

Literacy Matters

Fall 2017



Above: West Fresno Principal, Toshia Foth, reads to her elementary students during National Read Across America Day. To volunteer as a guest reader, contact your school site today!

Washington Unified Launches **READ 2 SUCCEED** Initiative With Help From Parents and Community

This Fall, Washington Unified formally launched its early literacy initiative titled Read 2 Succeed. The goal is bold, but simple: Every child will read on grade level by the third grade with the help of parents and the community. Washington Unified believes that helping every child meet this goal will drastically improve the lives of our students and our community.

Educational research has shown that whether or not a student can read on grade level by the third grade is a strong predictor of whether or not that child will graduate from high school, affecting the quality of life he or she will have in the future.

For Superintendent Joey Campbell, reading is a top priority. “Reading can’t be something taught in isolation each day. Reading must be embedded in everything we do. I want our

kids to see themselves as readers and to enjoy reading to learn.”

Read 2 Succeed began as a partnership with Footsteps2Brilliance™, an innovative early learning application designed to help improve reading skills. Using the Footsteps2Brilliance™ App, all families within Washington Union High School’s boundaries have access to books, learning activities, and games from any device. The application can be used in both English and Spanish, making it possible for more families to learn together, even before a child begins school.

Superintendent Campbell knows how important it is for everyone to get involved in helping students read, “We know that exposing children to reading before school begins is a crucial factor in student success. That is why

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Free Literacy App for All Residents Who Live in Washington Union High School Boundaries

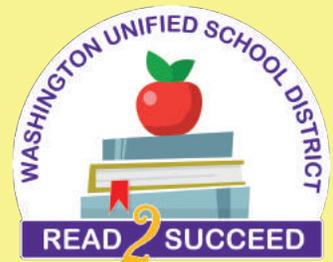
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Stay Connected With Your Child’s School Using WUSD’s Website and Social Media Options

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Washington Unified School District Proudly Serves:

- American Union Elementary School
- American Union Preschool
- Easton Community Day School
- Easton High School
- ELM High School
- Washington Unified Adult School
- Washington Unified Community Education Programs
- Washington Union High School
- West Fresno Elementary School
- West Fresno Middle School
- West Fresno Preschool



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we are counting on our parents and community members to come alongside us to invest in the lives of our students.”

There are many opportunities for parents and community members to get involved with Read 2 Succeed. Parents can begin as soon as a child enters the home!

Reading Tips for Families

Starting with Infants

Talk to your child. A child's understanding of language starts early, so it is important to talk to your baby.

Recite rhymes or sing songs with your child. This fun activity has been proven to help children gain skills needed to read later in life.

Engaging Toddlers

Keep reading time short and simple. Most toddlers won't get through an entire book, but you can still read a few pages each day.

Read to your child every day by making reading part of a daily routine.

Helping Beginning Readers

Have books available for your child at home. You can visit your local library to check out books for free.

Praise your child for their efforts. Even if they make a mistake, make sure your child knows that you are proud of them for trying.

Involve your child with tasks that include reading and writing. For example, ask your child to help you write a grocery list or take a walk together and read street signs.

For more ideas to help your child read, visit: <http://www.readingrocks.org/audience/parents>.

Washington Unified Chooses National Geographic's Reach Curriculum for K-5 Students



The Washington Unified School Board has approved National Geographic's Reach Curriculum to be used for English-language Arts instruction in grades Kindergarten through fifth grade.

The decision was made after a panel of teachers from each of the District's elementary schools piloted three common core aligned curricula during the Spring of 2017. The team consisted of teachers from every grade level and all teachers were invited to participate. The team chose Reach, because of its highly engaging lessons and interactive

materials designed to connect with students.

One of the reasons that Reach stood out among the other choices was that all lessons include scaffolds so that teachers can customize instruction to meet the needs of every student. English Learners through advanced readers will be challenged using the curriculum.

Reach also provides students with access to National Geographic's vast collection of informational materials, as well as providing them support in writing, listening, and speaking. Teachers will continue to receive training using the new curriculum.

Dr. Annie Sharp, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, is excited about the new curriculum. "Reach is an important part of Washington Unified's focus on literacy," stated Sharp. "Our students now have access to state of the art curriculum, providing them with exciting texts and activities designed to meet their educational goals."

Students See Success With Guided Reading

Washington Unified knows that teachers are the key to any high-quality reading initiative. That's why WUSD has partnered with Fresno County Superintendent of Schools expert, Lisa Clark, to train elementary teachers in the practice of implementing Guided Reading.

Guided Reading is an instructional strategy that uses individual and small group instruction to focus on the specific learning needs of each student. Emphasizing a laser-like focus on individual student progress, teachers work with each student to make sure that they meet their reading goals. Students are assessed regularly to identify areas where they might struggle. Teachers

then guide students with similar needs through a text, focusing on the identified need. Teachers monitor fluency, decoding, and comprehension in an effort to build each students' skills.

While some teachers have been using the strategy for many years, it is hoped that an intentional district-wide focus will strengthen results. As teachers collaborate to share successes and failures, they are able to better improve the reading ability of the students that they serve.



WUSD Students Earn Impressive Gains in Academic Achievement



This article first appeared on our website at www.washingtonunified.org. Visit our website today for the latest news and information.

Washington Unified School District's staff and students worked hard last year to improve academic achievement. Recently released state test scores show that this work is paying off. The California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) measures student achievement in the areas of English-Language Arts and Mathematics for students in grades 3-8 and 11. WUSD is excited to announce that our students made exciting gains, improving 6.6 % in English Language Arts and 8.5% in Mathematics, overall.

Washington Union High School students saw impressive gains in English-Language Arts as the school has worked hard to focus on reading and writing in every subject. 59% of students who took the test scored at or above standard. Principal, John Sherron attributes his students' success, in part, to his staff's dedication to teaching writing in every subject.

West Fresno Elementary School's scores also improved. WFES is particularly proud of their 11% gain in English Language Arts and Mathematics. "The focused efforts of our teachers directly led to these gains," stated Principal, Toshia Foth. "Our staff has worked hard to individualize reading instruction to the needs of each student in order to ensure that every student achieves at high levels."

American Union Elementary School's Mathematics scores rose significantly

with overall scores increasing by 10%. A district-wide focus on Dr. Jo Boaler's "Mathematical Mindset," has helped AU's students learn to see math as a subject that they can tackle and be successful in. Teachers and students have worked together to develop a growth mindset when it comes to math, helping them to see mistakes as opportunities for further learning.

Dr. Annie Sharp, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, is

proud that each WUSD site saw improvement in ELA and Mathematics. "Each school's commitment to the district's academic foci has contributed to the culture of achievement that we are seeing," stated Dr. Sharp.

Washington Unified's dedication to early literacy, effective and strategic lesson design, and to preparing all students for college and career have proven effective as student achievement continues to increase.

FREE LITERACY APP FOR RESIDENTS!

American Union
Orange Center
Pacific Union

Washington Colony
West Fresno
West Park



Big Brains for Little People™



Washington Unified School District is providing Footsteps2Brilliance®, a comprehensive literacy app, to the parents of all toddler to 3rd grade children who reside in the district. This engaging app will help your child excel at reading, one of the most critical skills for learning. Use Footsteps2Brilliance 15 mins per day with your child and watch them grow!



To register for this free app, go to
www.myf2b.org/register/wusd

If already registered, go to
www.myf2b.org





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- ✓ Check the weekly calendar of events and activities.
- ✓ Read about what is going on at school.
- ✓ Receive important updates from school staff.



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