



Phillis Wheatley Community Schools

K- 2 Literacy

The Initiative

Research shows literacy is a critical predictor of educational and lifelong success. [Louisiana's Comprehensive Literacy Plan](#) provides guidance for ensuring all Louisiana students will have improved literacy outcomes through high-quality instruction and interactions by an effective teacher supported by leaders and families. Louisiana is working urgently to improve early literacy outcomes and ensure all students are reading proficiently by the end of grade three. The [K-2 Literacy Coaching Pilot](#) is a key initiative in support of achieving this goal, and Phillis Wheatley Community School served as an active partner for this program. Phillis Wheatley Community School, with [FirstLine Schools](#), was selected as a Models of Excellence recipient for their initiative, Early Literacy.

Funding

Phillis Wheatley Community School received funding through the Early Literacy State Fund, a one-time funding for the pilot program.

Enrollment

According to the 2020 Reading Report, Wheatley had less than 20 percent of kindergarten through third grade students scoring on-level on the beginning of the year literacy screener.

Structure

In order to ensure that more third grade students were proficient in reading by the end of the school year, Wheatley used a beginning of the year screener to determine the needs of the students on their campus. Their literacy coach led teachers through data analysis to determine where to intervene for each student performing below benchmark. Teachers provided interventions through targeted small group instruction daily with progress monitoring occurring every two to three weeks. Wheatley created and ensured a dedicated literacy block to specifically deliver high quality core instruction and interactions as well as systematic, explicit interventions and extensions grounded in the foundations of reading. They provided responsive intervention and extension opportunities for students based on individual needs and ensured access to a variety of books for students to practice reading skills through classroom libraries. Teachers and the literacy coach worked alongside the school leadership team to monitor the progress of not only their school goals but individual student goals, which is part of the development of literacy plans that focus on setting and monitoring goals specifically for literacy achievement. Teachers and leaders participated in an extensive literacy training throughout the school year. The leadership team also conducted frequent walkthroughs to provide teachers with feedback, as well as engage in data-driven conversations.

In Conclusion

Phillis Wheatley's Community School's Early Literacy initiative is recognized as being exemplary for dedicating an instructional coach to literacy, tracking of student data and having a leadership team and staff committed to professional growth.

- To learn more about past Models of Excellence recipients, visit the [School and School System Awards](#) page.
- For questions, contact modelsofexcellence@la.gov.