



ADVANCED
COLLABORATIVE SOLUTIONS

Scaling Achievement Teams to Transform Teaching and Learning in Lindsay Unified School District

Lindsay Unified School District
Lindsay, California

*How one former principal's
experience and success
with Achievement Teams led
to an inspiring district-wide
movement of improvement.*

DEMOGRAPHICS

Lindsay Unified School District (LUSD) is a small, rural public school district serving K-12 students in Lindsay, California, outside of Fresno. The district is comprised of the following schools: Washington Elementary School, Reagan Elementary School, Jefferson Elementary School, Lincoln Elementary School, Kennedy Elementary School, Roosevelt Elementary School, Lindsay High School, and John C. Cairns Continuation Community (an alternative education campus).

- 190 teachers (or “learning facilitators” as LUSD calls them)
- About 4,200 students
- Over 96% Hispanic/Latinx
- 34% English Learners
- 91% socioeconomically disadvantaged students
- 10% students with disabilities
- 86% eligible for free/reduced lunch (though the district supplies 100% of students with this service)

CHALLENGE

Before cultivating its current data-driven and learner-centered culture, powered in part by Achievement Teams, Lindsay Unified School District faced considerable challenges. Despite being a community full of dedicated and veteran teachers and supportive parents, academic outcomes were not meeting the desired standards. Numerous students were graduating from high school unable to read. The district ranked unfavorably in adult literacy and poverty levels, and it faced the uphill task of ensuring progress for learners who needed it most. **To enhance instruction and achievement**, Cinnamon Scheufele, Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction, along with her team, worked to **establish a culture of inquiry and data-driven instruction**. With Achievement Teams as a guiding framework, the district began to **fully adopt Achievement Teams across campuses** in an effort to **spread best practices, improve instruction, act more urgently on student performance data, and provide every student with the personalized learning they needed**.



An LUSD learning facilitator joyfully working with her eager students.

IMPLEMENTATION

Cinnamon Scheufele, drawing on her experience as a former principal and familiarity with Achievement Teams, spearheaded district-wide implementation. Reflecting on her 30-year tenure as an educator, having spent 24 of those years in LUSD, Scheufele remembers her experience as site principal taking over a struggling school. With single-digit proficiency in some cases, new principal Scheufele was on the hunt for practices that worked, and she found one by accident.

“Early into my principalship, I actually found Achievement Teams by accident. I went to visit a site in Clovis that was very similar to our district demographics. While on a site tour of this school, which had turned itself around, I saw a group in the corner of the library and asked, ‘What are they doing?’ The principal said, ‘You can go over and talk to them.’ They were in the middle of an Achievement Teams protocol. I spent time with them and said we need to find out more about this and bring it here. I pitched it to my boss, who said yes, and I called Steve. He came out



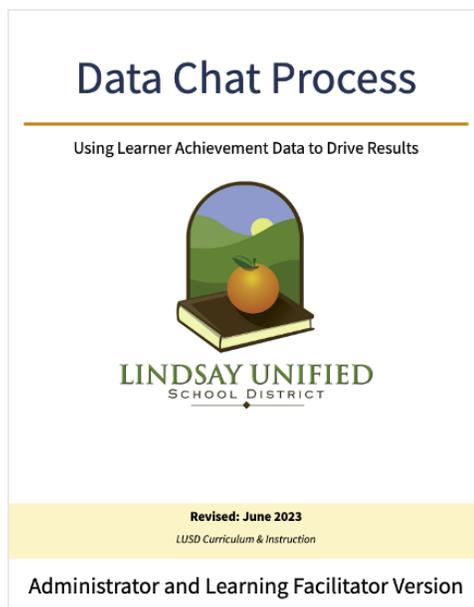
for some broad-scale trainings with lots of people. Some sites implemented and some didn't. My site is one that implemented. We implemented with true fidelity for several years and our trajectory went up and up until we became first in the district and stayed in first place for a decade."

Fast forward to 2018 when Scheufele moved into a district leadership role as Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction. She began leading the essential charge of enhancing instruction and achievement across all eight school sites and knew Achievement Teams would play an essential role. Recognizing the framework's potential to address district-wide challenges, Scheufele worked closely with Steve Ventura, Advanced Collaborative Solutions' founder and lead PD consultant, to ensure a thoughtful and comprehensive rollout for the entire district.

The implementation involved systematic training and certification of administrators and teachers across all eight sites. Providing the necessary notice and training, Scheufele made Achievement Teams a district-wide non-negotiable in the 2023-24 school year. This shift marked the first time that all sites in the district would run Achievement Teams concurrently, fostering a more cohesive and standardized approach. Additionally, coherence teams from each site received training to ensure consistency and alignment across the district. Despite challenges like turnover and mixed commitment initially, the district moved forward, with the ultimate goal of fostering a data-driven culture. Achievement Teams was officially codified into the district's practices and policies in their "Data Chat Process Manual."

TARGET OUTCOMES

- Improve academic outcomes for students across all grade levels
- Enhance collaboration among teachers (or "learning facilitators" as they are called in LUSD)
- Refine instructional strategies to meet the diverse needs of students
- Scale the success achieved in individual classrooms and schools, creating a unified district-wide approach to teaching and learning
- Increase the frequency and effectiveness of student data collection and response

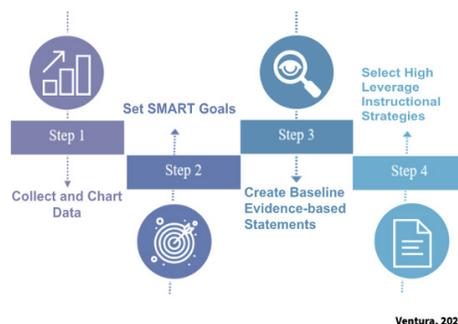


6. The Role of Achievement Teams

Achievement Teams are a collaborative process among learning facilitators (LFs) that focuses on utilizing short-cycle assessment techniques to enhance the impact of their teaching. These teams meet regularly to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching strategies in addition to the knowledge that students have acquired.

The primary emphasis of Achievement Teams is on individual learners rather than programs, fostering disciplined collaboration to enhance teaching, learning, and leadership. This process entails identifying precise and measurable performance objectives and implementing high leverage research-based strategies to enhance learning and learner achievement. By encouraging LF collaboration, organizations can effectively and practically pursue ongoing improvement. (Achievement Teams, 2022).

This model explains how teams work collaboratively to use data to drive instructional decision-making, which ultimately results in achievement gains.



These images are lifted from the Data Chat Process Manual detailing LUSD's innovative "Data Chat Process," showcasing just how committed the district remains to the Achievement Teams framework.





Steve and Michelle Ventura collaborating with Lindsay Unified School District leaders during their "Train the Trainer" event for the district.

“What I love about [Achievement Teams] is that it’s a structure that can be turned into a system, and once something is systematic, it’s much easier for learning facilitators to grasp and collaboration is enhanced. Versus a typical data meeting that may go off track, this is very specific. The other thing I love is you’re not waiting months [to see results]. We want to see how this is going two or three weeks from now. It gives us a way to measure effectiveness. Student motivation is affected when they do well.”

- Cinnamon Scheufele,
Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction for Lindsay Unified School District

RESULTS

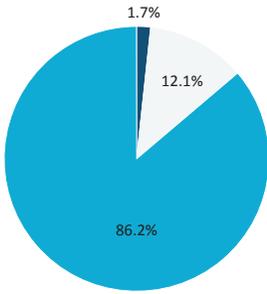
The implementation of Achievement Teams has already yielded positive progress and promising results in Lindsay Unified School District. Some key outcomes include:

- **Consistent Protocol Implementation Across Sites:** For the first time, all eight sites in the district have adopted Achievement Teams. This move ensures a standardized approach, promoting collaboration and data-driven decision-making.
- **Timely Data-Driven Adjustments:** Achievement Teams’ focus on short cycles and high-impact instruction strategies allows for timely adjustments to instruction and quicker interventions for struggling students. Teachers now identify and address learning gaps early in the learning process, contributing to improved student outcomes across campuses.
- **Student Academic Growth:** Across numerous Achievement Teams cycles in the district, teachers report seeing notable growth between pre- and post-data cycle assessments. This has led to improved student performance overall.

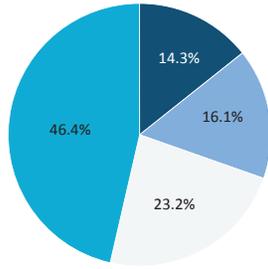


Roosevelt Elementary

GRADE 2



PRE-ASSESSMENT RESULTS

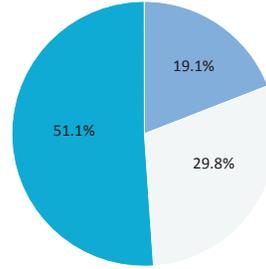


POST-ASSESSMENT RESULTS

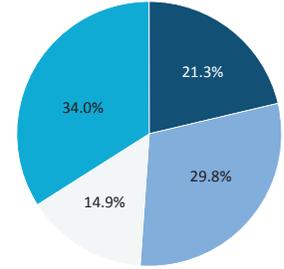
- Pre-assessment date: September 25, 2023; Post-assessment date: October 29, 2023
- The original SMART goal: "The percent of 2nd grade students scoring proficient or higher in OA.2 (fluently add and subtract within 20 using mental strategies) will increase from 2% to 14% as measured by CFA #1 on October 29, 2023."
- In one month and one Achievement Teams cycle, the percentage of students scoring proficient in OA.2 increased by 28%, going from 2% to 30%, **exceeding** the intended student growth goal.

Roosevelt Elementary

GRADE 3



PRE-ASSESSMENT RESULTS

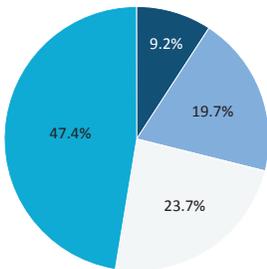


POST-ASSESSMENT RESULTS

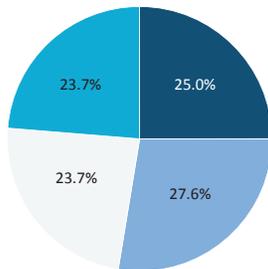
- Pre-assessment date: August 24, 2023; Post-assessment date: September 15, 2023
- The original SMART goal: "The percent of 3rd grade students scoring proficient or higher in NBT.2 (fluently add and subtract within 1,000) will increase from 19% to 49%, as measured by School City NBT.2 administered on September 15, 2023."
- In only 3 weeks and one Achievement Teams cycle, the percentage of students scoring proficient in NBT.2 increased by 32%, going from 19% to 51%, **exceeding** the intended student growth goal.

Roosevelt Elementary

GRADE 4



PRE-ASSESSMENT RESULTS

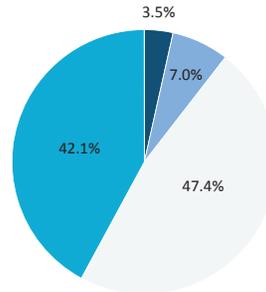


POST-ASSESSMENT RESULTS

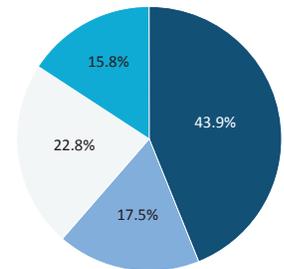
- Pre-assessment date: September 22, 2023; Post-assessment date: September 29, 2023
- The original SMART goal: "The percent of 4th grade students scoring proficient or higher in NBT.4 (fluently add and subtract multiple digit whole numbers using standard algorithm) will increase from 29% to 53% administered on September 29, 2023."
- In just one week and one Achievement Teams cycle, the percentage of students scoring proficient in NBT.4 increased by 24%, going from 29% to 53%, meeting the intended student growth goal.

Roosevelt Elementary

GRADE 8



PRE-ASSESSMENT RESULTS



POST-ASSESSMENT RESULTS

- Pre-assessment date: September 5, 2023; Post-assessment date: September 15, 2023
- The original SMART goal: "The percent of 8th grade students scoring proficient or higher in EE1 (know and apply the properties of integer exponents to generate equivalent numerical expressions) will increase from 11% to 58% administered on September 15, 2023."
- In just 8 instructional days and one Achievement Teams cycle, the percentage of students scoring proficient in EE1 Exponents increased by 50%, going from 11% to 61%, exceeding the intended student growth goal.



The learner growth reflected in these data sets tells a story of effective learning facilitation and a commitment to continuous improvement, with the Achievement Teams protocol remaining a key lever in achieving that growth. In addition to improvement in academic outcomes, Achievement Teams have also led to stronger instruction, learning community culture, and collaboration in the district.

- **Enhanced Collaboration and Instruction:** For the first time, all eight sites in the district have adopted Achievement Teams. This move ensures a standardized approach, promoting collaboration and data-driven decision-making.
- **Leveraging Leadership:** Achievement Teams' focus on short cycles and high-impact instruction strategies allows for timely adjustments to instruction and quicker interventions for struggling students. Teachers now identify and address learning gaps early in the learning process, contributing to improved student outcomes across campuses.

MOVING FORWARD

Lindsay Unified School District has become a beacon of data-driven instruction and personalized learning, so much so that the district will be hosting numerous visitors and observers across the school year who are curious to learn about and replicate Lindsay's effective practices. With Achievement Teams now embedded as a district-wide practice, Lindsay Unified School District anticipates continued growth and positive impacts. The structured and collaborative approach to data analysis and instructional planning is expected to lead to further improvements in academic outcomes, increased teacher collaboration, and a more comprehensive data-driven culture. As the district recovers from the disruptions caused by the pandemic, the ongoing implementation of Achievement Teams stands as a key pillar in Lindsay's commitment to providing quality education and shaping successful futures for its learners.



Learning Director, Mat Newcomb, during a "Train the Trainer" session for LUSD administrators presenting on the power of teacher collective efficacy

ABOUT ADVANCED COLLABORATIVE SOLUTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENT TEAMS

Advanced Collaborative Solutions is a professional development and consulting group that provides consulting services to schools, districts, and non-profit organizations globally specializing in instructional leadership, collaboration, assessment, and goal setting. Achievement Teams™ is an experiential and effective four-step protocol developed by ACS centered around Collective Teacher Efficacy — a shared belief that educators can have a greater impact on student achievement when they work together. Within Achievement Teams, educators look at student data to make decisions about instruction and teaching practices that need to shift to best meet student needs. Achievement Teams ensure continuous improvement and better student outcomes by providing a structure for teachers to collaboratively reflect, identify areas of need, and select optimal instructional approaches to respond to those needs.



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