Project Goals (p. 3)

1 — Solicit ideas for what the community *has done, is doing,* or *can do* to help children, youth, and adults in Alachua County achieve their full potential to read, write, and communicate.

2 — Describe Alachua County's *existing needs* and possible improvements to meet those needs.

3 — Create *specific recommendations* that, if acted upon, can promote literacy proficiency from birth through adulthood in Alachua County.

4 — Provide a *comprehensive list* of organizations providing literacy-related programs, services, and resources in Alachua County.
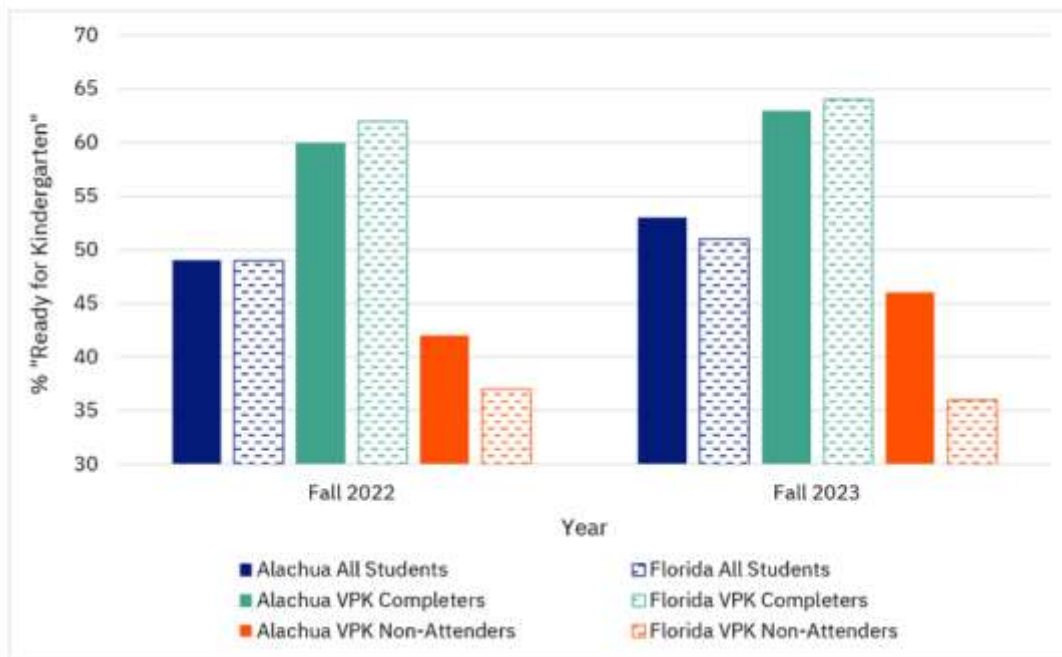
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Overview of Literacy Needs Assessment Activities (p. 4)

Table 1. *Literacy Needs Assessment Outreach and Activities*

Activity	Number
Interviews	**74**
Elected Officials	9
ACPS District Staff	9
ACPS School Principals	3
ACPS Educators	2
Committee Organizations	12
Community Organizations	39
Focus Group Participants	**157**
Family Members	74
Community Members	42
ACPS Educators and District Staff	41
Survey Completers	**1,122**
Family Members	740
Community Members	188
Students	37
ACPS Educators and District Staff	157
Community Events	**11**
Classroom Visits	**3**

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Kindergarten Readiness (p. 30)

Figure 8. *Percent of Students "Ready for Kindergarten" Based on FAST Scores at Kindergarten Entry, including by VPK, Alachua County, Fall 2022 and Fall 2023*


Legend:
- Alachua All Students
- Florida All Students
- Alachua VPK Completers
- Florida VPK Completers
- Alachua VPK Non-Attenders
- Florida VPK Non-Attenders

Reading on Grade Level by End of Third Grade (p. 34)

Figure 10. *Third Grade Reading (At or Above Grade Level) by Student Race/Ethnicity, Alachua and Florida, 2020-2021 through 2023-2024*
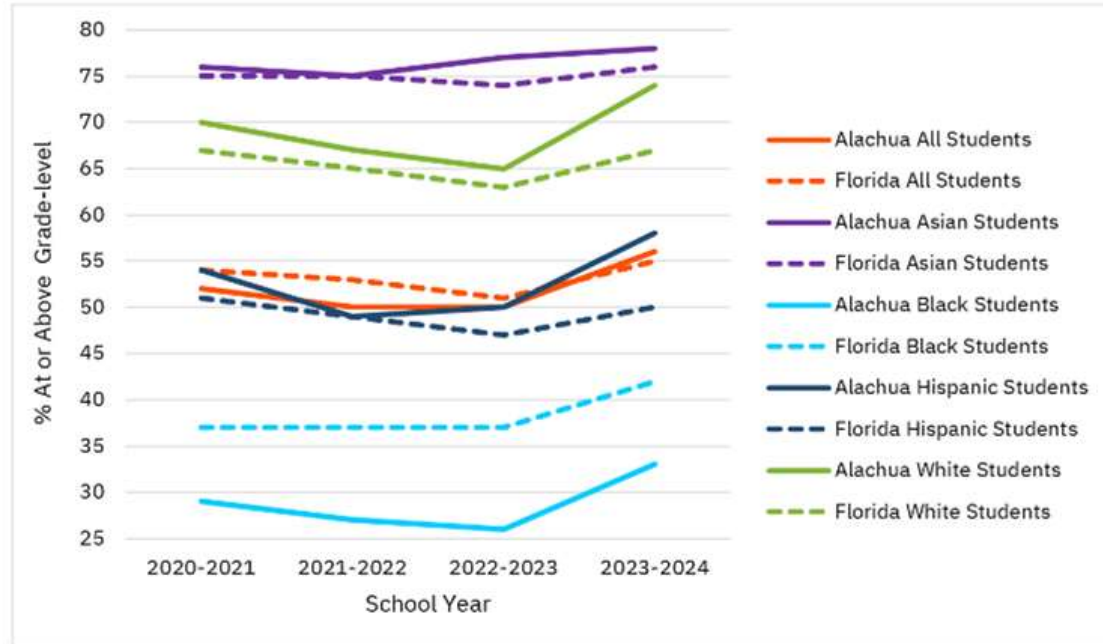
Survey Results: Family and Community Members (p. 60)

Figure 26. *Percent of Respondents, by Respondent Type, Who "Agreed" or "Strongly Agreed" About* **Children and Youth** *Having Necessary Literacy Skills To:*
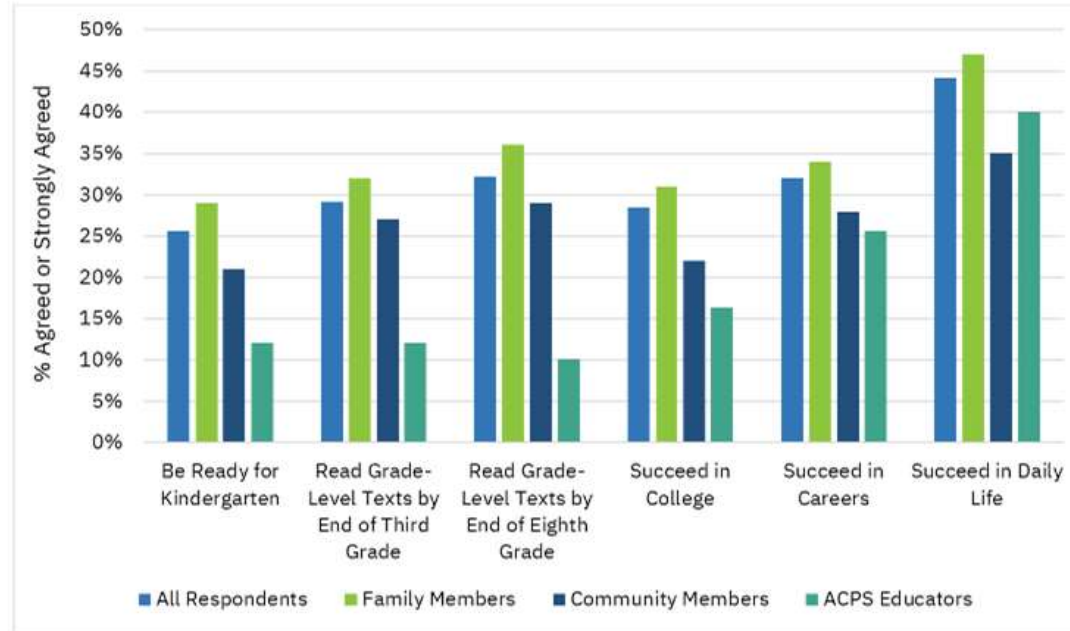
Survey Results: ACPS Educators and District Staff (p. 67)

Figure 33. *Percent of ACPS Elementary Educators Who "Agreed" or "Strongly Agreed" That Their School's Literacy Programs Helps Students Learn How to Read or Write*
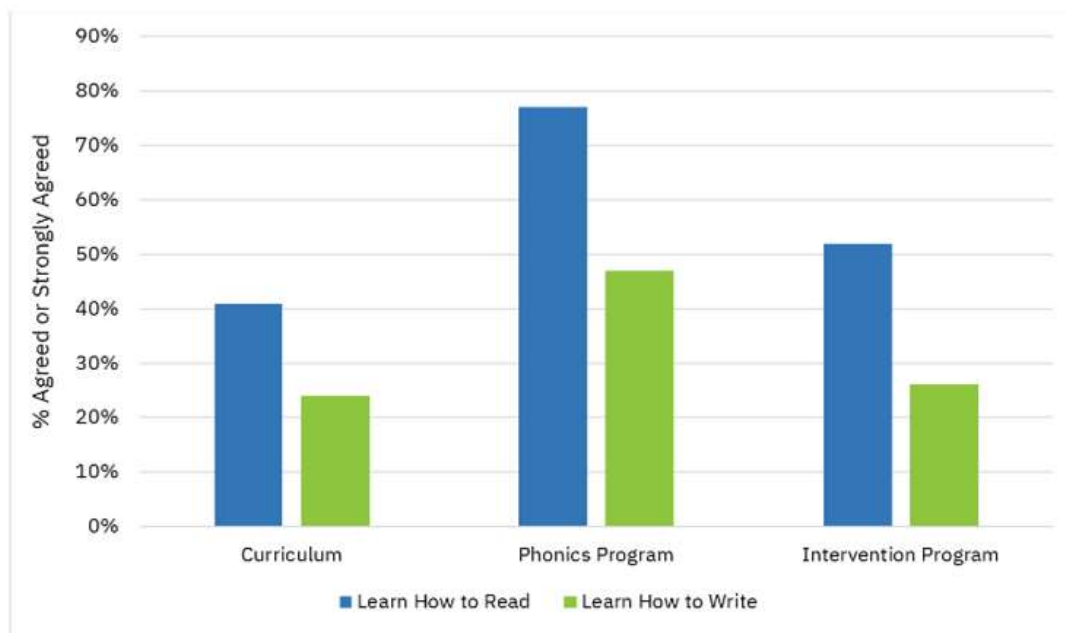
Teacher Needs (p. 81)

Key Concerns:

- Inadequate training on new curriculum tools and assessment platforms, especially for new teachers.
- Lack of professional development on effective teaching practices, curricula, and practical tools teachers are expected to implement.
- Need for mentorship and peer collaboration.

"Many teachers are left to figure out instructional strategies on their own, which isn't sustainable."

– ACPS Educator

Organization Needs (p. 88)

"More funding would allow us to expand our literacy initiatives and offer high-quality resources to our students."

– Staff at an Alachua Community Organization

"Better resource allocation can help us address the specific literacy needs of our students more effectively."

– Staff at an Alachua Community Organization

Recommendations (p. 103)

1 Enhanced Awareness and Communication

2 Focused Support

3 Expanded Professional Learning

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1. Enhanced Awareness and Communication (pp. 104-107)

→ Coordinate existing resources by building awareness within *organizations* and within the *community*
  - ◆ Name a central organization to serve as the linking mechanism between organizations; fund staff member(s) to coordinate county-wide literacy efforts
  - ◆ Allocate funding for staff member(s) to create and maintain a centralized website and print materials that serve as a resource hub alerting Alachua County residents about existing programs, opportunities, and events

→ Use public dollars wisely
  - ◆ Require organizations to show targeted literacy impacts to receive public funding
  - ◆ Infuse "fun" events with education - book giveaways, accessible resources to learn how to build language and literacy skills

2. Focused Support (pp. 108-112)

→ Start early! Increase public investments in key early learning and intervention organizations to pay long-term dividends

→ Provide ongoing evidence-based training for healthcare, education, and community providers serving multilingual learners, Black students, students experiencing poverty, and students with disabilities. Training topics would include the following:

- ◆ Knowledge about how children best learn how to read and write
- ◆ How to implement rigorous and systematic reading instruction
- ◆ Understanding of the assets brought by each group
- ◆ High expectations for attendance and learning

3. Expanded Professional Learning (pp. 113-118)

→ Early learning providers, staff at community organizations, and ACPS educators all need targeted professional learning in key topics:

- ◆ Providing evidence-based practices and strategies during reading instruction and support
- ◆ Improving implementation of existing programs and technologies
- ◆ Pacing and aligning instruction across grade levels to intensify learning
- ◆ Developing a culture of data-driven decision making at all levels, including expanding access to data within and across organizations

→ Other opportunities include the following:

- ◆ Enhanced mentorship and collaboration at all levels
- ◆ Increased opportunities for coaching
- ◆ Better services for students with disabilities

Next Steps (p. 120)

Figure 37. *Next Steps for Alachua County Literacy Improvements*

- Develop comprehensive plan
- Secure funding
- Support high-fidelity implementation of evidence-based programming
- Evaluate progress through data-informed decision making

Comprehensive Literacy Needs Assessment

Children's Trust of Alachua County Next Steps and Recommendations

April 7, 2025

Phase 2: Next Steps and Recommendation

Phase 2

Developing Comprehensive Plan

Phase 3

Secure Funding

Secure Supports

Implementation

Phase 4

Evaluation

Phase 2: Next Steps and Recommendation

Next Step

- Contract with Consultant
- Literacy Plan Workshop
- Develop plan

Time Frame

Estimate
3–5 months

Community Partners

- Library
- County/City Gov't
- ELC & ECS4Kids
- School District
- Community
- Housing