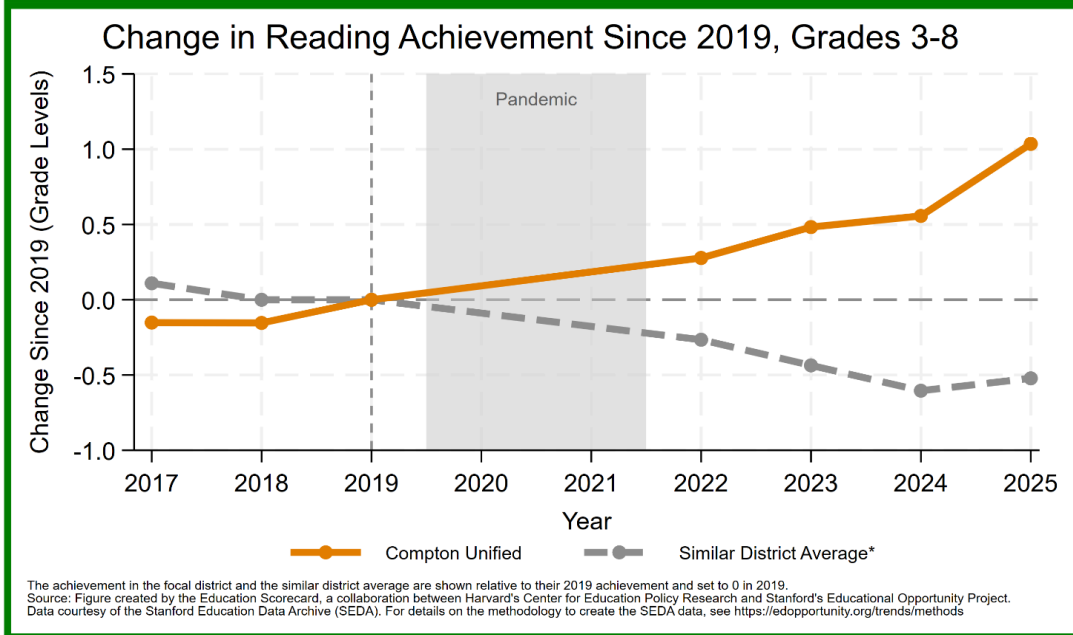
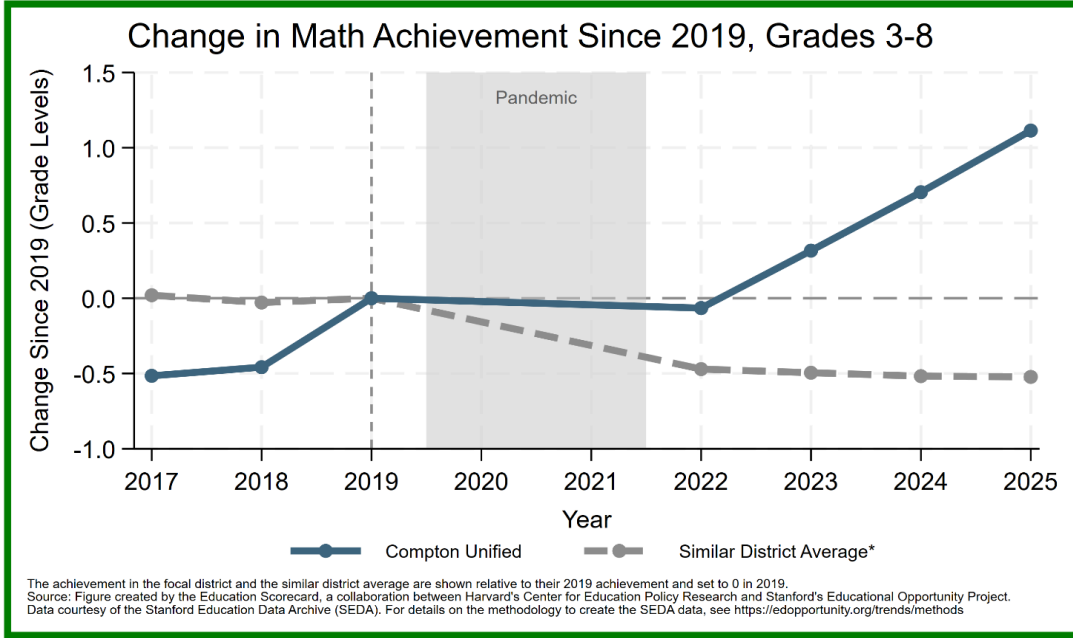


**Compton Unified School District**  
Compton, California

## Compton Unified, CA

### Rising Faster than Similar Districts in Math & Reading



\*Similar Districts: Palmdale Elementary, San Jacinto Unified, Tulare City, Lynwood Unified, Hesperia Unified

## **Student Demographics:**

Total student population: 19,430  
Hispanic/Latino: 80.0%  
Black/African-American: 18.1%  
Two or more races: 0.6%  
Students receiving FRPL: 88.1%  
ELL students: 27.9

**Dr. Darin Brawley**, Superintendent

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- “Urban districts don’t struggle because they lack ideas, they struggle because they lack continuity and instructional coherence. In Compton Unified, our progress is the result of sustained focus, instructional coherence, and a relentless commitment to ensuring every student, regardless of background, has access to high-quality instruction and meaningful opportunities to advance their interests.”

## **Background:**

Just over a decade ago, Compton Unified School District was [at risk of entering receivership](#) with the state of California. However, since 2012, under Dr. Darin Brawley’s leadership, the district has implemented strategies to gain control of its finances and prioritize turnaround efforts. Over the last 14 years, Dr. Brawley has transformed student learning and brought Compton Unified’s graduation rate from 58% when he started to [94%](#) today.

Today, Compton Unified’s progress is reflected not only in improved student outcomes or graduation rates, but in statewide recognition of its schools. Five schools were named [2026 California Distinguished Schools](#), including Compton Early College High School, Dominguez High School, Compton High School, Davis Middle School, and Whaley Middle School. In addition, all four comprehensive high schools have been recognized as Exemplary Dual Enrollment High Schools.

## **Strategies for Success:**

### **Strengthening Supports for Students with Disabilities**

- The district restructured its Special Day Class (SDC) model, which serves students with disabilities requiring intensive, specialized instruction in a self-contained setting, by transitioning from multi-grade classrooms to single grade-level configurations (K–8).
- This shift allows educators to deliver more targeted, standards-aligned instruction while better supporting the needs identified in each student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- District leaders report that eliminating multi-grade groupings has strengthened instructional consistency and increased access to grade-level content for students with disabilities.

### **Additional instructional time:**

- To address learning loss from the pandemic, Dr. Brawley implemented Saturday school and summer school programs to allow students multiple opportunities to catch up. The

district continues to offer these extended learning opportunities today.

- The [After School Education and Safety Program \(ASES\)](#) provides free after-school education and enrichment opportunities for Compton Unified students in kindergarten through eighth grade, including project-based enrichment and homework help.
- The ASES program provides tutoring opportunities by the non-profit [Think Together](#), as well as supplemental instruction in one or more core academic subjects that are designed to reinforce previously introduced skills.
- The ASES program covers thematic units in five- to seven-week blocks, during which students collaborate on long-term group projects designed to expand their understanding of a specific topic through visual and performing arts. At the end of each unit, students demonstrate their skills in a school-wide student showcase.
- [93% of parents](#) stated that their child's schoolwork has improved as a result of participation in the afterschool program.

#### Advancing literacy instruction:

- In the 2022-23 school year, CUSD received the Literacy Coaches and Reading Specialists (LCRS) Grant from the California Department of Education to advance literacy instruction, which allowed it to hire reading specialists in 18 schools.
- The district partnered with the [J3 Foundation](#), a non-profit focused on building solid foundations in reading for students, to implement fourth-grade grade-level literacy programs. The J3 Foundation reports that students engaged in its activities saw an increase in standardized assessment scores of 36 points (across its two partner school districts, CUSD and Glendale Unified School District).
- The district also hired two ELA administrators to support CUSD's high schools and conducted dyslexia screenings in all elementary schools to identify students in need of targeted support. It updated its instructional materials for reading interventions to SIPPS (Systematic Instruction in Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words), a foundational skills program for building literacy skills.
- From 2024 to 2025, [CUSD's ELA state assessment scores](#) grew 7.97% (from 43.02% to 50.99%).

#### Data driven strategies:

- Under Dr. Brawley's leadership, the district expanded its professional learning opportunities for teachers to utilize data to inform classroom-, school-, and district-wide instructional decisions, including creating an assessment calendar and conducting six-week "data chats" to promote ongoing data analysis.
- CUSD teachers leverage tests from the state assessment's interim assessment bank to assess student progress and understanding on a regular basis. This data allows teachers to continuously adjust their lesson plans, personalize learning for students, and identify learning gaps.