



Early Literacy Declaration of Support

Dear Students, Families, Guardians, Educators, and Residents of San Joaquin County:

San Joaquin County is home to more than 152,000 students in public education. Whether those students are in one of the fourteen school districts, charter schools, or a program offered by the San Joaquin County Office of Education (SJCOE), our educators are devoted to providing high-quality instruction to prepare students for college, career, and community involvement.

Reading by the third grade is the most critical academic skill for youth because it sets the foundation for future learning and academic success. Literacy also affords students the best opportunity to flourish and realize their full potential. Therefore, in partnership, all fourteen school districts, SJCOE's Teachers College of San Joaquin (TCSJ), San Joaquin Delta College, and the SJCOE are committed to ensuring students become proficient readers by the end of third grade.

Research shows there are adverse impacts on our community when literacy rates fall below standard. Literacy is directly related to job readiness, healthcare access, economic development, and the overall well-being of our entire community. Improved literacy can contribute to economic growth, help reduce poverty, promote critical thinking, and provide individuals with access to information. For students, literacy is the foundation for skills and knowledge to support them as they thrive on their academic journey.

This is why we are making a commitment to work together in a countywide effort to improve early literacy through a unique workgroup called a **Community of Practice**. Working together, this Community of Practice will recognize and support individual district goals and early literacy actions for students in TK-third grade, as well as embrace new best practices and standards. Additionally, the Community of Practice will help to collectively identify research-based strategies to advance early literacy efforts in San Joaquin County.

Through the Community of Practice, educators throughout the county will meet regularly to learn with and from one another to improve literacy education in schools. They will align their work with the Science of Reading to ensure literacy instruction supports students. The Community of Practice will investigate how to utilize community partners and how to best engage families in this work.

We pledge as educational leaders to work as collaborative partners to improve all student's ability to learn to read while addressing factors of equity and access that impact academic growth and social-emotional development for all students.

By uniting as educators in San Joaquin County, we are dedicated to working cohesively to improve early literacy learning and support student achievement.

There is power in unity, there is power in connectivity, and there is power in collaboration.

In Partnership,

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County Superintendent of Schools

Rechelle Pearlman, Ed.D.
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School District

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Superintendent, Linden Unified School
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Clint Johnson
Superintendent, New Hope Elementary
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Kellyann Reis
Superintendent, New Jerusalem
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