



September 23, 2024

For Immediate Release

Contact: Christine Elegante, K-3 Literacy Specialist
801-538-7782 · christine.elegante@schools.utah.gov

Utah Kindergarteners Show Significant Reading Gains

SALT LAKE CITY – The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) is pleased to announce that Utah’s kindergarten students are demonstrating remarkable improvements in reading proficiency, according to the latest Acadience Reading data. The Acadience Reading assessment measures basic early literacy skills and is a valuable tool for tracking student progress and identifying areas for improvement.

Currently, 93 schools, representing 22 districts and three charter schools, have 70 percent or more kindergarteners at the “above benchmark” level. Scoring “above benchmark” means a student has a 90-99 percent chance of meeting subsequent literacy benchmarks and may benefit from instruction on more advanced skills. “At benchmark” means that a student has a 70-85 percent chance of achieving future literacy goals and is likely to make adequate progress with effective core instruction.

“These achievements demonstrate the effectiveness of Utah’s educational strategies in providing our youngest students with a strong foundation in literacy. By equipping students with essential reading skills early on, Utah is supporting long-term academic success and empowering students to reach their full potential,” said State Superintendent of Public Instruction Sydnee Dickson, “as Utah continues to prioritize early literacy development, the state is positioned to continue its upward trajectory in reading proficiency and prepare students for academic challenges in the future.”

Key highlights from the data include:

- An 11 percent increase in kindergarten students achieving at or above benchmark reading levels since the end of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- A 16 percent increase in kindergarten students achieving above benchmark reading levels, indicating reading on grade level (ROGL), since the end of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- A 70 percent or higher number of kindergarten students making typical or better growth on Acadience Reading from the beginning of the school year to the end of year, representing 62 LEAs across the state.

This measurable progress is likely linked to the expansion of full-day kindergarten programs statewide and initiatives focused on enhancing reading instruction.

www.schools.utah.gov