

## PLANTING SEEDS

“Ready, Set, Read helps provide families with the tools and support they need to develop the skills and habits of reading together with their child. When families have tools, they thrive. But not all families have the tools for literacy.

We have 41 sites with volunteers on each site every day. Children get prizes for every ten books they read. If they read 60 books, they become Champions. We’ve compared Washington kids’ scores and found that our Champions score 13 percent higher in literacy.

Making this available to everyone closes gaps in school readiness and is a huge boost for families who don’t already have books in the home or experience with literacy. New this year, families can do activities online, so they can follow up on their books even if they don’t make it to a site in person.

The program has been around for 10 years and now our student data connects with the school district’s data, so we will be able to compare students who benefitted from Ready, Set, Read to other 3-5 year old students and see how they achieved on third grade reading and literacy assessments.

Our theme this year is “plant a seed and watch it grow.” As families read together, they are planting dreams and seeds for their children. It helps the child gain confidence as they grow up. Good seeds lead to healthy blossoms.

Children should see themselves and also learn about others different from themselves. We just purchased books that are bilingual in Arabic, Vietnamese and Spanish. Tagalog and Russian are next. We’ve added books on gender identity that break stereotypes. We want to continue to be more culturally responsive. This program is for everyone.”



Risa Hess is the Early Childhood Outreach Coordinator at Communities in Schools, which hosts the Ready, Set, Read program.

# ELEMENTARY SCHOOL THIRD GRADE READING

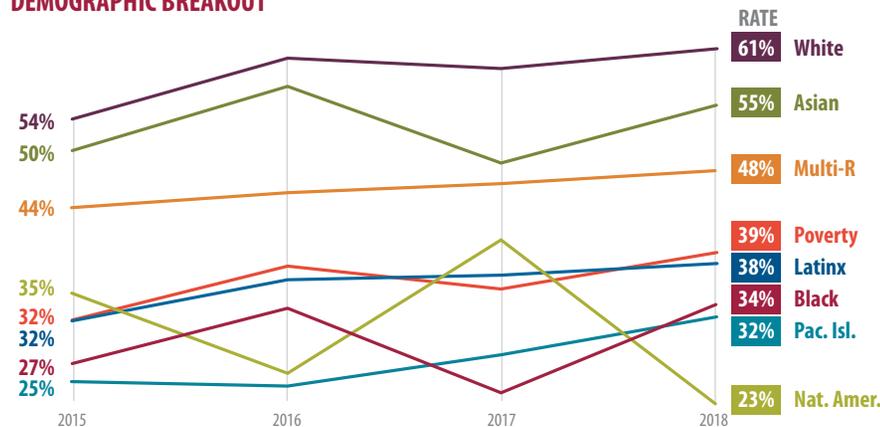
Reading and language literacy are foundational building blocks across all subjects as they are strong indicators of future student success. In Washington, third grade reading is tracked using the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) test. The SBAC applies computer adaptive technology to adjust the difficulty of questions based on student responses for more accurate measurement. Beyond literacy, the test requires students to demonstrate reasoning, comprehension, critical thinking, and their ability to identify and retain key details.

Overall, the percentage of Tacoma students passing the SBAC test continues to increase since its introduction in 2014-15. However, Tacoma lags behind the majority of Washington districts and the statewide average of 55.5 percent. There are dramatic year-by-year fluctuations within and between schools. Some variance is expected given each third grade class is a different group of students being tested, but may also help inform targeted interventions.

## Progress By Race and Poverty

Literacy rates continue to climb for almost all racial groups, but gaps between White students and students of color have widened. Literacy rates have declined for Native American students.\* While results have improved dramatically for Black students in the last year, the achievement gap has grown 2 percent since 2015. At the same time, poverty maintains a huge influence on third grade literacy rates, where a 27 percent gap between students in poverty and their more affluent peers lingers. Our community must continue to make targeted early interventions for the children most impacted and develop new strategies for reaching families in poverty.

## DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKOUT



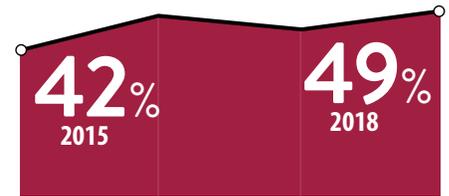
\*Rates tend to fluctuate dramatically for Native American students as they are the smallest TPS population. A single student change can show a significant shift. This is true for small populations across our indicators.

Data Source: Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

## DATA TRENDS

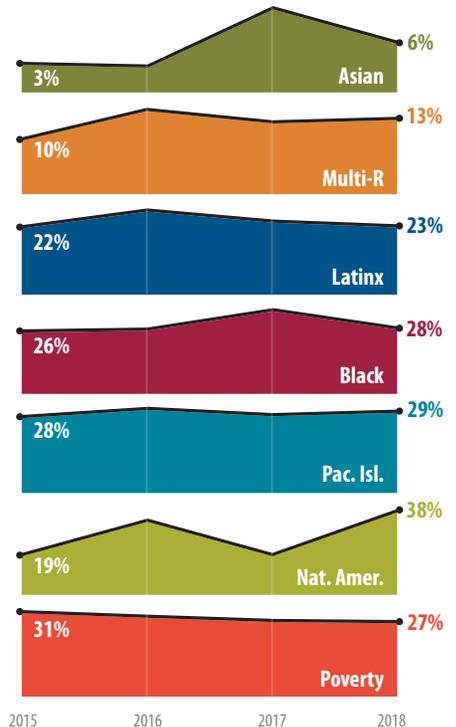
### BASELINE TO CURRENT

Third Grade Literacy (SBAC)



**AIMING HIGHER GOAL:** Increase the percentage of third graders meeting the Washington State standardized test for third grade literacy, now the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC).

**MULTI-YEAR GAPS** Represents the increase or decrease in the achievement gap between students of color and White students and between students in poverty and those not in poverty, baseline to current.



Note: Gap measures don’t perfectly match demographics due to rounding to the nearest percent.