

Running a Superintendent or District Reading Challenge



Simple strategies to build momentum, visibility, and community around reading.

Start With the “Why”

Connect the challenge to district priorities, literacy goals, or a strategic plan. A clear purpose helps leaders see how the reading challenge supports work already happening across the district.

In Action: Aldine ISD in Texas connected its “Aldine Accelerate” challenge to the district’s strategic plan, turning a big-picture priority into a shared goal. Students reached one million minutes in under a month and went on to log nearly nine million minutes.



Create a Challenge That Fits Your Community

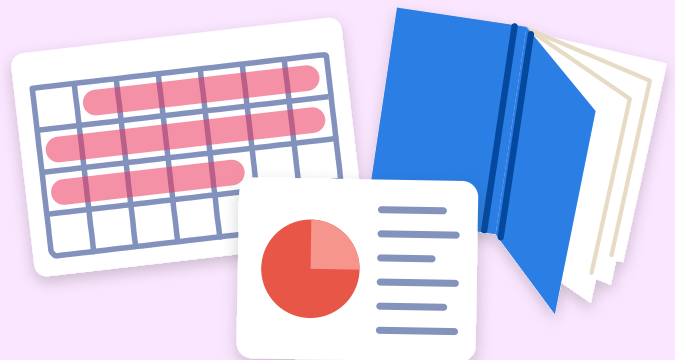
The best districtwide challenges reflect the community they serve. Build your theme around district goals, school mascots, local landmarks, community traditions, or other details students and staff already recognize.

Try: Incorporate recognizable imagery, school logos, and district colors into challenge banners, badges, and promotional materials.

Make Leadership Involvement Easy

Bring leaders a ready-to-use plan with a theme, dates, a goal, and simple ways to participate. A superintendent might record a kickoff video, spotlight top schools, or join in a fun celebration when students reach their goal.

Try: Work with your district communications team to facilitate leadership involvement, prepare materials, and make participation as easy as possible for leaders.





Set a Shared Community Goal

Give every school something to work toward together, such as one million minutes read across the district. Keep the goal simple, visible, and easy to celebrate throughout the challenge.

In Action: Berkeley County launched its districtwide challenge with a goal of three million minutes. After students quickly reached it, the district raised the goal to 16 million!

Build in Friendly Competition

Recognition keeps momentum going after launch. Use announcements, newsletters, social posts, certificates, leaderboards, school visits, and district shoutouts to make reading visible and celebrate progress along the way.

In Action: Richland One's "Soaring to New Heights" challenge ended with a memorable celebration: after students surpassed their reading goal, the superintendent took the theme literally and went skydiving.



Bring It All Together With Beanstack

Beanstack helps districts track reading, share progress, recognize participation, and build excitement across schools. With the right goal, strong leadership support, and consistent celebration, a districtwide challenge can make reading visible and rewarding.

