

RESEARCH UPDATE

Napa Valley Unified School District, Napa Valley, CA

System 44[®] and *READ 180*[®] Provide a Solid Return on Investment for Napa Valley Unified School District

PROFILE

District: Napa Valley Unified School District (NVUSD)

Evaluation Period: 2011–2012

Grades: 3–11

Model: Daily 30- to 120-minute model (Stand-alone and Integrated *System 44* and *READ 180*)

DISTRICT CHARACTERISTICS

Napa Valley Unified School District (NVUSD) is representative of school districts in California, serving 18,078 students in 30 schools during the 2011–2012 school year. Located in a demanding agricultural region, the district serves a large migrant population. At the time of this study, the majority of students in the district were Hispanic (52%). Approximately 37% were Caucasian, 8% were Asian, 2% were African American, and 1% were Native American. Nine percent were students with disabilities, 22% were English learners, and 46% were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW

In the 2011–2012 school year, NVUSD partnered with Houghton Mifflin Harcourt and Whiteboard Advisors to investigate the use of *System 44* and *READ 180* with its students in Grades 3 through 11. *System 44* and *READ 180* were first approved for use in the district in the 2005–2006 school year as a small pilot program. NVUSD monitored its success and slowly grew the program from a pilot to a district-wide service. The programs were chosen by the district, as they are among the most researched, competency-based reading intervention programs available. Additionally, *System 44* and *READ 180* are designed to support positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) that identify and sustain effective school-wide academic and behavioral

practices that improve student outcomes. The programs do this by incorporating instructional management routines, classroom engagement, clear goal setting, and rewards that may be implemented in parallel with positive behavior interventions. In these ways, *System 44* and *READ 180* are in line with NVUSD's vision for improving student outcomes while reducing costs.

Implementation Model

Students who participated in *System 44* received 30 to 120 minutes of instruction daily, either as a stand-alone program or integrated with *READ 180*. The *System 44* implementation guidelines included specified time for three rotations that consisted of Small-Group differentiated instruction, a personalized progression through the *System 44* instructional software, and modeled or independent reading. A goal of the district was to reduce the number of students in *System 44* at the middle and high school levels, so they provided students in Grades 5 and 8 the opportunity to receive additional software time before or after school. This was very positively received by teachers, students, and parents.

Students who participated in *READ 180* received 90 to 120 minutes of instruction daily. The *READ 180* implementation guidelines included specified time for three rotations that consisted of Small-Group differentiated instruction, a personalized progression through the *READ 180* instructional software, and modeled or independent reading. In the integrated *System 44/READ 180* model, students followed the same implementation.

Participants

A total of 517 students who participated in *System 44* and 877 students who participated in *READ 180* were included in these analyses. Students were included in the

System 44 analysis if they had completed the program at the end of the 2011–2012 school year and if they had assessment data from both the 2010–2011 school year and the 2011–2012 school year. Students were included in the *READ 180* analysis if they were enrolled in the program at the end of the school year and if they had assessment data from both the 2010–2011 school year and the 2011–2012 school year.

Measures

California Standards Test of English Language Arts (CST ELA)

The CST ELA is given to students in Grades 2–11 as a part of the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program. Developed exclusively for California’s public schools, the CST ELA provides information that can be used to determine how well students are mastering state content standards. The CST ELA reports students’ performance as both a scale score (which can range from 150–600) and as one of five Performance Levels. Each of the five Performance Levels (Far Below Basic, Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, or Advanced) is associated with a range of scale scores for each grade level.

California English Language Development Test (CELDT)

An English skills test is required by law for students in Grades K–12 whose home language is not English. The CELDT is the English skills test given in California.

It was developed to identify students with limited English proficiency (LEP), determine the level of English language proficiency of those students, and assess the progress of LEP students in acquiring the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English. The CELDT results are reported by the following performance levels: Beginning, Early Intermediate, Intermediate, Early Advanced, and Advanced. Results show the overall English performance level attained by students as well as performance in each domain by level.

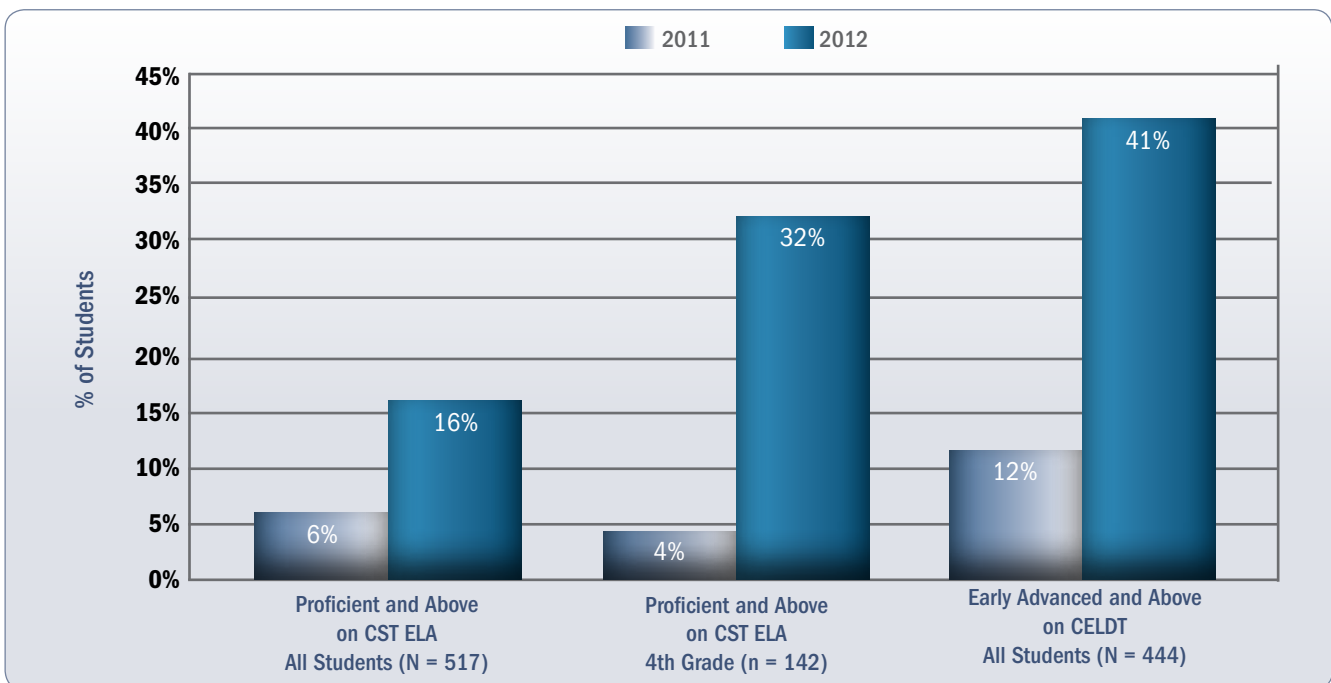
RESULTS

California Standards Test of English Language Arts (CST ELA) and California English Language Development Test (CELDT) scores were obtained for both *System 44* and *READ 180* students in Grades 3 through 11 who used the programs in the 2011–2012 school year. Results from the CST ELA and CELDT demonstrated that both the *System 44* and *READ 180* students significantly improved their reading comprehension skills after one year of using the programs.

As Graph 1 displays, the percentage of *System 44* students in Grades 3 through 11 scoring Proficient and Above on the CST ELA increased from 6% in the 2010–2011 school year to 16% in the 2011–2012 school year, including a jump from 4% to 32% for the district’s fourth graders. The CELDT corroborated these gains. Students using *System 44* experienced significant improvements. In 2012, 41% of *System 44* students scored Early Advanced and Above on CELDT, up from 12% in the prior year.

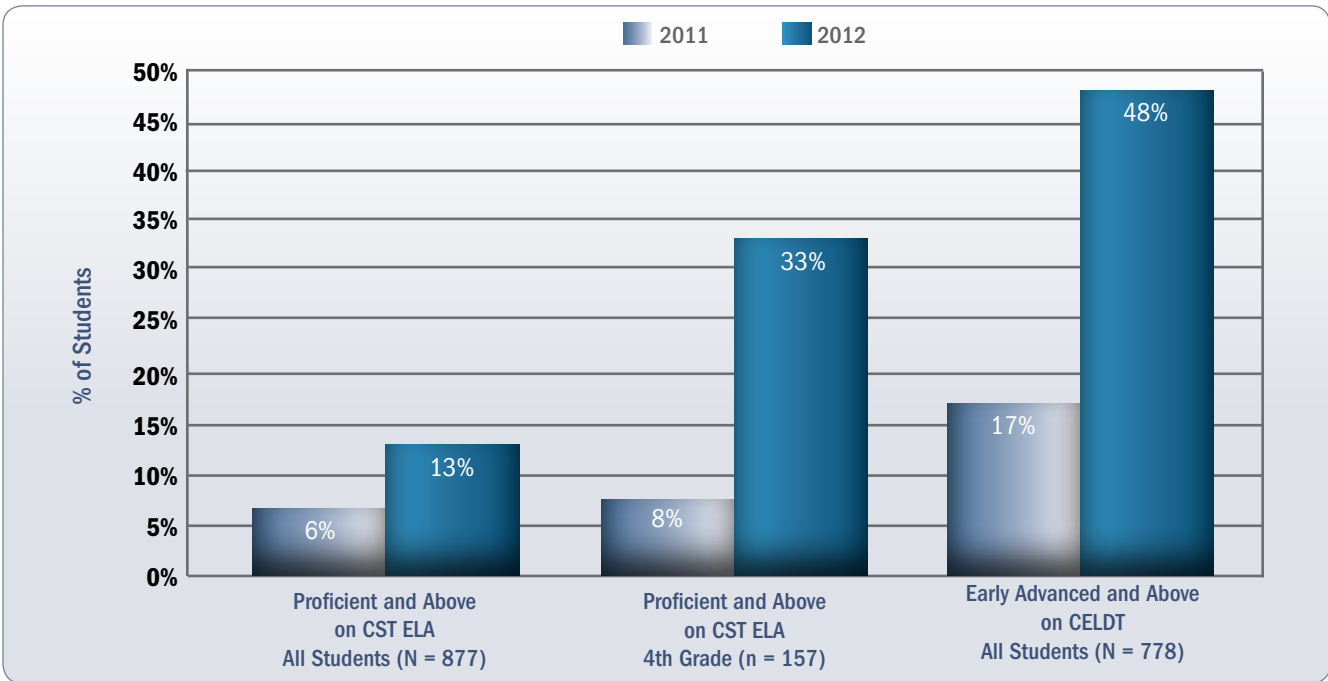
Graph 1.

Napa Valley Unified School District *System 44* Students, Grades 3–11 (N = 517)
Performance on CST ELA and CELDT, 2011–2012



Graph 2.

Napa Valley Unified School District *READ 180* Students, Grades 3-11 (N = 877)
Performance on CST ELA and CELDT, 2011-2012



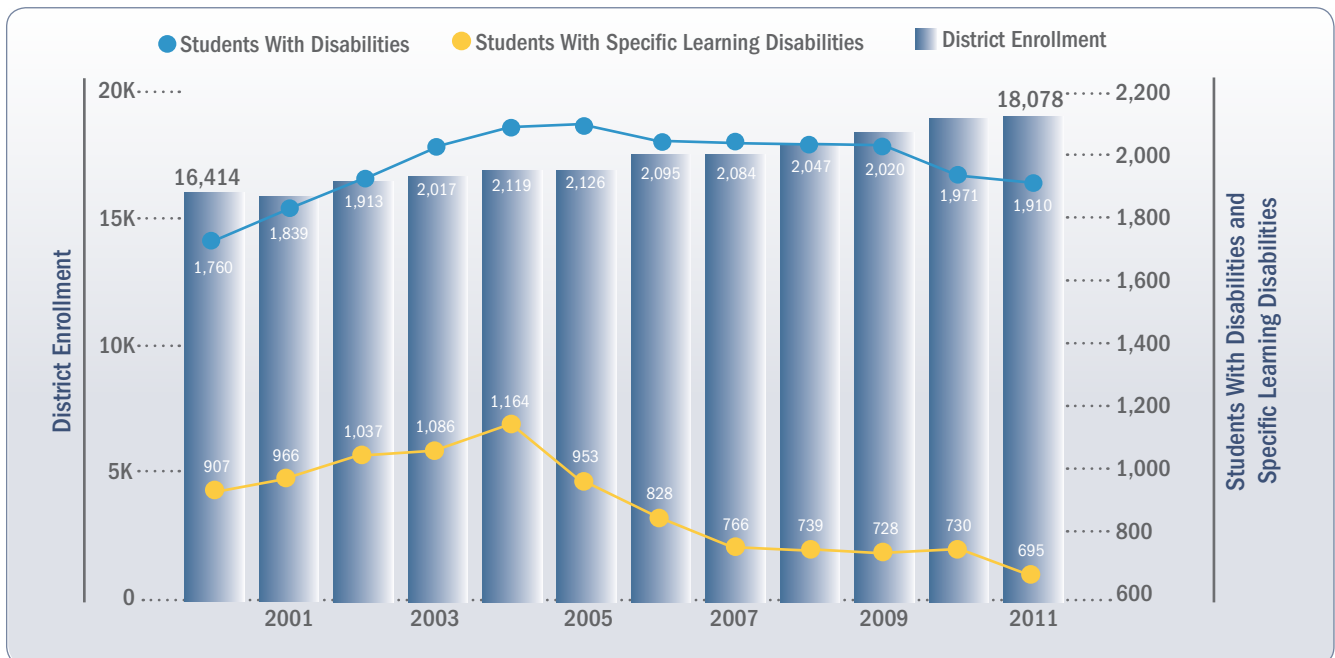
As Graph 2 displays, in the 2010-2011 school year, 6% of participating *READ 180* students in Grades 3 through 11 were scoring Proficient and Above on the CST ELA. In 2011-2012, this number increased to 13%, including a jump from 8% to 33% for the district's fourth graders. The CELDT corroborated these gains. Students using *READ 180* experienced significant improvements from the

2010-2011 to the 2011-2012 assessment. In 2012, 48% of *READ 180* students scored Early Advanced and Above on CELDT, up from 17% in the prior year.

In addition, the district tracked lower referral rates into special education since using *System 44* and *READ 180* (see Figure 1). In 2004, the district recorded

Figure 1.

Napa Valley Unified School District Students With Disabilities and Specific Learning Disabilities, Grades K-12 (N = 18,078)
Enrollment Trends, 2000-2011



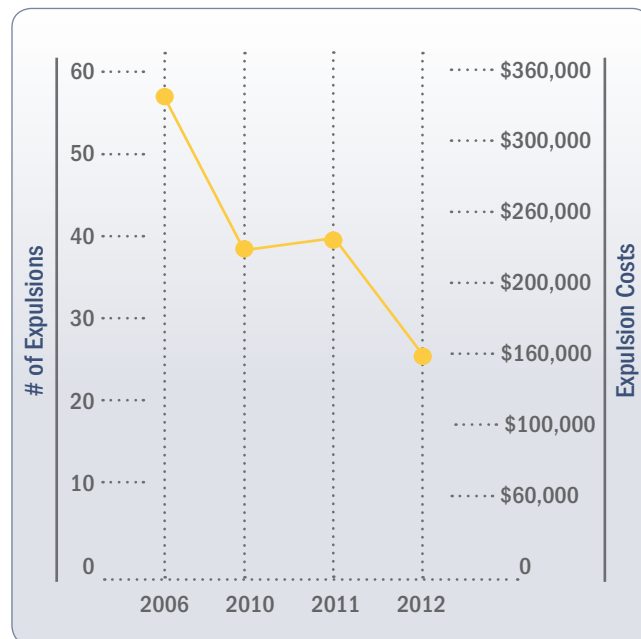
1,164 students with specific learning disabilities. In 2011, that count dropped to 695. This trend allowed NVUSD to reduce its special education caseload, reduce its associated costs for students with specific learning disabilities, and better focus its services on its academic and behavioral priorities.

While implemented as part of the Response to Intervention (RTI) model across NVUSD, the core components of *System 44* and *READ 180* were also in line with the district's Positive Behavioral Intervention Program. The district had been tracking some of the ancillary benefits of its Positive Behavioral Intervention Program, which included improved behavioral outcomes and cost savings (see Figure 2). In 2009, the district recorded 58 expulsions. That figure dropped to 26 expulsions in 2012, which represented \$188,660 captured by the district. Suspensions dropped from 4,881 to 2,086 from 2010 to 2012, representing \$83,850 that the district would otherwise have lost. The captured funds were reinvested back into NVUSD's program and behavioral priorities.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that both the *System 44* and *READ 180* programs produced a solid return on investment for NVUSD. Results from the CST ELA and CELDT showed that student outcomes on reading comprehension were significantly improved from one year to the next. The number of students scoring Proficient and Above on the CST ELA increased from 2011 to 2012, and the number of students scoring Early Advanced and Above on CELDT increased during the same time period. Lower referral rates into special education, along with a drop of almost half of the district's population of students with specific learning disabilities, reduced costs for these services, allowing the district to allocate funds to other priorities. Additionally, decreased suspension and expulsion counts saved the district over \$270,000. In sum, Napa Valley Unified School District was able to raise student achievement and reduce spending when implementing *System 44* and *READ 180* programs.

Figure 2.
Napa Valley Unified School District Students, Grades K-12 (N = 18,078)
Suspension and Expulsion Counts and Costs, 2006-2012



RESEARCH UPDATE



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