

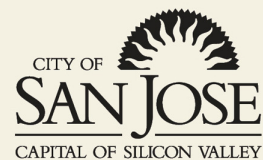
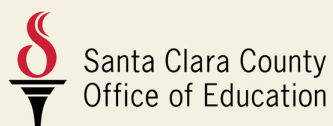
2012 All-America City Grade Level Reading Awards



Community Solutions Action Plan Executive Summary

For the City of San Jose

SJ  2020



**The All America City Award and Campaign for Grade Level Reading
Community Solutions Action Plan for the City of San José
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Campaign for Grade Level Reading

Reading proficiency by the third grade is one of most compelling predictors of school success and high school graduation. Research has established that if students are able to read proficiently by the third grade, they are able to make the transition from learning to read to reading to learn. Currently, two thirds of students in the US have not met that benchmark. Students who do not read by the end of the third grade and live in poverty are 6 times more likely to not graduate from high school.

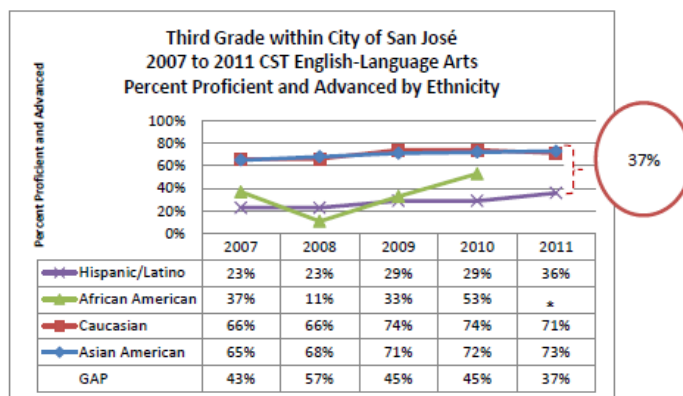
The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading focuses on three challenges to reading success that are amenable to community solutions:

- **The Readiness Gap:** Too many children from low-income families begin school already far behind.
- **The Attendance Gap (Chronic Absence):** Too many children from low-income families miss too many days of school.
- **The Summer Slide (Summer Learning Loss):** Too many children lose ground over the summer months.

In 2011, the National Civic League, in partnership with the Campaign for Grade Level Reading, a national alliance of community stakeholders, businesses, and funders, that seeks to increase the number of low-income children reading on grade level in the 3rd grade, announced Third Grade Level Reading as the theme for the 2012 All America City Award. The City of San José is one of over 120 cities across the nation to submit a detailed, comprehensive, and sustainable Community Solutions Action Plan in consideration of this year’s award addressing grade level reading.

.San José in Context

In San José, an estimated 40% of students are not proficient in their grade level skills. In the area of 3rd grade reading, a 37 percentage point gap exists between the highest and lowest performing subgroups. Despite steady and modest gains, latest standardized test results demonstrate that only 36% of Hispanic/Latino students are proficient in 3rd grade reading. Inadequate preparation for school, chronic absenteeism, and academic losses during the summer months only amplifies this inequality.



*data not available due to small sample size.

Source: California Department of Education, 2007-2011.

Arising from the disparity in academic achievement between lower-performing Hispanic/ Latino and African American students and their higher-performing Asian and White/non-Hispanic peers, the **San José 2020** (SJ2020) initiative seeks to eliminate the racial/ethnic achievement gap by 2020. Amongst the many SJ 2020 indicators for student success is 3rd grade English Language Arts (ELA). Given the 2010 baseline gap of 45 percentage points in 3rd grade ELA scores, an annual gap decrease of 4.5 percentage points a year has been established as a target.

In addition to our SJ 2020 indicators, we have also gathered additional data to serve as a baseline on school readiness, attendance, and summer learning. We plan on utilizing this data to identify goals and map progress as we work towards our goal of 3rd grade reading proficiency:

School Readiness: Following a recent survey asking teachers to rate student readiness levels in San José, only 59 % of kindergarteners were categorized as performing at or above teachers' expected proficiency levels. ¹

Attendance: While Santa Clara County had a truancy rate (defined as missing more than 30 minutes of instruction without an excuse three or more times during the school year) of 17 % in 2009, this rate was as high as 46 % in San José (Mt. Pleasant Elementary). ¹ In addition, a study examining attendance, school readiness, and third grade outcomes in Santa Clara and San Mateo County found that students who had no attendance risks scored 50 points higher on average on the 3rd grade ELA exams than students who were chronically absent (missing 10 % or more days of school) in their first two years of school. Only 17 % of students who were chronically absent in both Kindergarten and the 1st grade were scored proficient or advanced on 3rd grade ELA exams. ²

Summer Learning Loss: Although researchers have yet to gather summer learning loss data specific to students in San José, existing research has shown that students lose one to three months of academic growth over the summer. ³ These losses are more pronounced for low-income students. This data is salient to our work, as exactly 50% of students in San José are eligible for free or reduced price lunch (an indicator of socioeconomic status).

Strategies and Actions

In collaboration with the Santa Clara County Office of Education, local school districts, and community partners, including First 5 Santa Clara County, the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, Kids in Common, YMCA Silicon Valley, and city entities including the San José Public Library and Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services, the City of San José has developed a comprehensive, and cross-sector Community Solutions Action Plan that will improve 3rd grade reading and address the areas of increasing **school readiness, reducing chronic absence, and preventing summer learning** loss in our community. This plan was developed following a series of meetings with community partners, and was informed by an assessment of our community's assets, gaps in services, and barriers that may prevent access to these services.

Goals outlined in the plan include:

- Continuing to build upon the work outlined in the Early Learning Master Plan, and ensuring rigorous evaluation and measurements of quality and alignment across Pre-Kindergarten to 3rd grade and throughout the summer months
- Working in collaboration with local school districts to pilot the District Attendance Tracking Tool system to track, identify, and support students who are at risk of being chronically absent, and working with schools and community members to encourage a broader culture of school attendance
- Increasing access to quality early childhood and summer learning programs, particularly for low-income residents
- Engaging parents, families, and a broad network of community partners to provide students with support

¹ Source: Applied Survey Research, School Readiness Trends – City of San José, 2010

² Source: "Attendance in Early Elementary Grades: Associations with Student Characteristics, School Readiness, and Third Grade Outcomes", Applied Survey Research July, 2011

³ Source: National Summer Learning Association

Appendix – Focus Area Strategies

Chronic Absence	School Readiness	Summer Learning Loss
<p>School based system Develop and articulate a school based system to address chronic absence. This system will be informed by a survey filled out by schools and districts that will identify best practices and possibly identify a district to pilot the District Attendance Tracking Tool (DATT). A school based system would also promote a “culture of school attendance” by identifying and following up with individual students and encouraging teachers and families to reinforce regular attendance from students.</p>	<p>Parent Engagement/Education Provide workshops informing parents and families of the importance of school readiness and early childhood development and providing resources (multilingual) to address these issues.</p>	<p>Increase Opportunity/Access Increase the number of students participating in summer learning programs by expanding services (meal provision, physical activity, increased program spaces, etc.), increasing utilization of services (transportation for inclusion programs), and increasing opportunity and access to these programs (subsidizing fee based programs, marketing free programs, etc.).</p>
<p>Support system Engage the broader community, comprised of Community Based Organizations, Faith Based Organizations, parent groups, local service providers, and media partners to provide support, and if necessary, interventions that encourage regular attendance.</p>	<p>Professional Development Provide professional development through CARES and the Santa Clara County Integrated Institute for Professional Development for Early Childcare providers to promote school readiness.</p>	<p>Increase Quality Increase quality of summer learning programs by incorporating standards that measure the effectiveness of programs and offering professional development to summer learning program providers.</p>
<p>Community education campaign Develop and launch a community education campaign utilizing print and visual media, as well as social networking sites to disseminate messages that provide info on the importance of good attendance. These efforts will be supported through an assemblance of schools, community and faith based organizations, city departments and media departments.</p>	<p>Quality Ensure robust evaluation and measurements of quality in early childcare programs (using QRIS and Smartstart Quality Measures).</p>	<p>Parent Engagement/Education Provide workshops informing parents and families of the implications of summer learning loss and providing resources to address these issues.</p>
<p>Alternatives to elementary suspensions Work in collaboration with schools to provide alternatives to elementary suspensions.</p>	<p>Articulation and Alignment Facilitate systems-wide alignment from birth-3rd grade that includes meaningful assessments, cross communication, curriculum alignment, and has all children performing successfully in school. Curriculum will be aligned from infancy through grade 3 and language-rich for all children.</p>	<p>Articulation/Alignment with Schools Forge partnerships with schools, community based organizations, and government agencies (San José Public Library, Parks and Recreation) to align year long curriculum to summer learning curriculum.</p>
	<p>Increased Opportunity and Access Expand opportunity and access by increasing the number of affordable, quality early education spaces available for pre-school aged children.</p>	

School Readiness	
Year	Action Steps
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene Race to the Top Committee for Santa Clara County to begin planning work on quality rating improvement system for Santa Clara County (which is aligned to state efforts). • Determine areas of focus for local work on the quality rating and improvement system. • Complete articulation and alignment guide. • Pilot use of the articulation and alignment guide with 1-3 elementary schools.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete planning work for Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Fund. • If planning complete, identify potential pilots. Begin initial pilot work if possible. • Expand articulation and alignment guide implementation with 10 – 20 sites
7 Vision	All elementary schools in San José are “ready schools” with fully implemented articulation and alignment with local early childhood providers (subsidized and private) in place. All incoming kindergarten students have participated in a transitional program, either Transitional Kindergarten or a summer bridge program. All incoming kindergarten students have participated in “school readiness” assessment and their strengths and needs have been communicated to their new teachers and parents.

Chronic Absence Plan		
Year	School Based System Strategies	Community Support Strategies
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot DATT (District Attendance Tracking Tool) in Head Start (Pre-K) • Pilot DATT in 1-3 elementary schools, including focus on early identification and response • Identify effective practices for building regular school attendance culture, including recognition & incentives, and for building partnerships with community support organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify community organizations that engage and support families (resource mapping – to include districts/subgroups served) • Convene community organizations to highlight need and discuss solutions. Ensure chronic absenteeism is part of work plan for County School Linked Services. Recruit partners. • Identify effective practices for district-CBO collaboration (what they do, how they support it) • Identify effective community education campaign strategies, secure funding/partners for such an effort
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand Pre-K DATT pilot to State Preschool (district-run and Head Start partners) • Expand elementary DATT to 3 districts and 10 schools • Pilot effective practices (culture, incentives, support/intervention) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch community education campaign • Pilot focused family support/intervention efforts at participating DATT schools
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand pilots to additional districts/schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand family support interventions to additional schools
7	All schools in San José have implemented DATT and are implementing empirically	San José is a city with a school going culture with a community that understands

Vision	validated effective practices (culture, incentives, support/intervention) with fidelity and as necessary for their school. Regular professional development for staff and leadership includes techniques to address chronic absence and its causes. Chronic absence is significantly reduced and approaching a minimal “floor” level.	the importance of attendance following an extensive community education campaign. All districts have a partnership with a community-based organization to implement effective attendance support practices. Outside factors that impact chronic absence (mental and physical health, transportation, district transitions) have been identified and are being addressed by districts, school-linked service providers and the community.
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Summer Learning Loss Plan		
Year	<i>Increase Opportunity/Access/Quality Strategies</i>	<i>Parent Engagement/Education Strategies</i>
1	<p>Focus on identify existing resources and developing strategies to expand them by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping Summer Learning/Rec Programs - Identify/map existing summer programs that would prevent/minimize summer learning loss (programs could include traditional/recreational programs and programs implemented for educational reasons [e.g. 21st Century Summer Programs]) • Increasing 21st Century Summer educational programs by engaging potential providers/partners and providing technical assistance and planning support from the Santa Clara County Office of Education for this grant funded program. (<i>help potential providers understand strategies, timelines, etc.</i>) • Promoting Summer meal programs sponsored by City of San José - Identify potential providers, provide technical assistance and broker strategic partnerships to combine food program with educational/recreational program • Convening funders –_The City of San José convene funders to promote support and expansion of summer learning programs. 	<p>Focus on increasing parent awareness about existing summer programs and resources by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making use of summer programs (free and fee-based, recreational, learning-focused, etc.) and organizations listed on resource map to engage schools, community & faith-based organizations in getting information out to parents. Consider “summer program fairs” – like “job fairs” or “health fairs”. Help parents know what to look for and how to evaluate programs.
2	<p>Improve the quality and impact of summer programs by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying “best practice” summer programs and activities that address learning/learning loss and prepare age appropriate guidance materials for summer program providers (library, recreational programs, church groups, etc.) – include schools in development/dissemination. (<i>focus on literacy</i>) • Providing training to summer program providers on best practices, strategies 	<p>Focus on supporting and strengthening parents’ ability to support summer learning by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify existing resources and best practices for supporting summer learning in the home and community • Work with media and community organizations to provide information to parents about what they can do at home, and with their children to enhance summer learning opportunities (for example, tricks, tips, sample schedules,

	<p>for infusing learning/reducing summer learning loss in summer programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying “best practice” for learning focused summer programs (i.e., 21st Century) – especially for literacy (<i>ASAP Connect</i>) • Providing training/support for summer learning program providers to increase utilization and improve delivery of best practices. • Developing Evaluation tools - Identify/develop easy to implement pre/post assessments on effect of summer programs. • Tracking participation – Working in conjunction with City of San José (Parks & Recreation, Library, and summer meal programs) and Afterschool Collaborative, develop a system for tracking enrollment/participation in summer programs. 	<p>etc). Work with schools, library, etc. on developing these support materials</p>
<p>7 Vision</p>	<p>High quality summer programs, provided by trained staff and aligned with district educational programs, are available for all families who wish to be involved. Academic and other data is being used to improve programs and provide proof of efficacy for families and funders. Barriers to access (fees, transportation, nutrition) are reduced through public, private and philanthropic support. Summer learning loss is significantly reduced, leading to improved student achievement, particularly among low income and minority families.</p>	<p>Families are sophisticated consumers of summer programs, understanding the importance of avoiding summer learning loss, knowledgeable about their children’s needs and which programs are available to meet them.</p>