

A Focus for Instructional Improvement in California

If the failure of a school to make AYP is the result of inadequate student achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics, the LEA should help the school to narrowly focus its improvement efforts on a group of strategies that will significantly and rapidly improve student achievement. The California Department of Education recommends a series of steps fully aligned with the nine Essential Program Components used by the School Assistance and Intervention Teams (SAIT). While full implementation of these steps can constitute fulfillment of the first corrective action listed on page 2 of Attachment A (“Implement a new curriculum...”), implementation steps should by no means be confined to that option. In fact, regardless of which corrective action a district chooses during Year 3 of Program Improvement, the following steps are important ones for a school to undertake to improve teaching and learning:

- Provide all students in all classrooms and in all grade levels with copies of textbooks adopted by the State Board of Education in reading/language arts and mathematics that are aligned to the state’s academic content standards. In the case of high schools, for which the State Board does not currently adopt instructional materials, districts should provide all students with instructional materials that are clearly standards-aligned.
- These core instructional materials, and the reading and math intervention programs, prescribe a minimum instructional time that should be given priority and protected from interruptions.
- Prepare and distribute a district-wide pacing schedule for each grade level in reading/language arts and mathematics so that all teachers know when each lesson is to be taught to ensure consistent access to standards-aligned instruction for all students.
- Ensure participation by principals and vice principals in the AB 75 Principal Training Program. These trainings assist the school leadership to provide effective support for the implementation of the instructional program.
- Ensure participation by credentialed teachers in the AB 466 Mathematics and Reading Professional Development Program. These trainings help teachers to provide effective classroom instruction aligned to the state content standards.
- Implement a system for assessing, monitoring, and reporting student progress that will produce student data to be used by school staff in making decisions that will improve instruction and student achievement.
- Support and facilitate ongoing teacher collaboration to plan and discuss lesson delivery for the adopted textbooks in reading/language arts and mathematics.
- Provide teachers with instructional assistance and support through reading and math experts (e.g., coaches) who can conduct classroom observations, provide feedback, model effective lessons, and provide ongoing coaching to improve instruction.
- Ensure that general and categorical funds and other resources are used effectively to support the core instructional program.

For additional information regarding the Essential Program Components, please contact the School Improvement Division, California Department of Education, (916) 319-0830.