. Goal 2 Literacy: Smarter Balanced Assessment (Literacy)–Grade 3 Distance from Standard (DFS) Progress and Distance from Goal by Student Group

Goal 2 Literacy: Smarter Balanced Assessment (Literacy) - Grade 3 Distance from Standard (DFS) 2019-2024, Change in DFS 2022-2024, and 2026 Targets

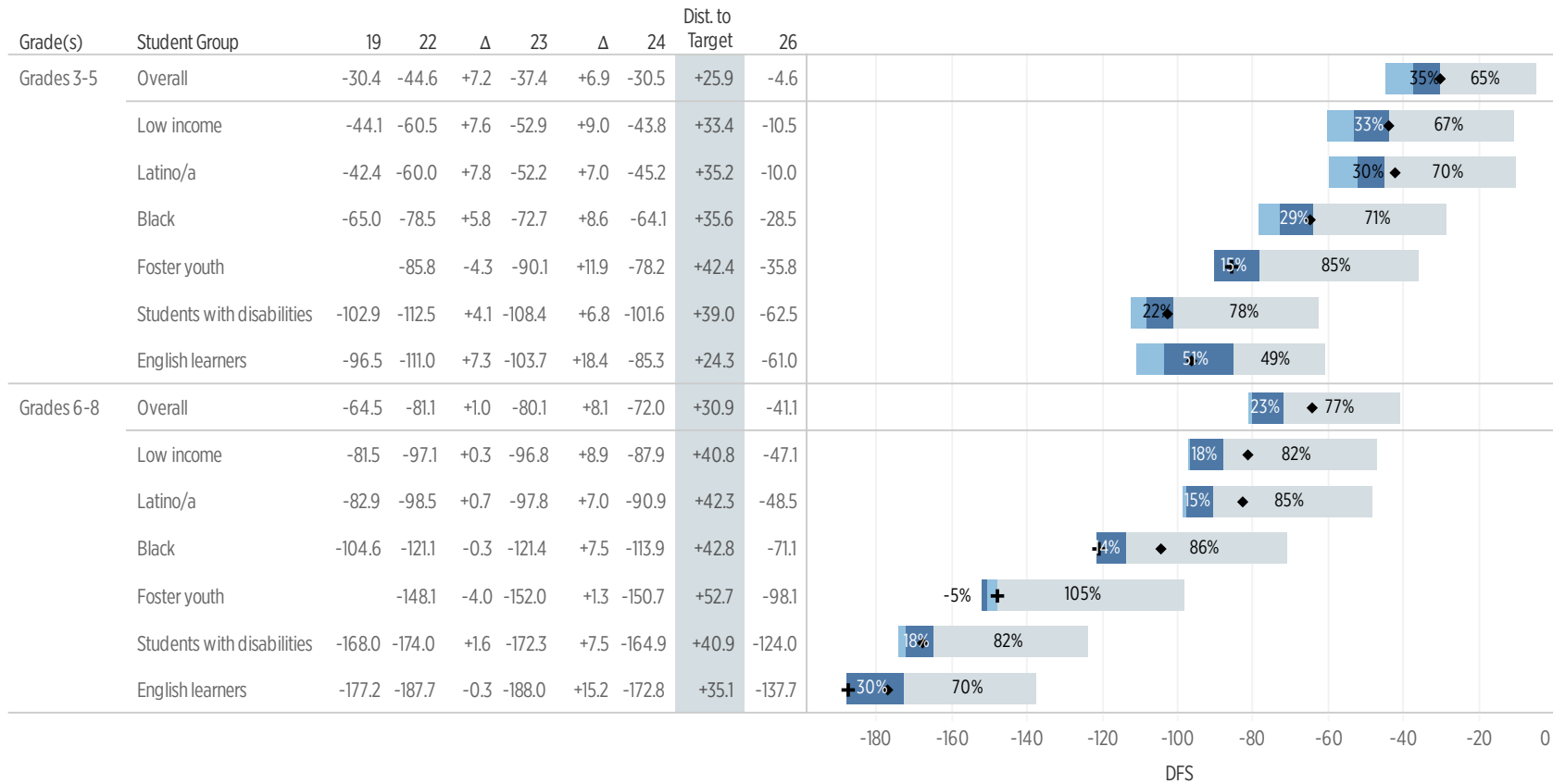


Notes: Baseline DFS only shown for student groups who exhibited decline in scores in either year. DFS for foster youth unavailable for 2019. Data reflects all tested students per student group in the district. Data also includes affiliated charters (unlike the California School Dashboard) but not independent charters.

Source: CAASPP Researcher File for Smarter Balanced Assessments. Rounding may result in slight discrepancies in results across platforms. <https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/>

Figure A2. Goal 3 Numeracy: Smarter Balanced Assessment (Mathematics)–Grades 3-56-8 DFS Progress and Distance from Goal by Grade Span and Student Group

Goal 3 Numeracy: Smarter Balanced Assessment (Math) - Grades 3-5, 6-8 DFS 2019-2024, Change in DFS 2022-2024, and 2026 Targets



Progress

Year 2

Year 1

Distance to Target

◆ Pre-COVID DFS

+ Baseline DFS

Notes: Baseline DFS only shown for student groups who exhibited decline in scores in either year. DFS for foster youth unavailable for 2019. Data reflects all tested students per student group in the district. Data also includes affiliated charters (unlike the California School Dashboard) but not independent charters.

Source: CAASPP Researcher File for Smarter Balanced Assessments. Rounding may result in slight discrepancies in results across platforms. <https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/>

A-II. School Performance

Characteristics of schools by performance band for all students are shown below for each goal. Access a link to all tables (e.g., tables by Board District, Region, BSAP, etc.) here: [School Performance by School Trait \(Figure 2\)](#).

Table A1. Characteristics of Schools's DFS and Growth by Grade 3 ELA School Progress Band for all Students

Progress Category	Smarter Balance Grade 3				
	Avg. Change (2024-2022)	Avg. Goal (2022-2026)	% Schools	# Schools	Avg. DFS (2024)
Decline More than 100%	-46.6	30	7%	37	-23.1
Decline Between 5 and 100%	-14.0	34	30%	149	-25.9
Relatively Stable (Between -5% and 5%)	-0.4	41	7%	34	-40.3
Growth Between 5 and 25%	5.8	44	12%	60	-43.7
Growth Between 25 and 50%	16.8	46	16%	81	-40.9
Growth Between 50 and 75%	30.4	48	11%	56	-31.4
Growth Between 75 and 100%	39.6	45	8%	39	-12.8
Goal Met (Growth More than 100%)	49.9	38	8%	41	16.9

Source: L.A. Unified Enterprise Reporting System SBAC ELA and Math DFS Data, 2022-2024

Table A2. Characteristics of Schools's DFS and Growth by Grades 3-5 Math School Progress Band for all Students

Progress Category	Grade(s) Grades 3-5				
	Avg. Change (2024-2022)	Avg. Goal (2022-2026)	% Schools	# Schools	Avg. DFS (2024)
Decline More than 100%	-42.0	40	0%	1	-16.0
Decline Between 5 and 100%	-10.5	44	15%	74	-30.6
Relatively Stable (Between -5% and 5%)	-0.3	44	10%	51	-36.8
Growth Between 5 and 25%	7.7	50	25%	126	-41.3
Growth Between 25 and 50%	18.7	51	29%	145	-32.9
Growth Between 50 and 75%	31.4	52	16%	80	-27.5
Growth Between 75 and 100%	43.0	51	4%	19	-20.8
Goal Met (Growth More than 100%)	52.9	47	1%	5	14.5

Source: L.A. Unified Enterprise Reporting System SBAC ELA and Math DFS Data, 2022-2024

Table A3. Characteristics of Schools's DFS and Growth by Grades 6-8 Math School Progress Band for all Students

Progress Category	Grades 6-8				
	Avg. Change (2024-2022)	Avg. Goal (2022-2026)	% Schools	# Schools	Avg. DFS (2024)
Decline More than 100%	-57.0	43	4%	8	-109.7
Decline Between 5 and 100%	-16.6	51	22%	47	-104.3
Relatively Stable (Between -5% and 5%)	-0.5	61	13%	27	-124.4
Growth Between 5 and 25%	8.6	56	23%	50	-96.5
Growth Between 25 and 50%	17.3	49	19%	41	-61.2
Growth Between 50 and 75%	28.2	47	9%	20	-27.4
Growth Between 75 and 100%	44.5	52	4%	8	-55.0
Goal Met (Growth More than 100%)	73.1	54	6%	12	-21.4

Source: L.A. Unified Enterprise Reporting System SBAC ELA and Math DFS Data, 2022-2024

A-III. Comparative Performance

Table A4. Grade 3 DFS ELA Comparative Progress: LAUSD vs. California and LAUSD vs. Comparison Districts

Comparison Metric		Overall	Low income	Latino/a	Black	Foster*	SWDs	ELs
LAUSD VS. DISTRICTS	Ranking among Comparison Districts							
	Two-Year Δ in DFS (since 2022)	3	3	3	2	*	3	1
	LAUSD difference from highest (▼)/next highest (▲)	▼ -3.9	▼ -4.1	▼ -2.7	▼ -1.2	*	▼ -6.5	▲ 4.6
	Avg Annual Δ in DFS (since 2022)	3	3	3	2	*	3	1
	LAUSD difference from highest (▼)/next highest (▲)	▼ -1.9	▼ -2.0	▼ -1.9	▼ -2.0	*	▼ -3.3	▲ 2.2
	Difference from Pre-Pandemic DFS (2019)	1	1	2	2	*	2**	1**
LAUSD VS. CALIFORNIA	Distance from Standard (DFS)							
	DFS 2024	LAUSD	-24.9	-39.7	-40.3	-47.4	-79.9	-90.3
		California	-22.1	-46.4	-47.0	-59.8	-80.2	-87.2
		Difference	▼ -2.8	▲ 6.7	▲ 6.7	▲ 12.4	▲ 0.3	▼ -3.1
	Difference from DFS 2019	LAUSD	-6.2	-5.3	-8.8	1.9	*	6.3
		California	-15.3	-14.0	-19.0	-14.2	*	-18.0
		Difference	▲ 9.1	▲ 8.7	▲ 10.2	▲ 16.1	*	▲ 24.3
	Change (Δ) in Distance from Standard (DFS)							
	Δ in DFS since 2022	LAUSD	8.0	11.2	9.6	14	-2.0	15.9
		California	1.3	7.1	3.4	3.4	-1.4	-4.1
		Difference	▲ 6.7	▲ 4.1	▲ 6.2	▲ 10.6	▼ -5.5	▲ 20
	Avg Ann. Δ since 2022	LAUSD	4.0	5.6	4.8	7.0	-1.0	7.9
		California	0.6	3.5	1.7	1.7	-0.7	-2.0
		Difference	▲ 3.4	▲ 2.1	▲ 3.1	▲ 5.3	▼ -2.8	▲ 9.9

*Not enough data; ** District(s) had post-COVID scores in 2022 higher than in 2019. SWD = students with disabilities. EL = English learner.

Notes: Two sets of districts were selected for comparison purposes. First, the IAU used the districts that L.A. Unified staff analysts used when they set the measurable objectives for the District goals in 2021: Fresno Unified, San Bernadino City Unified, Oakland Unified, Santa Ana Unified, and Stockton Unified. The second set of districts are the numerically largest urban districts in California: Corona-Norco Unified, Elk Grove Unified, Long Beach Unified, San Diego Unified, and San Francisco Unified. DFS for foster youth unavailable for 2019. Data reflects all tested students per student group in the district. Data also includes affiliated charters but not independent charters.

Source: CAASPP Researcher File for Smarter Balanced Assessments. Rounding may result in slight discrepancies in results across platforms. <https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/>

Table A5. Grades 3-5 Math Comparative Progress: LAUSD vs. California and LAUSD vs. Comparison Districts

Comparison Metric			Overall	Low income	Latino/a	Black	Foster*	SWDs	ELs
LAUSD VS. DISTRICTS	Ranking among Comparison Districts								
	Two-Year Δ in DFS (since 2022)		1	2	1	2	*	4	1
	LAUSD difference from highest (▼)/next highest (▲)		▲ 1.0	▼ -1.0	▲ 0.9	▼ -0.1	*	▼ -1.8	▲ 14.9
	Avg Annual Δ in DFS (since 2022)		1	2	1	2	*	4	1
	LAUSD difference from highest (▼)/next highest (▲)		▲ 0.5	▼ -0.5	▲ 0.5	▼ -0.1	*	▼ -0.9	▲ 7.5
	Difference from Pre-Pandemic DFS (2019)		1	1	1	1	*	2**	1
	LAUSD difference from highest (▼)/next highest (▲)		▲ 4.9	▲ 4.2	▲ 3.2	▲ 10.3	*	▼ -5.6	▲ 12.4
LAUSD VS. CALIFORNIA	Distance from Standard (DFS)								
	DFS 2024	LAUSD	-30.5	-43.8	-45.2	-64.1	-78.2	-101.6	-85.3
		California	-27.3	-51.9	-53.5	-75.6	-93.1	-95.1	-86.3
		Difference	▼ -3.2	▲ 8.1	▲ 8.3	▲ 11.5	▲ 14.9	▼ -6.5	▲ 1.0
	Difference from DFS 2019	LAUSD	-0.1	0.3	-2.8	0.9	*	1.3	11.2
		California	-11.3	-1.0	-14.9	-14.4	*	-7	-14.3
		Difference	▲ 11.2	▲ 1.3	▲ 12.1	▲ 15.3	*	▲ 8.3	▲ 25.5
	Change (Δ) in Distance from Standard (DFS)								
	Δ in DFS since 2022	LAUSD	14.1	16.6	14.8	14.4	7.6	11	25.7
		California	6.5	11.5	7.7	6.8	2.7	3.4	2.7
		Difference	▲ 7.6	▲ 5.1	▲ 7.1	▲ 7.6	▲ 4.9	▲ 7.6	▲ 23.0
	Avg Ann. Δ since 2022	LAUSD	7.1	8.3	7.4	7.2	3.8	5.5	12.8
California		3.2	5.8	3.8	3.4	1.4	1.7	1.3	
Difference		▲ 3.9	▲ 2.5	▲ 3.6	▲ 3.8	▲ 2.4	▲ 3.8	▲ 11.5	

*Not enough data; ** District(s) had post-COVID scores in 2022 higher than in 2019. SWD = students with disabilities. EL = English learner.

Notes: Two sets of districts were selected for comparison purposes. First, the IAU used the districts that L.A. Unified staff analysts used when they set the measurable objectives for the District goals in 2021: Fresno Unified, San Bernadino City Unified, Oakland Unified, Santa Ana Unified, and Stockton Unified. The second set of districts are the numerically largest urban districts in California: Corona-Norco Unified, Elk Grove Unified, Long Beach Unified, San Diego Unified, and San Francisco Unified. DFS for foster youth unavailable for 2019. Data reflects all tested students per student group in the district. Data also includes affiliated charters but not independent charters.

Source: CAASPP Researcher File for Smarter Balanced Assessments. Rounding may result in slight discrepancies in results across platforms. <https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/>

Table A6. Grades 6-8 Math Comparative Progress: LAUSD vs. California and LAUSD vs. Comparison Districts

Comparison Metric		Overall	Low income	Latino/a	Black	Foster*	SWDs	ELs
LAUSD VS. DISTRICTS	Ranking among Comparison Districts							
	Two-Year Δ in DFS (since 2022)	3	4	2	4	*	4	1
	LAUSD difference from highest (▼)/next highest (▲)	▼ -1.4	▼ -2.0	▼ -2.0	▼ -8.0	*	▼ -11.2	▲ +9.4
	Avg Annual Δ in DFS (since 2022)	3	4	2	4	*	4	1
	LAUSD difference from highest (▼)/next highest (▲)	▼ -0.8	▼ -1.0	▼ -1.1	▼ -4.0	*	▼ -5.5	▲ +4.7
	Difference from Pre-Pandemic DFS (2019)	1	2	2	2**	*	3**	1
LAUSD VS. CALIFORNIA	Distance from Standard (DFS)							
	DFS 2024	LAUSD	-72.0	-87.9	-90.9	-113.9	-150.7	-172.8
		California	-56.0	-88.2	-90.9	-116.1	-145.3	-157.3
		Difference	▼ -16.0	▲ 0.3	0.0	▲ 2.2	▼ -5.4	▼ -15.5
	Difference from DFS 2019	LAUSD	-7.5	-6.4	-8.0	-9.3	*	4.4
		California	-14.4	-11.1	-16.1	-13.9	*	-14.6
		Difference	▲ 6.9	▲ 4.7	▲ 8.1	▲ 4.6	*	▲ 19.0
	Change (Δ) in Distance from Standard (DFS)							
	Δ in DFS since 2022	LAUSD	-56.0	-88.2	-90.9	-116.1	-145.3	-157.3
		California	▼ -16.0	▲ 0.3	0.0	▲ 2.2	▼ -5.4	▼ -15.5
		Difference	-7.5	-6.4	-8.0	-9.3	*	4.4
	Avg Ann. Δ since 2022	LAUSD	-14.4	-11.1	-16.1	-13.9	*	-14.6
		California	▲ 6.9	▲ 4.7	▲ 8.1	▲ 4.6	▲ 6.7	▲ 19.0
		Difference	-72.0	-87.9	-90.9	-113.9	-150.7	-172.8

*Not enough data; ** District(s) had post-COVID scores in 2022 higher than in 2019. SWD = students with disabilities. EL = English learner.

Notes: Two sets of districts were selected for comparison purposes. First, the IAU used the districts that L.A. Unified staff analysts used when they set the measurable objectives for the District goals in 2021: Fresno Unified, San Bernadino City Unified, Oakland Unified, Santa Ana Unified, and Stockton Unified. The second set of districts are the numerically largest urban districts in California: Corona-Norco Unified, Elk Grove Unified, Long Beach Unified, San Diego Unified, and San Francisco Unified. DFS for foster youth unavailable for 2019. Data reflects all tested students per student group in the district. Data also includes affiliated charters but not independent charters.

Source: CAASPP Researcher File for Smarter Balanced Assessments. Rounding may result in slight discrepancies in results across platforms. <https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/>

NOTES

¹ A.J. Crabill, Director of Governance, and Michael Casserly, Strategic Advisor at the Council of Great City Schools served as consultants to the Board of Education for the goal-setting process. See <https://www.cgcs.org/> for more information.

² The Board development working sessions began on March 2, 2021, again on March 16, again on April 20, May 18, then June 22 for approval. Alberto Carvalho's contract was approved by the LAUSD board on December 14, 2021. Mr. Carvalho officially started on Monday, February 14, 2022 (however, the contract dates were March 1, 2022, to February 28, 2026. The 100-day report was completed on June 14, 2022. The strategic plan was approved by the Board June 21, 2022. June 21, 2022, Strategic Plan Presentation: https://drive.google.com/file/d/15Ou7rZoBO83t5K9GTlkIHbohK-Q1xWzc/view?usp=drive_link; June 21, 2022 Regular Board Materials:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/144_LO4A3JTrgsbqd56lmj6d67DuRqYtn/view?usp=drive_link

³ Many California school districts use percent proficient as the measure of student achievement when setting strategic goals, but LAUSD chose to use "distance from standard (DFS)," which has several advantages over proficiency level. First, it is more precise: it shows how far above or below standard (i.e. proficiency) students are performing. For LAUSD, DFS for most groups is generally negative, but once it moves into positive territory, it will mean that District students, on average, meet standards. Second, using DFS makes it straightforward to track student growth over time and to numerically identify performance gaps between different groups. Third, DFS allows for specific scale score targets for the District overall, schools, and student subgroups. Finally, it aligns with state accountability. On the other hand, focusing on average DFS obscures share of students who have met standards.

⁴ Only when the DFS improves 15 points is it deemed to have "significantly increased" and is color-coded blue. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/documents/dbguideintro24.docx>

⁵ Literacy DFS improved 2 points from SY 2016 to 2017, 11 points from SY 2017 to 2018, and 2.3 points from SY 2018 to 2019, for an average progress rate of 5.1. Elementary mathematics improved 1.4 points from SY 2016 to 2017, 5.2 points from SY 2017 to 2018, and 5.2 points from SY 2018 to 2019, for an average of 3.9. And 6-8 mathematics moved -0.2 points from SY 2016 to 2017, 4.1 points from SY 2017 to 2018, and 4.8 points from SY 2018 to 2019, for an average of 2.9. Though the three-year averages are well below the District's current aspiration for improvement, a few years of higher-than-average growth showed higher rates of improvement were possible.

⁶ LAUSD's DFS for all student groups exceeded these districts (Fresno Unified, Oakland Unified, San Bernardino City Unified, Santa Ana Unified, and Stockton Unified) for all student groups prior to the pandemic and since 2022. The only exception is in grade 3 ELA, where the DFS for English Learners slightly exceeded the DFS for LAUSD's English Learners in 2024. Source: CAASPP Researcher File for Smarter Balanced Assessments. Rounding may result in slight discrepancies in results across platforms. <https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/>. See also: [Board of Education Goals Presentation, June 22, 2021](#)

⁷ LAUSD's DFS for all students below these districts (Long Beach Unified, San Diego Unified, San Francisco Unified, Corona-Norco Unified, Elk Grove Unified) for all relevant metrics (grade 3 ELA DFS, grades 3-5 Math DFS, and grades 6-8 Math DFS) in the years prior to the pandemic and since 2022. However, for some student groups, LAUSD's DFS exceeded a few of these districts: Black students' DFS in LAUSD exceeds San Francisco Unified in ELA and math and San Diego Unified in math; Latino/a students' DFS in LAUSD exceeds San Francisco Unified in ELA and math and San Diego Unified in grades 3-5 math; English learners' DFS in LAUSD exceeds San Diego Unified in math. Source: CAASPP Researcher File for Smarter Balanced Assessments. Rounding may result in slight discrepancies in results across platforms. <https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/>.