California schools affiliated with the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) performed on average better than the state on the Smarter Balanced assessments, the state’s main test that makes up the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) results.

Among schools designated as TC Core Districts**, student performance on the computer-based Smarter Balanced assessments placed their students among the best in the state. Over 86% of students in these schools met or exceeded standard.

Smarter Balanced assessments are administered to students in grades 3-8 and 11 in California. The English Language Arts/literacy part of the test includes both a computer adaptive portion and a performance task. Students are then scored into one of four categories: Standard Exceeded, Standard Met, Standard Nearly Met, and Standard Not Met.

TCRWP data for this analysis is drawn from 8 California counties and 15 districts who have been with the Project for at least one year.

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Over a two-year period, the review of data shows TC-affiliated schools consistently outperformed the state by more than 10% in students meeting and exceeding standard. When analyzing for students who perform at the highest level - Level 4 - TC schools were higher by significant margins. Of particular note, TC Core schools** had 64% of students scoring at the highest level on the 2018 administration.
In addition to levels, California provides a more detailed analysis of how students perform in the areas of Reading, Writing, Listening, and Research/Inquiry. In the area of Reading, the state poses the question: How well do students understand stories and information they have read? For Writing: How well do students communicate in Writing? California then categorizes students as Below Standard, Near Standard, or Above Standard.

Comparatively speaking, TC-affiliated schools had more students meeting the high reading and writing standards.

To be rated Above Standard in Reading:

The student demonstrates a thorough ability to read closely and analytically to understand a range of informational texts (e.g., biographies; articles; and other writing covering disciplines like science, social studies, and technical topics) and literary texts (e.g., stories, plays, poems, and science fiction) of high complexity.

To be rated Above Standard in Writing:

The student demonstrates a thorough ability to produce well-organized, developed, and supported writing (e.g., narrative, informational, explanatory, and argumentative) for different purposes and audiences.
Districts connected to TCRWP span a wide spectrum of socio-economic and demographic groups within the counties of Contra Costa, Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Ventura.

On average, approximately one-third of students - 34.5% - in TC-affiliated schools are classified as economically disadvantaged. There is, however, a wide range, district-to-district and school-to-school. For example, TC schools in San Francisco and San Diego counties have 64% and 73% of students receiving Free and Reduced Priced Meals (FRPM), respectively. TC districts and schools in Santa Clara and Ventura counties have less than 15% of their student population meeting FRPM qualifications.

The same trend appears when analyzing for students classified by the California State Department of Education as English Learners. For TC schools, the English Learner average is 25.5% of students, though the range goes from a low of 1.5% of the student population in schools in Contra Costa County, San Ramon Valley Unified District to over 67% in Sonoma County, Sonoma Valley Unified District.

Comparatively speaking, students in TC-affiliated schools falling into these two sub-groups met with greater success on the state assessments.
** Core TC Schools are those that engage in deep implementation of Reading and Writing workshop with special attention to high volumes of reading, on-going writing, and engagement of the community.

Data for this report was taken from:

CAASPP: Test Results for ELA Literacy and Mathematics https://caaspp.cde.ca.gov/sb2018
2017-18 Student Poverty Report Free and Reduced Priced Meals (FRPM)
California School Dashboard - California State Department of Education (Reports on Academic Indicators (reported separately for English language arts/literacy and mathematics assessments), English Learner Progress, Chronic Absenteeism, Graduation Rate, Suspension Rate, College/Career Readiness (https://www.caschooldashboard.org)