

Literacy Report Sacramento County

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Not Reading at Grade-Level Correlated to Free & Reduced Price Meal Program Eligibility

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We all sense the connection between poverty and children not reading at grade-level and with the help of the Community Literacy Map, we have the data to prove these instincts. The Community Literacy Map, funded by Golden 1 Credit Union and developed by the Sacramento Public Library Foundation (Foundation), is a digital destination detailing the literacy inputs and outcomes for children attending public schools in Sacramento County.

The Foundation has been focused on growing the Sacramento Public Library's (Library) Summer Reading Program and at the same time the Library has been integrating the federal and state Summer Meals Service Program at 11 of their 28 branches. Because of this, we looked at the data layer showing the eligibility rates of the Free and Reduced Meals Program (FRMP) at each public school in relation to the English Language Arts (ELA) test scores. We ran a regression analysis (see resulting splatter chart at end of article) to see if there was a direct correlation between grade-level reading and FRMP eligibility. The results were definitive. There is a strong statistical correlation between children not reading at grade-level and children eligible for the FRMP. Children who are hungry are not able to focus on the task of reading, it is that simple.

Showing this data visually makes it easy to see that the schools and communities with the highest level of children not reading at grade-level are also the schools and communities with the highest rates of FRMP eligibility. Two elementary schools located in Arden Arcade, an area named by The Sacramento Bee in February 2018 as the community with the highest income inequality in California, reflects this correlation. Dyer Kelly Elementary School has 97% of their students not reading at grade-level and 96% of their students are eligible for FRMP. Neighboring James R. Cowan Fundamental Elementary, one of the top elementary schools in the Arden Arcade community and just 2.5 miles east of Dyer Kelly, has 37% of their students not reading at grade-level and 35% eligible for FRMP.

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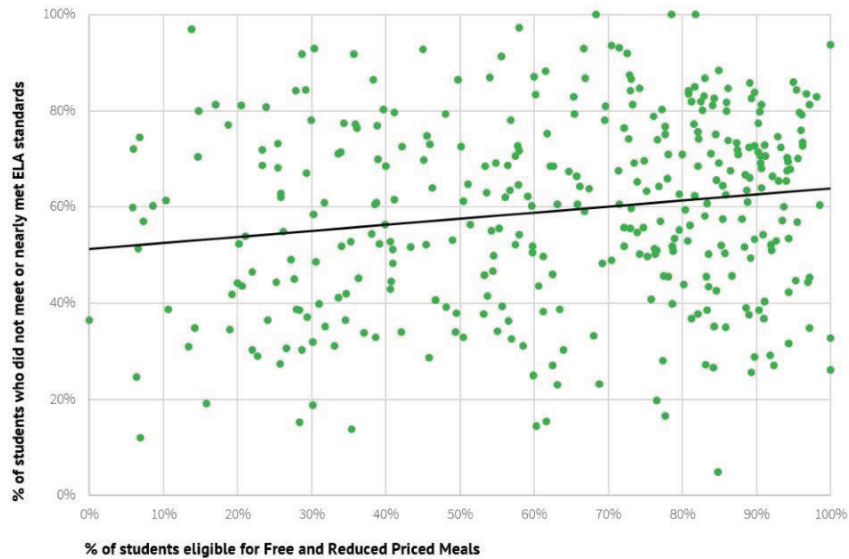


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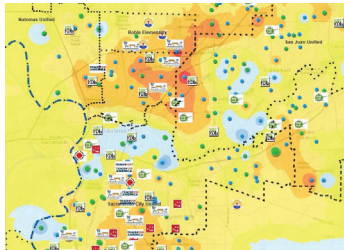
With the Community Literacy Map data, and resulting statistical analysis, we have statistical proof showing the connection between children who are not reading at grade-level and children who are hungry. If we are going to help all children achieve grade-level reading, we will need to make sure all children are getting the nutrition their bodies need too. We must feed the minds and bodies of children in tandem.

The more students who qualify for Free and Reduced Priced Meals, the more students who are not at grade-level reading (p=.002).

Graph is based on 2016/17 school year data for schools without missing data (n=356).



¹ Reese, Phillip. "The highest income inequality in California? Census suggests it's in Arden Arcade." *The Sacramento Bee* 18 Feb. 2018. Web. Regression Analysis Graph prepared by: LPC Consulting Associates, Inc.



The goal of the Sacramento County Community Literacy Map and the resulting annual 'Report Card' is to identify where literacy resources are needed most in Sacramento County. This is a community-wide effort to help ALL children achieve grade-level reading and writing.

Check out the Community Literacy Map yourself at www.communityliteracymap.org and learn about the kind of data we are gathering.

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