

**Presented by:**  
**Dr. Heather Sánchez**

Candidate for  
Nevada Superintendent  
of Public Instruction  
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# LITERACY LIFTOFF

Equipping every Nevada student  
with the skills to soar toward  
lifelong success



# Data Summary & Historical Context

Nevada's decade-long early literacy push has yielded both **gains and stubborn gaps**. The 2015 *Read by Grade 3* initiative lifted SBA reading proficiency to 46% by 2019, but pandemic disruptions drove scores down to 36% in 2021, with only **partial recovery** to 41% by 2024. MAP data show nearly half of K–3 students still below benchmark, and NAEP 4th-grade reading scores, though once climbing, have slipped to 213—**trailing the national average**. **Persistent disparities** across income, language, and race, coupled with **uneven access to high-quality early learning**, continue to hinder progress, especially in underserved communities.

*Despite setbacks, Nevada has seen some district-level successes, improved kindergarten readiness, and renewed state investment in literacy infrastructure. The foundation is in place; the challenge is equitable and consistent execution.*

## Sources:

Nevada Department of Education. *Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) Statewide Results, 2015–2024*.

Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA). *Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Reading Data, Nevada K–3, 2022–2024*.

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). *National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Grade 4 Reading, 2013–2024*.

Nevada Legislature. *Read by Grade 3 (RBG3) Program Overview and Annual Reports, 2015–2024*.



A Venn diagram consisting of three overlapping circles. The top-left circle is light blue and labeled 'Technical Challenges'. The top-right circle is light green and labeled 'Adaptive Challenges'. The bottom circle is light yellow and labeled 'Bundled Challenges'. The circles overlap in the center, creating a darker yellow area.

**Technical  
Challenges**

**Adaptive  
Challenges**

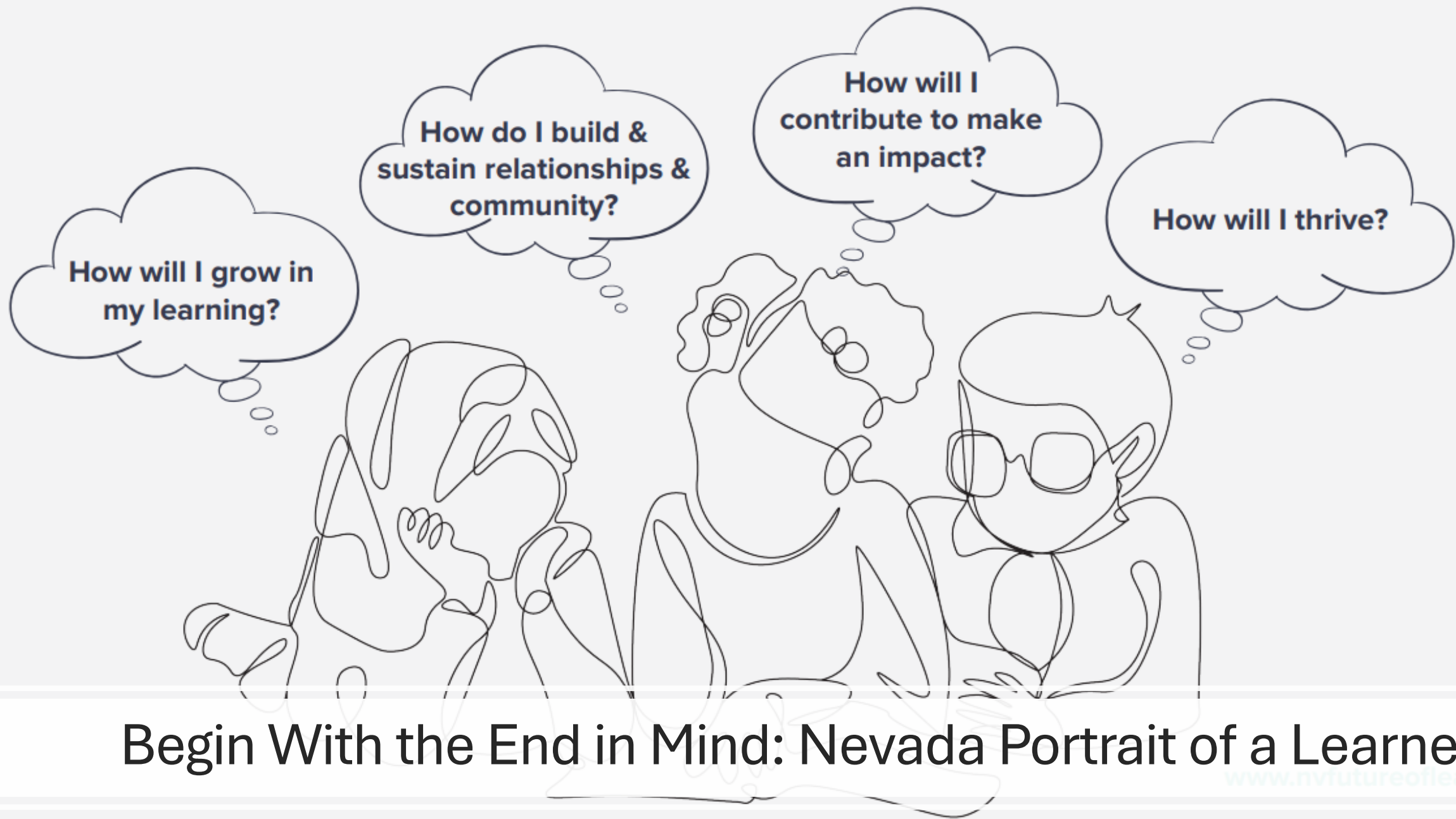
**Bundled  
Challenges**

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## Clarity Fuels Change

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“The single most common source of leadership failure...is that people, especially those in positions of authority, treat adaptive challenges like technical problems.” --Ronald Heifetz, Author of *Leadership on the Line*



# Begin With the End in Mind: Nevada Portrait of a Learner

[www.nvfutureoflearning.org](http://www.nvfutureoflearning.org)

How might we create learning relationships, experiences, and environments that put these shared values into practice? >>>

# Root Causes & Systemic Barriers

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- **Uneven** access to evidence-based early literacy instruction
- **Variability** in PreK program quality and access
- **Inconsistent** alignment between PK–3 standards, assessments, and instruction
- **Gaps** in teacher training in Science of Reading methods
- **Inconsistent** MTSS application and early intervention practices



# Strategic Alignment Essentials

## Statewide Plan for the Improvement of Pupils (STIP) 2030

Advance Nevada's *Portrait of a Learner* by ensuring universal P–12 access, elevating educator professional development, and optimizing resources

## Nevada State Literacy Plan (NSLP) 2025

Align P–12 literacy through MTSS and Science of Reading

## Senate Bill 460 (June 11, 2025)

Expand high-quality early learning access, modernize standards and assessments with real-time feedback and data dashboards, and strengthen statewide facilities and programs.



# Vision & 3-Year Goals

***Vision: By 2028, all Nevada students will have equitable access to high-quality, evidence-based literacy instruction from PreK–3***  
(aligned to STIP and NSLP)

**Increase Grade 3 SBAC ELA proficiency by +5 percentage points annually**  
(Aligned with STIP 2030 and NSLP 4<sup>th</sup> grade goals)

**At least 65% of K–3 students meeting MAP growth targets each year**  
(STIP 2030)

**Narrow subgroup gaps (SWD, EL, Low-Income) by at least 3 points annually** (aligned with STIP Equity Commitments)

# Continuous Improvement Strategies: *Engagement-Cohesion- Evidence-Informed Learning*

## Strategy #1: A Seat at the Table

Expand high-quality PreK access in underserved areas, improve programs and facilities, and engage communities through outreach.

## Strategy #2: Evidence-based Instruction

Implement Science of Reading-aligned programs, embed language and writing in PreK–3, and align with STIP 2030 and NSLP.

## Strategy #3: Teachers at the Center

Build statewide literacy expertise through PD, Science of Reading certification for K–3 teachers, and sustained support via regional coaches, mentorship, and service centers.





# Continuous Improvement Strategies: *Engagement-Cohesion- Evidence-Informed Learning*

## Strategy #4: Responsive Feedback Loops

Use K–3 MAP Growth dashboards, early warning systems, and annual access audits to drive targeted Tier 2/3 interventions and close subgroup gaps.

## Strategy #5: Families as Partners

Launch family literacy academies, provide multilingual resources, and lead statewide public literacy awareness campaigns.

## Strategy #6: Policy, Funding & Accountability

Align STIP, NSLP, and SB 460 goals, requiring 3-year School Improvement Plans with early literacy targets.



# Empowering Transformation

Nevada's 17 school districts and the SPCA each serve diverse communities with unique needs.



## Tailored Support

Provide tailored support through a comprehensive menu of resources.



## Leverage Technology

Deliver remote support, translation, adaptive resources, and on-demand assistance



## Education Service Centers

Prioritize establishing and deploying Education Service Centers.



## Foster Innovation

Create space for district-wide curiosity, creativity, and new ideas.



## Engagement Strategies

Implement Listen & Learn tours, statewide cafecitos, surveys, focus groups, and public campaigns.





# Nevada Literacy Timeline 2024–2030: Publicly Reporting Progress

## Science of Reading Launch

In **2024–25**, Nevada launched Science of Reading professional development and has begun aligning K–3 instructional materials for literacy improvement.

## SB 460 Funding and PreK Expansion

SB 460 literacy infrastructure funding begins in **2025–27**, with PreK expansion rolling out in *fall 2025* to enhance early education.

## Assessments and Program Implementation

Statewide literacy assessments and MTSS supports start in **2025–26**. By **2026–27**, all districts will use approved K–3 literacy programs.

## Ongoing Monitoring and Support

From **2026–28** and through **2030**, annual monitoring, compliance, and subgroup support will ensure sustained literacy progress.

# Comprehensive Evidence for Continuous Improvement

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**\*\*=Qualitative metric added**



Nevada's Pupil-Centered Funding Plan (PCFP), overseen by the 11-member Commission on School Funding, uses a revenue-based approach rather than projected expenditures. For FY 2025, the legislature approved a \$6.315B budget, averaging \$13,387 per pupil, with early literacy funded as part of the overall education budget.

## Nevada Literacy Budget Overview

Nevada's literacy funding integrates ongoing per-pupil support with targeted investments for early literacy, professional development, and facilities expansion.



### PCFP Base + Weights

Per pupil statewide base funding + weights  
(EL, at-risk, G/T)



### Read by Grade 3

Targeted literacy professional development  
\$6M federal



### SB 460 Literacy/PreK Grants

\$50M Early Literacy Appropriation  
(SB460 Section 75)



### SB 460 Facilities Expansion

\$10M PreK Facilities Expansion  
(SB460 Section 73)



### Additional Literacy & Facilities Funding

\$21M over 2 years for literacy & facilities



### Teacher Compensation Initiatives

\$250M teacher salary increases and retention  
incentives

# *Engagement-Cohesion- Evidence-Informed Learning*

- Early literacy is the foundation for lifelong learning.
- Nevada's current recovery trajectory needs acceleration.
- This 3-year initiative aligns funding, policy, and instruction for systemic change.





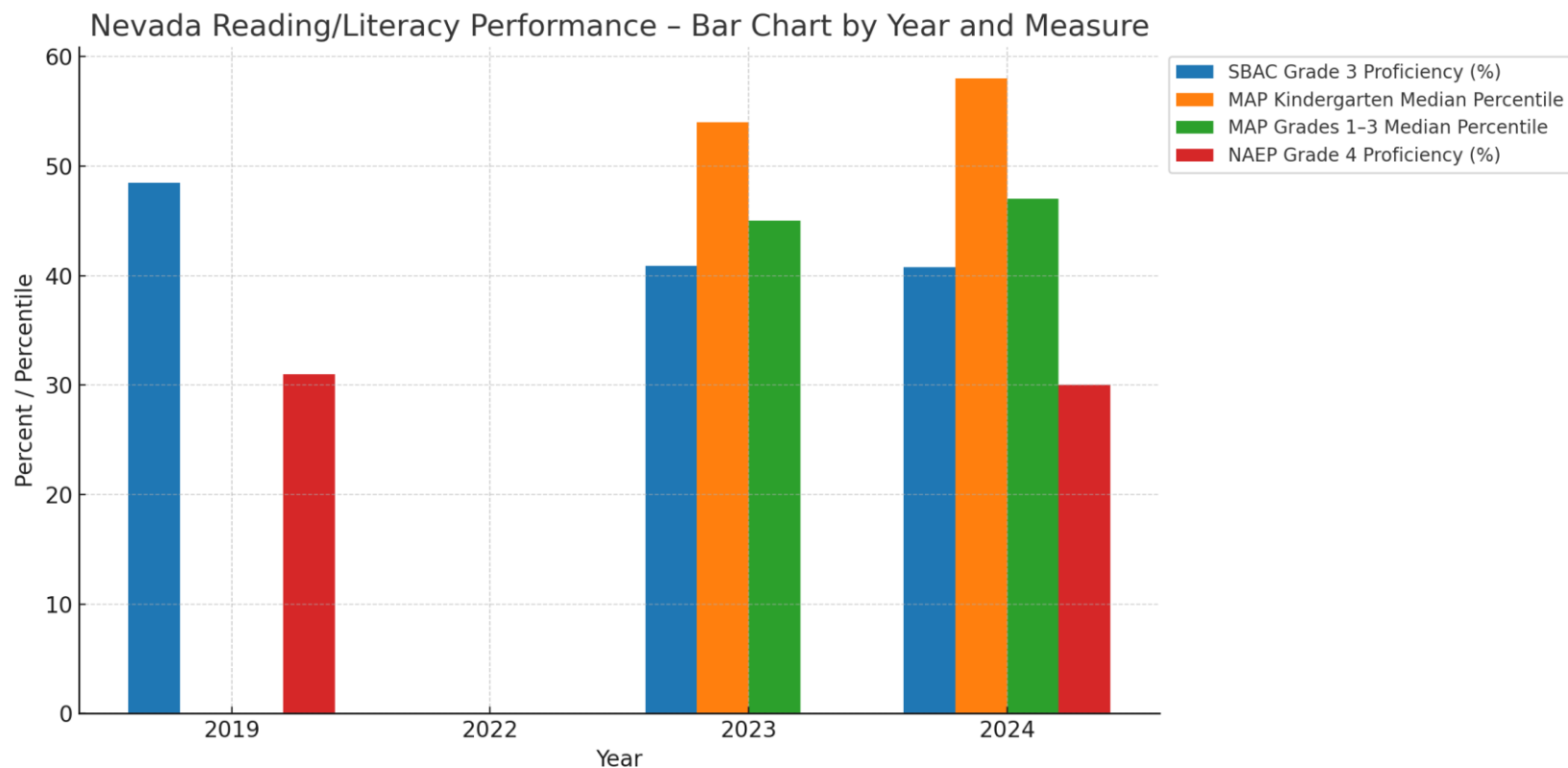
**A literate, informed  
society is a free  
society.**

—Madeleine Albright

# Appendix: Assessment & Budget



# Nevada Reading/ Early Literacy Performance Cross-Measure Trends

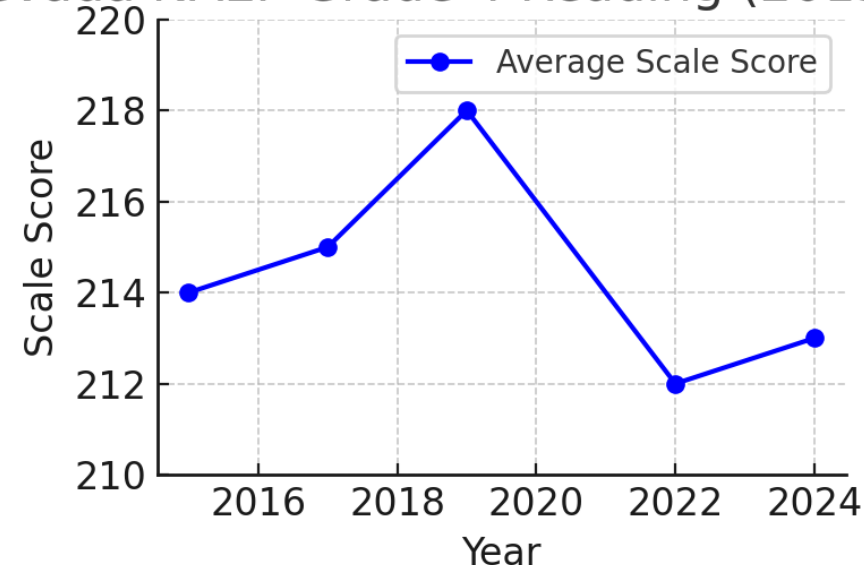


**Overall Trend: All indicators demonstrate partial recovery from pandemic-related declines, though they have yet to reach pre-pandemic levels.**

- 2. Subgroup Patterns: Achievement gaps persist; certain subgroups (Low-Income students on SBAC, K/EL/FRL groups on MAP) are recovering more rapidly.
- 3. Grade-Level Differences: MAP shows the most significant growth in Kindergarten; SBAC scores for Grades 3–8 remain steady; NAEP Grade 4 exhibits partial rebound.
- 4. Policy Implications: Early literacy interventions are proving more effective on MAP assessments; ongoing targeted support for specific subgroups remains essential.

# NAEP Grade 4 Reading Nevada Trends & Subgroup Comparisons

Nevada NAEP Grade 4 Reading (2015-2024)



Group	2019 (Pre)	2024 (Post)
All Students	31%	30%
Asian	47%	49%
White	43%	40%
Two or More Races	35%	43%
Hispanic	24%	22%
Black	16%	20%
Econ Disadvantaged	24%	27%
Non-Disadvantaged	46%	45%

**Data Summary:**

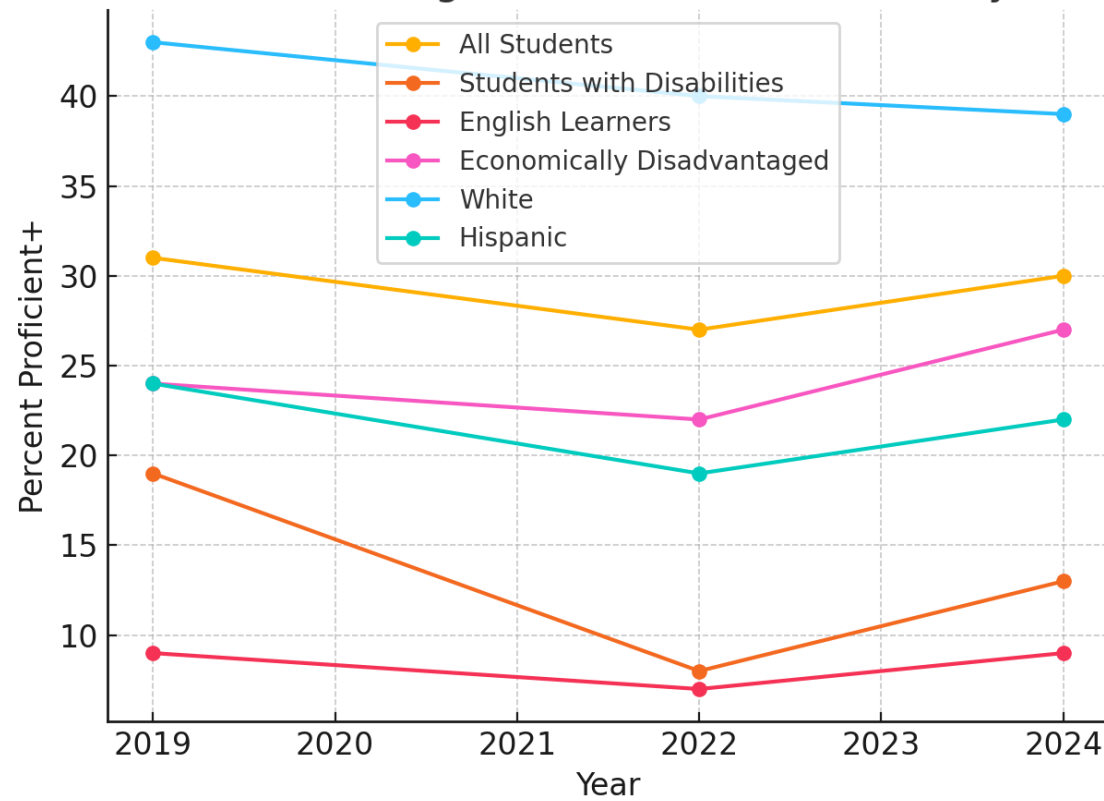
- Nevada’s average Grade 4 NAEP Reading scale score increased from 214 in 2015 to a peak of 218 in 2019, declined to 212 in 2022, and rebounded slightly to 213 in 2024.
- The percentage of students at or above Proficient dropped from 31% in 2019 to 27% in 2022, recovering to 30% in 2024, but still below pre-pandemic levels.
- Subgroup analysis shows persistent achievement gaps: in 2024, Asian students (49%) and White students (40%) outperformed Hispanic (22%) and Black students (20%), with Two or More Races showing notable gains (+8 points since 2019).
- Economically disadvantaged students improved modestly (+3 points), but still trail non-disadvantaged peers by 18 points.
- National data indicate that Students with Disabilities and English Learners perform substantially lower than peers, with gaps of 40 and 32 points in 2022 respectively.

**National Reference:**

- SWD (National, 2022): 183 avg scale vs Non-SWD: 223 (gap 40 pts)
- EL (National, 2022): 190 avg scale vs Non-EL: 222 (gap 32 pts)

# NAEP Grade 4 Disaggregated Historical

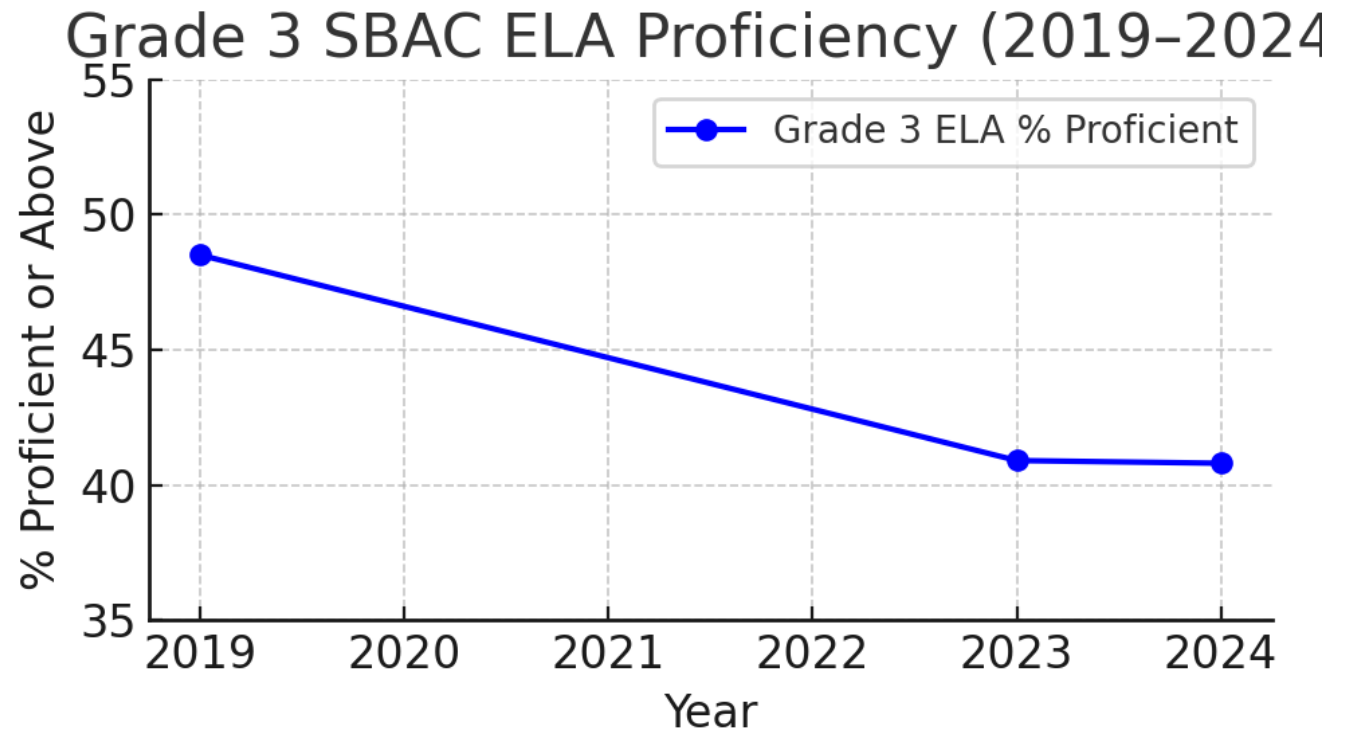
NAEP Grade 4 Reading - % Proficient or Above by Subgroup



# Nevada SBAC ELA – Grade 3 Proficiency Trends

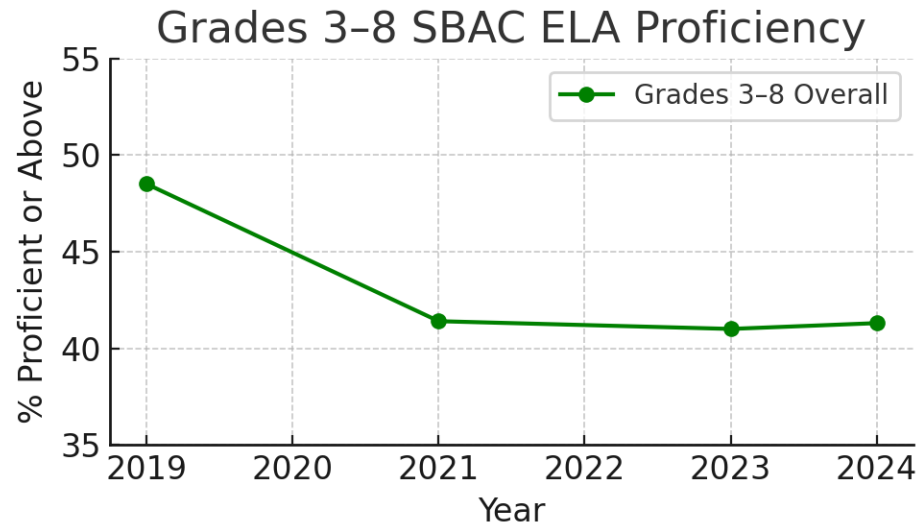
## Summary:

- Grade 3 proficiency dropped from ~48.5% in 2019 to 40.9% in 2023.
- 2024 saw a minimal change to 40.8% (–0.1 pts).
- This reflects a sustained ~7–8 point gap from pre-pandemic levels.





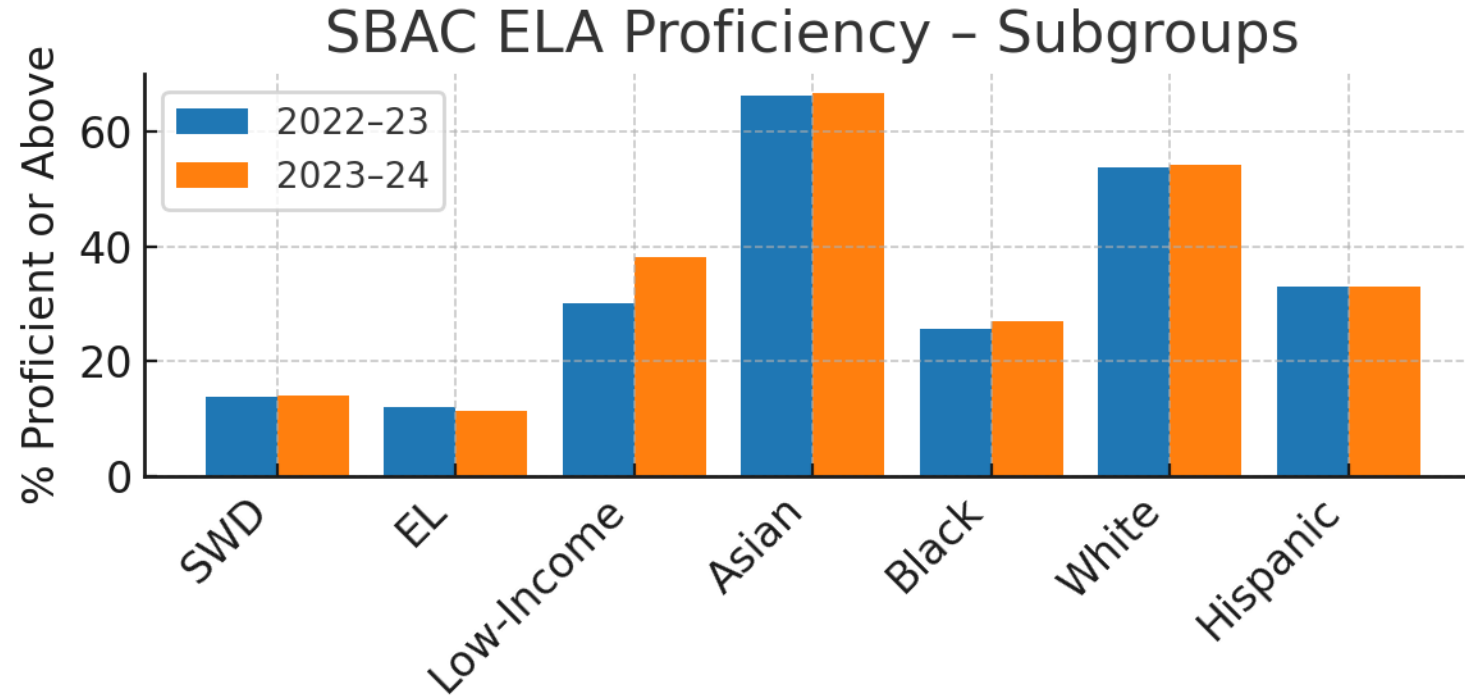
# Grades 3–8 SBAC ELA Proficiency Context



## Summary:

- Proficiency fell from 48.5% in 2019 to ~41% in 2021.
- Recovery has been limited, with 2024 at 41.3%.
- Overall performance remains ~7 points below pre-pandemic.

# SBAC ELA Proficiency by Subgroup (2022–23 to 2023–24)



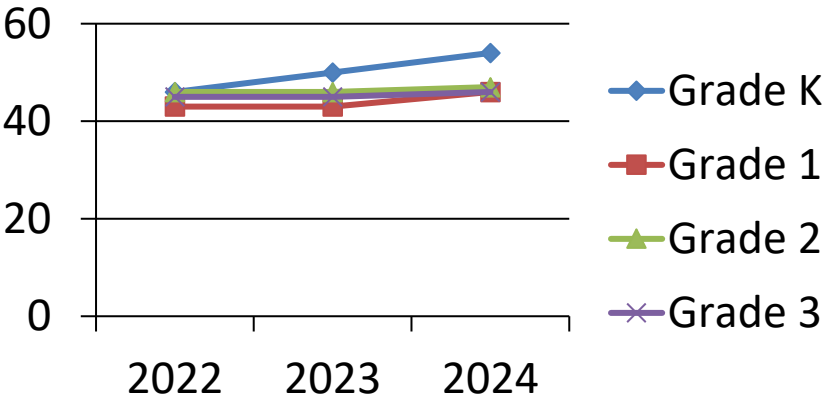
## Summary:

- Low-Income students saw the largest gain (+8.1 points).
- SWD improved slightly; EL declined slightly.
- Racial group changes were modest; Hispanic unchanged.

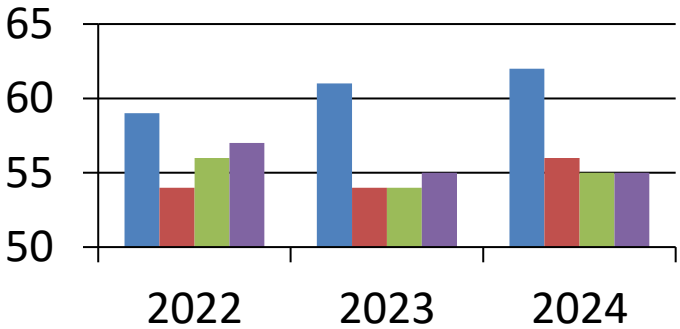
# Nevada K–3 MAP Reading: 2022–2024 Trends

Subgroup	Spring 2023	Spring 2024
Students with Disabilities	19	20
English Learners	25	27
Economically Disadvantaged	43	46
Non-Economically Disadvantaged	57	60
Asian	70	72
White	60	62
Hispanic/Latino	45	47
Black/African American	42	44

Median Achievement Percentile  
by Grade



% At/Above 40th  
Percentile by Grade



- Kindergarten led recovery with +8 points median percentile from '22 to '24.
- Grades 1–3 show modest but positive movement in 2024 after flat 2023.
- % $\geq$ 40th percentile improved or held steady across all grades in 2024.
- All subgroups posted median percentile gains from '23 to '24; largest jumps for K, EL, and FRL students.

Source: Nevada Department of Education, NWEA MAP Briefings (2022–2024)

# Sample K–3 Literacy Competency Assessment Map (Abbreviated)

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Strand	Competency Example	Evidence of Mastery
Phonemic Awareness	Blend and segment CVC words orally	Teacher checklist; oral recording
Phonics	Decode CVCe and vowel team words	Running record; 95% accuracy rate
Fluency	Read grade-level passage @ benchmark WCPM	Timed read; fluency rubric
Vocabulary	Apply new words in oral & written context	Vocabulary journal; writing sample
Comprehension	Identify main idea & supporting details	Graphic organizer; written summary
Writing	Compose coherent paragraph with topic & detail sentences	Writing sample scored on rubric



# PCFP + SB 460 Literacy Funding: District Comparison & Flow (SAMPLE)

## Funding Flow:

PCFP Base Funding → District Operational Budgets → Core K–12 Literacy Support

SB 460 Targeted Funds → Early Literacy Infrastructure, Pre-K Expansion, Literacy Assessments

Combined Impact → Stable foundational funding + targeted gap-closing investments

## Clark County School District (Urban)

- Large base funding from PCFP due to high enrollment.
- SB 460 funding boosts early literacy specialists and dual-language literacy programs.
- Expanded Pre-K classrooms targeting underserved areas.
- Literacy screening upgrades to serve >20,000 K–3 students.
- Strong synergy with PCFP base enabling scale of interventions.

## Elko County School District (Rural)

- Smaller PCFP base, but rural weights increase per-pupil allocation.
- SB 460 adds mobile literacy coaches and regional Pre-K hubs.
- Literacy resources tailored to multi-grade classrooms.
- Updated assessment tools to reach remote communities.
- PCFP stability + SB 460 targeted programs close rural literacy gaps.