

## Case Study

# A Districtwide Commitment to High-Quality Literacy Instruction

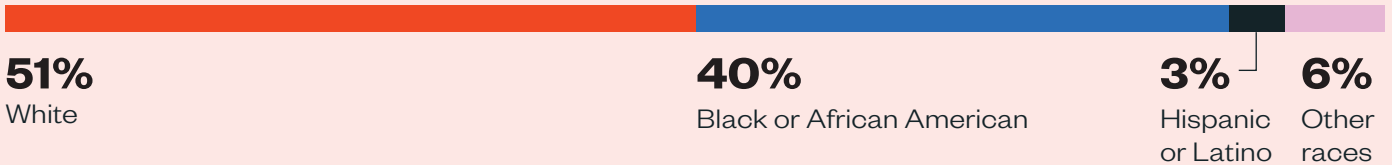


Natchitoches Parish School District in Louisiana serves students across

Grades

**3–12**

**83%** of students from low-income families.



### Background

The district has been nationally recognized, including in a recent [NPR article](#), for improvements in reading performance. As part of its literacy strategy, the district implemented Louisiana’s ELA Guidebooks curriculum across grades 3–12 to strengthen standards alignment, coherence, and instructional rigor.



### The Challenge

Prior to fully implementing ELA Guidebooks, Natchitoches Parish faced inconsistencies in literacy instruction:

- Daily instruction and assessments were not aligned to the depth and rigor of grade-level standards.
- Limited coherence across lessons and grade levels resulted in uneven development of knowledge and skills and variability in instructional rigor.



Louisiana Guidebooks have strengthened literacy instruction in Natchitoches Parish. The organization of sections and embedded section diagnostics help our teachers align lessons to the specific knowledge and skills students need to succeed on the culminating writing task. The Lesson Look-Fors provide clear guidance to ensure instruction targets the standards making planning more intentional and driving measurable student growth across our classrooms.

**-Andrea Penrod**  
District ELA Teaching & Learning Specialist

In its efforts to establish a well-aligned, vertically coherent approach to ensure equitable, high-quality literacy instruction across schools, the District continues to partner with Education Elements.



## How We Helped

In partnership with the District, Education Elements supported implementation by:



Providing high-quality printed ELA Guidebooks for grades 3–12 for several years



Supporting the district's transition to the updated Guidebooks 9–12 in 2021 and in grades 3–8 during the 2025–26 school year



Managing production and fulfillment of materials to ensure consistent, implementation-ready resources

Guidebooks offered vertically aligned unit structures grounded in knowledge and skills, with daily lessons intentionally aligned to culminate in writing tasks and cold read assessments. Materials included student handouts, unit readers, and daily lesson supports aligned to grade-level expectations.



## The Results

Since implementing Guidebooks, Natchitoches Parish has recorded measurable growth. From 2021 to the present, students scoring on grade level or above on the LEAP assessment (Grades 3–English II) increased from 36% to 45%. In one elementary classroom, students who typically struggled cited specific passages to support their thinking. Listed here are a few other success indicators:



### Stronger Standards Alignment

Improved alignment to grade-level standards, particularly in writing instruction



### Increased Student Engagement

More structured partner discussions, fluency routines, and evidence-based responses



### Improved Teacher Collaboration

Weekly job-embedded professional development, cluster meetings led by master teachers, and shared analysis of student work



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