

Long Beach Unified School District

District Profile

Rank among U.S. School Districts (by size):	29
Number of Schools:	93
Number of Students:	88,242
Number of Teachers:	4,266

Superintendent: Christopher J. Steinhauser was unanimously appointed superintendent of the Long Beach Unified School District in 2002. Steinhauser is a 20-year-veteran of the district, where he began as a teacher and has also been a vice principal, principal and director of special project services. Steinhauser served as deputy superintendent prior to his appointment as superintendent.

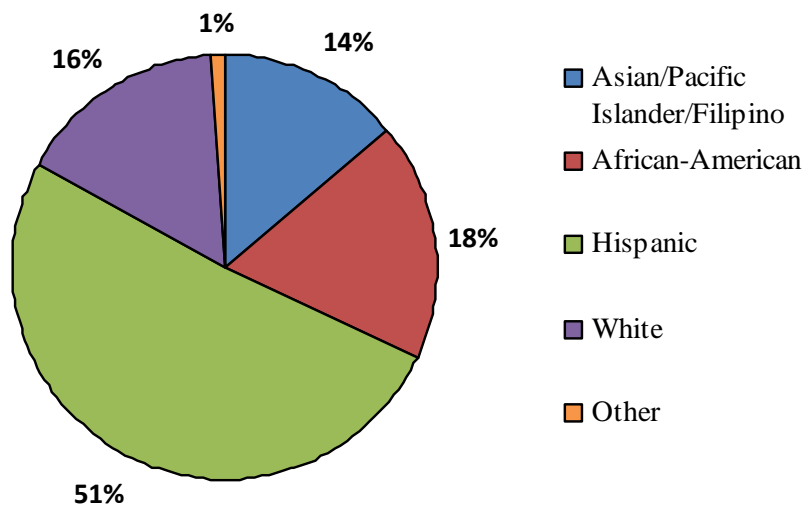
Governance: Five-member board of education, elected by geographic area to serve four-year terms.

Teachers Unions: Teachers Association of Long Beach (TALB)

Student Characteristics

Percent of Students Eligible for Free and Reduced-Price School Lunch:	67%
Percent of Students Designated as English Language Learners:	24%

Student Demographics



(2007-08 data)

Student Achievement

Long Beach Unified School District's (LBUSD) student achievement gains are evidenced by publicly available data collected and analyzed by MPR Associates, Inc., a leading education research consulting firm. Among the reasons that LBUSD stood out among large urban school districts:

Greater overall performance

- In 2007, Long Beach outperformed other districts in California serving students with similar income levels in reading and math at all grade levels: elementary, middle and high school, according to The Broad Prize methodology.

Greater subgroup performance

- In 2007, Long Beach's low-income, African-American and Hispanic students outperformed their peers in similar districts in reading and math at all grade levels, according to The Broad Prize methodology.
- In 2007, Long Beach's Hispanic and low-income students achieved higher average proficiency rates than their state counterparts in reading and math at all grade levels. In addition, African-American students achieved higher average proficiency rates than their state counterparts in math at all levels and in reading in elementary and middle school.

Greater overall improvement

- Between 2004 and 2007, Long Beach showed greater improvement than other California districts serving similar income levels in middle and high school reading and in math at all grade levels, according to The Broad Prize methodology.
- Between 2004 and 2007, Long Beach was more successful than the state in increasing the percentage of all students who achieved proficiency in middle and high school reading and elementary and high school math.

Greater subgroup improvement

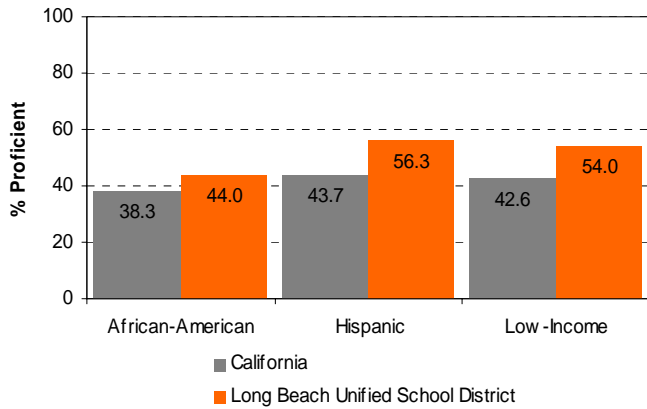
- Between 2004 and 2007, Long Beach's low-income, African-American and Hispanic high school students showed greater improvement than similar districts in both reading and in math, according to The Broad Prize methodology.
- Between 2004 and 2007, participation rates for African-American and Hispanic students taking the SAT and Advanced Placement exams increased in Long Beach. The average SAT score for African-American and Hispanic students also rose during this period.

Closing achievement gaps

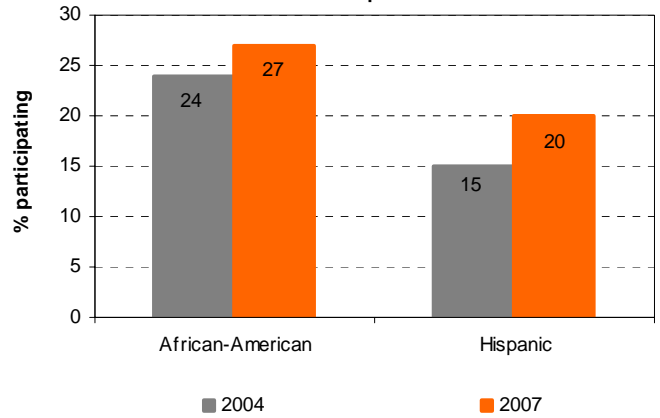
- From 2005 to 2007, Long Beach narrowed achievement gaps between Hispanic students and white students in high school reading and math.
- Between 2004 and 2007, Long Beach also narrowed achievement gaps between Hispanic and white students in elementary school reading and math faster than the state.
- Between 2005 and 2007, Long Beach also narrowed achievement gaps between Hispanic students and the state average for white students in high school reading and math. For example, between 2005 and 2007, the gap between Hispanic students and the state average for white students narrowed by 7 percentage points in high school math.

Student Achievement Highlights

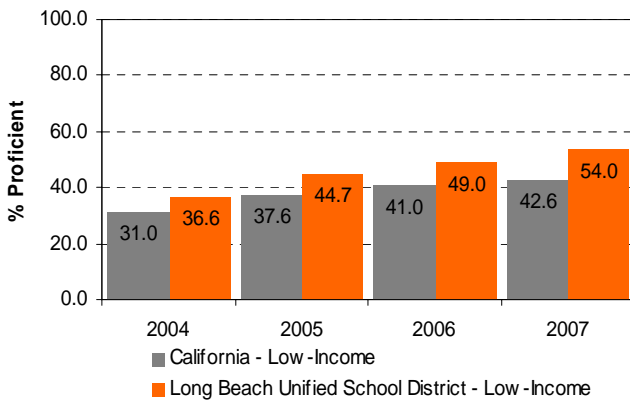
Elementary School Mathematics Proficiency Rates 2007



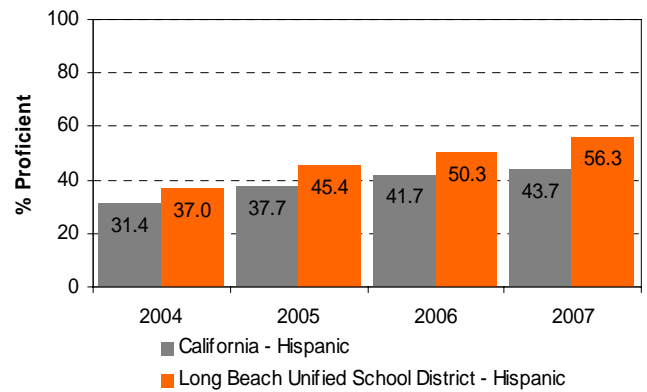
Long Beach Unified School District SAT Participation Rates



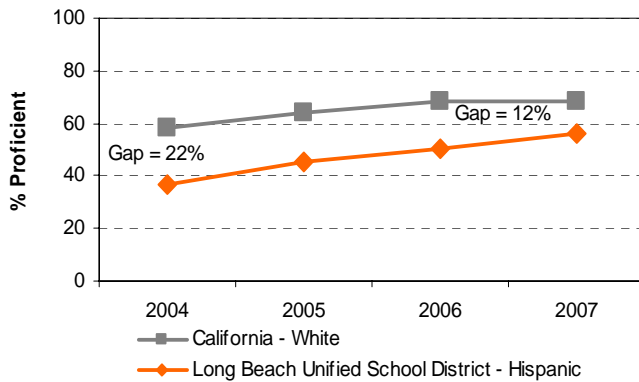
Elementary School Mathematics Proficiency Rates for Low-Income Students in the District vs. Low-Income Students Statewide



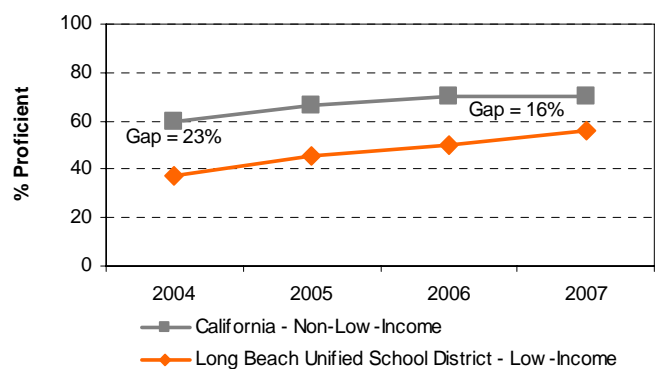
Elementary School Mathematics Proficiency Rates for Hispanic Students in the District vs. Hispanic Students Statewide



Elementary School Mathematics Proficiency Rates for Hispanic Students in the District vs. White Students Statewide



Elementary School Mathematics Proficiency Rates for Low-Income Students in the District vs. Non-Low-Income Students Statewide



Key District Policies and Practices

SchoolWorks, an education consulting firm based in Massachusetts, collected and analyzed evidence of LBUSD policies and practices affecting teaching and learning. SchoolWorks' qualitative analysis, produced below, is based on a site visit, focus group interviews with district stakeholders and analysis of extensive documentation. The criteria used for evaluation, available at www.broadprize.org, are grounded in research-based school and district practices that have been found to be effective in three key areas: **teaching and learning, district leadership, and operations and support systems**. LBUSD demonstrated the following effective policies and practices.

Teaching and Learning

Research shows that effective teaching is the primary factor contributing to high levels of student achievement. LBUSD promotes strong teaching and learning through a fully aligned and comprehensive curriculum and assessment system. A district-wide core pedagogy allows for all teachers and staff to use a common language and ensures that classroom instruction is effective and differentiated to meet all students' needs.

Curriculum

LBUSD has a comprehensive, K-12 written curriculum that is aligned to state, University of California and California State University standards. Across all subject areas, the district provides teachers with detailed pacing guides that include the recommended sequence and duration for each unit and lesson, suggested instructional materials and assessment correlations. Curriculum guides also help teachers "unpack" the standards and understand which prerequisite skills students need to master the standards. All LBUSD curriculum guides and course outlines are available online through the district website. Most of the district's supplemental materials and programs were developed internally.

In order to ensure that English language learners' (ELL) needs are met, the district has developed English Language Development curricular units that correspond with and bridge to the core language arts curricula.

Based on success in using the Reading First program—a federal program that uses proven reading instruction methods—at 14 elementary schools in kindergarten through third grade, the district expanded a comparable model to fourth and fifth grades in the same schools.

To improve elementary student performance in mathematics, the district developed a comprehensive, data-driven program called MAP2D (Mathematics Achievement Program Professional Development) that further refines the way the mathematics curriculum is delivered. The district initially rolled out MAP2D in second through fifth grades (in four elementary schools in 2004-05; in 15 elementary schools in 2005-06). After schools using the program showed significant student gains, the district expanded MAP2D to all elementary schools, including in kindergarten and first grade. The district is currently piloting the program in sixth and seventh grade.

The district has regular procedures to review and modify the curriculum that occur at many levels of the organization. Curriculum reviews have been instrumental in identifying where additional modifications are needed and / or supplemental curriculum documents should be created. Because the district has a web-based curriculum, changes can be made on an ongoing basis, and teachers have instant access to up-to-date curriculum documents.

Instruction

LBUSD provides its teachers with a vast toolbox of effective instructional strategies. Teachers are well-trained, supported and held accountable for using a common, district-wide core pedagogy that reflects differentiated, targeted and individualized instruction designed to push students beyond mastery. While the common core pedagogy provides a foundation, the district also incorporates additional strategies to ensure high quality instruction to meet the needs of all LBUSD learners.

The district requires teachers to use Essential Elements of Effective Instruction (EEEI), a range of research-based instructional strategies that encourage higher-order thinking—that is, pushing all students beyond knowledge and comprehension to analysis and evaluation. To assist teachers in incorporating EEEI strategies, lesson plan templates that the district provides ask teachers to define instructional delivery components, including strategies for delivery, modeling, guided practice, checking for understanding and independent practice.

LBUSD teachers use academic vocabulary—district-developed “word lists”—to reinforce both expressive and receptive language and to encourage students to discuss their own learning at high levels. At the secondary level, the district’s course outlines show teachers which key “word list” terms to use in specific content areas.

In 2005, the district began incorporating research-based strategies for advanced learners into its instructional toolbox for all of its students, regardless of achievement level. The district continues to offer Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) programs for advanced learners, but it also rolled out the EXCEL program, which infuses instructional strategies for gifted learners into the regular classroom, for “potentially gifted” students. The district is working to train all staff to receive gifted and talented credentials.

Assessment

LBUSD assessments are clearly linked to the curriculum across grade levels and subject areas and are designed to explicitly measure student learning in relation to the district curriculum. The district makes a range of assessments available to teachers at the classroom, school and district levels so teachers can monitor student learning progress and work as early as possible to prepare students to succeed on state tests.

By definition, “teaching” in Long Beach involves using assessment data to differentiate instruction, a central element in the district’s core pedagogy. Teachers are required to use both informal and formal assessment information to plan and deliver tailored instruction based on student need. Teachers report using assessment information to create flexible student groups within the classroom, to identify student strengths and weaknesses and to re-teach content. Teachers also ask students directly and use other informal assessments to check for student understanding throughout lessons.

Teachers also use assessment information to determine student placement in courses (e.g., advanced, remedial), levels of tiered intervention (i.e., how much support a student needs within the school), as well as support for students who need extra assistance, including Saturday classes and summer school.

The district has established performance and grading criteria that align with course outlines in middle and high school. At the elementary level, the K-5 report card and grading criteria are aligned with the district curriculum and state proficiency standards.

LBUSD introduces new programs and initiatives based on data-driven results. The district typically pilots programs first to gauge their effectiveness before implementing them on a larger scale. For example, based on MAP2D’s positive results in 15 elementary schools, the district expanded the program to all

elementary schools and even to middle schools. Similarly, the district chose to expand the Reading First Program, the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program and the Baldrige continuous improvement model after student achievement increased under each model at a small number of schools.

District Leadership

District governance and leadership, from goal-setting to implementation to evaluation, must support the essential work of teaching and learning in schools. To keep all components of a district focused on student learning, research shows that district leadership must set clear strategic goals and hold the organization accountable for implementation. LBUSD's mission drives district practices and decision making, including school board initiatives, strategic plan development and staff accountability district-wide.

Mission, Vision and Values

LBUSD stakeholders (i.e., the school board, district staff, principals, teachers, parents and the greater Long Beach community) are committed to the district's mission: "to support the personal and intellectual success of every student, every day." This commitment is evident through widespread stakeholder participation in the development of the mission, communication of the mission and through a range of district initiatives and key partnerships that provide additional opportunities for students.

After the district developed its mission, vision and values in 2005, it began the process of creating a strategic plan. Through surveys, public forums and committee meetings, the district gathered extensive input from thousands of district stakeholders to ensure that the direction in which the district was heading captured the essence of the surrounding community.

Staff and teachers describe LBUSD's supportive professional environment, including professional development and coaching, as key to the district's ability to deliver on its mission by maintaining student success.

In addition, LBUSD has developed a broad range of solid community partnerships that support the district's mission of student success. The district has longstanding relationships with local universities that, in addition to training teachers, provide continuing education opportunities for students. LBUSD has worked collaboratively with the city government, prominent businesses (e.g., Boeing, Verizon) and local individuals to create initiatives (e.g., tutoring, mentoring programs) that increase opportunities for students and promote the work of the district in the community.

Governance

The Long Beach Board of Education has focused its time, energy, communication and district oversight on student achievement. The school board ensures that its own actions support district priorities through oversight efforts such as strategic plan development, the development of a college readiness effort and the adoption of measurable district targets. The board also participates in community-based forums to stay abreast of critical and current information necessary for members to evaluate district initiatives and priorities.

In 2005, the board directed the district to undertake a strategic planning process and then worked in collaboration with the superintendent and community partners to establish an approach that would create a living strategic plan document that was regularly updated and used.

The board also established the Academic and Career Success Initiative, a three-part policy designed to improve student readiness for college and career. Central to the Academic and Career Success Initiative

are efforts to enhance seamless education by increasing alignment between the K-12 system and post-secondary systems through the following initiatives:

- Increased information to students and parents about graduation requirements and post-secondary options starting in the sixth grade.
- Collaborations with local colleges to ensure admission and tuition waivers for district students, including a promise from Long Beach City College (LBCC) to provide a tuition-free semester to all LBUSD students by 2011.
- Use of grant opportunities to align higher education initiatives with career technical education programs in place at LBUSD high schools (e.g., to purchase equipment for an architecture, construction and engineering program).

In the fall of 2007, the school board adopted district-wide targets to monitor district performance. Using a focused dashboard that includes a measure of recent performance and a 2013 target, the board monitors student proficiency on select state assessments. The dashboard also addresses post-secondary eligibility and college/career readiness as a means of measuring Academic and Career Success Initiative outcomes.

In collaboration with the district, board members regularly communicate the district's mission to the public. For example, the board regularly holds parent forums and parent exchange groups, as does the superintendent and assistant superintendents. In addition, the superintendent hosts employee forums in which staff members address concerns or share successes from their workplace.

Strategic Planning

LBUSD's strategic planning process is based on an ongoing data-based cycle of reflection. The board and the district use this cycle of reflection to monitor and evaluate whether the district has met or made progress towards its goals. The board-approved strategic plan contains five goals all based on data-driven priorities established by the district. These goals include: 1) all students will attain proficiency in the core content areas; 2) all students will graduate from high school prepared for post-secondary and career options; 3) the district will ensure staff and student safety; 4) the district will improve growth and development of the workforce; and 5) the district will improve communications throughout the district.

When initially developing its strategic plan, the district gathered extensive input from Long Beach stakeholders. The public had—and continues to have—numerous opportunities to weigh in and ask questions through parent and employee forums, community meetings and board meetings. Stakeholders also provide the district with input on programs and initiatives through surveys and evaluations.

In developing its strategic plan, the district also used demographic information (e.g., course enrollment, staff retention), as well as formative and summative assessment data that tracks student performance.

To allow staff and stakeholders to regularly reflect on the relevance of the district's strategic plan, LBUSD publishes a "report to the community," detailing those programs and initiatives the district has put in place to meet its strategic plan goals. The strategic plan and related reports have been widely disseminated to the community in hard copy and on the district's website.

"Goal teams," organized by the district and comprised of district, school and community representatives, meet regularly to develop action plans that accomplish the district's strategic plan goals.

Performance and Accountability

LBUSD holds school and staff accountable for achieving district strategic goals and student achievement by linking school and staff performance expectations to those strategic district goals. The district has also set up ongoing channels of communication, feedback and support to help staff meet these goals.

LBUSD requires each school to develop goals that align with both the Academic and Career Success Initiative (board goals) and with the district's five strategic goals. Board goals are designed to roll down from the top and school goals are expected to roll up from the bottom. While the district requires school performance goals to be grounded in student achievement and aligned to the district's broader goals, schools are also given the autonomy to establish specific goals and action plans that reflect their unique learning community.

Individual staff performance goals in Long Beach also stem from the strategic plan. Once the board approves the superintendent's personal performance targets, which flow from the strategic plan, the superintendent then approves goals for executive staff. Executive staff, in turn, develop goals that flow down to their respective areas of oversight.

Assistant superintendents establish goals at the elementary, middle and high school levels that roll down to the principal level. The principal evaluation process begins with a goal-setting meeting between principals and their assistant superintendents. The district requires principals to consider district-level performance targets, school goals and individual goals when establishing personal performance goals.

The teacher evaluation process is guided by the teachers' contract and a district evaluation handbook. Teacher evaluations begin with a goal-setting meeting with the principal and are designed to encourage student success.

LBUSD does not seek to apply "consequences" to struggling schools, but rather aims to provide supports such as deploying coaches and/or curriculum specialists or by providing additional funding for school-based support positions. The district has also required struggling schools to implement the Baldrige continuous improvement model. Baldrige trainers and aligned goal setting have yielded positive results for struggling schools.

Operations and Support Systems

Research shows that the design and implementation of district operations and systems directly affect how well the district can effectively support teaching and learning. In Long Beach, the district offers a wide range of programs designed to challenge and support students. By strategically hiring and selecting teachers, the district ensures that new teaching staff are qualified to teach in the district. In addition, the district provides comprehensive training programs for new teachers and school leaders to ensure their ongoing growth and development.

Human Resources

LBUSD has a rigorous hiring and selection process to ensure that candidates applying for district positions meet Long Beach criteria. By establishing key recruitment and training partnerships with local colleges, the district also ensures an experienced applicant pool.

LBUSD makes significant efforts to screen candidates before individuals become part of their teacher applicant pool. The district uses the Haberman interview process, which focuses on individual characteristics or personal qualities that are likely to yield successful teachers in an urban setting. This interview process ensures that teachers entering the district will be a good fit and will possess Long Beach's district-specific characteristics and work ethic.

To develop a pipeline of potential future teachers, LBUSD has partnered with local colleges to align college curriculum with K-12 needs and to allow many district administrators to teach potential teacher candidates while they are still in college. As a result, future LBUSD teachers (more than 80 percent of hires come from local colleges) gain insight into district practices years before applying for district positions. These partnerships help LBUSD maintain a large applicant pool.

Organizational Structures and Management

Through the implementation of various programs and initiatives, the district challenges students to achieve their full potential.

LBUSD has increased enrollment in AP courses by 65 percent since 2003 and has also increased not only the number of AP courses offered but also the ethnic diversity of the students taking the advanced courses.

While Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) programs exist across district schools, LBUSD is moving away from filtering students for GATE programs, opting instead to infuse instructional strategies for gifted learners into regular classrooms. The EXCEL program, a pathway for “potentially gifted students” or high achievers who are on track to succeed in AP courses, is being rolled out across middle schools and in some elementary schools.

Because schools have seen success under Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), a program designed to prepare students for college, the district has expanded AVID across all middle and high schools. AVID is also contributing to increased AP enrollment at the high school level.

Support for Teaching and Learning

An extensive new teacher training program and a robust leadership development pipeline are cornerstones of LBUSD’s professional development program. Teachers report that the district’s training programs and workshops are one of the district’s strengths. LBUSD also has extensive practices to evaluate the effectiveness of its professional development and modify it as necessary to better support teachers and students.

The “New Teacher Institute” is the hallmark of LBUSD’s professional development program. A two-year, tiered program, the institute provides extensive professional development to teachers that are both new to the profession and new to the district. During a teacher’s first year at LBUSD, the institute provides training on core district practices, differentiated trainings on programs central to elementary level teachers, and content-specific trainings for middle and high school teachers. During their second and third years in the institute, teachers continue to advance their instructional and classroom practices. Through the institute, all new teachers work with a mentor who has been trained by the district. Mentors and mentees meet weekly, following classroom observations.

The district has also developed intensive training and experiential programs that are strategically designed to grow and develop staff at all levels of the district and establish a leadership pipeline. The LBUSD leadership development plan contains four components:

- Aspiring assistant principals: A series of standards-based workshops provide teachers aspiring to become assistant principals with preparatory knowledge and skills.
- Aspiring principals: The district provides aspiring principals with training and institutes designed to complement credential programs and create a pathway into LBUSD leadership. Through apprenticeships, aspiring principals shadow high-performing mentor principals throughout the year while continuing to serve at a school site.

- **Induction:** The district has established supports to follow new administrators during their first three years. In the first year, new administrators receive personal coaching designed to meet their individual needs and professional development aligned to their school's goals and their own personal skill development areas. As the new leader transitions from the first year into the second year, the district provides continued training and support teams to ensure continued growth.
- **In-service:** LBUSD also provides leadership development training to leaders at all levels of the district.

LBUSD uses multiple measures to evaluate the success of its professional development, including surveys, focus groups, input from teacher councils, feedback from coaches and curriculum leaders, individual interviews, pre-/post-tests, student achievement data, staff credentialing, and retention information. The district then uses data-based conclusions about training effectiveness to plan for or adjust future trainings. District and school administrators also conduct frequent walkthroughs to determine how well teachers and staff are performing as a result of training.

The LBUSD office of research and evaluation plays a prominent role in evaluating the effectiveness of curricular and professional development programs. For example, to assess the effectiveness of MAP2D, the district conducted a rigorous, in-depth study of program implementation at the classroom level. A team of evaluators visited a sample of classrooms at 20 district schools. Each classroom was rated for fidelity to 24 specific instructional elements emphasized in MAP2D professional development trainings. The research office ran multiple statistical analyses of program effectiveness, controlling for variables such as the demographic composition of the classroom and the teacher's experience level. The study found that fidelity to the MAP2D program was significantly correlated with higher rates of student achievement, and that teachers who had worked with a classroom coach were much more likely to implement the program correctly. The district was therefore able to conclude—based on data—that the efforts of MAP2D coaches were leading directly to higher student achievement—which led to the district-wide rollout of MAP2D.

For more information about Long Beach's best practices, please visit www.broadprize.org and/or contact Chris Eftychiou, director of public information, at ceftychiou@lbusd.k12.ca.us or 562-997-8250.