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# Guided Reading Professional Learning: Effect on Instructional Behaviors and Learner Achievement

Prepared for: Lindsay Unified School District Teacher and School  
Leader Initiative (TSL)

**August 2019**

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# Executive Summary



Lindsay Unified School District (LUSD) implemented a partnership with The Learning Accelerator (TLA) and software vendor Yet Analytics to conduct a study to understand the relationships between their teacher and leader professional learning offerings and learner outcomes during the 2018-19 school year. These professional learning opportunities were funded by a federal Teacher and School Leader (TSL) Grant. LUSD is pioneering the use of research science to understand the potential impact of professional development; this study is its first step.

This executive summary highlights key findings from research conducted by TLA to understand if learning facilitators' (LUSD's preferred term for educators) participation in the TSL Guided Reading Learning Academies and Micro-Credentials professional development helps LUSD progress towards its mission to provide each learner with the best possible learning facilitator, as well as ensure all learners read at content level, by:

1. Testing for increases in learners' reading achievement (as measured by the SRI or DRA assessments) and language achievement (as measured by California's SBAC ELA assessment).
2. Documenting certified learning facilitators' engagement in educator actions related to the district's Adult Learning Curriculum outlined in LUSD's [Instructional Look Fors](#).
3. Investigating if a certain intensity of participation is critical to being effective.

Guided Reading is a small-group instructional method with the goal of building independent readers who can read fluently with comprehension. A Guided Reading learning facilitator plans lessons and focuses instruction on the areas where learners need support. By focusing instruction on these areas, a Guided Reading lesson prepares learners to be able to read the next level of text complexity.

In LUSD, Guided Reading professional learning was delivered as a four-day, in-person professional learning workshop where learning facilitators were trained on specific skills to implement the Guided Reading model and protocols in their learning environments. Learning facilitators could opt to attend professional learning with or without the intent to seek certification of proficiency. Certification could be attained for either a Learning Academy or Micro-Credential, and only if all Guided Reading sessions were attended. The certification process included the following steps and incentives:

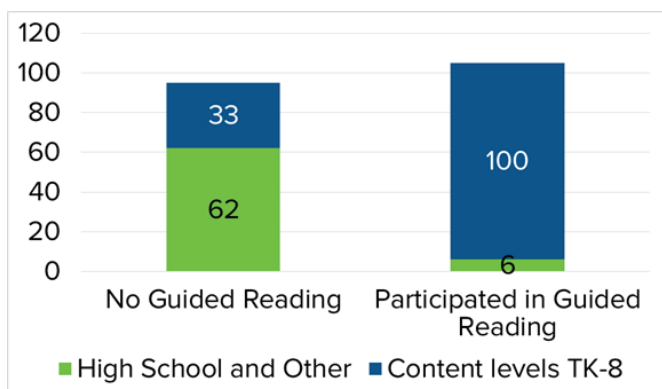




To date, two cohorts of learning facilitators ( $n = 84$  and  $n = 22$ ) have completed a Guided Reading professional learning opportunity. These 106 individuals represent 53% of all learning facilitators in LUSD (74% of learning facilitators in content levels Transitional Kindergarten-8) who serve 2,070 content level Transitional Kindergarten (TK)-8 learners.

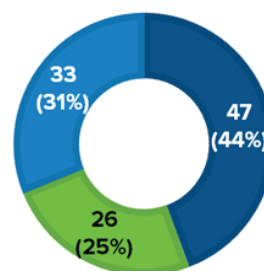
In addition, 45 of the 52 learning facilitators who certified with Cohort 1 enrolled in subsequent Cohort 2 Guided Reading opportunities.

**Number of Learning Facilitators who Participated in Guided Reading by School Level**



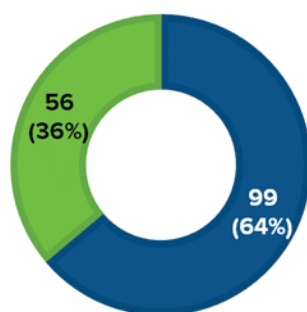
**Percentage of Participating Learning Facilitators who Attained Guided Reading Certifications**

■ Attained 1 Certification ■ Attained 2 Certifications  
■ Did not Attain Certification



**Percentage of Guided Reading Enrollments Resulting in Certification**

■ Resulted in Certification ■ Did Not Result in Certification



# Key Finding #1

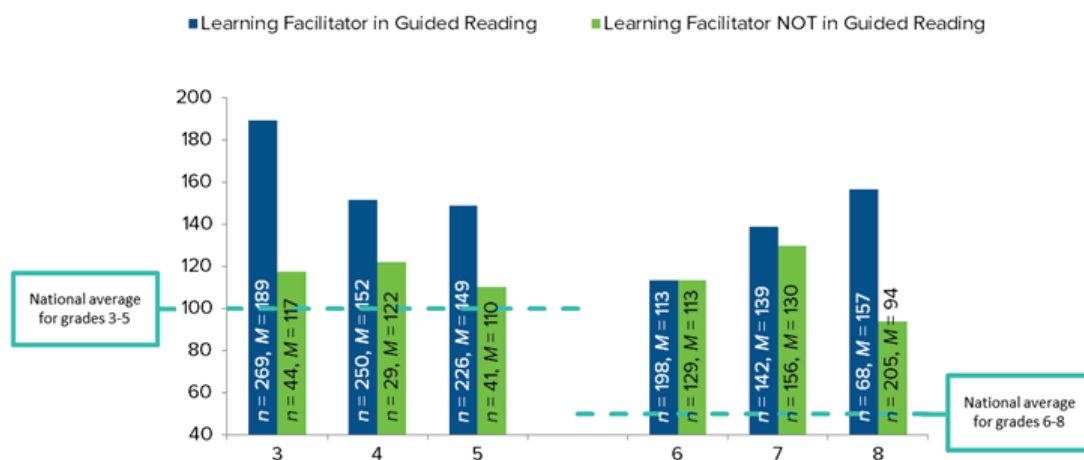


Overall, learners whose learning facilitator participated in Guided Reading professional learning had higher average reading score gains than learners whose learning facilitator did not participate.

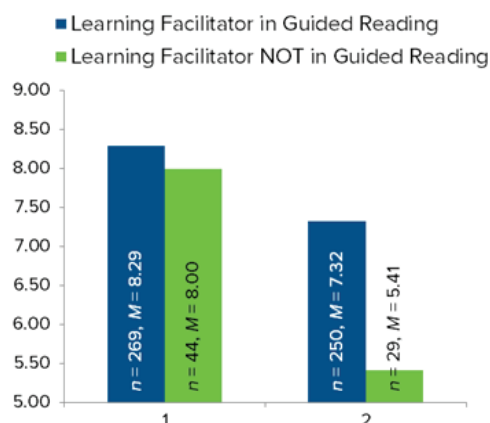
Reading achievement gains were higher in elementary than middle schools, and SRI reading scores were **higher than national average expected growth**<sup>1</sup>. Overall, effect sizes ( $0.10 \leq d \leq 0.634$ ) were small when compared to general effect size guidelines, but typical when compared to benchmarks of effect sizes in educational gains<sup>2</sup>.

Trends were clearer and more pronounced in benchmark reading assessments, the Diagnostic Reading Assessment (DRA) and Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI), than in California's annual language assessment, the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium's English Language Arts (SBAC). This was expected, partly because SBAC language outcome scores include subtest scores for writing, listening, and speaking, in addition to reading.

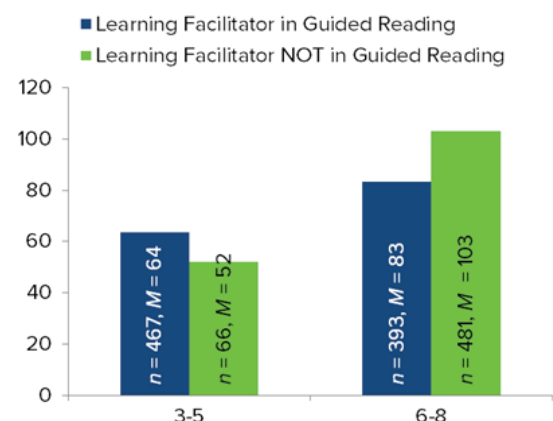
Mean SRI Growth from August 2018 to June 2019 by Content Level



Mean DRA Growth from August 2018 to June 2019 by Content Level



SBAC 2019 Growth from SBAC 2018 Scores by Content Level



<sup>1</sup> Scholastic Inc. (2007b). SRI Technical Guide (2007). New York, NY: Scholastic Inc. Education Group. Retrieved from: [https://www.hmco.com/product-support/content/techsupport/sri/manuals/SRI\\_Tech\\_Guide\\_05\\_10.pdf](https://www.hmco.com/product-support/content/techsupport/sri/manuals/SRI_Tech_Guide_05_10.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Lipsey, M. W., Puzio, K., Yun, C., Hebert, M. A., Steinka-Fry, K., Cole, M. W., Anthony, K., & Busick, M. D. (2012). *Translating the statistical representation of the effects of education interventions into more readily interpretable forms* (NCSER 2013-3000). Washington, DC: National Center for Special Education Research, Institute of Education Sciences.

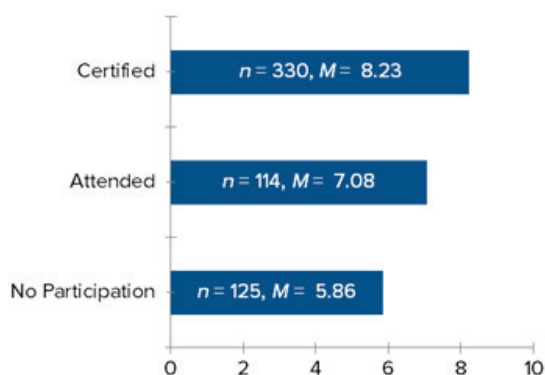
# Key Finding #2

## Certification matters.

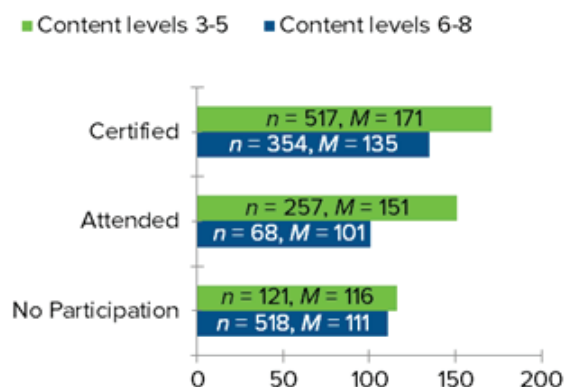


Across content levels 1-8 **reading growth scores were higher when the learning facilitator certified** after participating in Guided Reading Learning Academy or Micro-Credential.

**DRA Growth from August 2018 to June 2019 by Depth of Participation in Guided Reading for Content Levels 1-2**

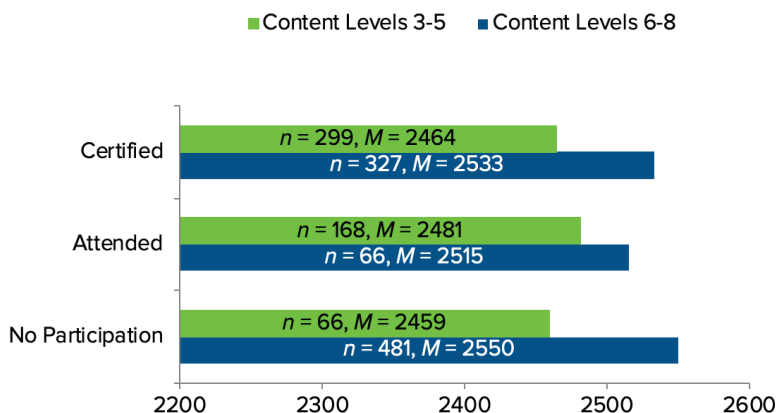


**SRI Growth from August 2018 to June 2019 by Depth of Participation in Guided Reading for Content Levels 3-5 and 6-8**



Similar to the trends in Key Finding #1, these trends did not hold for language outcome scores on SBAC. This was expected, partly because SBAC language outcome scores include subtest scores for writing, listening, and speaking, in addition to reading.

**2019 SBAC Means, Adjusted for 2018 Scores, by Depth of Participation in Guided Reading for Content Levels 3-5 and 6-8**



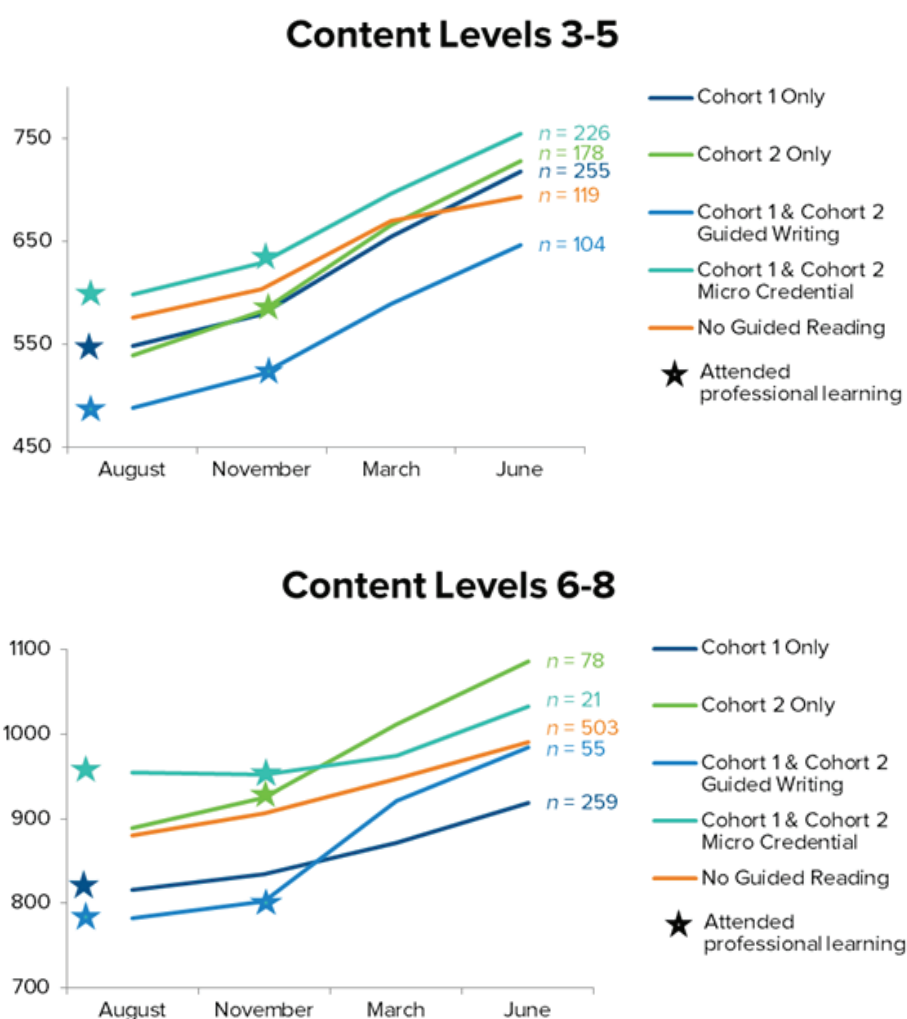
# Key Finding #3

Guided Reading impacts on learners are both immediate and sustained.



Cohort 1 received the professional learning in July 2018, before measurement of August 2018 reading scores, so the August 2018 scores are not a true pretest for this group, and effects for this group are potentially underestimated. Growth scores were highest for Cohort 2, then Cohort 1, then learners who did not have a learning facilitator participating in Guided Reading professional learning. **This suggests both sustained effects of Guided Reading training in addition to more immediate, proximal effects from Cohort 2**, who received training in November 2018.

Timeline of SRI Growth Scores and Guided Reading Participation for each Cohort in Content Levels 3-5 and 6-8



Note: n's in these charts represent the number of learners with learning facilitators in each cohort

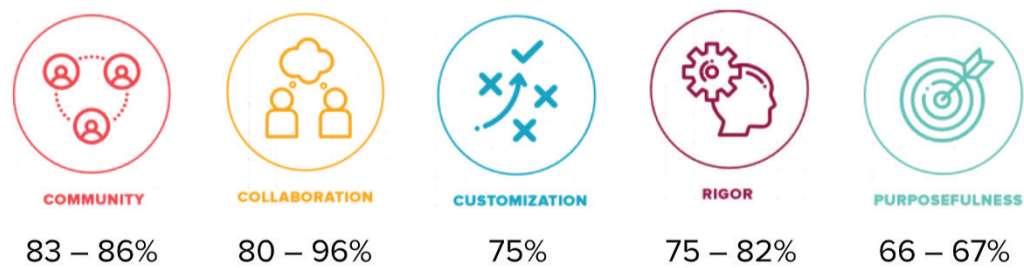
# Key Finding #4

Guided Reading professional learning allows space for learning facilitators to exhibit educator actions aligned to the Adult Learning Curriculum in a learning environment.

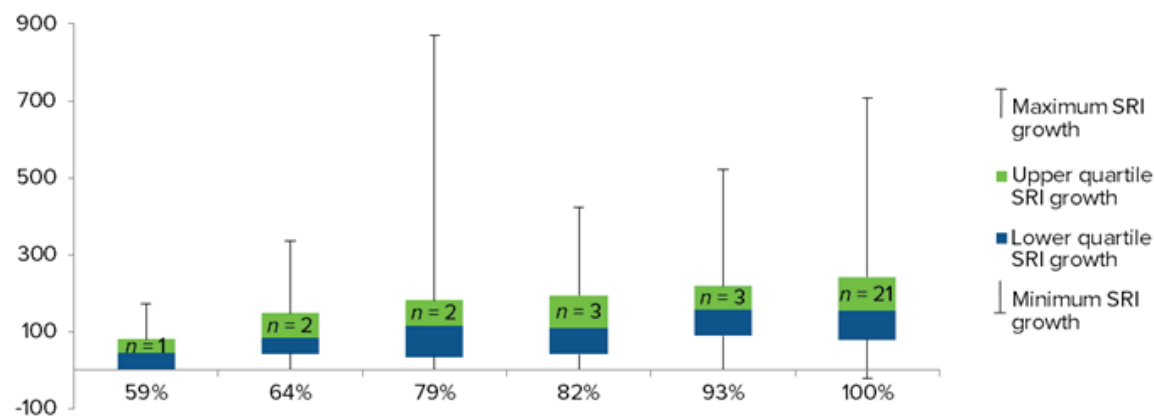


Learning facilitators who attained certification exhibited high rates of LUSD’s desired Instructional Look For educator actions, particularly those actions associated with the Community principle. For example, across observations for Cohort 1 and Cohort 2, 83-86% of learning facilitators demonstrated all selected and aligned educator actions from the Community principle during a Guided Reading lesson observation. And, the percentage of all educator actions was positively related to reading growth scores.

Percentage of Learning Facilitators Demonstrating All of the Selected and Aligned Instructional Look Fors in Each Relevant Principle of the Adult Learning Curriculum



Relationship between Frequency of Observed Educator Actions and SRI Reading Growth Scores



Note: n's in this chart represents the number of Learning Facilitators in each category



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# The Take-Away

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The results from the 2018-19 Academic Year showed a positive relationship between learning facilitators' participation in Guided Reading professional learning and learners' reading growth. **This suggests Guided Reading has been a successful tool for providing LUSD's learners with the best possible learning experience, and the opportunity to attain their fullest potential reading achievement. Certification is also a potentially powerful mechanism for converting professional learning experiences into visible instructional and achievement-related changes in the classrooms.**

As we continue to investigate LUSD's Teacher and School Leader professional learning offerings, additional cohorts and data will help illuminate where the most value lies and how LUSD's Adult Learning Curriculum principles and educator actions are related to learning.

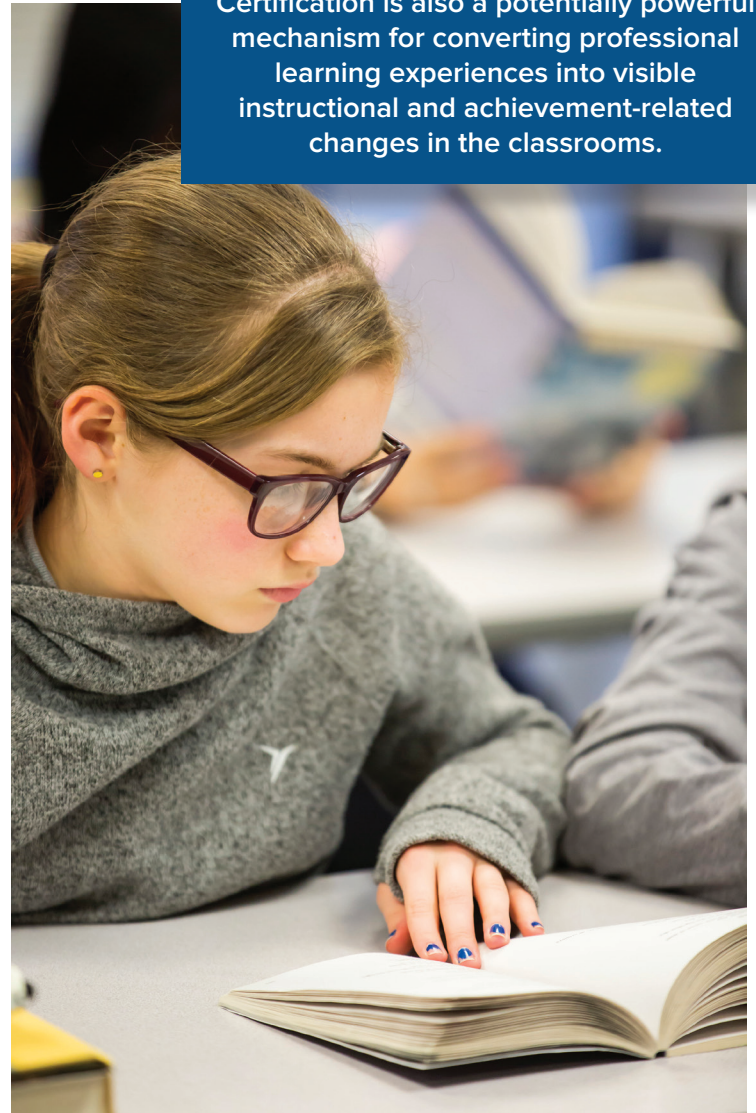
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## About this Project

This report was developed as part of a multi-stage data science project for Lindsay Unified School District's federally funded Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program. This 18-month project is supported by The Learning Accelerator (TLA) and Yet Analytics.

TLA, the lead research partner and co-author of this report, is a national nonprofit that makes the 'potential' possible and practical for every teacher and every learner. TLA envisions a future in which each student receives an effective, equitable, and engaging education – one that is informed by data and supported by technology – enabling them to reach their full and unique potential. Its mission is to connect teachers and leaders with the knowledge, tools, and networks they need to enact personalized and mastery-based practices to transform K-12 education.

Yet Analytics, a Baltimore-based software firm, is a leading provider of data technology solutions to learning and training organizations and aims to make learning data more accessible, visible, and actionable.



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