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## 2001–2004 • Increasing Student Achievement through School-Wide Reading Apprenticeship®

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The Strategic Literacy Initiative's ongoing professional development work in the greater Bay Area has provided data from two schools that have been working over a number of years to implement Reading Apprenticeship school-wide. These schools, identified by the California Department of Education as academically underperforming schools, have documented rising Academic Performance Indices<sup>1</sup> that they attribute to this work in Reading Apprenticeship. Here we summarize information about these two schools as examples of potential outcomes for students from the coordinated efforts of administration and staff at the school building level.

### **Dixon High School, Dixon Unified School District**

#### ***School Characteristics (from 2000 report):***

Latino students: 42%; white students: 52%; participants in free or reduced-price lunch: 25%; English language learners: 1,9%.

#### ***History with SLI:***

Dixon High School sent a team to SLI's first year network professional development series in 2000–2001, sponsored by the STARSS demonstration grant from the California Department of Education to Bay Region IV County Offices of Education. The team was a cross-curricular team and, significantly for the development of this work at the school, included the school principal. The team began sharing Reading Apprenticeship approaches to reading instruction with their whole faculty immediately during a common planning time, even as they were beginning to implement in their own classrooms.

Dixon High School sent a new, first year team to SLI's first year network series in 2001–2002. At the same time, many of the 2000–2001 team remained in the Continuing Network. The STARSS grant continued to support their involvement. They continued to offer professional development to colleagues back at the school, working as a team

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<sup>1</sup>Academic Performance Index measures the progress of California Public Schools toward student achievement goals. See the California Department of Education's website for more information: <<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ap/apidescription.asp>>.



to share particular strategies and approaches. The principal required teachers at the school to try the new approaches out and gave them opportunities to observe the literacy team implementing Reading Apprenticeship in their own classrooms. The support and commitment evidenced by the school principal was important to the growth of the work school-wide. At one point, the literacy team taught key strategies such as “questioning” to students throughout the school, balancing their colleagues’ needs for professional development with students’ needs for immediate help.

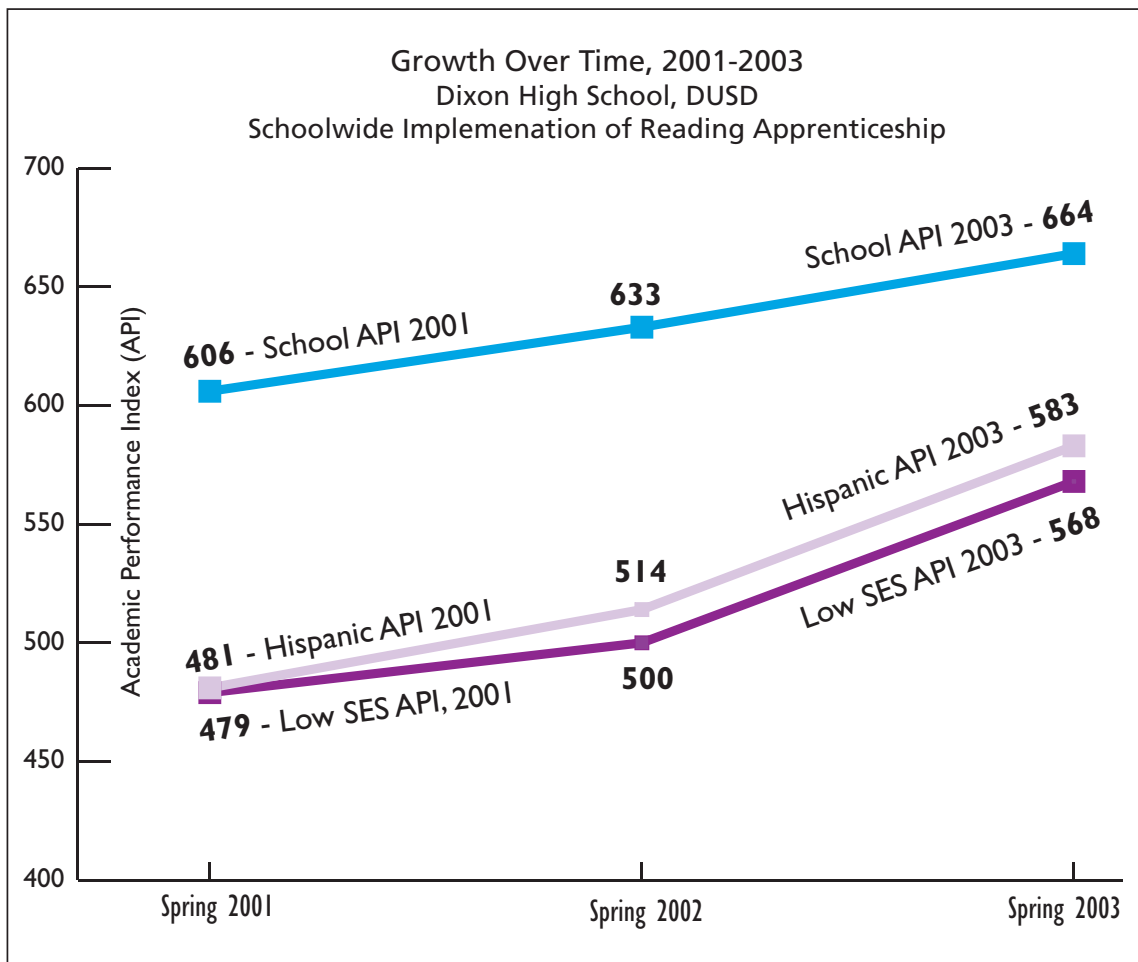
Two classrooms at Dixon High School were sites for SLI’s Reading Apprenticeship Classroom Study in 2001–2002. The school also instituted an Academic Literacy course in 2001–2002 for students scoring above the 25th but below the 40th percentile. During this same year, an Academic Literacy course was offered in Spanish for Spanish-speaking students. These remedial efforts were required by the state-sponsored school improvement plan. While a better alternative than most remediation programs, the fact that only these students were enrolled in the course made it quite different from the model recommended by SLI and influenced the enrollment in content area classrooms, specifically biology classes, through scheduling effects.

Dixon High School sent another new, first year team to SLI’s first year network series in 2002–2003. First and second year teams joined the Continuing Network for another year as well. Leaders among these teachers continued to offer ongoing professional development at the school site for their colleagues, with the active support of the school principal. Three classrooms at Dixon High School were sites for SLI’s Reading Apprenticeship Classroom Study during this year. During the 2002 – 2003 school year, Academic Literacy was again taught, this time to a broader range of students scoring below the 50th percentile on the reading component of the state-wide standardized test.

School leaders from Dixon High School continued to be involved in the Continuing Networks during the 2003–2004 academic year. In addition, the literacy team from Dixon developed a plan for articulation with the school’s feeder middle school that was launched in the summer of 2003, when a team from the middle school joined the first year network series with SLI. Literacy team leaders from Dixon High School met with their middle school colleagues throughout the year for on-site professional development and coaching.



An increasing Academic Performance Index (API) for Dixon High School over the past several years is shown in graph form below.



### 2000 – 2001 API Growth Report

The data is not available for this year for Dixon High School due to testing irregularities that plagued the state reporting system.

### 2001 – 2002 API Growth Report

Dixon High School exceeded its target growth for the 2001 – 2002 school year. From a spring 2000 API of 606, Dixon High School grew to 633, a growth of 27 points (growth target was 10 points). Latino students improved from a baseline of 481 in spring 2001



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to 514 in spring 2002, a growth of 33 points (target was 8 points). Socio-economically disadvantaged students also gained more than their target 8 points, from 479 to 500 points, for a 21-point gain.

### **2002 – 2003 API Growth Report**

Dixon High School again exceeded its target growth for this academic year, growing 24 points (the target had been 8 points) to an overall API of 664. The CDE describes comparable schools reaching a median API of 643; Dixon High School therefore exceeded its own growth target, as well as surpassed the growth made by similarly constituted schools. Indeed, as a result of its comparatively high API, the school was ranked 9 in 2003, with 10 being the highest ranking, among similar schools in the state. The school also dramatically exceeded its growth targets for Latino and socioeconomically disadvantaged sub-groups, increasing 41 points for Latino students (the target had been 6 for this group) and 58 points for socioeconomically disadvantaged students (the target had also been 6 for this group).

### **Westlake Middle School, Oakland Unified School District**

#### ***School Characteristics (from 1999, 2000 reports):***

African American students: 43%; Asian students: 33%; Latino students: 15%; participants in free or reduced-price lunches: 61%; English language learners: 43%

#### ***History with SLI:***

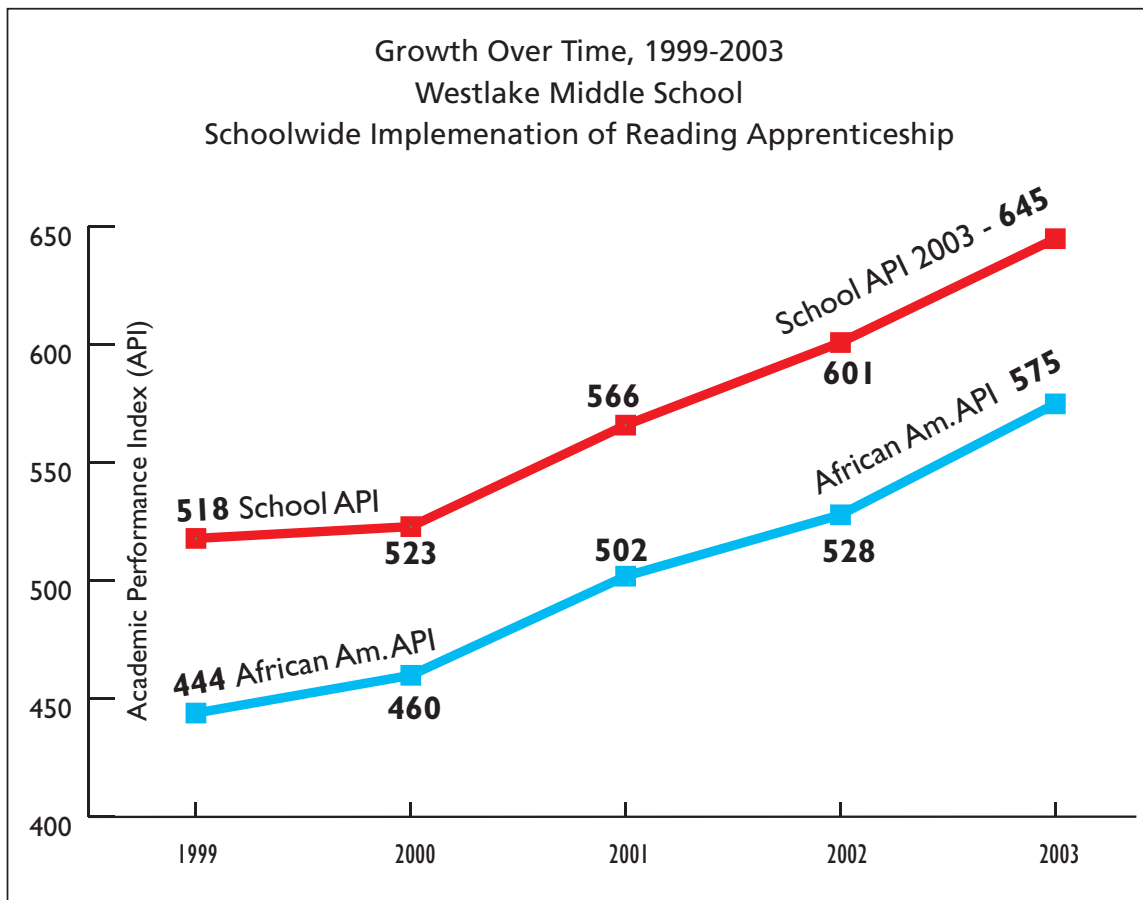
A team of teacher leaders and administrators from Westlake came to SLI's first National Institute in Reading Apprenticeship in the summer of 2000. At this time, the school had been using Corrective Reading for students scoring below the 25th percentile on the Sat-9 reading test. Over the next three years, Westlake continued to be involved in SLI professional development. New teams were sent to the first year networks and a leadership team from the school has participated in the Continuing Networks in the 2001–2002, 2002–2003, 2003–2004, and 2004–2005.

Westlake created an Academic Literacy course in the 2000 – 2001 school year. They also continued with Corrective Reading for the lowest scoring students while simultaneously working to embed Reading Apprenticeship across the curriculum. School leaders in Reading Apprenticeship included both math and English language arts teachers.



Westlake abandoned Corrective Reading for the 2001 – 2002 school year because teachers felt it was “talking down” to their students. Instead, the few (<30) students who had need for additional instruction related to decoding were given support through a modified Reading Recovery program. The school also created another reading course, focused on increasing students’ overall reading opportunities, for students who were not yet ready for more strategic reading work. The school continued with the Academic Literacy course as well.

As new teachers were hired on staff, the Westlake leadership team coached them in Reading Apprenticeship approaches. The work to embed Reading Apprenticeship across the curriculum is ongoing. The graph below shows Westlake Middle School’s improving Academic Performance Index scores over the past several years.



### **1999 – 2000 API Growth Report**

At the end of a year implementing Corrective Reading, Westlake's API was 523, up from the spring 1999 API of 518. However, the school failed to meet their growth target of 14. Westlake did meet the sub-group growth target of 11 (actual gain of 16) for African American students (from 444 to 460) but failed to meet the growth target for socio-economically disadvantaged students.

### **2000 – 2001 API Growth Report**

Westlake Middle School exceeded its API growth targets. At the end of the first year implementing Academic Literacy and Reading Apprenticeship, as well as Corrective Reading for the lowest performing students, the API of 566 was up 43 points from 523 (target had been 14 points). The school met all sub-group targets as well—African American students gained 42 points (target had been 11 points), and socio-economically disadvantaged students gained 37 points (target had also been 11 points).

### **2001 – 2002 API Growth Report**

Westlake Middle School again exceeded its API growth targets. At the end of a year in which the school discontinued Corrective Reading but continued with Academic Literacy and other reading-rich programmatic approaches, the API was 601, up 32 points from 569 in spring of 2001. The school met its sub-group targets as well: both African American and socio-economically disadvantaged student groups improved 26 points, with each having had a growth target of 10 points.

### **2002 – 2003 API Growth Report**

Again Westlake exceeded its API growth targets. Its API was 664, surpassing the growth target of 8 (actual gain was 24). Comparable schools in this year had a median API of 643, compared to Westlake's 664, so the school not only exceeded its own growth targets but surpassed the growth of schools similar in socioeconomic and demographic characteristics. Westlake dramatically exceeded its growth targets for African American, Asian, and socioeconomically disadvantaged sub-groups, increasing 27 points for African American students (the growth target had been 8 for this group), 46 points for Asian students (the target had also been 8 for this group), and 48 points for socioeconomically disadvantaged students (also with a target of 8).

