

CASE STUDY

Students Lead Literacy Program Buy-In at Valley View Leadership Academy





At Valley View Leadership Academy in South Phoenix, students are excited about literacy like never before.

Valley View, a Title I school, is part of Roosevelt School District 66. The school serves close to 600 K–8 students, 99% of whom are on free or reduced lunch. Eighty-three percent of the students are Hispanic and many of their families are migrants from Mexico and the surrounding areas.

As a Leader In Me school, Valley View encourages students to own their learning. Leader In Me is an educational model based on Stephen Covey’s “Seven Habits of Successful People,” that aims to equip students with the leadership and life skills necessary to thrive in today’s world.

So, when Valley View’s administrators rolled out a schoolwide literacy implementation, students stepped up to own their progress and meet their goals. The student buy-in and self-driven growth has clear results: Many Valley View students are outperforming the rest of the district in the programs, and the percentage of Emergent Bilingual students who reclassified (from English Learner to Fluent English Proficient) during the last two years was nearly double the state average.

Where It All Began

When the 2022–2023 school year began, educators at Roosevelt School District, including Valley View, were using multiple reading and intervention programs, including an intensive Tier 3 program. That year, the district also rolled out a comprehensive Lexia® portfolio, but only for English Language Learners. At Valley View and other schools, Emergent Bilingual students started with [Lexia English Language Development™](#), and depending on their grade level, either [Lexia® Core5® Reading](#) or [Lexia® PowerUp Literacy®](#).

Both Larry LaPrise and Jessica Zimmerman, Valley View’s principal and instructional coach, saw the benefits and expansion potential right away. “The students were excited about using Lexia. The teachers liked it because it was low prep. It was ready. It was at their level. It was engaging,” Zimmerman said.

The ease of Lexia’s real-time progress monitoring and tailored resources made Core5 and PowerUp stand out as teacher-friendly literacy solutions above and beyond the other programs in use, particularly with interventions. “With our Tier 3 program, there was so much work for teachers,”

Zimmerman said. Lexia was much more user-friendly, and more importantly, the school was already seeing results.

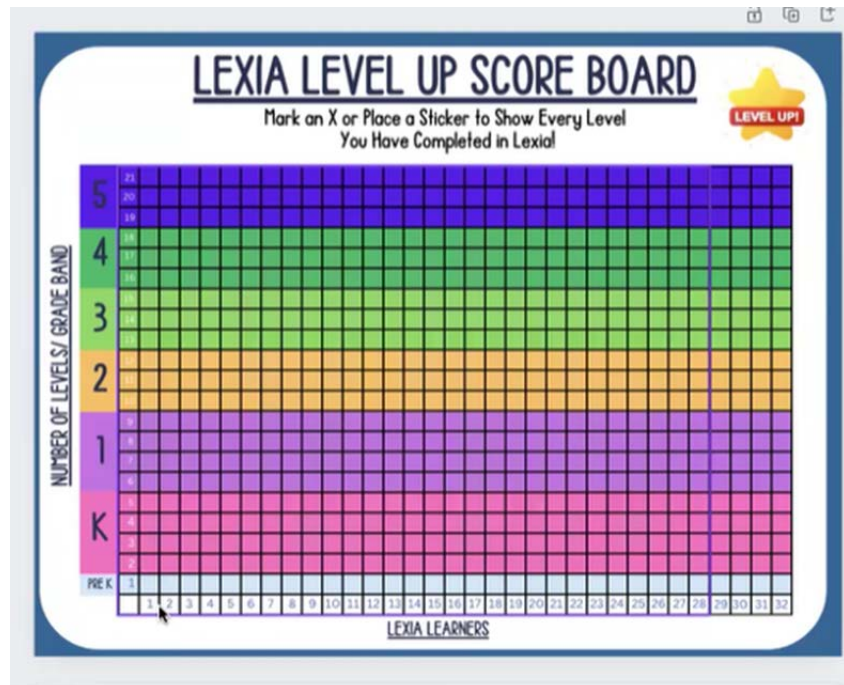
She recalls reaching out to district leadership with LaPrise, saying, “Wow, this is really great for our English Language Learners. Can we also use it for our students that are requiring remediation, and, in fact, can we use it for just intervention, because it meets them where they are?”

District leaders agreed, allowing a few schools, including Valley View to pilot Lexia as a resource for additional students. “We saw the students and classes that were using the programs were showing growth,” Zimmerman said.

Expanding Schoolwide

Zimmerman and LaPrise were excited about the results they saw and planned out how to implement Lexia schoolwide. “We do things big at Valley View!” Zimmerman said.

Key to a successful implementation was the coaching support from Lexia. “It was very comprehensive. They were very helpful with navigating the programs and helping us as a school set goals,” Zimmerman added.



At the primary grades, every teacher tracks student progress monthly, monitoring both units and levels gained in Core5.

“Teachers are very excited about being able to support their students and tracking where they are, within the myLexia® dashboard,” Zimmerman said. She also used the various tracking systems extensively, showing teachers what was available and expanding on what Lexia offers by creating a physical tracker with little clips that can be moved every time a student levels up.

Celebrating Success for Student Buy-In

While the teachers and administrators can see the students’ growth in real time in myLexia, LaPrise is proud to see how the students are owning their literacy progress, and loves being a part of celebrating their success. “Expanding Lexia as a schoolwide program really made students, especially our junior high, get on board,” LaPrise said. “I knew we had that buy-in when a student went up to one of their

teachers and said, 'Hey, I need five more units. Please give me some time on Lexia.'"

One of the ways Valley View educators celebrate success with Lexia is the 'Lucky Lexia Wheel' that students have the opportunity to spin when they meet their goals. Based on units gained or levels gained, the educators offer students different ways to celebrate success. Zimmerman added, "They could win different things like an ice cream party, or 'dress down day,' or 'buy lunch for the principal.' The kids loved it."

Zimmerman became known as the "Lucky Lexia Lady," and students would rush by her on the way to the bus yelling, "I'm on level five!" or "I just got 10 units today!"

To celebrate by grade level, school leaders also organized larger rewards, like a class pizza party or grade-level barbeque.

The schoolwide implementation and goals LaPrise put in place led to enthusiastic buy-in from students—and the enthusiasm was contagious. "The buy-in from students really made our Lexia implementation take off and then because of the engagement from students, teachers became excited, too," Zimmerman said.

Secondary Struggles

But not everyone was onboard immediately. Zimmerman noticed that while primary-age students were using Lexia frequently, the programs weren't being used consistently in the older grades. Sometimes it was an issue of junior high educators not knowing how to support students missing foundational skills, but other times students weren't being given the opportunity or the time they needed to succeed.





Zimmerman helped teachers support students at different grade levels with individual challenges—so they could keep students moving forward without their confidence taking a hit. PowerUp’s age-appropriate and engaging content was key, as was Lexia’s individualized student learning pathways.

To help the junior high teachers align with the schoolwide implementation, LaPrise instituted “Lexia Friday.” “This is a schoolwide goal—we have to have systems in place so that kids can be successful,” Zimmerman said. “We needed to give them that time for everyone to be successful.”

“Lexia Friday” helped keep Lexia top of mind for all teachers schoolwide so every Friday, time was set aside for Lexia work. It reminded teachers to build Lexia into their weekly activities—such as offering it as a 15-minute cool down after recess for a perfect reset activity.

At Valley View, where students don’t necessarily have tech or connectivity at home, it was important to ensure they were given the opportunity to do their Lexia work at school; and “Lexia Friday” helped with that.

Zimmerman tracked the progress of students in each classroom, and, for those who were having a tough time getting off the ground, she modeled how students should approach the work. She had them look at their progress and jot down whether they accomplished their goals for the day. “The teachers got to see, ‘Oh, it’s not this big, inundating, scary process. It’s actually really simple because Lexia has all of those tools built in,’” she said.

In education in general, Zimmerman notes, K–5 educators are familiar with remediation, monitoring, and adjusting instructional plans. Junior high typically doesn’t have the same structure. “So, we had to build the capacity of our teachers at our school site, to adjust their instructional plans to meet the kids where they were,” Zimmerman said.

Zimmerman emphasized the importance of administrator buy-in when it comes to accountability and support as well. “I have coaching friends at other schools who are trying to lead the charge alone, and they’re not successful because there’s not that accountability piece and overall support from administration. You have to have it,” she said.

Impressive Results

LaPrise and Zimmerman saw impressive results in both unit and level progress. At Valley View, they set goals for K–5 students to complete 30 units in Core5 each month, and for sixth–eighth grade students, the goal is 45 units in PowerUp. “We made a school goal and to have 75% meet it. That’s huge,” Zimmerman said.

For Emergent Bilingual students, in particular, reclassification is a major milestone. Statewide, 10%–11% of students reclassify with the Arizona English Language Learner Assessment (AZELLA). At Valley View, the school average is 18% reclassification in 2024 and 20% in 2023.

“Before Lexia, our ELA scores were stagnant. Now, we hit our growth numbers every year. Our growth is outstanding and we’re hoping that continued work on the platform will lead us to seeing proficiency match the growth in reading,” LaPrise said.

Zimmerman added, “Around 25% of our population was three or more grade levels below. With schoolwide intervention, pairing SIPPS and Lexia, we got that number down to 13% in a year.”

Glowing Feedback and Pressing Forward

Given the positive results of Valley View’s Lexia journey during the past two years, LaPrise and Zimmerman are leading the charge for the district and they are optimistic about where they’re headed.

“We’re seeing some amazing growth with Lexia, and if we’ve done our jobs right it will sustain long after,” Zimmerman said.

As they look ahead, LaPrise and Zimmerman are also excited about their school’s Lexia® LETRS® professional learning program. Administrators and teachers are both working through the course, which provides the knowledge needed to become experts in literacy instruction based on the science of reading. LaPrise in particular is optimistic about how the knowledge will continue to improve literacy efforts across Valley View.

“We’re excited,” LaPrise said. “Our children deserve everything we can give them every single day.”

Their plan is set and they’re staying the course with a program that is inspiring rave reviews—and making a meaningful difference for Valley View students.

“Other apps have come our way, and we’ve said, ‘Don’t worry about it—we’re using Lexia,’” Zimmerman said. “Are we pivoting? No, we’re not pivoting. We’re using Lexia.”

Why Educators Love Lexia

1. Lexia meets students where they are.

“That’s what I like about Lexia. It meets the child where they’re at. Our vision is to focus instruction, to increase student achievement. So, if you’re truly focusing instruction, you’re not teaching to the middle. You’re teaching to the high, medium, and the low. And we know for a fact, during Lexia time, each child is actually at their level. And that’s the beauty of it.”

–Larry LaPrise, Principal

2. Easy and intuitive real-time progress reporting

“Lexia’s reports are so easy and tell you so much. Lexia reporting is truly amazing. It’s intuitive.”

–Jessica Zimmerman, Instructional Coach

“If the principal can figure it out, it’s easy.”

–Larry LaPrise, Principal

3. Clear skill and grade-level progression and predictions for goal-setting

“It’s so explicit on the standards. It’s so explicit on the students’ skills and growth and trajectory for grade levels, for the rate and accuracy in which they’re practicing specific down to the sound that they’re working.”

“When you’re sitting in a data meeting and we’re talking about a goal that we’re setting, we can explicitly set a goal based on what practice we’ve seen that they’ve needed, based on data that we can pull from Lexia.”

–Jessica Zimmerman, Instructional Coach

4. Resources for targeted small-group and individual practice

“Lexia has a lot of resources within that hub. So, it has the ‘I can’ statements that can then help us generate some smart goals, and then in the Resources section, it has all of those pieces by domain. So, if it’s a vocabulary goal, I can go to that vocabulary section and pull vocabulary resources.”

“Within Lexia, within that resource hub, it’s just a literal goldmine of resources that we can use to then support our students.”

–Jessica Zimmerman, Instructional Coach

5. Student ownership of learning

“What Lexia does really beautifully is support with that student goal, the student ownership piece of, ‘I’m tracking my own goal. I’m writing down what I’m going to do, how I’m going to grow.’”

–Jessica Zimmerman, Instructional Coach

“With these systems, Lexia, in place, children are owning their learning.”

–Larry LaPrise, Principal

6. Results

“Our growth is amazing. It just goes to show the systems we have in place are impacting our students with those foundational skills that they need, and I know we can absolutely attribute that to Lexia.”

–Jessica Zimmerman, Instructional Coach

“Seventy-five percent of our student body met the Lexia goal.”

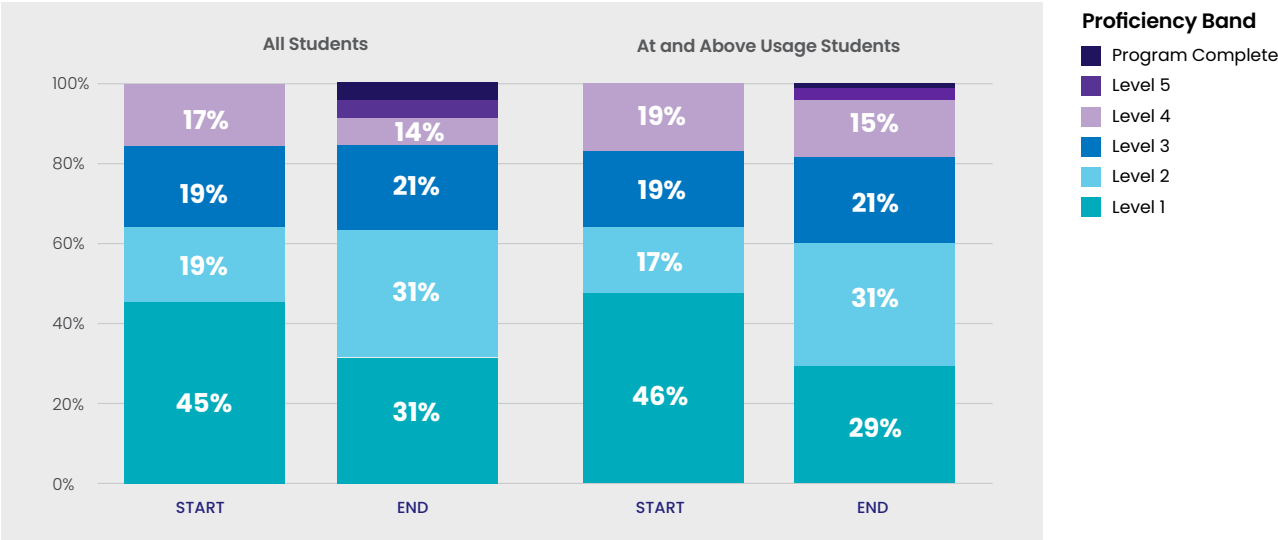
–Larry LaPrise, Principal

Student Progress Highlights From 2023–2024

During the 2023–2024 school year, Valley View students outperformed the rest of the district in progress measures across all Lexia programs—Lexia English, Core5, and PowerUp.

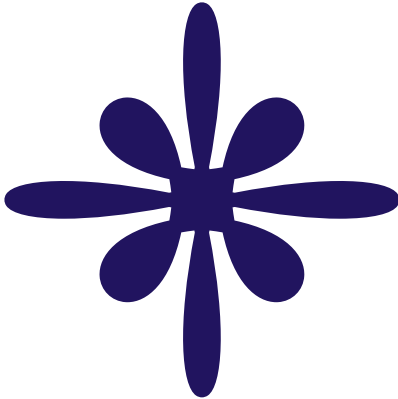
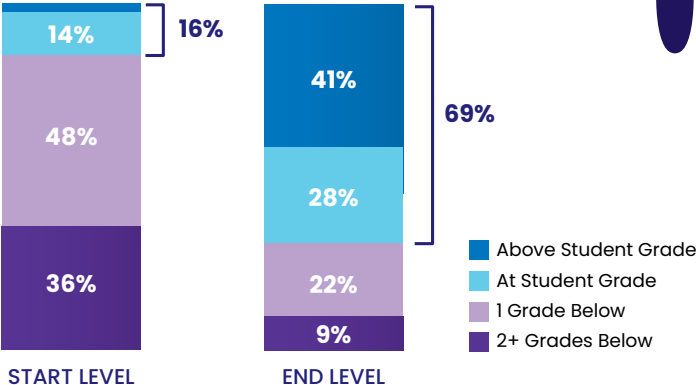


Nineteen percent of ELL students at Valley View have moved up at least one proficiency band of in-program material in Lexia English.



87% of Valley View K–5 students using Core5 advanced at least one grade level of material, and 69% of students ended the year in or above grade-level material.

Students Meeting Usage (277)



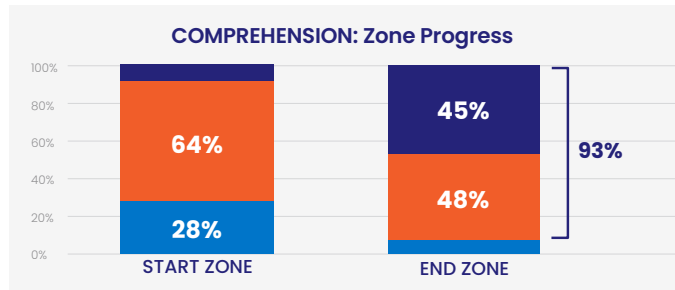
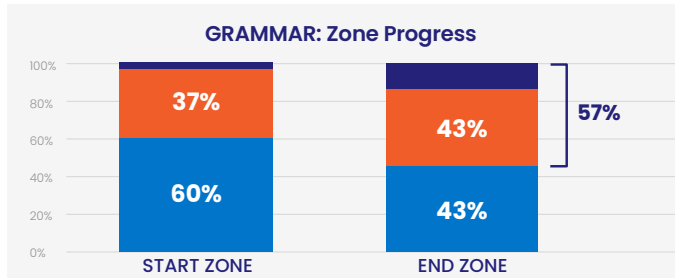
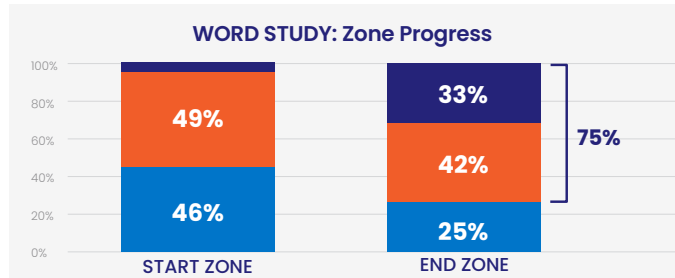
The number of students working on advanced skills across all three PowerUp strands more than tripled by the end of the year, with 93% of students ending the year in intermediate or advanced skills in the Comprehension strand.

In particular, 100% of students who met usage moved up at least two zones.

See what Lexia can do for your district.

2022–2023 PowerUp Zone progress by Strand for all students, regardless of usage

■ Foundational ■ Intermediate ■ Advanced





Lexia®, a Cambium Learning Group company, is a leader in science of reading-based solutions. For 40 years, the company has focused on pre-K–12 literacy and today provides solutions for every student and educator. With a complete offering of professional learning, curriculum, and embedded assessment, Lexia helps more learners read, write, and speak with confidence. For more information, visit lexialearning.com.

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