

Literacy Outcomes Report

Reading Assessment Data • SFSD • 2019–2025

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More than half of SFSD students read below grade level — despite a 22% increase in district spending over the same period. This document presents the outcomes data and Stuart Willett’s plan to reach 90% of students reading at grade level within four years.

>50%

SFSD students reading below grade level

+22%

Budget growth since 2019 during this same period

90%

Willett’s target: grade-level readers in 4 years

THE ACCOUNTABILITY ARGUMENT

If a business grew its budget 22% and its product got worse, the board of directors would ask hard questions. Then they would make changes.

The product of a school district is student learning. Over half of SFSD students cannot read at grade level. That number has not meaningfully improved despite the budget growth. The 22% increase did not solve the reading crisis — it funded something else.

Spending more and getting less is not a funding problem. It is a prioritization problem. More than half of our students cannot read at grade level. That is the number that matters.

STATE ASSESSMENT CONTEXT

Assessment	SFSD Result	Benchmark	Gap
Students reading at/above grade level	<50%	90% (Willett target)	>40 points
SD State reading proficiency avg.	Available from SD DOE	SFSD vs. state	Review needed
Low-income student reading gap	Significantly wider	Equity benchmark	Priority population

ELL student reading outcomes	Distinct population	Input Hypothesis approach	Methodology gap
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THE KRASHEN INPUT HYPOTHESIS APPROACH

Stuart Willett homeschooled his own children using Dr. Stephen Krashen’s Input Hypothesis methodology, achieving strong literacy outcomes. The core principle: students acquire language and reading fluency through comprehensible, engaging input — not through drill, testing, and punitive assessment of pleasure reading.

- Provide access to books students actually want to read — quantity and variety matter.
- Do NOT test students on pleasure reading. Testing kills intrinsic motivation.
- Treat sustained silent reading as curriculum, not reward.
- Prioritize comprehensible input at or just above the student’s current level.
- Let student choice drive reading selection whenever possible.

THE FOUR-YEAR PLAN

Year	Priority Action	Outcome Target
Year 1	Audit current reading curriculum against Krashen research; survey teachers	Establish baseline; identify gaps
Year 2	Pilot Input Hypothesis approaches in willing classrooms; expand independent reading access	Measurable gains in pilot schools
Year 3	Scale successful pilots; integrate into teacher training via IG-R grant program	District-wide trend improvement
Year 4	Assess: 90% target; publish results; adjust as needed	90% reading at grade level

COMMITMENT

Stuart Willett's commitment: 90% of SFSD students reading at grade level within four years — using proven methodology, classroom teacher input, and the IG-R grant program to fund innovation from within the existing budget.