Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement

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Department of Education & Workforce

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Acknowledgments

Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement functions as a dynamic, working document to meet state, regional, and local needs for supporting language and literacy development.

The State Literacy Team, led by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce's Office of Literacy Achievement, is a group of experts in language and literacy content, instruction, intervention, assessment, professional learning, and policy. This team was established to best represent stakeholders that support educators and families from birth through grade 12.

Ohio's State Literacy Team first assembled in 2017 to develop the state's vision and direction for literacy. This team reconvened in 2019 to reflect on the initial implementation of *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*, analyze updated state and project-specific data, and offer recommendations to enhance the plan. The team continues to convene regularly to reflect on additional years of development and implementation and provide additional recommendations for accelerating the progress of this work. Most recently, the State Literacy Team convened in the fall of 2024 to reflect on the state's historic investments in literacy and the integration of Ohio's literacy efforts under Governor Mike DeWine's ReadOhio initiative.

Department staff work collaboratively with the State Literacy Team to share *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement* with state, regional, and local entities. The primary goal of this cross-organizational collaboration is to guarantee a consistent and coherent message about evidence-based language and literacy practices.

The State Literacy Team (Appendix A) includes individuals and experts from the following:

- Office of Ohio Governor Mike DeWine
- Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence
- The Outreach Center for Deafness and Blindness
- Ohio Department of Children and Youth
- State support teams and educational service centers
- Ohio Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
- Ohio districts and schools
- Ohio colleges and universities
- State foundations and partnerships

Introduction

Literacy is the cornerstone of education, the foundation upon which interdisciplinary knowledge and skills are built. Just as a well-built cornerstone bears the load of an entire architectural structure, literacy bears the weight of all other educational endeavors and initiatives. When learners cultivate strong language and literacy skills, they can secure the autonomy to pursue personal and professional aspirations.

Ohio is committed to supporting an education system that prioritizes the language and literacy development of all learners, aligned with the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce's key priorities: literacy, accelerating learning, workforce readiness, and student wellness.

In 2023, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine launched the ReadOhio initiative, a statewide effort to raise literacy achievement. State agencies and partner organizations are collaborating to anchor supports for families, educators, leaders, and community partners in the science of reading.

Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement articulates a state literacy framework to promote proficiency in reading, writing, and communication for all learners. Grounded by scientific research, the plan encourages a professional movement toward implementing data-based, differentiated, and evidence-based practices within various educational settings. Specifically, this plan illustrates Ohio's strong language and literacy efforts and the state's vision to expand and strengthen them to foster continuous improvement.

This plan aims to inform evidence-based language and literacy teaching and learning for all learners from birth through grade 12. Acquiring language and literacy skills affects learners' access to and interest in content materials and instruction at all grade levels, and it permeates all aspects of their adult lives. Ohio does not treat language and literacy as a separate field of study or course; instead, language and literacy are integrated throughout all aspects of education. Thus, it is critical that every educator and educational activity promote language and literacy development.

Ohio regularly convenes its State Literacy Team, comprised of stakeholders involved with birth through grade 12 literacy. The Department asks its members with unique expertise in language and literacy content, assessment, instruction, intervention, district and state professional learning design, and program evaluation to support the development and implementation of the state's comprehensive literacy plan.

Recent State Literacy Team convenings focused on reflecting on current implementation of *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*, analyzing updated state data, and offering recommendations to enhance the plan.

Key recommendations include the following:

- Continued focus on the need for evidence-based instruction across a system of multi-tiered supports that aligns to the **science of reading**
- Connecting schools, districts, and early care and education programs to tools and resources that support the **implementation of evidence-based language and literacy practices**
- Clear **alignment** of statewide guidance, professional learning implementation supports, and policy levers to support best practices in literacy for all students, particularly in light of the state's historic investments in literacy and the integration of Ohio's literacy efforts under ReadOhio

The updates to *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement* are based on the team's recommendations in 2022 and 2024. The team will continue meeting to review and analyze state, regional, and local progress and revise the plan as needed to meet the needs of all Ohio's learners.

This plan is not stagnant and is a place to begin exploring dispositions and knowledge. One of the Department's goals for the plan is to inspire educators to dig deeper, seeking opportunities to grow their knowledge, abilities, and skills in the science of reading.

Section 1: Why A State Comprehensive Literacy Plan Is Needed

Comprehensive Needs Assessment

The use of data is a critical driver of systemic improvement, and Ohio is committed to using data to meet students' needs and accelerate learning. In the spring of 2022, Ohio's State Literacy Team examined selected 2021 and 2022 school year data, birth through grade 12, to update and inform the state's comprehensive needs assessment. Ohio's comprehensive needs assessment focuses on analyzing four critical pieces of data:

- A root cause analysis of the language and literacy needs of Ohio's learners
- Learner performance data from 2023
- Literacy instruction data from Ohio districts and schools
- Additional data points that contextualize the educational experience of Ohio's students

These data illustrate the critical need for explicit support for implementing evidence-based language and literacy instruction and intervention to improve learning outcomes. This need extends not only to the classroom but across all levels of the educational system — state, regional, district, school, and grade levels — as well as families and communities.

ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS

To identify the language and literacy needs of Ohio's learners, stakeholders participating in the development of the State's Systemic Improvement Plan engaged in a root cause analysis. A root cause analysis is a structured, facilitated team process aimed at identifying breakdowns in processes and systems that result in undesirable outcomes, such as low literacy achievement. The purpose of a root cause analysis is to find out both what happened and why it happened, and then determine the changes that need to be made. Although this analysis was conducted several years ago, the results continue to inform Ohio's vision for raising literacy achievement.

The stakeholder team identified the following five areas as the primary root causes of literacy underperformance	
1. Learners who "start behind, stay behind"	Although learners may make progress in school — for example, make a year's worth of growth in one school year — students who begin kindergarten academically behind generally remain behind.
2. District infrastructure/ support for educators	Districts are challenged in effectively supporting educators to support literacy instruction. Specifically: • District administrators have many responsibilities and currently are experiencing initiative overload. • The larger the district, the less likely a teacher will receive effective supports. • Districts often lack systems and structures that effectively plan for and implement evidence-based literacy instruction. It was found that programs changed frequently and did not identify evidence-based practices that can be implemented with fidelity. • Due to limited funding and resources, many children lack access to early childhood programming and preschools, which affects their readiness for kindergarten and their earliest introduction to literacy development.

3. Instructional practices	Districts were either not using effective instructional practices or not implementing them with integrity. Specifically, districts and schools: • Used outdated special education and intervention practices • Lacked differentiation in all tiers of instruction • Continued intervention(s), even when progress is not occurring • Lacked effective progress monitoring and data literacy skills (for example, analyzing and using data to inform instruction) • Had a limited understanding of how to build emergent and early literacy skills in young children • Lacked deep knowledge of Ohio's Learning Standards for English Language Arts, particularly foundational reading skills
4. District/building culture	The culture of the district or building often was not conducive to effective improvement. Specifically, districts and schools lacked: • Collaboration between special educators and general educators • A collective belief that all children can learn and all educators can teach • The implementation of proactive planning
5. Family knowledge and involvement	Families were not being appropriately leveraged as partners in literacy improvement. Specifically, families lacked: • Meaningful educator and family partnerships • Depth and/or meaning in family engagement interactions

LEARNER PERFORMANCE DATA

Literacy inequities are visible statewide, but they are felt even more keenly in schools serving students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, referred to as "high-needs schools."

- In 2023, 1,711 of Ohio's elementary, middle, and high schools were high-needs schools (as defined by the U.S. Department of Education), serving more than 712,000 (43%) of Ohio's students.
- While just over one-quarter (31%) of White, non-Hispanic students attended high-needs schools, 81% of Black students, 60% of Hispanic students, and 54% of multiracial students attended high-needs schools in 2023.
- About two-thirds (66%) of English learners attended high-needs schools in 2023, as did almost half (49%) of students with disabilities.

BIRTH THROUGH KINDERGARTEN ENTRY

Children in high-quality rated early childhood education programs perform significantly better on Ohio's Kindergarten Readiness Assessment than their peers in lower-quality rated programs, specifically on language and literacy (Compass Evaluation and Research, 2017). There continues to be a need to reach more students with quality early education programs and quality literacy instruction.

Data from recent years show:

- In 2023, Ohio served more than 118,000 children birth through age 5 through federal and state early learning programs, representing 14% of children in that age group.
- Ohio serves more than 25,000 infants and toddlers in early intervention programs; 41% have substantial adaptive, cognitive, communication, physical, or social-emotional developmental delays.
- Just over 33,000 children with disabilities receive educational interventions between ages 3 and 5 in preschool special education programs.
- In 2023, 175,837 (36.7%) of Ohio's students in kindergarten-grade 3 were not on track for reading on grade level. This indicates a notable decrease from 2022 when 39.7% of kindergarten-grade 3 students were not on track.

These data reflect encouraging progress regarding students' early literacy skills and promising evidence that Ohio's efforts to raise literacy achievement are taking effect. To ensure all students benefit, this work must continue.

KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 12

Ohio has been making important strides toward improving literacy, yet data across the K-12 spectrum reveal significant numbers of students with persistent language and literacy difficulties. In addition, the effects of the pandemic have exacerbated existing gaps and inequities for Ohio's learners. At every point along the spectrum, Ohio's disadvantaged learners experience this struggle most acutely.

As seen in Figure 1 below, the proportion of kindergarten students demonstrating school readiness at the beginning of the school year has remained relatively consistent, at around 36%. The percentage of kindergarten students who scored on track for the language and literacy subscale of the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment has also remained relatively consistent over the past three years at around 46%. As noted above, these data underscore the need for equitable access to high-quality language and literacy learning experiences before students start formal schooling.

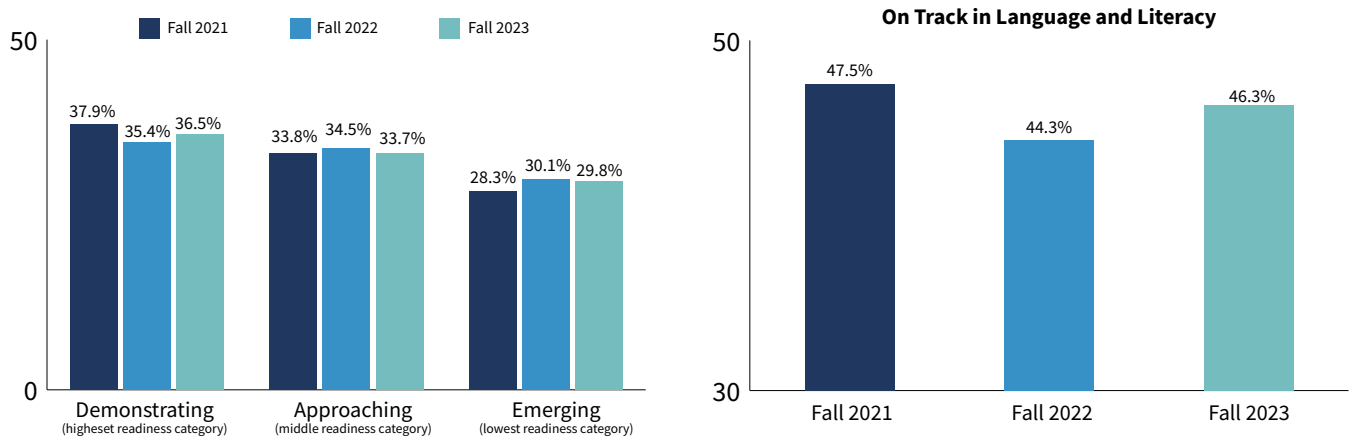

Figure 1. Distribution of kindergarten students scores on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment by overall readiness category and on-track status for language and literacy.

In 2023, more than 59,000 (53.7%) of Ohio's kindergartners entered school not on track relative to language and literacy skills, based on scores on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment. These data consistently indicate that the majority of kindergartners continue to demonstrate difficulties in their early language and literacy skills as they begin formal schooling.

Ohio's spring 2024 assessment results indicate slow but steady increases in reading proficiency since 2021. Just under 40% of students in grades 3 through 8 were not proficient on Ohio's English language arts tests, including more than 43,000 (35.5%) of Ohio's third graders. This performance represents a 12.6% increase from proficiency levels among third graders in the 2020-2021 school year. Despite some promising increases in overall reading proficiency, disaggregated data demonstrates that many of Ohio's disadvantaged students are overrepresented among the state's students who struggle with reading. Table 1 below shows significant discrepancy in proficiency rates when considering different student groups, including students with disabilities, English learners, and Black and Hispanic students.

Table 1. 2023-2024 Statewide Reading Proficiency Rates by Demographic Group

Student Groups	2023-2024 Statewide Reading Proficiency Rate Grades 3-8
All students	60.9%
Economically Disadvantaged	47%
Students with Disabilities	21.9%
English Learners	42%
White, non-Hispanic	69%
Black, non-Hispanic	36.4%
Hispanic	45.4%
Multiracial	56.5%
Asian or Pacific Islander	73.6%
Alaskan Native or American Indian	52.7%

Ohio students who enter kindergarten on track in language and literacy are seven times more likely to go on to score proficient on Ohio's third grade English language arts assessment.

IMPACT OVER TIME

Student learning is cumulative by nature. Students who are not proficient in reading by third grade are three times more likely than their proficient peers to not graduate on time.

State data from the 2023-2024 school year shows that only 49.4% of Ohio's eighth graders scored at least proficient on the English language arts assessment and 61.4% of the students taking Ohio's English end-of-course high school exam scored proficient.

Based on the relationship between Ohio's literacy measures and graduation, the struggles Ohio's students face can significantly impact their futures. Among Ohio's 2024 high school graduates, 88% had earned diplomas after four years (on time), which is the highest percentage of on-time graduates over the past five years. While this represents a slight improvement over time, it still means nearly 16,000 students did not graduate on time or at all. Moreover, Ohio's most disadvantaged students are overrepresented among students who do not graduate on time.

CORRELATION BETWEEN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND MATHEMATICS PROFICIENCY

A large body of research has consistently shown that reading and math skills are highly and positively correlated, with some studies finding that anywhere from 30-70% of students with difficulties in either reading or math also experience difficulties in the other domain (Landerl & Moll, 2010). As seen in the figure below, a district-level analysis showed a clear and linear relation between students' scores on the state English language arts and mathematics tests. Study results also showed that kindergarten students whose fall reading diagnostic scores were on track for reading at grade level were 2.7 times more likely to be proficient in third grade math than their kindergarten peers who were not on track in reading. These findings highlight the critical importance of early literacy skills and the extent to which reading proficiency impacts other academic areas as well.

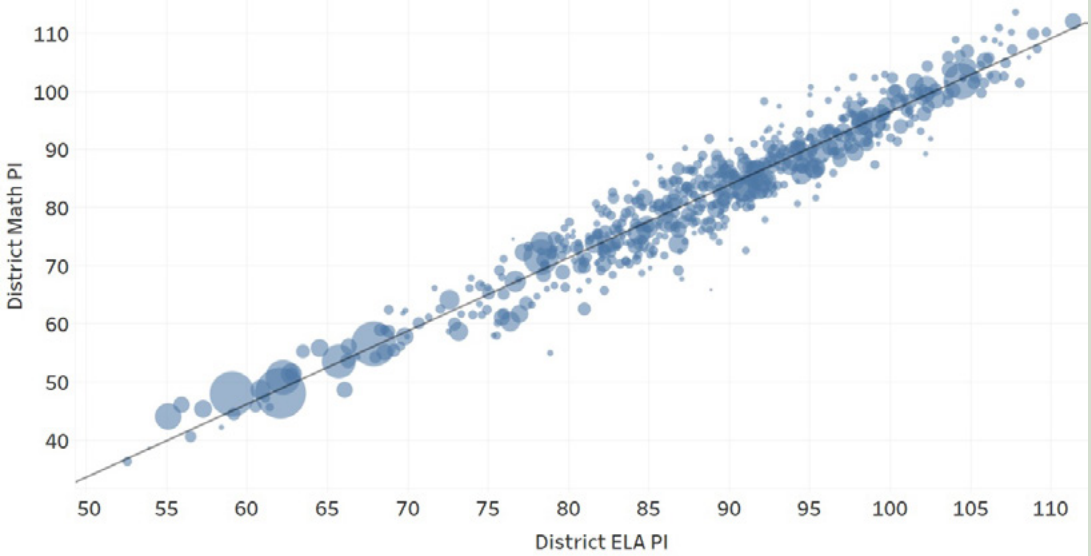

Figure 2. Correlation between districts' performance index on state ELA and math tests

LITERACY INSTRUCTION DATA

In the fall of 2023, the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce conducted a survey to obtain baseline information regarding the adoption and implementation of core curriculum and instructional materials in English language arts, as well as reading intervention programs being used by Ohio's public schools. School districts, community schools, and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) schools were required to participate in the survey. Key findings from that survey include:

- Less than one-third of districts and community schools (32.5%) reported using a core literacy curriculum that is on the state's list of approved materials.
- Over one-half of responding districts and community schools (60%) reported using more than one published curriculum for K-5 core reading instruction and intervention.

In the spring of 2024, the Department released a list of approved high-quality instructional materials and core curriculum in English language arts and evidence-based reading intervention programs. Districts and community schools could select from these resources, with the goal of having all schools and districts implement the approved materials by the 2025-2026 school year. Trend data suggests there is significant progress toward meeting that goal already. Data from the 2023-2024 school year showed that 54.4% of districts and community schools have begun using or will be using approved materials, with only 20% of schools and districts still using unapproved instructional materials.

READING IMPROVEMENT AND MONITORING PLAN (RIMP) ANALYSIS

Research suggests that when students at risk for reading difficulties receive early and intensive intervention, they have a much stronger chance of achieving grade-level reading ability. Without early intervention, their difficulties are likely to persist and worsen over time as the demands of school increase. The likelihood of "catching up" decreases over time.

No single reason explains why a student struggles to read. Districts and community schools choose intervention strategies for students on Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plans on a case-by-case basis according to the unique needs of each student as determined by data. Schools are required to report the types of reading intervention services provided during the school year in the Department's Education Management Information System (EMIS).

A review of the reported data highlighted some notable trends in the delivery of reading intervention services for students in kindergarten through grade 3, specifically that:

- A large proportion of kindergarten students (88%) received explicit intervention in phonemic awareness as part of their Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plans, underscoring the importance of this key skill as students are in the early stages of word recognition instruction.
- In general, intervention strategies in the early grades tended to focus on word recognition (phonemic awareness, decoding, sight word recognition) but shifted to focus on supporting fluency and comprehension by grade 3.
- Explicit interventions in decoding and phonemic awareness remain frequently used intervention services across the second and third grade bands, suggesting that supports specific to word recognition continue to be necessary for students who experience reading difficulties.

For third grade students, intervention services are of particular importance for ensuring reading proficiency for future academic success. Table 2 shows the average fall and average spring scores on Ohio's State Test for English Language Arts for third grade students receiving the five most frequently reported interventions and the levels of gain throughout the year. It is also important to note that just over one-half of third graders (52%, n = 30,252) received more than one type of intervention.

Although these results show that students on Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plans demonstrated significant progress throughout the year, these results also show that, on average, most students still are not scoring at or above grade-level proficiency even after receiving intervention services. In fact, only 37% of third grade students on Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plans (n = 21,327) scored at or above grade-level proficiency in the spring. These data support the idea that early intervention is critical; students who receive intervention can make considerable progress over time, so providing these services as early as possible is key.

Table 2. Improvement on Ohio's State Test for Grade 3 English Language Arts by Intervention Type in 2022-2023

Intervention strategy	Avg. Fall Score	Avg. Spring Score	Gain
Explicit Intervention in Comprehension	664	690	26
Explicit Intervention in Decoding	655	677	22
Explicit Intervention in Phonemic Awareness	655	676	21
Explicit Intervention in Fluency	660	686	26
Explicit Intervention in Vocabulary	663	688	25

ADDITIONAL CONTEXTUALIZING FACTORS

ACCESS TO QUALITY COMPREHENSIVE EYE CARE SERVICES

Vision problems, such as uncorrected farsightedness, nearsightedness, or astigmatism, are prevalent in the school-age population and can negatively impact reading performance. For example, young children with uncorrected, moderate farsightedness have been shown to have deficits in print knowledge but not phonological awareness (VIP-HIP Study Group 2016; Shankar, Evans et al. 2007). Many other studies have demonstrated that children with farsightedness will have reduced reading performance when compared to children with an age-typical refractive error (Thurston 2014; Collins, Mudie et al. 2016, Collins, Mudie et al. 2017; Mavi, Chan et al. 2022). Additionally, oral reading fluency was observed to be significantly worse in children with astigmatism when they were not wearing adequate spectacle correction (Harvey, Miller et al. 2016).

The Department is dedicated to collaborating with other agencies to ensure students have access to vision care.

The Ohio Department of Health's most recent Children's Vision Program Annual Report (2019-2021) shows that approximately 10% of Ohio's children were referred for a comprehensive eye examination after a failed school vision screening. However, fewer than 20% of those referred went on to receive the recommended comprehensive eye examination. Unfortunately, this equates to more than 60,000 Ohio children annually who were identified as needing additional vision intervention but did not receive the recommended eye care.

ACCESS TO PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND COACHING

Ohio's dyslexia support laws, enacted in April 2021, require the completion of professional development training grounded in the science of reading for all K-3 teachers and special education teachers serving students in grades K-12. The subsequent ReadOhio laws require the Department to provide professional development courses in the science of reading and evidence-based strategies for effective literacy instruction for teachers in additional grade bands, as well as administrators. These requirements illustrate Ohio's commitment to increasing access to high-quality professional learning opportunities for all educators to facilitate evidence-based reading instruction for all students.

The push to increase access to high-quality professional learning opportunities is critical, particularly given recent data that some teacher preparation programs in Ohio do not provide adequate instruction in the science of reading (Ellis et al., 2023). The statewide survey that gathered information regarding the use of high-quality instructional materials also captured baseline information concerning the completion of science of reading-based professional learning and access to district literacy coaches.

Results were overwhelmingly positive and showed that:

- A large number of districts and community schools report that at least some of their teachers have already completed science of reading professional development prior to the 2023-2024 school year (n = 687, 69%).
- 58% of districts and community schools reported their teachers completed the state-developed training, either as the solitary training or in conjunction with other approved trainings.
- 45% of districts and community schools reported their teachers completed a training that has Accredited or Accredited Plus status from the International Dyslexia Association.
- Schools and districts varied greatly with respect to access to literacy coaches. Urban districts, particularly the eight largest urban districts in Ohio, reported having the highest number of literacy coaches. Suburban districts, on average, had between one to two literacy coaches per district, whereas rural and small-town districts reported having an average of less than one full-time equivalent position dedicated to the role of literacy coach.

Research suggests that although professional learning may increase teacher knowledge, ongoing and individualized support, often in the form of teacher coaching, can be even more effective for changing teachers' instructional practices. The Department is committed to building the capacity of statewide literacy coaches and supporting educators to transform newly gained knowledge into practice.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Consistent attendance at school is critical for students to acquire the foundational skills they need for long-term academic success. Numerous studies have identified a link between chronic absenteeism and failure to graduate from high school, with some studies also finding associations between chronic absenteeism and reading outcomes (Gottfried, 2014). Historically, Ohio has seen relatively high levels of student absenteeism, which was exacerbated by the pandemic. Considering the likely impact on reading outcomes and overall academic success, the Department is committed to working with schools and districts to support student attendance, improve engagement, and raise academic achievement. Levels of chronic absenteeism are improving (see figure below), but a concerted effort must be maintained to ensure students receive consistent access to high-quality reading instruction.

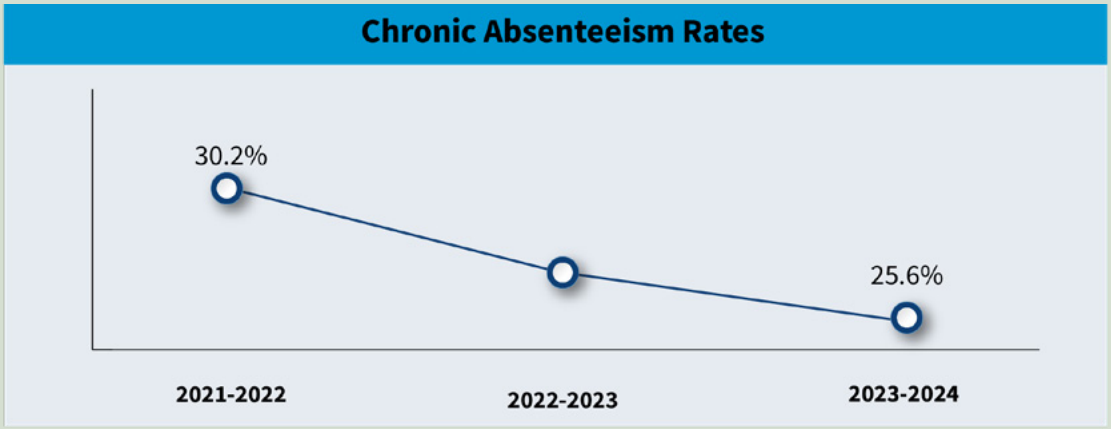

Figure 3. Chronic absenteeism rates 2021-2024

OHIO'S NEED DRIVES LITERACY VISION

The data shows that Ohio needs to build the capacity to support evidence-based language and literacy instruction at the state, regional, and local levels. The need applies to Ohio's most disadvantaged learners from birth through grade 12, including students who are economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, and students who are English learners. Each data point discussed in this section shows a significant lack of literacy achievement from birth through grade 12.

The need for evidence-based language and literacy instruction is heightened by the demonstrated negative effect of the pandemic on Ohio's students. Ohio is committed to supporting districts and schools in using evidence-based language and literacy strategies to aid accelerated literacy development in kindergarten through grade 12. Collectively, this data provides the focus for Ohio's vision and commitment to raising literacy achievement in Ohio.

Ohio's Theory of Action for Language and Literacy Development

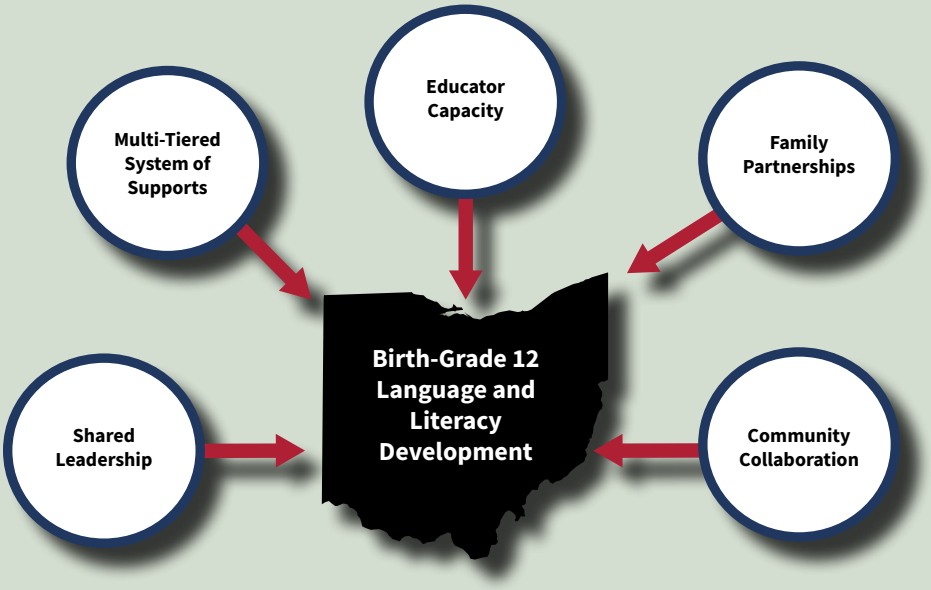

Figure 4. Ohio's Theory of Action

Ohio's state, regional, and local leaders agree that more must be done to ensure all learners have access to high-quality language and literacy instruction and appropriate intervention, from birth through grade 12. *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement* aligns with and builds on the state's current literacy-related policies and practices and promotes evidence-based language and literacy instruction and intervention. To achieve this alignment, the state is coordinating and linking efforts through the following strands of action (see Figure 4).

These strands include:

- Shared leadership
- Multi-tiered system of supports
- Educator capacity
- Family partnerships
- Community collaboration

More detailed information regarding the desired inputs and outputs for each of these strands can be found in Appendix B.

SHARED LEADERSHIP

Shared leadership brings vision, energy, cohesion, and direction to literacy improvement efforts by distributing responsibility and fostering collaboration, rather than relying on a single leader. It is focused on empowering others to collectively engage in educational reform across different levels and roles. The responsibility for leading and supporting the successful implementation of evidence-based strategies is distributed among district leaders, building administrators, and classroom teachers. Together, these leaders prioritize building capacity and collective efficacy to ensure all educators are equipped to successfully implement evidence-based instruction and intervention.

Shared leadership involves all educators in identifying challenges, analyzing underperformance, proposing solutions, and executing leadership tasks to support improvement. This is accomplished through leadership teams—district leadership teams, building leadership teams, and teacher-based teams—which share accountability for data-driven planning, implementation, feedback, and adjustments. *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement* supports shared leadership through training and coaching on evidence-based language and literacy practices and systems to support literacy improvement. This includes targeted training and resources for state and regional staff, administrators, principals, instructional coaches, teacher-leaders, and families.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS FOR READING

As students acquire language and literacy skills, various patterns of strengths and challenges emerge. Some students master literacy skills quickly and with relative ease, while others exhibit reading difficulties rooted in word-reading and/or language deficits. These differences can be addressed through a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS). A multi-tiered system of supports is a framework designed to efficiently match students' precise strengths and needs with evidence-based instruction that meets the academic and non-academic needs of all students. It serves all students, including those who need additional time, support, practice, or more intensive instruction, as well as those requiring enrichment or acceleration. Importantly, a multi-tiered system of supports ensures that every student receives targeted support as soon as data indicates a need, with or without special education or gifted labels. This system of progressively intensive support aims to prevent students from falling behind or failing to reach their potential.

A multi-tiered system of supports offers a three-tiered "needs-based model for differentiation" to purposefully address the needs of all learners, including struggling readers and those with advanced skills (Seedorf, 2014, p. 250). Tier 1 provides evidence-based core instruction to all students. Tier 2 offers targeted small-group intervention and enrichment opportunities to some students. Tier 3 delivers intensive, individualized intervention or enrichment for students with the greatest needs. For students with reading difficulties, the tiers increase in intensity to expedite learning and close gaps, reducing the need for prolonged intervention (Kilpatrick, 2015). As students respond to intervention, instructional intensity is gradually faded. The goal is to eliminate the need for intervention, ensuring that students are effectively supported by core instruction and have access to enrichment opportunities as their skills progress. For students with advanced skills, the tiers also increase in intensity to provide greater depth and complexity. For all learners, movement between the tiers is fluid and guided by data, focusing on providing the right level of instruction and support. This approach ensures all students can access the full continuum of services, which is particularly vital for **twice-exceptional learners**, such as those with dyslexia and giftedness.

This system includes a continuum of evidence-based, systemwide practices to address academic and behavioral needs. It also calls for frequent data-based monitoring to inform instructional decision-making to empower each learner to achieve high standards (Sansosti & Noltemeyer, 2008; Shores & Chester, 2008). A multi-tiered system of supports framework can be used at local, regional, and state levels to address the varied, often complex, needs of learners (Hayes & Lillenstein, 2015). *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement* includes training and coaching for state, regional, district, and school teams in screening, progress monitoring, instructional decision-making (including Universal Design for Learning), and communicating with families within a multi-tiered system of supports.

EDUCATOR CAPACITY TO PROVIDE INSTRUCTION ALIGNED TO THE SCIENCE OF READING

Educators and quality instruction are the most fundamental components to student acquisition of literacy skills and knowledge. Professional development and technical assistance tied to evidence-based language and literacy practices are key. They help build the capacity of teachers to maximize their impact. Ohio is building educator capacity through embedded, sustained professional development and coaching that focuses on evidence-based language and literacy practices and interventions.

Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement emphasizes the need for professional learning and resources that deepen educators' understanding of how children learn to read, diagnose why some children struggle, and sharpen educators' abilities to implement reading instruction and intervention aligned with the science of reading. Implementation science is integrated into professional learning and coaching to systematically bridge policy and practice.

In addition to supporting in-service educators, Ohio is partnering with the Ohio Department of Higher Education, colleges, and universities to enhance teacher-preparation programs. This collaboration ensures preservice candidates gain practical experience applying science of reading during their field placements and are equipped to use evidence-based practices upon graduation. Preservice teachers will launch their careers with effective strategies that build both confidence and competence. Inservice teachers may also benefit by assuming mentorship roles, engaging with preservice candidates in ways that foster professional reflection and growth. Teachers participating in this initiative may have access to updated training resources and professional development. Over time, mentoring and onboarding opportunities can further enhance preservice preparation, helping to refine the implementation of these practice.

"[A] key element of teacher quality is the specialized knowledge teachers utilize when teaching"

Piasta, 2009

FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

Family partnerships are essential to support learner progress and achievement in language and literacy development. Ohio's work focuses on the importance of building these partnerships in early childhood and kindergarten through grade 12 educational settings. Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement emphasizes how state, regional, and local educational entities can develop goals and strategies for supporting families in their critical roles in children's literacy development. The skills of phonological awareness, letter recognition, phonemic awareness, oral language, vocabulary, comprehension, motivation, and the connection of reading material to everyday life begin developing at birth. Families play an important role in promoting them.

Schools' strategies for partnering with families must support the adult behaviors that directly support children's language and literacy development. By communicating with families, offering resources and guidance for literacy development at home, and developing strategic family partnerships, schools can create holistic and sustainable support systems for learners from birth through graduation.

Language and literacy support for families offered by schools and communities should:

- Provide all families with opportunities to be active supporters of their children's language and literacy development
- Promote language and literacy interactions at home that are enjoyable for children and families
- Provide clear, timely understanding for families about their children's progress
- Equip families with the developmentally appropriate strategies and resources they need to support their children's learning, such as access to books
- Promote literacy in families' home languages
- Ensure families have access to materials, resources, and information in their home languages, including all homeschool connection materials, to support effective communication and engagement
- Communicate high learning expectations for all children (Boone et. al., 2017; Caspe & Lopez, 2017; Richards-Tutor et. al., 2016)

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

Everyone in the community plays a vital role in supporting children's literacy development. Key community partners, including libraries, after-school programs, cultural institutions, health care providers, businesses, philanthropic organizations, and the faith-based community, are essential for the healthy growth of children. It is crucial to establish a shared understanding and mutual reinforcement of efforts in their approach to fostering children's language and literacy skills. State, regional, and local-level partnerships are instrumental in advancing literacy improvement and emphasizing the significance of proficient literacy skills. These partnerships include networks that share successes and challenges, provide opportunities to problem-solve, and protect time to consult with each other to strengthen local literacy plans and community improvement efforts.

Through support from American Rescue Plan funds and the Department of Education and Workforce, the Columbus Metropolitan Library system hired 42 School Reading Assistance to provide tutoring aligned with evidence-based literacy practices in eight schools across three districts. The tutors provided more than 16,000 hours of instruction to nearly 800 students. Through similar partnerships, libraries across Ohio have served over 50,000 students with tutoring and homework help, increased access to high-quality materials, and STEM and early literacy programs.

Section 2: Ohio's Language and Literacy Vision

Vision Statement: Ohio's vision is for all learners to acquire the knowledge and skills to become proficient readers.

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce and its partners view language and literacy acquisition and achievement as powerful catalysts for improving student outcomes. Attaining proficiency in language and literacy skills is not merely desirable; it is imperative for the success of all students. This proficiency functions as a critical determinant of achievement across a spectrum of academic subjects and serves as a gateway to accessing a broad spectrum of post-secondary education and diverse workforce prospects.

The consequences of underdeveloped literacy skills are profound, negatively impacting both academic performance and social behavior (McGee et al., 2002; Morgan et al., 2008). Moreover, reading difficulties are associated with heightened risks of depression, increased dropout rates, lower income levels, and decreased likelihood of earning college degrees (Miller et al., 2010; Maughan et al., 2003; Hernandez, 2012; McLaughlin et al., 2014).

Given these challenges, Ohio's vision reflects a commitment to removing barriers and ensuring that each learner has the opportunities to attain essential literacy skills. Ohio's primary aim is to significantly increase the number of students acquiring the essential language and literacy skills for reading comprehension at their respective grade levels, preparing them for enduring success in their academic and professional pursuits.

Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement is firmly anchored in scientific research and evidence-based language and literacy practices, emphasizing inclusivity for all learners. By adhering to this vision, Ohio aims to cultivate an educational environment where language and literacy proficiency are tangible and attainable achievements for every student. To increase students' language and literacy achievement, the Department is urging districts and schools to (a) provide ongoing high-quality professional learning opportunities, (b) operationalize a robust multi-tiered system of supports, (c) select and implement high-quality instructional materials and evidence-based practices, and (d) employ strategic practices to meet the needs of all learners.

Efforts to achieve the vision outlined in *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement* center on these five **commitments**:

Bridge the gap between research and practice to support access to high-quality evidence-based literacy instruction aligned with the science of reading.

Ensure all learners are represented and supported throughout the language and literacy development continuum, which includes emergent, early, conventional, and adolescent literacy.

Ensure all educators and administrators are supported in building knowledge and capacity to increase students' language and literacy development through evidence-based literacy instruction.

Support the integrity of implementation of evidence-based language and literacy practices aligned with the science of reading.

Support quality planning and data-driven decision-making in a multi-tiered system of supports through collaborative problem-solving.

Ohio remains committed to supporting literacy improvement efforts across the state's educational system, encompassing regions, districts, buildings, and classrooms. To improve literacy at all levels, Ohio is prioritizing five key components outlined in the state's Theory of Action (see Appendix B):

- Through **shared leadership**, educational entities will use **proven practices** to provide language and literacy instruction and interventions to all learners.
- Educational entities will implement a robust **multi-tiered system of supports** and make **data-driven decisions** to meet the needs of all learners.
- By **increasing educator capacity**, all learners will have access to high-quality, evidence-based language and literacy instruction that includes interventions and meets their individual needs.
- **Families** will be better equipped to be active and engaged partners in their children's language and literacy development.
- **Community collaboration** will enable more learners to experience language-rich, literacy-based environments outside school and before entering school.

The Department will communicate this vision across the educational system, ensuring that literacy initiatives are aligned across Ohio Department of Education and Workforce offices, state partners, regional supports, districts, buildings and classrooms, family supports, and community engagement. Literacy acquisition and achievement will serve as the lever for school improvement. A comprehensive list of activities and efforts aligned with the state's literacy commitments can be found in Appendix D.

Commitment 1:

Bridge the gap between research and practice to support access to high-quality, evidence-based literacy instruction aligned with the science of reading.

THE SIMPLE VIEW OF READING

Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement is grounded in the theoretical framework identified in Gough and Tunmer's (1986) **Simple View of Reading** (see Figure 5). The Simple View of Reading is a formula based on the widely accepted view that reading comprehension is the product of two essential components: word recognition and language comprehension. Word recognition is the ability to transform print into spoken language, while language comprehension is the ability to understand spoken language. The Simple View of Reading asserts that both word recognition and language comprehension are necessary for skilled reading. In other words, while engaging with text, one must be able to accurately and automatically read the words and understand what they mean to read with sufficient comprehension.

The Simple View of Reading distills the multifaceted reading process into two overarching competencies, providing a helpful framework for understanding and improving literacy. Scrutinized by over 150 studies (Kilpatrick, 2020), research shows a strong link between these two competencies and reading comprehension, with studies indicating that word recognition and language comprehension explain 94–100% of the differences in comprehension (e.g., Chiu & Language and Reading Consortium, 2018; Lonigan et al., 2018).

Upon conducting a root cause analysis of students' suboptimal language and literacy performance (see Section 1), data indicated that districts were either not utilizing effective instructional practices [in both components of the Simple View of Reading] or not implementing them with fidelity. Understanding the Simple View of Reading equips educators to assess language and literacy strengths and weaknesses, enabling them to provide appropriate evidence-based instruction tailored to specific needs. Consequently, Ohio will continue to offer guidance and support to educators to ensure all learners receive appropriate instruction in both components of the Simple View of Reading.

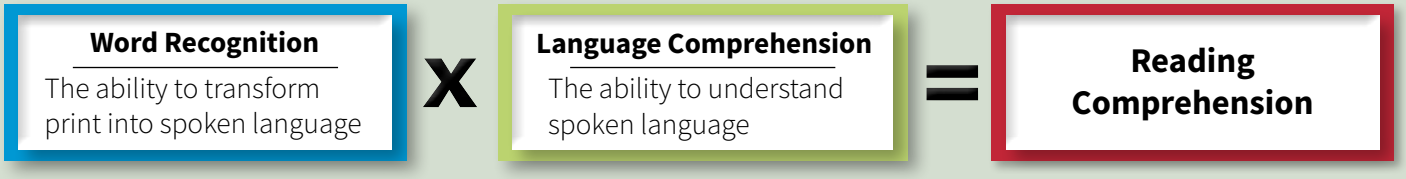

Figure 5. The Simple View of Reading (Gough & Tunmer, 1986)

Ohio's education system aims to provide all learners with high-quality, evidence-based language and literacy instruction to ensure they become proficient readers. The state can achieve this goal by supporting all levels of the education system in both the *word recognition* and *language comprehension* aspects of language and literacy instruction.

CONVERGENCE OF EVIDENCE FOR LEARNING TO READ: THE SCIENCE OF READING

The Department is committed to using the Simple View of Reading and other models supported by cognitive science, neuroscience, and educational research to promote literacy acquisition and achievement statewide.

Converging evidence about how individuals learn to read has accumulated over the past 20-30 years. Several well-known syntheses, such as Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children (National Research Council, 1998) and The Report of the National Reading Panel (National Reading Panel [NRP], 2000) have clarified instructional targets, prioritizing five essential components of reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Writing instruction has also been widely recognized as an important instructional target (Graham & Perin, 2007; Graham & Hebert, 2010). In addition, several other studies have clarified how reading and writing should be taught (e.g., National Early Literacy Panel [NELP], 2008; Snow et al., 2005; Castles et al., 2018; Shanahan & Lonigan, 2010). More broadly, the value of direct teaching, modeling, and deliberate practice has been repeatedly affirmed (Hughes et al., 2017). Several practice guides have been developed to help educators put research into practice.

> **"It is simply not true that there are hundreds of ways to learn to read…when it comes to reading we all have roughly the same brain that imposes the same constraints and the same learning sequence"**
>
> (Dehaene, 2010).

Neuroscience explains how the brain works when an individual is reading and what the brain needs to transform itself from a nonreading brain to a reading brain. This remarkable insight has been primarily gleaned through functional MRI scans of the human brain, substantiating the wealth of research that endorses the explicit and systematic instructional methods outlined by the National Reading Panel.

Evidence converging from several fields, including psychology, education, linguistics, and neuroscience overwhelmingly aligns. The converging evidence is widely referred to as the "science of reading."

Under Ohio law, science of reading means an interdisciplinary body of scientific evidence that:

a. Informs how students learn to read and write proficiently
b. Explains why some students have difficulty with reading and writing
c. Indicates that all students benefit from explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and writing to become effective readers
d. Does not rely on any model of teaching students to read based on meaning, structure and syntax, and visual cues, including a three-cueing approach

Ohio will continue using this body of research to inform, develop, and update the resources and support available to Ohio educators to improve student outcomes.

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

Ohio's language and literacy vision prioritizes instruction grounded in evidence-based practices with proven effectiveness. These evidence-based practices have been scrutinized by rigorous empirical research and "represent the best option for influencing early learning trajectories that establish who is on track to receive a quality education" (Fien et al., 2021). They have also informed how to best support older students with various reading difficulties (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Connor et al., 2013; Foorman & Torgesen, 2001; Scammacca et al., 2007, 2015; Torgesen et al., 2007; Vaughn et al., 2010).

The Department develops and disseminates resources to help educators understand and implement language and literacy practices grounded in the science of reading. The Department's website provides specific support for districts and schools implementing evidence-based language and literacy instruction. The aim is to ensure comprehensive representation and support for all students across the language and literacy development continuum, spanning emergent, early, conventional, and adolescent literacy stages.

Commitment 2:

Ensure all learners are represented and supported throughout the language and literacy development continuum, which includes emergent, early, conventional, and adolescent literacy.

INCLUDING ALL LEARNERS IN THE LANGUAGE AND LITERACY CONTINUUM

Language and literacy develop along a continuum. Starting at birth, children acquire language skills and move through and between the phases of emergent, early, conventional, and adolescent literacy development (Figure 6). Some aspects of these phases overlap. Ohio will continue to provide learners with individualized, differentiated support and instruction across this continuum. Although some descriptions of these phases of literacy development make age- or grade-level references, Ohio's vision and plan encompass all learners in all phases of literacy development, regardless of their age or grade, and presumes competence for all learners.

Figure 6. Language and Literacy Development Continuum

PRESUMED COMPETENCE FOR ALL LEARNERS

Ohio is committed to the belief that all learners, regardless of the complexity of their disabilities, possess the potential to grow their skills and knowledge in language and literacy. It is imperative to approach the literacy needs of students with disabilities with the steadfast conviction that these students can and will succeed; that they are able to achieve the same expectations for reading accomplishment as all other students. "Inclusive education is characterized by presumed competence, authentic membership, full participation, reciprocal social relationships, and learning to high standards by all students with disabilities in age-appropriate general education classrooms. It is critical that supports are provided to students and teachers to enable them to be successful" (NCIE, 2011). These core beliefs about learners are consistently upheld and emphasized throughout *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*.

All learners have the right to actively participate and engage in high-quality instruction and assessment. Ohio's plan addresses learners who have the most complex needs, including those with significantly diverse intellectual abilities. Instruction and assessment within a multi-tiered system of supports ensure learners have access to core instruction and targeted tiers of intervention. This underscores Ohio's commitment to maintaining high expectations for growth and achievement, with an emphasis on strengths rather than limitations (Jorgensen, 2005; Jorgensen et al., 2007). It is imperative that all educators maintain high expectations for all learners regardless of their unique characteristics or circumstances.

EMERGENT LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Raising language and literacy achievement begins with nurturing emergent skills to build the foundation for early communication and literacy. Literacy learning begins at birth and continues throughout our lives. The years from birth to kindergarten entry are critical for building the foundation for early reading and writing. With intentional adult support, infants, toddlers, and preschoolers can engage in meaningful interactions and activities that support precursors to literacy such as communication and oral language skills that continue developing throughout early childhood and beyond. Emergent literacy skills include the evidence-based, literacy-related steps in phonological processing, print awareness, and oral language a child takes before they are able to read text (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 2001).

Researchers have established that these skills are facilitated through specific types of child interactions with the environment, peers, caregivers and educators (Heath, 1982; Teale & Sulzby, 1986; Bowers & Vasilyeva, 2010; Guo et al., 2012; Girard et al., 2013, Wright et al., 2022). Early intervention and attention to early indicators of skill deficits may prevent future reading difficulties. Appendix E illustrates three emergent literacy skills and how each skill relates to later conventional reading and writing. These concepts are represented in Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards.

EARLY LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

During the early language and literacy phase, children begin to develop skills that pave the way for decoding, automatic word recognition, and language comprehension. These skills lay the foundation for proficient reading, writing, and communication. These concepts are represented in Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards and Ohio's Learning Standards for English Language Arts.

The National Early Literacy Panel (NELP) identified 11 literacy variables that predict later measures of literacy development (see Appendix F). Ohio uses research that confirms these 11 variables when developing evidence-based resources to promote emergent and early language and literacy development. The studies reviewed by the NELP indicate that certain variables like teaching phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, concepts of print, writing, and oral language expansion have clear benefits for young children. Children's mastery of these early skills contributes to the successful application of "conventional" language and literacy skills. In contrast, variables like rapid automatized naming (RAN), which relates to processing speed, are not intended for direct instruction (Shanahan & Lonigan, 2013).

In 2022, the What Works Clearinghouse convened a panel of early childhood experts to review recent research and help early childhood educators plan and teach young children from preschool to kindergarten entry. In Preparing Young Children for School (Burchinal et al., 2022), the panel offered seven recommendations to improve learning opportunities for young children in school. Recommendations 5-8 focus specifically on language and literacy and clarify for educators the role and impact of:

- Intentionally planning activities to build vocabulary and language
- Building children's knowledge of letters and sounds
- Using shared book reading to develop children's language, knowledge of print features, and knowledge of the world

Educators and caregivers can utilize the recommendations to guide instructional decision-making for young learners.

CONVENTIONAL LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

During the conventional language and literacy stage, children develop and refine essential literacy skills such as decoding, oral reading fluency, reading comprehension, writing, and spelling (NELP, 2009; NRP, 2000). These instructional priorities are represented in Ohio's Learning Standards and Extended Standards for English language arts in kindergarten through grade 12. They are evident in these strands, or areas, of the standards: Foundational Skills; Speaking and Listening; Language; Literature; Informational Text, and Writing.

The National Reading Panel (2000) calls these skills the Five Components of Reading:

1. **Phonemic awareness**
2. **Explicit and systemic phonics**
3. **Fluency**
4. **Vocabulary**
5. **Comprehension**

Research indicates that teaching the essential components of literacy benefits all learners, including English learners and students with reading difficulties. Indeed, "[a] synthesis of the empirical research on reading instruction suggests that students with significant intellectual disabilities and associated disabilities can learn phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension skills with direct instruction" (Woods-Field et al., 2015). During this stage, learners also develop conventional writing skills that bolster oral language, communication, and reading comprehension, laying the groundwork for effective and artful written communication.

Although the K-5 standards cover each essential reading component, the Simple View of Reading builds the foundation for a learning progression for developing skilled readers. Appendix G details a hierarchy of skills from simple to more complex to teach word recognition and language comprehension. Both are necessary for skilled comprehension of written text. This learning progression is intended to reflect an evidence-based timeline for typical developmental progress and further illustrates why a strict balance of components may inadvertently impede student progress. Because mastery of these essential components is crucial for success throughout adolescence, students who are not making adequate progress may require additional support, including interventions targeting foundational skills. Importantly, this plan stipulates that students with language and literacy difficulties should receive supplemental and intensive interventions aligned with their needs, regardless of their grade levels or disability status, into middle and high school. This support should be provided as soon as possible, and it should be provided as long as necessary. Opportunities for enrichment should also be prioritized.

ADOLESCENT LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

The adolescent language and literacy stage begins around fourth grade and extends through high school. During this stage, there is an increasing emphasis on understanding and engaging with complex texts. When students enter middle and high school, academic language and disciplinary texts become increasingly more sophisticated. As these demands increase and developmental changes occur, instructional priorities subtly shift (Roberts et al., 2008) to the five essential areas for adolescent literacy:

1. Advanced word study
2. Fluency
3. Vocabulary
4. Comprehension
5. Motivation

To learn critical content, students must be able to read, write, understand, interpret, and discuss various texts across different content areas (International Reading Association [IRA], 2012). To accomplish this, advanced word study, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, writing, and motivation must be integrated into all content areas and must become the shared responsibility of all secondary educators and specialists. This does not mean all educators become reading teachers. However, it does necessitate that all educators differentiate instruction within their disciplines to ensure all learners have equitable opportunities to access discipline-specific text, discourse, and writing.

The integration of discipline-specific literacy instruction is essential for workforce readiness and preparing students for future career aspirations. Literacy skills take on new relevance when tied to practical, real-world applications within various fields. For instance, understanding technical manuals, analyzing data, creating persuasive arguments, or interpreting industry-specific research are all essential components of literacy tied to career success. By linking literacy instruction to the demands of specific disciplines, educators can help students recognize how these skills translate into professional contexts, fostering both competence and confidence.

Motivation, one of the five essential areas of adolescent literacy, is closely linked to relevance within disciplines. When students see how literacy connects to their own interests, goals, and career aspirations, their engagement and effort in learning are likely to increase. Instructional strategies that connect texts, writing tasks, and discourse to authentic experiences within fields such as science, technology, business, and the arts not only enhance motivation but also demonstrate the pivotal role literacy plays in achieving long-term personal and professional success. Thus, making literacy instruction meaningful across disciplines is not just an academic endeavor, but a bridge to lifelong learning and workforce readiness.

To meet the needs of all learners in this phase of the language and literacy continuum, districts and schools should:

- Implement **intentional evidence-based strategies across content areas**, such as explicit vocabulary instruction, explicit comprehension instruction, and extended discussion of text meaning and interpretation
- Provide literacy instruction and support that is **discipline-specific**
- Provide **individualized intensive intervention** in reading, as needed, including interventions focused on reading complex multi-syllabic words, fluency-building, and comprehension-building practices (Appendix H)

DEVELOPING WRITING PROFICIENCY (EARLY, CONVENTIONAL AND ADOLESCENT LITERACY)

Writing is an essential component of learners' academic experiences and, like reading, requires explicit, evidence-based instruction. Writing benefits reading in many ways, including reinforcing decoding skills through the encoding process and making connections between the components of language comprehension through writing in response to what is read (Conrad, 2008; Graham & Hebert, 2010). Even proficient readers may struggle with writing, making it critical to provide explicit writing instruction for all students (Graham & Perin, 2007). Daily direct and explicit instruction of handwriting, whether manuscript or cursive, supports visual letter identification and letter formation, which also supports better reading and spelling (Berninger, 2012).

During the early and conventional language and literacy phases, handwriting instruction positively influences the development of reading and spelling skills by improving letter perception and strengthening the brain networks involved in letter processing (Wolf et al., 2018; Berninger, 2012; James et al., 2016). During this stage, building background knowledge is also crucial for producing coherent writing that meets the increasing demands of content and sources introduced at each grade level. Writing also serves as a valuable tool for teaching critical thinking (Langer & Applebee, 1987). With increased handwriting proficiency, students are able to allocate more attention to the higher-level writing skills required across content areas. For example, fluent handwriting lets writers quickly capture and transfer their ideas onto paper, keeping pace with their thoughts (Graham et al., 2019). Mastery of handwriting mechanics enables students to concentrate on the higher-level thinking and communication skills needed for success in school and life.

What is dysgraphia?

Students with impaired handwriting may have the specific learning disability dysgraphia. The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke defines dysgraphia as "a neurological disorder characterized by writing disabilities…the disorder causes a person's writing to be distorted or incorrect"

(NINDS, 2019).

Dysgraphia occurs when there is "a breakdown in the communication pathways between the mind's image of a letter and the hand's ability to produce that letter in written form"

(Moats & Tolman, 2018).

Berninger and Amtmann synthesized the research on writing development through the Simple View of Writing, later expanded and retitled the Not-So-Simple View of Writing (Berninger & Amtmann, 2003; Berninger & Winn, 2006). This framework includes transcription and compositional skills as necessary components for skilled writing. The model proposes mastery of foundational skills is necessary to transform spoken words into written language. Skilled writing is also dependent on the formulating of ideas through knowledge of topics, word choice, organizational structures, and sentence structure. Writing is cognitively demanding and thus involves self-regulation, cognitive flexibility, and working memory to generate pieces that demonstrate skilled written expression (Graham et al., 2012).

Insufficient handwriting instruction can diminish writing quality and coherence, especially for those with dyslexia or dysgraphia. For students who struggle, handwriting and systematic spelling instruction can reduce cognitive load, allowing more mental resources to be devoted to text generation and organization. Other writing strategies, such as morphemic analysis, sentence combining, and self-regulated strategy development (SRSD), can also be leveraged to substantially improve writing quality (Hebert et al., 2018).

"[W]hen all of [this] is in place—when the mechanics aren't too burdensome and the writer has sufficient information to work with—writing may be the most powerful teaching tool we have. Writing assignments quickly alert students and their teachers to information students have missed or failed to understand, enabling to fill in gaps or correct errors before it's too late. If students have absorbed the right information, writing about it forces them to retrieve it in a way that lodges it in their long-term memories, where it can be drawn on in the future. Cognitive scientists call this retrieval practice"

(Wexler, 2019).

SUPPORTING ALL LEARNERS THROUGH PREVENTION, INTERVENTION, AND ENRICHMENT

The three-tiered model of prevention and intervention originated in public health and has been applied to improving reading outcomes in a variety of schools, districts, and states (Al Otaiba et al 2011; Ervin et al, 2006; Harn et al, 2011; Scanlon et al., 2008; VanDerHeyden et al., 2017; Vellutino et al., 2008). Conceptualizing the tiers as primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention of reading failure is a hallmark of the multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) model. It involves efficiently matching student needs to instruction and using the fewest resources possible to get the desired outcome for the largest number of students. Over time, MTSS has also been recommended as a more equitable mechanism for purposeful enrichment and acceleration opportunities (e.g., Berkeley et al., 2020; Coleman & Hughes, 2009; Hughes et al., 2009; Johnsen et al., 2015; Rollins et al., 2009; Seedorf, 2014). For advanced learners, MTSS can prevent disengagement, underperformance, and social-emotional difficulties, like anxiety disorders and depression (Crepeau-Hobson & Bianco, 2013). Thus, a more comprehensive MTSS framework should be viewed as a proactive system designed to prevent both reading failure and underperformance.

DIFFERENTIATED CORE INSTRUCTION (TIER 1 INSTRUCTION)

Differentiated core **(Tier 1) instruction** is the foundation of effective teaching for all learners. It represents the first level of instruction provided to every student in the general education classroom. The goal of Tier 1 instruction is to address the needs of all students by providing high-quality, evidence-based literacy instruction. Whenever possible, this instruction should be tailored to accommodate differences in students' knowledge and skills. As the first line of support, Tier 1 ensures students build strong literacy skills through continuous assessment and instructional adjustments to meet their varied needs.

It is important to recognize that learners might be labeled as struggling or having reading disabilities when, they simply may not have received sufficient instruction in word level reading, writing, and content to develop the skills and background knowledge needed for text comprehension. Ineffective instruction should not be ascribed to an individual educator or group of educators. Insufficient instruction is the result of an insufficient system, which may unconsciously harbor low expectations for certain subgroups of learners. In addition to struggling learners, advanced learners may also be underserved when instruction fails to provide sufficient depth and complexity. Schools must commit to evaluating current practices and cultivating high expectations for all students, ensuring all students are supported adequately challenged.

The Department encourages district, school, and early care and education leaders to develop and strengthen supports for differentiated core instruction in kindergarten through grade 12 by:

- Using evidence-based instructional practices and accessible assessments
- Ensuring all educators have access to content-rich, high-quality instructional materials aligned to state standards and science of reading
- Ensuring educators have access, ongoing training, and coaching in assessments and materials to plan for and implement differentiated instruction and intensify instruction
- Providing educators with the opportunity to collaborate and plan for differentiated instruction to support a range of learners

Effective leaders encourage continual professional learning. They emphasize research-based strategies to improve teaching and learning and initiate discussions about instructional approaches, both in teams and with individual teachers.

(The Wallace Foundation, 2013).

TARGETED AND INTENSIVE INSTRUCTION (TIER 2 AND 3 INTERVENTION AND ENRICHMENT)

In addition to high-quality differentiated core instruction, some learners may require additional support through targeted or intensive instruction. Thus, students may benefit from targeted interventions to strengthen specific skills, opportunities for greater depth and complexity, or both, particularly for **twice-exceptional learners**. This supplemental support is provided in addition to, not as a replacement for, core instruction.

Tier 2 instruction offers additional support for students who do not make adequate progress with Tier 1 instruction alone. It involves targeted, small group instruction focused on specific literacy needs identified through assessment. These interventions use evidence-based strategies that are aligned with the core curriculum. It also involves targeted, small group enrichment opportunities for students needing advanced instruction. These enrichment opportunities are guided by data and standards and will likely involve lessons further along the scope and sequence or learning progression. Student progress is regularly monitored to assess the effectiveness of the interventions (or enrichment opportunities). Adjustments are made as needed to ensure students are growing in response to instruction.

Tier 3 instruction is offered to students who need the most intensive support, particularly those who have not responded adequately to Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions (or enrichment). This level of intervention is highly individualized, targeting specific deficits with one-on-one or very small group sessions. These sessions are more intensive, often involving more frequent and longer sessions. This level of enrichment is also highly individualized, targeting specific strengths with one-on-one or very small group sessions. These enrichment sessions are more intensive, but they may move at a faster pace with less repetition. Progress is closely monitored, and instruction is continuously adjusted to meet students' needs. If students do not respond to Tier 3 interventions or enrichment, further evaluations may be necessary to determine if additional support services are required (such as more specialized services or acceleration).

The Department encourages district, school, and early care and education leaders to develop and enhance intervention and enrichment supports for students in kindergarten through grade 12 by:

- Implementing evidence-based instructional, intervention, and enrichment practices
- Using data from valid and reliable assessments to drive decision-making
- Providing all educators with high-quality instructional materials to meet student needs
- Ensuring educators have access to and training in necessary assessments for planning and implementing targeted interventions and enrichment
- Offering opportunities for educators to collaborate and plan for intervention and enrichment supports

NOTE ON ADOLESCENT LEARNERS:

Educators should guide their choices of interventions by appropriate, diagnostic assessments that are flexibly designed to identify learning and motivational needs. Specialists then can provide individualized interventions that include explicit instructional focus that meet a learner's needs.

(Kamil, et al. 2008).

Individualized intensive intervention is meant to accelerate learning so learners can make substantial progress toward reading successfully in their content area classes and increase their motivation to read. This level of intensity means the learner must progress at a faster rate than typically expected in the amount of time instruction is occurring.

(Denton, 2012).

TYPES OF READING PROFILES

For educators to determine which scientifically proven methods to use when working with a learner, they must understand the reading profile of that student. Research shows evidence of five reading profiles informed by the Simple View of Reading (see Figure 7; Hoover, 2023). Like the Simple View of Reading, this is a simple model, and each learner has individualized needs educators must address through assessment and instruction.

Profiles of Students with Reading and Writing Difficulties

- The reader characterized as having a **word recognition difficulty** is weak in word reading but strong in language comprehension.
- The reader characterized as having a **language comprehension difficulty** is strong in word reading but weak in language comprehension.
- The reader with a **mixed reading difficulty** is weak in both word reading and language comprehension (Kilpatrick, 2015; Compton et al., 2014).
- The reader with **insufficient mixed ability** has good but insufficient word recognition and language comprehension skills.

Profile of Skilled Readers and Writers

- The reader with **sufficient mixed ability** has good and sufficient word recognition and language comprehension.

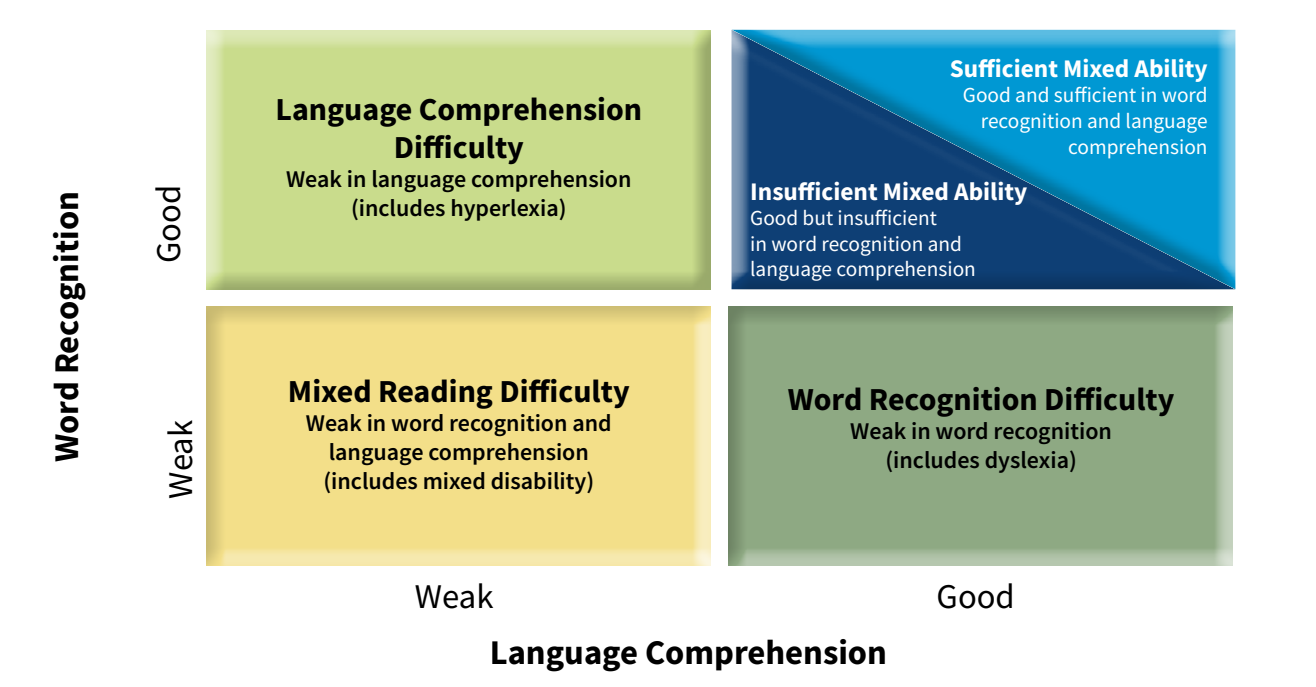

Figure 7. Five Reading Profiles Organized Under the Simple View of Reading (Adapted from Hoover, 2023)

Image Title: Five Reading Profiles Organized Under the Simple View of Reading

Original Creator: Wesley A. Hoover, Source: https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11145-023-10471-x

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Modification Note: This image has been modified from its original form by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, with written permission granted. Changes include: (a) replacing the word "poor" with "weak" and (b) replacing the "good readers" and "poor readers" headings with more precise descriptions of the readers in each profile.

Tailoring instruction to each learner's unique strengths and needs is imperative for their success. Educators must identify the differences in each reading profile and apply appropriate interventions and enrichment strategies. Using relevant assessments to pinpoint reading difficulties and strengths guides these strategies. Monitoring progress and setting exit criteria help determine when to adjust support levels. Aligning teaching methods and interventions with individual characteristics enhances engagement, understanding, and achievement. This personalized approach effectively addresses challenges and leverages strengths, making learning more impactful.

Reading Profile	Priorities for Assessment and Instruction
Word Recognition Difficulties	Learners with word recognition difficulties require assessments of word-level reading broken down by the skills needed in word-level reading, such as decoding and phonological skills, including phonemic awareness, letter-sound knowledge, and rapid automatic naming (RAN), and interventions directly associated with the teachable word-level reading skills.
Language Comprehension Difficulties	Learners with language comprehension difficulties require more language-oriented assessments and interventions associated with linguistic comprehension, such as vocabulary, background knowledge, working memory, inferencing and comprehension monitoring.
Mixed Reading Difficulties	Learners with mixed reading difficulties require diagnostic assessments in both word-level reading and language comprehension, as well as interventions addressing both needs.
Insufficient Mixed Ability	Learners with insufficient mixed ability may benefit from intentional scaffolding in core instruction.
Sufficient Mixed Ability	Learners with sufficient mixed ability may benefit from greater depth and complexity during core instruction. These learners may also benefit from targeted, data-driven enrichment in subsequent tiers of instruction.

SPECIFIC NOTE ON LEARNERS WITH DYSLEXIA

Ohio law defines dyslexia as “a specific learning disorder that is neurological in origin and that is characterized by unexpected difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities not consistent with the person's intelligence, motivation, and sensory capabilities, which difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language” (ORC 3323.25) (A)(1). The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) provides more context around dyslexia by adding, “Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge” (IDA, 2012). While statistics about the prevalence of learners with dyslexia fluctuates, the body of evidence known as the science of reading provides a solid foundation for reading instruction and intervention for all students, including those with characteristics of dyslexia and identified with dyslexia.

There are many misconceptions about dyslexia that research does not support. Some of these misconceptions include:

- Learners who have dyslexia "see things backward" or make letter reversals, such as seeing b for d. These are common errors among developing readers, regardless of age or ability levels, that educators can address through explicit instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics (Kilpatrick, 2015).
- Using colored overlays with learners who have dyslexia will accommodate eyestrain. Research provides limited support for using colored overlays to accommodate eyestrain independent of reading ability. However, there is no research to validate this accommodation to support reading in learners with dyslexia (Kilpatrick, 2015).
- All students with dyslexia demonstrate the same problems with reading. Students with dyslexia or characteristics of dyslexia demonstrate varying levels of difficulty in learning to read (National Center on Improving Literacy, 2020).
- There is one assessment for dyslexia. To ensure all students receive the supports they need to succeed, schools should use valid and reliable measures to screen students for dyslexia risk, provide high-quality, evidence-based instruction to all students, and intensify supports and interventions for students with and at risk for dyslexia (National Center on Improving Literacy, 2020).
- People with dyslexia will never learn to read. Learners with dyslexia require significantly more support but they can learn to read (National Center on Improving Literacy, 2020).

Ohio remains committed to providing core instruction that is explicit, systematic, and structured. This approach enables students with dyslexia to receive preventative, effective core instruction alongside peers who are not dyslexic. Students with word reading difficulties, including dyslexia, may or may not require intensive supports. Nevertheless, combining high-quality core instruction aligned to the science of reading and targeted interventions, Ohio intends to ensure students with dyslexia receive the support they need to thrive. More information regarding best practices and methods for universal screening, intervention, and remediation for children with dyslexia or children displaying dyslexic characteristics and tendencies using a structured literacy program is available in Ohio's Dyslexia Guidebook.

Commitment 3:

Ensure all educators are supported in building knowledge and capacity to increase students' language and literacy development through instruction aligned to the science of reading.

PRESUMED COMPETENCE FOR EDUCATORS

Teaching language and literacy to learners at any age requires great depth of knowledge in complex processes, as well as purposeful collaboration among educators. Research has shown that "a key element of teacher quality is the specialized knowledge teachers utilize when teaching" (Piasta et al., 2009). Using language and literacy practices supported by scientific research is critical, especially for learners who may have difficulty learning to read or are in the process of learning the English language.

To address the needs of all learners and improve literacy achievement, Ohio educators will be supported in:

- Believing all students can learn to read at or above grade level and grow in their skills
- Implementing scientifically based instructional and assessment practices that meet the needs of all learners
- Providing integrated supports and evidence-based interventions for students with disabilities
- Prioritizing learner needs based on data-based decision making

Educational systems will be strengthened to:

- Support educators in sharing expertise
- Provide teachers with time for planning instruction collaboratively
- Encourage shared responsibility for the teaching of all learners, referred to in education as "collective efficacy." This exists when educators have a collective belief in their ability to affect students positively (Hattie, 2016; Bandura, 1997).

> **"I believe there's a process for everything. Collaboration is also key. There aren't many decisions that are made without discussion through teams."**
> (Tony Hiser, Building Administrator, Northridge Local Schools)

Implementing evidence-based language and literacy strategies and promoting collaboration among educators begins with commitment and support from education leaders. This can be supported by:

- Analyzing whether instructional decisions and implementation are improving student outcomes
- Ensuring content-rich, accessible, high-quality instructional materials are aligned to state-standards and evidence-based language and literacy practices
- Providing sustained, intensive, job-embedded, data-driven, and classroom-focused professional learning that supports evidence-based language and literacy strategies and implementation of high-quality instructional materials
- Using an assessment system that allows educators to screen for reading difficulties and strengths, pinpoint instructional needs, differentiate instruction, and monitor student progress toward goals
- Dedicating time for collaborative preplanning that includes all educators, such as general educators, intervention specialists, gifted intervention specialists, paraprofessionals, and coaches

Educators can enhance the language and literacy development of all students by harnessing the science of reading, engaging in collaborative planning and coaching, and fostering a shared belief in their ability to positively impact student achievement.

ENHANCING PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION OF ALL EDUCATORS AND STAKEHOLDERS TO ADDRESS INEQUITIES IN EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

Ohio's root cause analysis (Section 3) indicates the *culture of districts or buildings often is not conducive to effective improvement*. Consequently, there is a need to strengthen collaboration among educators within existing teaming structures, like teacher-based teams (TBTs) and professional learning communities (PLCs). Establishing purposeful partnerships between instructional leaders, general educators, special educators, and gifted educators is a powerful lever for raising literacy achievement. When warranted, involving other related service personnel in these collaborative conversations ensures that the needs of the whole child are comprehensively addressed. This model of shared leadership and collective ownership leverages the group's collective expertise, fostering a synergistic environment where all educators can exponentially grow in service of all students. Practically speaking, collaboration also enhances educators' ability to provide differentiated Tier 1 instruction and offers opportunities to align and systematically intensify intervention and enrichment opportunities. Ultimately, Ohio's plan is grounded in the belief that all children can learn, all educators can teach, and proactive planning undergirds successful implementation for all learners.

Effective literacy instruction must include a comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of all students. Providing targeted, intensive intervention to students with reading difficulties is crucial. Both federal and state regulations support early intervention services and advocate for flexible service delivery, including cross-categorical support and specialized instruction for students regardless of their disability status. Although federal and state legislation does not require enrichment services, district and building teams are encouraged to consider how meaningful enrichment and acceleration opportunities can be provided to students needing advanced instruction, whether they have a gifted label or not.

PREPARING EDUCATORS TO PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY LITERACY INSTRUCTION FOR ALL STUDENTS

Ensuring all students receive comprehensive, evidence-based language and literacy instruction also relies on the preparation of high-quality teacher candidates. By helping teacher candidates acquire a deep understanding of the science of reading and its practical implications, educators will enter their classrooms with a solid foundation of proven strategies and instructional techniques.

Ohio is committed to supporting institutions of higher education in their efforts designed to:

- Increase teacher knowledge and application of the foundational skills of reading
- Increase teacher knowledge and application of development across the language and literacy continuum
- Prepare and support teachers, related services personnel, principals, and others to implement evidence-based literacy practices consistently and coherently across systems
- Partner with local school districts to ensure teacher preparation and field placements are high-quality and mutually reinforcing

The P20 Literacy Collaborative is a community of practice of IHE-district partner teams who collaborate to promote inclusive models of preparation and personnel development for educators and improve equitable access to high-quality literacy instruction and equitable literacy outcomes for struggling learners.

As part of this collaboration, several Ohio institutions of higher education are working to strengthen core reading course content aligned to the science of reading. Along with district partners, these institutions of higher education are working to ground course content in the science of reading, and prepare and support teacher candidates to apply what they're learning in school settings in order to improve literacy instruction and outcomes for every child.

To fulfill this vision, teacher educators must critically examine their current practices and identify areas where additional training or support may be necessary. To further their own understanding, teacher educators should have access to professional learning opportunities and resources, enabling them to deepen their knowledge base and improve the quality of teacher training. In doing so, educators can leverage evidence-based strategies to mitigate the opportunity gap and bridge the research-to-practice gap, ultimately creating a more equitable and effective educational system for all learners.

It is also essential to forge strong partnerships with cooperating teachers who model and reinforce what is learned within the education preparation program. Simply providing more time for clinical experiences does not ensure teacher preparedness. Candidates are better prepared to support student learning when they have clinical experiences in positive working environments with effective teachers. Research indicates that schools with shared commitments to teaching and learning, high-quality teacher collaboration and professional development, strong relationships, and supportive leadership positively impact student learning, instructional effectiveness, and teacher retention (Ronfeldt, 2021).

Commitment 4:
Support the fidelity of implementation of evidence-based language and literacy practices aligned to the science of reading.

Findings from the needs assessment conducted by Ohio's State Literacy Team, coupled with the expectations of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), point to the need for Ohio to support schools and districts in implementing evidence-based instruction and intervention strategies aligned to the science of reading.

WHAT IS AN EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE?

Evidence-based practices are instructional approaches or strategies that have been evaluated and proven to improve student outcomes. The term "evidence-based" emphasizes the importance of using information from well-designed and well-conducted research studies to inform decision-making and practice. The objective is to guarantee that practices adopted in educational settings are founded not merely on tradition or intuition, but on verifiable effectiveness, substantiated by research findings.

Evidence-based practices "represent the best option for influencing early learning trajectories that establish who is on track to receive a quality education" (Fien et al., 2021). Relying on evidence-based practices helps educators avoid using ineffective or outdated approaches that may waste valuable learning time or hinder student progress. By incorporating these research-supported methods into their teaching, educators can more effectively address learning challenges and optimize overall learning outcomes. High-quality instructional materials that include evidence-based practices for core instruction and intervention are more likely to improve student outcomes.

A **program** is a packaged set of lessons and additional academic content used to teach a subject at a particular grade level (adapted from the definition of Curriculum Programs and Materials in the R-TFI) or a branded intervention or product (adapted from the definition of program type from the What Works Clearinghouse).

A **practice** is a lesson or repeated instruction intended to introduce, develop, or improve a skill. A practice is not a branded intervention or product, but rather a method, approach or strategy for teaching (adapted from the definition of the program type from the What Works Clearinghouse).

> Example: Develop awareness of the segments of sounds in speech and how they link to letters (IES Practice Guide for Foundational Reading)

An **activity** is what students are doing to learn and/or practice a skill, from engaging with a teacher during modeling to supported practice and ultimately independent practice.

> Example: Students read a passage chorally, paying close attention to the phrasing and then provide feedback on how they read the phrases differently.

Under the Every Student Succeeds Act, the term evidence-based has a specific meaning, and there are four tiers or levels of evidence: strong evidence, moderate evidence, promising evidence, and demonstrates a rationale. The federal government's emphasis on using evidence confirms its belief in the importance of making decisions based on rigorous evaluation. Resources created before the enactment of the Every Student Succeeds Act might claim to be evidence-based, but it does not necessarily mean these practices meet the Every Student Succeeds Act definition of evidence-based.

What is the difference between evidence-based and research-based?

The terms evidence-based and research-based are frequently used interchangeably, but they are different — and it is important to understand the difference.

A strategy that is evidence-based likely also is research-based; however, the reverse is not always true. A program or strategy — especially if it is newly developed — may be research-based but not meet the formal definitions of evidence based.

For a strategy to be considered evidence-based, its efficacy must have been evaluated by someone other than just the people or organizations that developed the strategy. The outcome of the evaluation(s) will determine what, if any, level of evidence the strategy meets.

While generally there is research that goes into the development of a strategy, it must be evaluated for efficacy, as outlined by ESSA, to fulfill Ohio's state or federal requirements related to evidence-based strategies.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES NEEDED IN EVIDENCE-BASED LANGUAGE AND LITERACY STRATEGIES ACROSS THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Each level of the educational system must develop different levels of knowledge, skills, and abilities related to evidence-based language and literacy strategies. Educators working directly with learners need deep knowledge, skills, and abilities in how to use an evidence-based strategy successfully. Educators who are further removed from student instruction, such as district and building leaders, need deep knowledge, skills, and abilities in how to select high-quality resources and how to apply implementation science to support or evaluate implementation strategies.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEVEL

Educators providing instruction to learners in language and literacy must have deep knowledge, skills, and abilities in:

- The components of word recognition and language comprehension
- Principles of learning science
- Explicit instruction and differentiation
- Measurement of fidelity of instruction
- Collection and analysis of student data to inform instruction

BUILDING LEVEL

Building leaders must have knowledge, skills, and abilities in:

- The components of word recognition and language comprehension
- The progression of skills at each grade level served (Appendix G)
- Measuring the fidelity and integrity of adult implementation and student outcomes
- Analyzing aggregated student outcome data based on the components of the Simple View of Reading to make building-level decisions
- Using implementation science to systematically support educators' use of programs and practices
- Determining the success of, and barriers to, implementation in each grade level and schoolwide
- Identifying resources such as teacher time, staffing, and high-quality instructional materials needed to support evidence-based instruction that meet all learner needs
- Knowing what to look for to tell them if explicit instruction in the components of the Simple View of Reading is occurring in instruction

DISTRICT LEVEL

District staff members, including curriculum, assessment, student services, and other staff responsible for decisions related to literacy, must have knowledge, skills, and abilities in:

- Using implementation science to systematically support educators' use of programs and practices
- The processes used to select effective programs, practices, and activities aligned to the Simple View of Reading to ensure the district's strategies will improve student outcomes
- The components of word recognition and language comprehension and progression of skills at grade levels served (Appendix G)
- The assessments used to measure the degree of adult implementation, such as application of concepts and walkthrough tools; these determine if educators have effectively applied strategies and properly collected and analyzed student outcome data to identify successes and challenges.

REGIONAL LEVEL

Regional educational service centers and state support teams must have knowledge, skills, and abilities in:

- Understanding research and evaluation to discern practices aligned to science of reading versus those misaligned to the evidence base
- Selecting programs, practices, and activities to ensure what the educational service center or state support team staff supports is aligned to the science of reading and the Simple View of Reading and will improve adult implementation and student outcomes
- Using implementation science to systematically support educators' use of programs and practices
- Using processes to select assessments to measure and prioritize the degree of change needed for adult implementation
- Developing coaching and technical assistance strategies aligned to the science of reading and the Simple View of Reading

STATE LEVEL

State-level staff supporting literacy efforts must have knowledge, skills, and abilities in:

- Research and evaluation to discern effective versus ineffective strategies in reading
- Strategies that align to components of the science of reading and the Simple View of Reading
- Identifying ineffective practices promoted by other state staff or state guidance documents to streamline messaging and bring coherence to improvement efforts

USING IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE TO SUPPORT EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES

"Implementation science identifies the changes that must occur within the systems of an organization so that implementers can successfully use a selected program or apply an innovation as intended with fidelity" (Duda & Wilson, 2018). The National Implementation Research Network (Fixsen et al., 2005) identifies several stages of implementation that can effectively support the adoption of high-quality instructional materials and evidence-based language and literacy practices (see Figure 8):

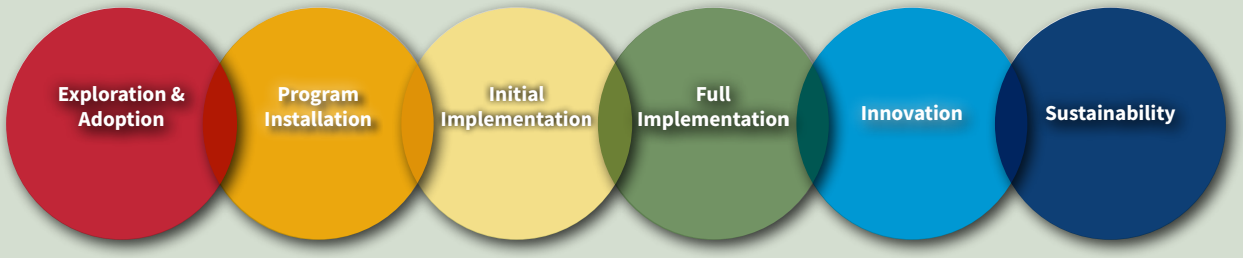


Figure 8. Stages of Implementation (Adapted from Fixsen et al., 2005, 2009)

- **Exploration and Adoption:** Assess needs, resources, and readiness for implementation.
- **Program Installation:** Create the necessary infrastructure and supports, including initial training.
- **Initial Implementation:** Begin using the new materials/strategies, with aligned professional learning and coaching support.
- **Full Implementation**: Ensure materials/strategies are being used consistently and effectively, with ongoing professional learning and coaching support.
- **Innovation:** Refine practices; differentiate and improve fit, with ongoing professional learning and coaching support.
- **Sustainability:** Ensure that materials and practices are being optimally implemented with ongoing professional learning and coaching support. Consider the needs of new and veteran educators.

SELECTING INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES

A critical question schools should be asking is, "Which high-quality instructional materials and evidence-based practices should we implement, and for which students?" Ohio continues to develop resources to help schools identify and implement high-quality instructional materials and evidence-based practices. One effective approach involves using the plan, study, launch, implement model, depicted in Figure 9. The plan, study, launch, implement structure aligns with the National Implementation Research Network's (NIRN) stages of implementation (Fixsen et al., 2005, 2009), providing a systematic approach to selecting and implementing materials and practices (Appendix J).

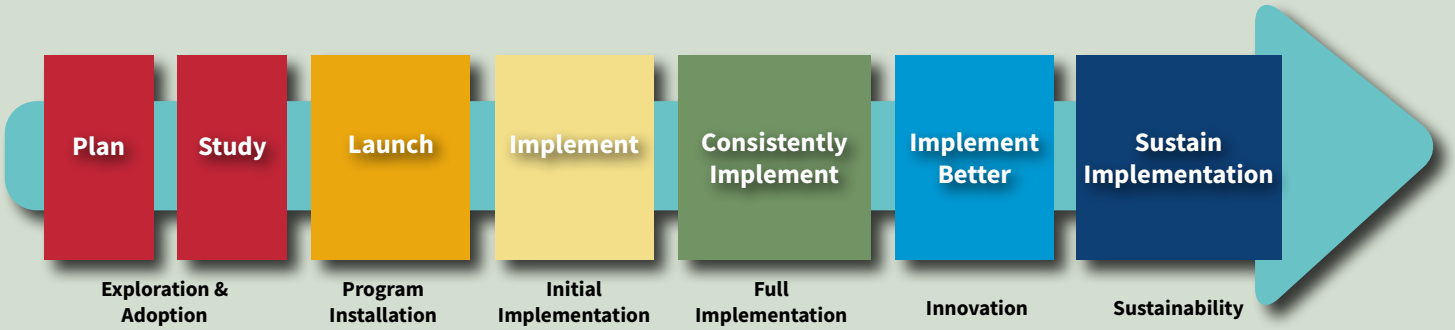


Figure 9. Plan, Study, Launch Implement model

PLAN:

- During the first part of the exploration/adoption stage, planning involves creating a clear roadmap for the selection and implementation of high-quality instructional materials and/or evidence-based practices.

STUDY:

- During the second part of the exploration/adoption stage, studying involves evaluating and researching high-quality instructional materials and/or evidence-based practices.

LAUNCH:

- During the installation stage, launching involves introducing and disseminating high-quality instructional materials and/or evidence-based practices.

IMPLEMENT:

- During the initial implementation stage, implementing involves beginning to put high-quality instructional materials and evidence-based practices into use.
- During the full implementation stage, the goal is to achieve widespread, consistent implementation.
- During the innovation stage, the goal is to implement better, using data to support differentiation.
- During the sustainability stage, the goal is to sustain high-quality implementation over time.

ENSURING EFFECTIVENESS AND REFINING IMPLEMENTATION

The Department's investment in the identification and implementation of evidence-based language and literacy practices represents a strategic approach to enhancing educational outcomes. This commitment is multifaceted and includes several critical components that work together, like cogs in a machine, to ensure that high-quality literacy instruction is equitably provided in every classroom. These include the selection of high-quality instructional materials and evidence-based practices, providing curriculum-based professional learning, supporting coaching and collaboration connected to classroom practice, establishing a structured process for data-driven refinement, and planning for long-term sustainability.

Figure 10: A Process for Ensuring Effectiveness and Refining Implementation

Working with regional educational service centers and state support teams, the Department is developing tiered professional learning programs for districts, schools, and early childhood education programs. The tiered approach includes activities and intensive supports for districts and schools most at risk. The Department is also enhancing Ohio's Coaching Model to help districts and schools implement practices. Ohio plans to ensure its effectiveness through supporting the selection of high-quality instructional materials, professional learning, and coaching across the stages of implementation. In addition, the Department supports the implementation of communities of practice (CoPs) and networked improvement communities (NICs) to problem-solve and collaborate in the implementation of evidence-based language and literacy instruction.

HIGH-QUALITY INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Research shows that providing teachers with high-quality instructional materials is an effective strategy for increasing student learning. Careful selection of high-quality instructional materials and programs to support literacy instruction across all content areas allows for clear alignment of instructional focus. High-quality instructional materials provide standards-aligned content, a clear scope and sequence that allows for vertical alignment, evidence-based strategies that allow for data-driven instruction, and a curriculum that allows all learners' needs to be met.

Standards-aligned content provides students the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and skills at grade level. Combined with alignment to the science of reading and strategies for effective literacy instruction, all students' needs can be met. A scope and sequence allow teachers to know where their content lands in vertical alignment, which can help in understanding the importance of their standards, as well as what skills are taught before and after their content (Hirsch & Allison, 2020). When implemented with integrity, teachers use the assessment data to drive instruction and make data-based decisions for their students (Sy & Shapiro, 2023).

The Department is committed to supporting district leaders and teams in selecting, preparing for, and supporting the use of high-quality instructional materials in literacy and English language arts.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Professional learning is most effective when it is sustained, intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data-driven, and classroom-focused (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015). Teachers are more inclined to embrace new approaches when they perceive clear connections between professional learning and their classroom needs. Thus, engaging teachers in curriculum-based professional learning focused on high-quality instructional materials and evidence-based practices is a powerful way to deepen teachers' knowledge content and provide practical knowledge they can apply immediately (Short & Hirsch, 2023). This approach provides educators with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to implement the curriculum with integrity, while offering immediate and sustained support for implementation. The provision of ongoing support enhances teachers' expertise in the science of reading, fosters a unified understanding of effective practices, and promotes a culture of continuous improvement that can improve student outcomes.

Professional learning should:

- Align with school, district, and state priorities
- Focus on critical content, high-quality instructional materials, and evidence-based practices
- Include examples and modeling
- Include opportunities for active learning and applications of new strategies
- Include opportunities for collaboration
- Involve follow-up and feedback

A strategic approach to professional learning should also promote reflection, assess teaching impact using adult data, and continuously refine implementation based on student data (Guskey, 2002a, 2002b, 2014). These practices can be supported by instructional coaching, peer coaching, and collaborative discussions within existing teaming structures like TBTs or PLCs. Such a data-driven approach promotes skill transfer, refinement, and sustainability while informing necessary updates to building and district plans.

Ohio is committed to supporting high-quality professional learning by updating or developing job-embedded opportunities that align with *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*. These will be aligned with Ohio's literacy standards for learners from birth through grade 12, model curriculum, e-learning modules and guidance documents. To ensure accessibility and widespread impact, resources will be made available to all stakeholders through the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce's website. Additionally, targeted support will be provided through the Department's Learning Management System. For more intensive needs, Ohio will leverage its regional state support teams and educational service centers, offering more personalized, on-site support.

Literacy professional learning is aligned with the science of reading and spans the entire language development continuum—emergent literacy, early literacy, conventional literacy and adolescent literacy—discussed in Section 2. This professional learning emphasizes foundational and extended literacy strategies grounded in research-based reading instruction, including the Simple View of Reading (Gough & Tunmer, 1986), Scarborough's Rope (Scarborough & Brady, 2002), and the Four-Part Processing Model for Word Recognition (Seidenberg & McClelland, 1989). Consequently, teachers will be equipped with a repertoire of strategies to differentiate instruction and address the specific needs of their students.

COACHING

Research supports coaching as an effective way to improve teacher's instructional skills and outcomes for learners (Cantrell & Hughes, 2008; Carlisle & Berebitsky, 2011; Shidler, 2009). In Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement, coaching serves as a tool for implementation and an intervention to improve outcomes for all learners—especially the most disadvantaged.

As an identified support mechanism for district staff, the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce developed Ohio's Coaching Model. Ohio's Coaching Model identifies coaching processes with different levels of intensity (Appendix C).

These levels of intensity can be enacted at both the instructional and systems level:

- **Level 1:** All educators and staff received universal coaching support.
- **Level 2:** Educators and staff may opt into a self-guided support structure.
- **Level 3:** Educators may find themselves in small group coaching.
- **Level 4:** Educators may find themselves in one-on-one coaching.

Instructional coaching is implemented at the classroom level. The goal of instructional coaching is to develop educators' knowledge, skills, and abilities in content-specific strategies to improve student learning. This type of coaching is for teachers, specialists, and small teams of educators and paraprofessionals. It includes face-to-face conversations and use of video demonstrations. Professional learning and resources for instructional coaching in literacy are available on the Department's Learning Management System.

Systems coaching implemented at the administration and leadership team levels. The goal of systems coaching is to develop knowledge, skills, and abilities in district and school infrastructures to promote the use of high-quality language and literacy strategies. This type of coaching often is provided to administrators, district leadership teams, building leadership teams, and teacher-based teams.

Peer coaching can be a driver at both the instructional and systems level. The goal of peer coaching is to drive forth improvement grounded in common professional learning and curriculum implementation. Peers support and guide each other, sharing knowledge, feedback, and best practices. Colleagues work together to reflect on current literacy practices; expand, refine, and build new skills; share ideas; teach one another; conduct classroom research; or solve problems in the workplace (Robbins,1991).

NETWORKING AS AN IMPROVEMENT DRIVER

Networking can be a powerful driver for literacy improvement. It allows educators and administrators to share knowledge and expertise, leading to innovative solutions that enhance implementation and improve student outcomes. Two effective networking frameworks include communities of practice and networked improvement communities.

Communities of practice are multiple systems or sites that dedicate time and personnel to learn, collaborate on shared problems of practice, identify best practices, and support each other in implementation of reform efforts designed to improve student outcomes.

There are **six core elements** of a successful community of practice:

- Clear focus on shared problem of practice
- Active learning through process of inquiry
- Collective ownership
- Appropriate mix of partners
- Sufficient commitment to support implementation
- An effective structure of governance and decision making (Bowman, 2016)

Networked improvement community are characterized by the six elements of a community of practice plus an additional four characteristics:

- Focused on a well-specified aim, seeking to accomplish a clearly defined, measurable outcome
- Guided by a deep understanding of the problem, the system that produces it, and a theory of improvement relevant to it
- Disciplined by the rigor of improvement science
- Coordinated to accelerate the development, testing, and refinement of interventions and their effective integration into practices across varied educational contexts (LeMahieu, 2015)

The Department is committed to fostering collaboration and shared problem-solving through communities of practice and networked improvement communities to enhance evidence-based language and literacy implementation across Ohio. The Department has developed a statewide literacy network consisting of state and regional literacy specialists who collaborate to develop statewide and regional resources. Additionally, in all 16 regions, each regional support team for literacy has established regional literacy networks that enable educators to collaborate and build capacity for implementing evidence-based literacy instruction. These regional literacy networks help scale successful practices from implementation sites involved in the Comprehensive Literacy State Development grant, and they provide opportunities for neighboring districts to share their successes and challenges. Both the statewide literacy network and regional literacy networks operate based on the common conceptual frameworks described in *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*.

For more information on implementing evidence-based language and literacy instruction aligned with the science of reading, an accompanying implementation toolkit for *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement* is available on the Department's website.

Regional Literacy Networks in Action

Region 14 offers several regional networking opportunities, including a Literacy Leaders Network. This network has been especially instrumental in promoting and supporting the implementation of evidence-based practices grounded in the science of reading. Participants routinely engage in collaborative discussions and problem-solving, providing mutual coaching and support. Additionally, they have the opportunity to visit other school districts, observe instructional practices, and share insights, fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

Debbie Mickey, the Regional Literacy Specialist in Region 14, expressed satisfaction with the growth the network and its participants have experienced. She credits collaboration between leaders, educators, state support team consultants, and educational service center consultants as a catalyst. According to Debbie, participants have "adopted a posture of mutual support rather than competition or 'keeping up' with other districts". She shared that since 2018, leaders have consistently applied what they have learned to ensure better instruction and stronger systems of support. Overall, these incremental changes have led to improved student outcomes throughout the region.

Commitment 5:
Support quality planning and data-driven decision-making within a multi-tiered system of supports

A multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) framework includes three tiers of instruction in which all students can access the type and amount of instructional support they need to become skilled readers, without waiting to fail or waiting to flourish. Knowledge and understanding of the three-tiered model can assist districts and schools in establishing a system to support all learners through prevention, intervention, and enrichment. Data-based decision-making is crucial within this model, as it helps identify and match student needs to an appropriate intervention or enrichment opportunity. This model uses the collaborative problem-solving process to analyze student data and match student needs to instruction, using the fewest resources possible to get the desired outcome for the largest number of students.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING

Data-driven decision-making in a multi-tiered system of supports depends on educators' collaboration in planning and providing instruction, as well as assessing student progress. Teams can be more effective and efficient if they all use a collaborative problem-solving process, sometimes referred to as data-based decision-making. When all members of the school community use the common structure of collaborative problem-solving, in all levels of teaming, results can be obtained for students more efficiently. Collaborative problem-solving provides a common routine and way of thinking about problems, which provides more time to focus on resolving the problem. Several examples exist in the educational literature – most follow a plan, do, study, act cycle.

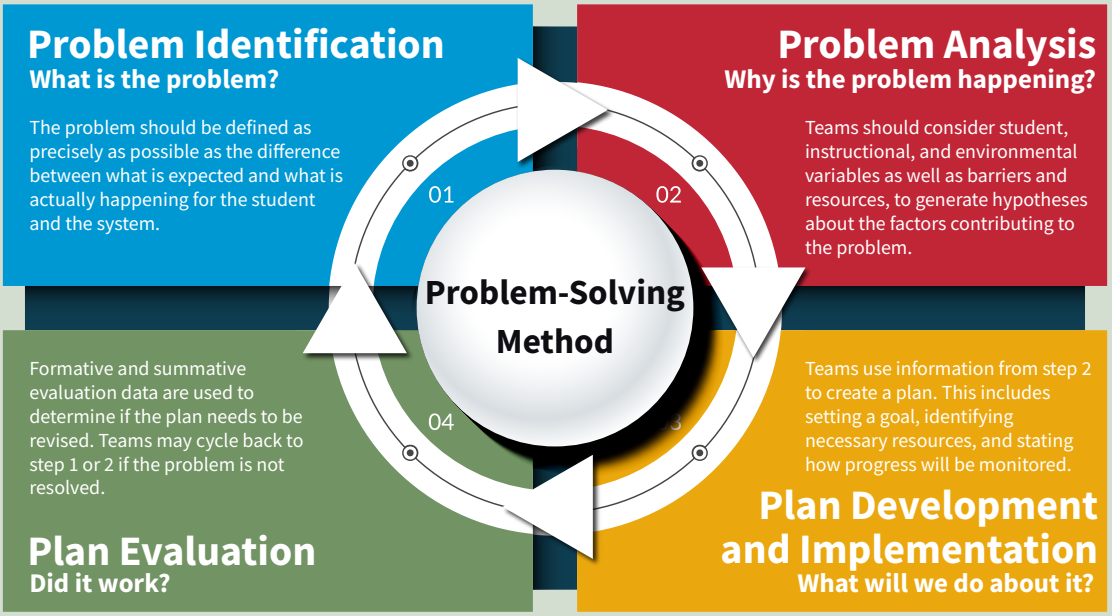


Figure 11. Collaborative Problem-Solving Model

KNOWLEDGE OF STUDENT NEEDS

The collaborative problem-solving model is crucial for understanding students' needs. By integrating multiple data sources, this model helps: (a) identify students' strengths and areas for improvement; (b) set attainable goals; (c) guide differentiation, intervention, and enrichment; (d) and monitor instructional effectiveness. By continuously evaluating the effectiveness of instruction, educators can adjust goals and methods to better meet students' needs (Connor et al., 2009, 2011; Deno & Mirkin, 1977; Espinas & Fuchs, 2022; Hosp & Ardoin, 2008; Tomlinson, 2005). While some students will be well-served by core instruction, others may require systematically intensified intervention or enrichment opportunities.

TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS

Effective data-based decision-making hinges on the use of age-appropriate, valid, and reliable assessments. Within a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) framework, four categories of assessments guide educators in making informed decisions about instructional strategies and interventions:

- **Universal screening assessments**, which are used to help educators identify students who meet, exceed, or fall below grade-level expectations while evaluating the adequacy of Tier 1 instruction for potential instructional improvement.
- **Diagnostic assessments**, which help identify specific skill proficiencies and instructional targets for students who require additional support.
- **Progress monitoring assessments**, which track students' growth over time.
- **Outcome assessments**, which indicate whether grade-level expectations have been met, typically at the end of the year.

INTEGRATING LITERACY INTO IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

Literacy improvement efforts should be integrated across all levels of the education system, including local district and building plans. Local literacy improvement plans should align to other local or community improvement plans focused on literacy outcomes. In addition, clear alignment between literacy improvement plans and other improvement efforts and priorities should be in place to support effective implementation. Frameworks and plan-do-study-act cycles, such as the Ohio Improvement Process or the collaborative problem-solving process, can connect collaborative team structures and facilitate communication, laying the foundation for sustainable change.

Section 3: Infrastructure to Support Ohio's Vision

Supporting Ohio's vision for all learners requires alignment of statewide literacy improvement efforts, a robust system of support at the state and regional levels, and guidance for local implementation. The Department is committed to monitoring and measuring the success of literacy activities to evaluate the impact of its effort to drive continuous improvement and inform state, regional, and local efforts.

ReadOhio

ReadOhio is a statewide effort to promote reading and raise literacy achievement statewide. Spearheaded by Governor Mike DeWine, this effort includes all state agencies and programs in aligning programs and services to support Ohioans in learning or improving their reading and literacy skills.

Foundation for Ohio's Literacy Improvement Efforts

A series of key initiatives and drivers laid the foundation for Ohio's literacy efforts and continues to inform the progress of Ohio's vision. Since 2015, Ohio has committed to improving literacy achievement through the implementation of evidence-based practices. Lessons learned through implementation and piloted tools and resources continue to serve as the basis of Ohio's literacy improvement efforts and inform policies and practices.

OHIO'S STATE SYSTEMIC IMPROVEMENT PLAN: EARLY LITERACY

OHIO'S EARLY LITERACY PLAN (2015)

Stakeholders from across the state helped develop Ohio's Early Literacy Plan (2015) using the active implementation framework (Fixsen et al., 2013). To develop the goals and strategies that formed the basis for Ohio's Theory of Action (Section 1), the stakeholder group analyzed the framework's drivers, which included competency, organization, and leadership. Stakeholders reviewed the results of Ohio's Dyslexia Pilot Project to identify critical supports Ohio would need to provide for schools taking part in the Early Literacy Pilot.

OHIO'S EARLY LITERACY PILOT (2015-2020)

Ohio's Early Literacy Pilot (2015-2020) supported educators and leaders implementing evidence-based language and literacy strategies as part of their instruction and interventions. It involved two cohorts in 15 high-needs districts. Implementation included professional learning in the science of reading, instructional and systems coaching, family engagement, and use of data to inform instruction. The pilot served as the foundation for the design and implementation of evidence-based strategies contained in *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*.

DYSLEXIA SUPPORTS

OHIO'S DYSLEXIA PILOT (2012-2015)

Ohio's Dyslexia Pilot Project (2012-2015) involved eight school districts. The goals of the pilot project were to evaluate (a) the effectiveness of early screening and reading assistance programs for children at risk for reading failure; and (b) whether those programs could reduce future special education costs. The pilot's external evaluator found a cost savings attributable to the pilot. All participating school districts that met the requirements for the project in Year 3 demonstrated meaningful gains in learner rates of improvement that are likely to be sustainable. Ohio projects that, over time, all school districts will experience special education cost savings exceeding the initial pilot investment (Morrison, 2015). Several of the practices tested in Ohio's Dyslexia Pilot Project were included in Ohio's Early Literacy Pilot (see above) to test their scalability and sustainability.

MODEL DEMONSTRATION PROJECT (2020-2024)

The $1.2 million Model Demonstration Projects for Early Identification of Students with Dyslexia Grant (2020-2024) aimed to improve the literacy of students with — or at risk for — dyslexia. Nationally, it has been estimated that approximately 10 percent of students have dyslexia, a learning disability that can cause challenges with reading, writing, and spelling. This grant supported pilot programs to address the literacy needs of students in three model schools (preschool through grade 1). These schools offer professional learning and support for teachers, coaches, and principals, along with regional support focused on instruction for children with dyslexia.

EACH CHILD READS GRANT (2021-2023)

The Each Child Reads grant (2021-2023) provided support for 13 districts to expand the Early Identification of Dyslexia Model Demonstration program to address differentiated support for literacy development in preschool through first grade. Preschool, kindergarten, and first grade teachers participated in professional learning and needs assessment to identify strengths and weaknesses in literacy assessment and instructional practices, aligned to research and Ohio's Dyslexia laws. Grantees used funds to improve instructional practices and systems. Effective levers included monitoring the explicitness and integrity of implementation of high-quality core instructional materials, administering universal screening three times each year, developing and deploying decision rules, adopting and implementing high-quality intervention materials aligned to student needs, and increasing opportunities for progress monitoring.

Ohio's Language and Literacy Drivers

OHIO'S COMPREHENSIVE POLICIES FOR LITERACY IMPROVEMENT

Many of Ohio's language and literacy drivers are situated within policies for literacy improvement that, when viewed in tandem, encompass the state's comprehensive policies for literacy improvement. The Department views these policies as supporting a preventative approach for reading difficulties that should be implemented in concert with each other.

OHIO'S THIRD GRADE READING GUARANTEE

To promote the mastery of age-appropriate reading skills at the earliest stages of a child's academic experience, Ohio enacted the Third Grade Reading Guarantee in 2012. This law requires all districts and schools to screen all K-3 students to determine whether they are on track or not on track to read on grade level. Each learner identified as a struggling reader is required to receive a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan (RIMP) to individualize reading instruction based on the learner's identified needs. The services provided through these plans must be grounded in the science of reading and include intensive, explicit, and systematic instruction to ensure progress toward proficient reading. As part of *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*, the Department is updating guidance and resources associated with these plans to reflect the latest research on reading difficulties. For the latest updates and resources, please see the Third Grade Reading Guarantee webpages.

OHIO'S DYSLEXIA SUPPORT LAWS

To strengthen the dyslexia supports provided for Ohio's children, Ohio's Dyslexia Support Laws were enacted in 2021. These laws establish requirements for dyslexia screening for all kindergarten students and students in grades 1-6 upon parent request, or by teacher request with parent permission. The laws also require professional development for teachers in identifying characteristics of dyslexia and understanding the pedagogy for instructing students with dyslexia, and that schools and districts establish a structured literacy certification process for teachers and multidisciplinary teams to support the identification, intervention, and remediation of dyslexia. In addition, the law establishes requirements for the formation of the Ohio Dyslexia Committee, which is responsible for developing a dyslexia guidebook which provides implementation guidelines for Ohio's Dyslexia Support Laws.

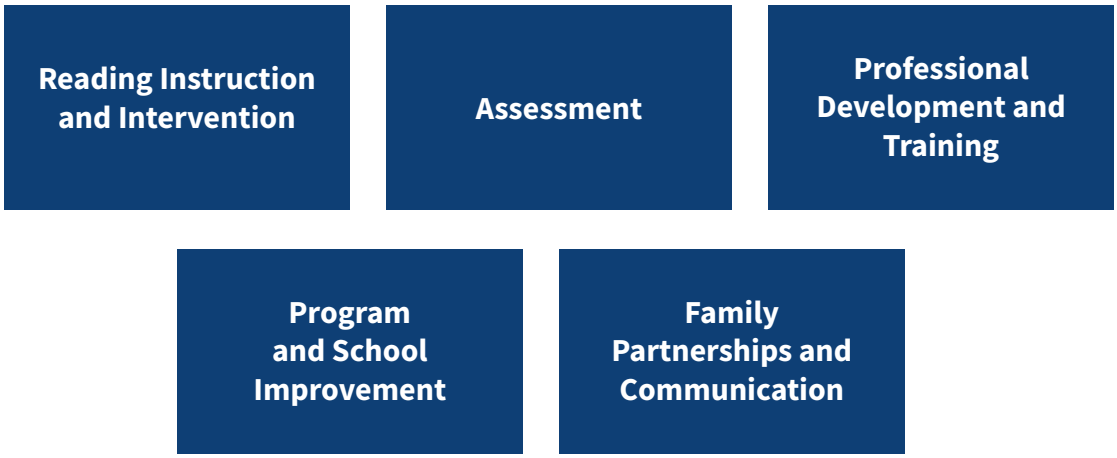
OHIO'S SCIENCE OF READING POLICIES

To strengthen support for educators and students in instruction aligned with the science of reading, laws related to the science of reading were enacted in 2023 as part of the biennial budget. This included significant financial investments in literacy for Ohio's students. The law establishes a requirement for districts and schools to require all teachers and administrators to complete professional development in the science of reading by June 30, 2025, and requires each district and school to pay teachers a stipend upon completion. The law also requires the Department to establish approved lists of high-quality core curriculum and instructional materials in English language arts and evidence-based reading intervention programs that are aligned with the science of reading and strategies for effective literacy instruction and requires districts and schools to use materials and programs only from the approved lists. Additionally, the Department provided subsidies to districts, community schools, and STEM schools to support the financial cost of meeting this requirement. The law also prohibits a district or school from using core curriculum, instructional materials, or intervention programs in grades pre-kindergarten to five that use the three-cueing approach to teach students to read, unless the district or school receives an individual student waiver from the Department.

ALIGNMENT OF OHIO'S LANGUAGE AND LITERACY IMPLEMENTATION DRIVERS

Ohio's range of aligned policies and practices are aimed at ensuring all learners acquire essential literacy skills. The Department promotes alignment of all school improvement efforts into one comprehensive plan. Clear alignment of literacy plans to other improvement activities and local improvement efforts is critical. Ohio's literacy improvement efforts are driven by a variety of funding sources, practices, legislation, and other policy levers.

Taken together, this set of policies and practices drives Ohio's commitment to improving literacy outcomes for all learners as a coordinated state effort. State leaders will continue to ensure these efforts align with the vision and commitments of Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement (described in Section 2), as well as other school improvement efforts, to support local implementation of language and literacy efforts. The following drivers will continue to expand as the Department annually examines data and identifies targets for improvement.



READING INSTRUCTION AND INTERVENTION

OHIO'S LEARNING STANDARDS

Ohio has developed high-quality learning standards aligned across grades that define what learners should know and be able to do. These include:

- Early Learning and Development Standards (birth to kindergarten entry)
- Ohio's Learning Standards (kindergarten-grade 12, including standards for literacy in history and social studies, science and technical subjects grades 6-12)
- Ohio English Language Proficiency Standards
- Ohio's Learning Standards Extended for learners with significant cognitive disabilities

OHIO'S RULE FOR PHONICS

As authorized under Ohio law, the Department has prescribed minimum standards requiring the use of phonics as a technique in the teaching of reading in grades kindergarten through three. Phonics must be used as a technique in the teaching of reading in grades kindergarten through three. Phonics is also recommended to be used as a technique in the teaching of grades four and five for students in need of continued, systematic phonics instruction.

HIGH-QUALITY INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND EVIDENCE-BASED READING INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

To support equitable access to high-quality instruction, Ohio has developed approved lists of high-quality instructional materials and core curriculum in English language arts and evidence-based reading intervention programs that are aligned with the science of reading and strategies for effective literacy instruction:

- Approved List of Core Curriculum and Instructional Materials (prekindergarten and kindergarten-grade 5)
- Approved List of Evidence-Based Reading Intervention Programs (prekindergarten-grade 12)

TUTORING AND LEARNING ACCELERATION

Ohio law requires the development of a list of tutoring programs that are high-quality and have the potential to accelerate learning for students in the areas of English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Ohio law also requires districts and schools to provide high-dosage tutoring opportunities to all students on RIMPs, including students with disabilities. A student remains on a RIMP until reading at grade level. In addition to other RIMP requirements, high-dosage tutoring opportunities must continue until the student is reading at grade level.

ASSESSMENT

SYSTEM OF ASSESSMENTS

Ohio has developed a standards-aligned system of assessments that measures language and literacy development and outcomes using the following:

- Early Learning Assessment for preschool-age children
- Kindergarten Readiness Assessment-Revised for learners entering kindergarten
- K-3 reading diagnostic assessments used to screen students in kindergarten-grade 3 for reading difficulties
- Tier 1 dyslexia screening measures for students in kindergarten
- Ohio's State Tests in English language arts for grades 3-8
- High school end-of-course exam in English language arts II

ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM AND REPORT CARDS

Ohio has an accountability system and report cards that describe academic performance through student growth and achievement data. Ohio School Report Cards include information about student accomplishment in English language arts in grades 3-8 and high school. Student performance on assessments appears in the Achievement, Progress and Gap Closing components of the report cards. The Early Literacy component also measures the proficiency rate of Ohio's State Test for grade 3 reading and year-to-year progress of students with RIMPs in grades K through 3.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR EDUCATORS AND ADMINISTRATORS IN LITERACY

Ohio's Dyslexia Support Laws require all kindergarten through third grade teachers, as well as teachers providing special education instruction to children in kindergarten through grade 12, to complete professional development on identifying characteristics of dyslexia and understanding pedagogy for instruction of students with dyslexia. In addition, districts and schools must require all teachers and administrators to complete the Department's professional development course in the science of reading and evidence-based strategies for effective literacy instruction by June 30, 2025.

PRE-SERVICE EDUCATOR PREPARATION

The Department collaborates with the Department of Higher Education as well as the Ohio Deans Compact to improve Ohio's systems of educator preparation, including supporting institutions of higher education to improve preparation and practice in using evidence-based language and literacy practices aligned with the science of reading.

Ohio law requires reading competencies for all reading credentials and training to be adopted by the Department. The reading competencies communicate what teachers should know and be able to do to provide effective reading instruction and support to students, inform higher education credential and training programs, and contribute to the development of the Foundations of Reading test for educator licenses.

In addition, Ohio law requires educator preparation programs to effectively teach the science of reading and prepare teachers who are responsible for teaching reading to use and implement the science of reading in their classrooms. This includes requiring that metrics for educator preparation programs ensure educators complete coursework and clinical preparation in classrooms that utilize literacy instruction strategies aligned to the science of reading. Ohio law also requires the Chancellor of Higher Education to develop an auditing process that clearly documents the degree to which every educator preparation program at an institution of higher education is effectively teaching the science of reading.

PROGRAM AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS

QUALITY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

The Department collaborates with the Department of Children and Youth to support quality early care and education for literacy. Step Up To Quality is a three-tier quality rating and improvement system for Ohio's early learning and development programs. Step Up To Quality recognizes and promotes programs that meet and exceed quality program standards. Step Up To Quality program standards are based on national research identifying what leads to improved outcomes for children. Ohio's Step Up To Quality rating system ensures all publicly funded, birth to kindergarten entry early care and education programs provide effective support for learning and development. Step Up To Quality requires programs to implement a comprehensive, research-based curriculum that is aligned with the Early Learning and Development Standards and the science of reading.

OHIO IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

The Ohio Improvement Process supports focused school improvement. The improvement process advances the state's Reading Achievement Plans and Local Literacy Plans to help districts identify learner needs, identify root causes, set goals, develop action plans, and monitor continuous improvement.

ALIGNED REGIONAL SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

Ohio has a strong system of aligned support for districts and schools that includes state support teams and educational service centers. Each regional state support team has at least one regional literacy specialist, in addition to early childhood, family engagement, and school improvement consultants. Regional literacy specialists provide intensive and targeted literacy improvement support to identified districts and schools across the state. Literacy specialists are also housed in state support teams to support literacy improvement efforts in 11 urban districts.

In addition, 51 educational service centers support universal literacy improvement, planning, and implementation. Six educational service centers house regional adolescent literacy specialists who provide targeted support and professional learning related to serving learners in grades 4 and above. Four educational service centers house a regional literacy coaching coordinator and a cohort of ReadOhio coaches, deploying aligned literacy coaching services statewide.

READOHIO COACHING

Ohio has coordinated coaching efforts to provide literacy support to school districts, community schools, and STEM schools with the lowest rates of proficiency in literacy based on their performance on the English language arts assessments. Coaches have training in the science of reading and evidence-based strategies for effective literacy instruction and intervention and implement Ohio's Coaching Model (Appendix C) in targeted buildings kindergarten-grade 12.

FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNICATION

Families are critical partners in supporting literacy success, and Ohio requires families be informed and involved in their child's reading progress. Under the Third Grade Reading Guarantee, districts must create a RIMP for any student in grades K-3 who is not on track (reading below grade level) within 60 days of receiving the reading diagnostic results. Districts must involve the student's parent or guardian and the classroom teacher in developing the plan. The district must also provide opportunities for the student's parents or guardians to be involved in the instructional services. In addition, districts are required to provide written notification to the parent or guardian of any student identified by the reading diagnostic assessment as having reading skills below grade level. This statement must include "[a] statement that connects the child's proficiency level in reading to long-term outcomes of success related to proficiency in reading."

Under Ohio's Dyslexia Support Laws, districts must notify the student's parent, guardian, or custodian when a student has been identified as at risk for dyslexia based on the results of the Tier 1 dyslexia screener; share the results of progress monitoring with the student's parent, guardian, or custodian for students who continue to demonstrate risk and will be administered the intervention-based diagnostic (Tier 2) screener; and report to the student's parent or guardian the student's results on the intervention-based diagnostic (Tier 2) screener. If the student is identified as having dyslexia tendencies based on the results of the intervention-based diagnostic (Tier 2) screener, information about reading development, the risk factors for dyslexia, and descriptions for evidence-based interventions must be provided to the student's parent or guardian, and if a student demonstrates markers for dyslexia, a written explanation of the district or school's structured literacy program must be provided to the parent or guardian.

FUNDING SOURCES

Since 2017, Ohio has committed over $260 million in state and federal funds to equip schools and districts to implement high-quality literacy instruction. These funds have supported:

- Deployment of regional consultants to support literacy improvement across the state
- Professional learning, coaching, and implementation of high-quality instructional materials and multi-tiered system of supports in schools and districts
- Continuous improvement projects aligned to the science of reading
- Piloting of an early literacy needs assessment and implementation strategies for early identification of students with reading disabilities and grants to expand the pilot across Ohio
- Foundational training in the science of reading for professionals in educational service centers
- Development of free, virtual, asynchronous training in high-quality literacy instruction, available to all Ohio educators
- Stipends to support educator training in the science of reading for all prekindergarten-grade 12 educators
- Subsidies for the purchase of high-quality instructional materials
- Launch of the ReadOhio Coaching program with literacy coaches deployed to 125 high-need schools across the state

COMPREHENSIVE LITERACY STATE DEVELOPMENT

Ohio's $60 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education will leverage the foundation of Ohio's existing regulations and policies that require statewide training and the use of assessments and high-quality instructional materials and interventions. The Department of Education and Workforce will use 95% of those funds to award subgrants to eligible entities to improve literacy outcomes for children from birth through grade 12. Local education agencies will develop projects to ensure effective implementation through leadership development and training, coaching, curriculum-based professional learning, installation of multi-tiered system of supports, and collaboration with families and community partners. Early childhood education programs will carry out high-quality professional development opportunities for staff and support engagement with families and local schools to support literacy development and transition to kindergarten. The remaining 5% of funds are leveraged by the Department to provide technical assistance to subgrantees and develop additional training and supports for school leaders.

Supporting Implementation at the State and Regional Levels

Ohio is committed to increasing state and regional capacity to implement language and literacy efforts. Since publishing the 2020 version of *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*, Ohio has continued to enhance the state and regional infrastructure by supporting a robust literacy team at the Department. The unit consists of teams supporting both literacy policy initiatives and literacy implementation spanning birth through grade 12. The literacy team partners with several key organizations to enact literacy initiatives, including the Ohio Statewide Family Engagement Center, The Center for Teaching Diverse Learners at OCALI, and Ohio's Dean's Compact.

Additionally, the Department coordinates a statewide network comprised of regional literacy specialists, urban literacy specialists, adolescent literacy specialists, ReadOhio Coaches, and regional literacy coaching coordinators. These coaches, consultants, and coordinators engage in ongoing training, coaching, and collaboration to support the historic ReadOhio initiative.

In addition to the statewide network, the Department is committed to increasing the capacity of all regional staff, including partners at state support teams and educational service centers, who provide language and literacy support to districts, schools, and early care and education programs. To ensure regional partners are equipped to support implementation, the Department provided ongoing coaching and professional learning to regional support teams for literacy (Appendix K), including an initial four-year sequence of professional learning designed to build knowledge and skills in the key components of literacy instruction. Initially, professional learning focused on creating a shared vision aligned with *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*. Then, regional support teams engaged in sustained learning about phonemic awareness, phonics, oral language, vocabulary, comprehension, writing, and literacy across the disciplines. Over time, regional support teams have also examined how to deliver instruction across the language and literacy continuum.

Regional support teams for literacy consist of regional staff who provide support to districts and schools in:

- Data-driven decision-making using the collaborative problem-solving process
- Developing improvement plans focused on literacy
- Supporting the fidelity of implementation of evidence-based practices aligned to the science of reading

The Department continues to prioritize professional learning and support services for regional support teams to strengthen their capacity to provide universal, targeted, and intensive support to schools and districts. To maximize the effectiveness of these teams, the Department will continue to provide professional learning guided by the science of reading, learning science, and implementation science.

Measuring Success and Monitoring Progress of Ohio's Goals

MEASURING SUCCESS

Ohio will measure the success of its literacy activities using learner's results on Ohio's Early Learning Assessment, Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, and Ohio's State Tests in English language arts. Ohio is committed to analyzing data sources that influence learner outcomes along the way.

To measure the success of Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement, the State Literacy Team will examine these questions and data sources annually:

1. **Are districts', community schools', and early care and education programs' local literacy plans aligned to the state's plan and their overall improvement efforts? Data sources will include:**
    - Reading achievement plans
    - Local literacy plans
    - One Plans
2. **Are districts, schools and early care and education programs engaging in data-driven decision-making? Data sources include:**
    - One Plans
    - Step Up To Quality early childhood quality rating & improvement system
    - Reading achievement plans
    - Local literacy plans
3. **Are districts, schools and early care and education programs implementing evidence-based language and literacy practices alongside high-quality instructional materials and literacy assessments? Data sources include:**
    - State-level achievement
    - Local-level achievement
    - One Plans
    - Reading Tiered Fidelity Inventory (St. Martin, et al. 2023a, 2023b)
    - Ready Schools Language and Literacy Plan
    - Reading improvement and monitoring plans
    - Reported use of high-quality core curriculum and instructional materials and evidence-based reading intervention programs
    - Reported use of reading diagnostics and dyslexia screening assessments
4. **Are network activities productively supporting effective implementation, feedback, and improvement? Data sources include:**
    - Family, community, district, and regional surveys
    - Reading Tiered Fidelity Inventory (St. Martin et al., 2023a, 2023b)
    - Semiannual and annual reporting
5. **Are the literacy outcomes for learners from birth through grade 12 improving at least at the rate set by Ohio's Every Student Succeeds Act Consolidated State Plan for the state's most disadvantaged learners? Data sources include:**
    - Ohio's Early Learning Assessment
    - Kindergarten Readiness Assessment
    - Ohio's State Tests in English Language Arts for grades 3-8 and high school
    - Ohio's English Language Proficiency Assessment for English learners
    - Ohio's Alternate Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

Ohio submitted goals to the U.S. Department of Education through its Every Student Succeeds Act Consolidated State Plan. The Department will measure the success of this comprehensive state literacy plan against these same learner performance goals (see Appendix I).

MEASURING SUCCESS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE LITERACY STATE DEVELOPMENT GRANT

Ohio will analyze the performance of districts, schools, early childhood education programs, and consortia awarded subgrants under the Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant. Each awardee will establish goals based on local data to measure progress. The Department will work with awardees to monitor progress toward their goals and more deeply analyze data.

To gauge awardees performance under these grant opportunities, Ohio will monitor progress toward the following outcomes:

- Outcome 1a: *Student Outcomes*. Through improvements in integrity of implementation, coaching, leadership support, a multi-tiered system of supports, and family and community engagement, from school year 2025-2026 to school year 2028-2029, participating Literacy Implementation Sites will increase the percentage of students proficient in reading in grades 3 through high school on the state English language arts assessment or on track in reading for prekindergarten through grade 2 by 5 percentage points per year or reach at least 80%.
- Outcome 1b: *Adult Outcome*s. One hundred percent of educators will implement instructional practices aligned to professional learning as measured by building level instructional items of R-TFI and leadership team reports of schoolwide observations.
- Outcome 2a: *Student Outcomes*. To ensure literacy improvement activities impact all students, by school year 2028-2029, 90% of students with disabilities in participating Literacy Implementation Sites will demonstrate improvement in their approved universal screening measure(s) by at least 5% annually from 2025-2029.
- Outcome 2b: *Adult Outcomes*. One hundred percent of the Literacy Implementation Sites use data-based decision-making through a problem-solving model by analyzing assessment data to support students through tiers of instruction.
- Outcome 3: *Student Outcomes*. As part of the commitment to disseminate successful learning and strategies, by school year 2028-2029, statewide public-school districts, and community schools will increase the percentage of students in grades 3-high school proficient on the state's English language arts tests or on track in reading for preschool-grade 2 by at least 10%.

Ohio will assess progress annually and share findings with stakeholders and the State Literacy Team to guide Ohio's continuing literacy development efforts.

MONITORING PROGRESS

Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement is founded on the principle that all learners deserve and must have access to the highest quality of evidence-based language and literacy instruction, curriculum and resource materials. To achieve this, the Department will monitor state, regional, and local efforts that support resources and practices, ensure alignment, and interconnect.

MONITORING STATE LITERACY ACTIVITIES

The literacy team works to ensure alignment of the literacy improvement work occurring across all agency offices and throughout the state. The chief of the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce's Section for Literacy Achievement and Academic Success, the associate administrators and the senior research strategist within the Office of Literacy Achievement oversee the monitoring and coordination of all literacy activities for learners from birth through grade 12 outlined in this document. The Department continues to work to make sure programs and initiatives align and interconnect. As a result, staff monitors the alignment of literacy practices and policies inside and outside the Department. These leaders will review all practices and policies across Department offices and partner agencies to make sure messages about literacy improvement and content align. This work is critical to the Department because Ohio's literacy programs and resources are extensive and include implementing multiple literacy initiatives across offices and agencies. These must align with one another to achieve the greatest impact for Ohio's learners.

MONITORING REGIONAL LITERACY ACTIVITIES

PRACTICE-TO-POLICY FEEDBACK LOOP

The Department collaborates with a statewide network of regional literacy specialists and coaches. To ensure alignment of their efforts, the Department developed a Practice-to-Policy Feedback Loop to connect Department and regional staff. Through this system, the Department monitors literacy activities in the regional network to ensure they align with the state's and, at the same time, respond to local and regional needs. Feedback loops allow the Department to support improvements and adjustments in implementation, enabling a deeper understanding of what is working and what is not. Figure 12 illustrates the reciprocal, Practice-to-Policy Feedback Loop protocol supported by research. The feedback loop allows the Department to receive and respond to direct feedback from the education community.

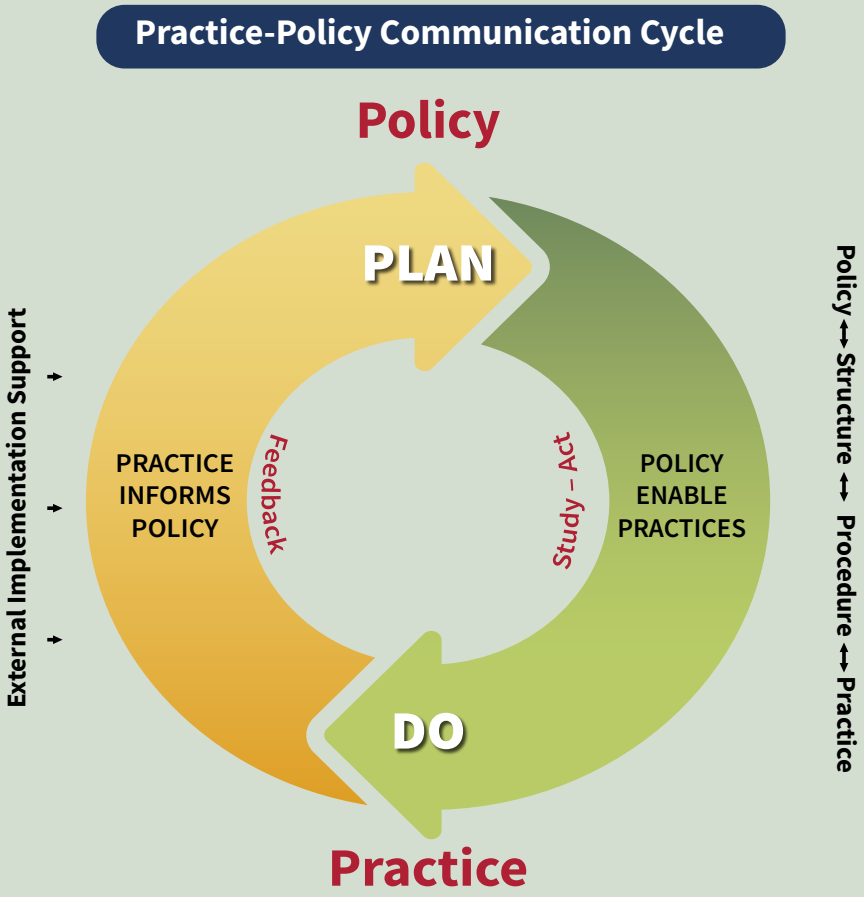


Figure 12. Adapted from State Implementation and Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices Center (SISEP) and the National Implementation Research Network at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute

NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR REGIONAL LITERACY NETWORKS

The Department developed a regional needs assessment to monitor implementation and support the continuous improvement of regional literacy networks across Ohio's educational regions. Baseline data were collected in the fall of 2021, with annual data collection guiding the planning and execution of these networks. Each region is supported in identifying a network focus area that aligns with state priorities, ensuring alignment and equitable access statewide and ensuring alignment and equitable access statewide and creating opportunities for collaborative small group and targeted, individualized technical assistance. This ongoing process of assessment, feedback, and collaboration aims to strengthen literacy initiatives across the state, ensuring that all regions can effectively meet the needs of their communities.

MONITORING LOCAL LITERACY ACTIVITIES

To monitor the effectiveness of Ohio's efforts and investments in literacy achievement, the Department will evaluate its longstanding and recently enacted literacy legislation through analyzing student and district level data, including the following:

- The use and effectiveness of evidence-based interventions grounded in the science of reading for students with RIMPs
- The use and implementation of high-quality core curriculum and instructional materials in English language arts and reading intervention programs
- Results of Tier 1 (universal) and Tier 2 (Intervention-based diagnostic) dyslexia screeners for kindergarten through grade 6
- Completion of professional development in dyslexia and the science of reading
- Disaggregated K-3 Reading Diagnostic and Ohio's State Test in English Language Arts performance results

This data will provide a baseline for the Department's literacy research team to analyze the effectiveness of Ohio's literacy policies for the Department to provide targeted support, resource allocation, and policy recommendations.

READING ACHIEVEMENT PLANS

The Reading Achievement Plan is a plan for raising student achievement in reading. Ohio law requires each school district or community school that meets the following criteria, as reported on the past two consecutive report cards issued for that district or community school, to submit a Reading Achievement Plan:

1. The district or school received a performance rating of less than three stars for early literacy component on the Ohio School Report Cards
2. Fifty-one percent or less of the district or school's students scored proficient on Ohio's State Test for Grade 3 English Language Arts

Regional literacy specialists and urban literacy specialists from State Support Teams help districts and schools develop, modify, and implement their Reading Achievement Plans. Additionally, the Department monitors each submitted plan for compliance and reviews each plan for quality. Districts and community schools receive feedback in the form of strengths and suggestions for improvement. District and community school plans are posted on the Department's website.

Monitoring of district and community school Reading Achievement Plans inform state and regional efforts to support districts in implementing evidence-based language and literacy instruction and intervention. These supports include professional learning, individualized coaching by regional state support teams and educational service centers, and state-level technical assistance.

LITERACY SUBGRANT AWARDEES

Ohio monitors the implementation of subgrantees of state and federal literacy grants to ensure they are:

- Deliberate in identifying instructional practices and materials that meet the needs of their community
- Providing educators with the necessary training, materials, and support to provide effective instruction
- Monitoring integrity of implementation
- Collecting and using student data to refine core instruction and provide appropriate intervention
- Regularly assessing outcomes and making changes as necessary

Monitoring efforts at the state, regional, and local levels allow the Department to make mid-course corrections to its plan when needed and celebrate successes, especially at the local level. Aligning monitoring efforts further improves the Department's ability to implement and achieve the vision of *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*.

Universal Supports for Local Implementation

To support local implementation and sustainability of the practices described in *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*, the Department is committed to providing universally available resources to Ohio's districts, schools, and early care and education programs. These resources consist of web-based professional learning, guides for school leaders, and tools for coaches and teams. For more information, view the accompanying Implementation Toolkit to *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement* on the Department's website.

Glossary

Community of practice (CoP): A network with a clear focus on shared problem of practice, active learning through process of inquiry, collective ownership, and appropriate mix of partners, sufficient commitment to support implementation, and an effective structure of governance and decision-making (Bowman, 2016).

Comprehension: The understanding and interpretation of what is read in written material or heard from speaking or read aloud.

Curriculum-based professional learning: Professional learning that provides ongoing support focused on the content and teaching methods necessary for effective implementation of high-quality instructional materials and evidence-based practices.

Diagnostic assessment (Intervention-based diagnostic assessments): Criterion referenced assessments used to pinpoint specific academic skill weaknesses for the purposes of identifying academic skill targets for intervention and selecting appropriate, evidence-based interventions. Examples include phonemic awareness, phonics, and word reading surveys.

Data-based decision-making: A collaborative process used in a multi-tiered system of support to plan instruction, assess progress and solve problems.

Diagnostic teaching: Instruction is based on careful and continuous assessment, both informally and formally.

Dyslexia: A specific learning disorder that is neurological in origin and that is characterized by unexpected difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities not consistent with the person's intelligence, motivation and sensory capabilities, which difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language (ORC 3323.25).

Evidence-based Practice: instructional practices and strategies that have been proven effective through rigorous research and data.

Explicit instruction: A teacher-directed and systematic instructional approach that includes specific components of delivery and design of instruction, such as review of previous content, step-by-step demonstrations, clear language, adequate range of examples, frequent student responses, monitoring of student progress, feedback to students and multiple opportunities to practice, both guided and independent. This practice includes distributed and cumulative practice. This practice does not make assumptions that learners will acquire skills and knowledge on their own.

Fluency: The ability to read with appropriate speed, accuracy and proper expression.

Implementation science: A systematic approach used to adopt, support, scale, and sustain educational innovations, including high-quality instructional materials, evidence-based practices, high-quality professional learning, and instructional delivery frameworks like MTSS. It focuses on ensuring that these innovations are successfully integrated into educational systems and are consistently maintained to improve student outcomes and overall teaching effectiveness.

Instructional coaching: Instructional coaching is a classroom-level support aimed at developing educators' knowledge, skills, and abilities in content-specific strategies to enhance student learning. It is designed for teachers, specialists, small teams of educators, and paraprofessionals. This coaching typically includes face-to-face conversations and video demonstrations to guide improvement.

Intervention: A systematic approach to targeting specific skills identified as the potential cause of reading difficulty. Intervention consists of enhanced opportunities to learn, including, but not limited to, additional time with the core curriculum in small groups, other supplementary instruction, or individualized intensive instruction.

Morphology: Describes how words are formed from morphemes, the smallest unit of meaning in a word. Morphology is the study of word structure.

Multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS): Comprehensive and integrated systems of instruction and intervention designed to ensure that all students meet essential literacy academic and behavior goals and objectives.

Outcome evaluation: Also called outcome assessments or high-stakes assessments, these are given to all students at the end of a specific period of time, often the end of a school year. The assessments measure students' skills against grade-level expectations.

Networked improvement community (NIC): A network that functions similarly to a community of practice, but with an even more specified aim. NICs seek to accomplish clearly defined, measurable outcomes, guided by a deep understanding of the problem, the system that produces it, and a theory of improvement relevant to it. It is disciplined by the rigor of improvement science and coordinated to accelerate the development, testing, and refinement of interventions and their effective integration into practices across varied educational contexts (LeMahieu, 2015).

Phonemic awareness: Ability to break a word into individual sounds.

Phonological awareness: A set of skills that include identifying and manipulating units of oral language (words, syllables, onsets and rimes).

Phonics: Instruction that teaches the relationship between the letters of written language and sounds of spoken language, how to sound out words, and exceptions to the principles.

Peer coaching: A collaborative coaching approach that supports improvement at both the instructional and systems levels. Its goal is to foster growth through shared professional learning and curriculum implementation.

Professional learning: Learning that is most effective when it is sustained, intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data-driven, and focused on classroom needs. Professional learning should align with school and district priorities, focus on critical content, and include opportunities for active learning, collaboration, feedback, and reflection.

Progress monitoring: Assessment procedures used on a frequent basis (for example, monthly, weekly, daily) to measure student growth in response to targeted or intensive intervention. Progress monitoring data are used to determine whether the intervention is having the intended effect or if the intervention needs to be modified or intensified to meet the student's unique needs.

Science of reading (ORC 3313.6028(A)(1)): An interdisciplinary body of scientific evidence that: (a) Informs how students learn to read and write proficiently; (b) Explains why some students have difficulty with reading and writing; (c) Indicates that all students benefit from explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and writing to become effective readers; (d) Does not rely on any model of teaching students to read based on meaning, structure and syntax, and visual cues, including a three-cueing approach.

Systems coaching: Systems coaching is implemented at the administration and leadership team levels with the goal of developing knowledge, skills and abilities to strengthen district and school infrastructures.

Tier 1 instruction: Explicit, systematic instruction for all students that is the primary prevention of reading failure. Designed to ensure that at least 80% of students meet grade-level expectations. Tier 1 instruction includes whole-group, small-group, and individualized instruction based on student needs as defined by the universal screening data.

Tier 2 (Targeted) Instruction: Tier 2 (targeted) instruction is strategic and targeted and is provided in addition to Tier 1 instruction. The goal of Tier 2 instruction is to enable students who are at risk to catch up to grade level expectations. Tier 2 instruction targets specific reading concerns.

Tier 3 (Intensive) Instruction: The purpose of Tier 3 instruction is to address severe and persistent learning difficulties. The instruction is individualized to intensify and coordinate structured literacy interventions. Tier 3 instruction targets specific reading concerns and breaks tasks into even smaller units. Tier 3 instruction is often not a different program but rather an increase in intensity in terms of smaller groups, increased instructional time, more opportunities to practice, and more frequent progress monitoring.

Twice-exceptional learner: Twice-exceptional learners are students who are gifted and identified with one or more of the disability categories under the IDEA. Twice-exceptional learners are found across all recognized gifted identification and disability categories, including, but not limited to, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and learning disabilities (such as dyslexia).

Universal Screening: A process that involves administering measures to all students to identify students who are at risk for future difficulties and thus should be considered for prevention or early intervention services. Universal screening data also can be used to assess the overall effectiveness of the academic instruction in meeting the needs of students.

Vocabulary: The body of words that students must understand and use to understand text and communicate effectively. Vocabulary includes receptive (what is understood through listening or reading printed words) and expressive (what is communicated through speaking, writing or alternative forms of communication) skills.

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Appendices

Appendix A: State Literacy Team Members

The following individuals and organizations were crucial in developing and updating *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement* in 2024.

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Appendix B: Ohio's Theory of Action

Strands of Action	If the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce	Then	Then	Then
Leadership	Invests in building the capacity of leaders and systems to promote evidence-based language and literacy instruction for all learners.	Through shared instructional leadership, districts will identify and implement proven, evidence-based practices to provide reading instruction and interventions to all learners.	More learners, including those who are disadvantaged, will become proficient readers.	More disadvantaged learners will graduate ready for college, careers, and/or independent living.
Multi-Tiered System of Support	Creates a coherent multi-tiered system of supports network at the state, regional, and district levels to provide continuous support for implementing evidence-based instruction.	Districts will thoroughly implement multi-tiered system of supports, with fidelity, so all learners receive appropriate academic and behavioral supports.		
Educator Capacity	Builds the capacity of: • Birth to kindergarten-entry educators to develop emergent literacy skills, and • Preschool to grade 5 teachers to deliver high-quality reading instruction and data-driven interventions through the use of high-quality instructional materials, and • Middle school and high school educators to deliver high-quality reading instruction and data-driven interventions across content areas, and • All educators to implement strategic practices to meet the needs of all learners.	All learners, including those who are disadvantaged, will have access to high-quality instruction with intervention designed to meet individual needs.		
Family Engagement	Promotes continuous family engagement and family partnerships to support language and literacy development.	Families will be better equipped, more engaged partners in their children's language and literacy development.		
Community Collaboration	Coordinates local community partnerships among agencies providing services to learners to support language and literacy development.	More learners will experience language-rich, literacy-based environments outside school.		

Appendix C: Ohio's Coaching Model for Literacy

Appendix D: State Strategies and Activities to Meet the Commitments of Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement

COMMITMENT 1: BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN RESEARCH AND PRACTICE TO SUPPORT ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY, EVIDENCE-BASED LITERACY INSTRUCTION ALIGNED WITH THE SCIENCE OF READING.

Key Strategies	
Strategy 1	**Building Knowledge Around the Science of Reading**: Engage partner organizations, communities, families, and state agencies in building knowledge and understanding of the research that underpins proficient reading, known as the science of reading.
Strategy 2	**Professional Development Supporting Comprehensive Literacy Instruction**: Engage educators and administrators in professional learning focused on implementing comprehensive literacy instruction, using the Simple View of Reading (Gough & Tunmer, 1986) to drive all literacy content, conversation, development, and organization of resources.
State Activities	
Universal Support	• Develop and provide technical assistance webinars, professional learning series, and web-based courses that provide district leadership teams, early care and education professionals, building teams, and teacher-based teams with knowledge of the research that underpins proficient reading. • Develop and provide professional development opportunities in the science of reading through webinars, web-based courses, and professional learning series. • Develop and provide ongoing professional development opportunities that highlight theories of language and literacy development (including brain research). • Develop and provide tools and resources that support discussion of the research that underpins proficient reading. • Create access to professional learning in the science of reading through the engagement of national literacy experts and researchers through the state's annual Literacy Academy.
Targeted Support	• Develop and provide professional learning in the science of reading for regional support teams, including the development of coaching questions, tools, and resources related to the research that underpins proficient reading. • Develop and provide professional learning in the science of reading for all students, including English learners, learners who are gifted, learners at risk for dyslexia, and students with disabilities. • Partner with organizations, family advocates, and state agencies in the implementation of literacy-related initiatives that build knowledge around the science of reading and its importance for communities.
Intensive Support	• Provide individualized technical assistance regarding shifting to the science of reading for identified districts, schools, and early care and education programs.

COMMITMENT 2: ENSURE ALL LEARNERS ARE REPRESENTED AND SUPPORTED THROUGHOUT THE LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT CONTINUUM, INCLUDING EMERGENT, EARLY, CONVENTIONAL, AND ADOLESCENT LITERACY.

Key Strategies	
Strategy 1	**Professional Development Supporting Specific Learner Needs**: Engage educators and administrators in professional learning focused on supports for learners having difficulty reading or writing.
Strategy 2	**Professional Development Supporting Partnerships and Collaboration of All Educators**: Engage educators, administrators, and school personnel in professional learning focused on enhancing partnerships and collaboration among general education and special education practitioners and stakeholders.
Strategy 3	**Regional Capacity to Support Language and Literacy Continuum**: Engage regional specialists in professional learning and training focused on meeting the needs of learners at all phases of the language and literacy continuum, including emergent, early, conventional, and adolescent literacy.
Strategy 4	**Professional Development Supporting Implementation of Multi-Tiered System of Supports**: Engage administrators, educators, and literacy leaders in professional learning and training focused on implementation of a multi-tiered system of supports for reading.
State Activities	
Universal Support	• Develop and provide professional learning in effective leadership practices for furthering literacy, content elaboration, and best practices for data analysis and planning instruction and intervention. • Develop and provide professional development in dyslexia and the science of reading and strategies for effective literacy instruction. • Develop and provide professional development in literacy instruction and supports for all students, including students with disabilities, students who are gifted, and English learners. • Create and scale tools focused on dyslexia, including tools to support the implementation of evidence-based practices and instruction that meet the needs of all students, screening and progress monitoring for students with, or at risk for dyslexia, and a multi-tiered system of supports to improve early literacy outcomes for all students.
Targeted Support	• Regional support teams facilitate professional learning and technical assistance to support districts and community schools in implementing supports for all students, including students with disabilities, students who are gifted, and English learners. • Facilitate professional learning and networking for regional staff who support literacy implementation in systems and instructional practices that ensure all learners are represented and supported.

Intensive Support	• Provide individualized technical assistance to support districts and community schools in using data to drive differentiated instruction aligned to student needs. • Provide individualized technical assistance and coaching support to literacy implementation sites participating in the Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant in implementing literacy instruction to meet the needs of all learners, including students with disabilities and English learners. • Provide individualized technical assistance and coaching support to literacy implementation sites participating in the Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant in implementation literacy instruction to meet the needs of all learners through intensification practices.

COMMITMENT 3: ENSURE ALL EDUCATORS ARE SUPPORTED IN BUILDING KNOWLEDGE AND CAPACITY TO INCREASE STUDENTS' LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH INSTRUCTION ALIGNED TO THE SCIENCE OF READING.

Key Strategies	
Strategy 1	**Professional Development Supporting High-Quality Core Instruction and Intervention:** Engage educators, administrators, and school personnel in professional learning focused on enhancing quality of core reading instruction and support for all learners through prevention, intervention, and enrichment.
Strategy 2	**Professional Development Supporting Partnerships and Collaboration of All Educators:** Engage educators, administrators, and school personnel in professional learning focused on enhancing partnerships and collaboration among general education and special education practitioners and stakeholders.
Strategy 3	**Support for institutions of higher education:** Provide support for higher education partners in the training of pre-service teachers in the knowledge of evidence-based language and literacy instruction.
State Activities	
Universal Support	• Develop and provide professional development, guidance, resources, and tools to support the implementation of effective high-quality literacy instruction. • Establish approved lists of core curriculum and instructional materials prekindergarten-grade 5 and reading intervention programs prekindergarten grade 12.
Targeted Support	• Regional support teams develop and provide targeted technical assistance and coaching for building leadership teams focused on instructional support for teacher-based teams. • Regional support teams develop and provide targeted technical assistance and coaching for district and building leadership teams on the selection and implementation of high-quality instructional materials for literacy.
Intensive Support	• Provide professional learning, technical assistance, and guidance in the alignment of undergraduate and graduate reading coursework with the science of reading. • Provide technical assistance and guidance to districts and schools not yet implementing instructional materials aligned with the science of reading to support transition.

COMMITMENT 4: SUPPORT THE FIDELITY OF IMPLEMENTATION OF EVIDENCE-BASED LANGUAGE AND LITERACY PRACTICES ALIGNED WITH THE SCIENCE OF READING

Key Strategies	
Strategy 1	**Professional Development Supporting Evidence-Based Leadership Practices**: Involve educational leaders in professional development focused on evidence-based leadership practices and systems that support educators as they implement practices to further learners' language and literacy development through a tiered-support approach.
Strategy 2	**Professional Development Supporting Evidence-Based Teaching Practices**: Engage educators in professional learning focused on implementing evidence-based language and literacy practices through a tiered-support approach.
Strategy 3	**Support Stakeholder and Community Partnerships and Engagement**. Involve stakeholders and community partners in developing and implementing literacy-improvement efforts.
Strategy 4	**Provide Family Engagement Opportunities**: Offer Ohio families opportunities to support evidence-based language and literacy practices at home through a tiered-support approach.
Strategy 5	**Professional Development Supporting Instructional Coaching for Literacy**: Engage administrators, literacy leaders, and instructional coaches in professional learning and networking around instructional coaching for literacy aligned with Ohio's Coaching Model.
Strategy 6	**Support the Identification, Implementation, and Demonstration of Sustainable Practices**: Engage stakeholders and community partners in accessing information about the implementation of sustainable literacy practices.
Strategy 7	**Provide Financial Support for Literacy Improvement Efforts**: Dedicate state and federal funds to literacy improvement efforts aligned with the science of reading.
State Activities	
Universal Support	• Develop and provide professional learning and web-based courses for educational leaders on leadership practices to promote learner language and literacy development. • Develop and provide series and courses for educational leaders and literacy coaches in instructional and systems coaching (see Appendix C). • Develop and support family and community support tools, including scaling implementation of Partnerships for Literacy (P4L) (Wellman & Boone, 2018). • Create implementation and sustainability tools, in collaboration with state partners, that further sustainable, evidence-based language and literacy practices, including highly skilled regional consultants, high-quality asynchronous professional learning, systems assessment tools, and implementation guidance for coaches and administrators. • Develop case studies, reports, and video resources that demonstrate the levers involved in successful implementation and sustainability of evidence-based practices at different phases of the language and literacy continuum.

Targeted Support	• Provide in-person professional learning and coaching to educational leaders on leadership practices to promote language and literacy development. • Develop and provide supports for implementing the Ohio Improvement Process, focusing on evidence-based literacy practices. • Provide professional learning to regional support teams on system-level assessments, such as the Reading Tiered Fidelity Inventory (St. Martin et al., 2023a, 2023b), a literacy-specific multi-tiered system of supports needs assessment that examines teams, implementation of tiered instruction, evaluation and resources. • Develop professional learning to support regional staff who are using data from the Reading Tiered Fidelity Inventory (St. Martin et al., 2023a, 2023b) to drive system and instructional change in districts and schools using the Ohio Improvement Process. • Develop web-based platforms to support the sharing of evidence-based language and literacy instructional practices. • Enhance a regional network of literacy specialists to increase support for districts implementing evidence-based literacy practices throughout the state. • Establish and leverage regional networks, including model literacy sites, to target support to districts, community schools, and early care and education programs serving all learners, including those with the greatest needs. • Support parent mentors for special education to provide literacy-specific guidance and communication to families and caregivers. • Provide professional learning and coaching to regional support teams in the selection of evidence-based practices, programs, and activities to support districts and schools in improvement planning. • Support the development of resources focused on literacy improvement efforts by partner organizations. • Create and scale tools focused on data-driven decision-making, including the use of appropriate assessments, selecting high-quality instructional materials, and planning professional learning.
Intensive Support	• Regional literacy specialists and coaches provide intensive support in the implementation of effective literacy instruction to individual educators and teacher-based teams within identified schools for ReadOhio coaching. • Provide technical assistance and coaching to literacy implementation sites participating in the Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant in the implementation of an aligned system of effective literacy instruction.

COMMITMENT 5: SUPPORT DATA-DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING IN A MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS AND QUALITY PLANNING

Key Strategies	
Strategy 1	**Capacity for data-driven decision-making:** Provide educational leaders professional development on collecting and using valid, reliable, and efficient language and literacy data to drive district leadership team and building leadership team decision-making in a multi-tiered system of supports.
Strategy 2	**Educator professional learning:** Provide educators professional learning focused on collecting and using valid, reliable, and efficient language and literacy data to drive teacher-based team decision-making in a multi-tiered system of supports.
Strategy 3	**Aligned school improvement planning:** Provide educational leaders technical assistance to help them understand the state's comprehensive literacy plan and how to develop an aligned school improvement plan that supports increased literacy outcomes through a multi-tiered system of supports.
State Activities	
Universal Support	• Develop and provide technical assistance webinars, professional learning series, and web-based courses that teach district leadership teams, early care and education professionals, building teams, and teacher-based teams how to collect, analyze, and use literacy data. • Develop and provide technical assistance webinars that teach districts, community schools, and early care and education programs how to create aligned school improvement plans for literacy. • Develop and provide technical assistance webinars, professional learning series, and web-based courses that support the use of the collaborative problem-solving model.
Targeted Support	• Provide ongoing technical assistance and support to regional support teams to build capacity in coaching district and building leadership teams. • Regional support teams develop and provide targeted technical assistance and coaching for building leadership teams focused on support for teacher-based teams. • Regional support teams develop and provide targeted technical assistance for districts, community schools, and early childhood education programs developing aligned school improvement plans for literacy. • Develop aligned coaching resources and tools for regional support teams that leverage the collaborative problem-solving model.
Intensive Support	• Provide professional learning, support, and coaching services to identified districts and schools for administering and interpreting the results of a literacy specific multi-tiered system of supports needs assessment. • Provide targeted technical assistance and coaching for leadership teams focused on developing and implementing multidisciplinary teams. • Regional literacy specialists develop and provide individualized technical assistance plans for high-needs districts, schools, and early care and education programs developing actions to move from data and decisions to implementation. • Regional literacy specialists develop and provide individualized technical assistance plans for high-needs districts, community schools, and early care and education programs developing aligned school improvement plans for literacy. • State-level and regional literacy specialists develop and provide individualized technical assistance plans for literacy subgrantees and ReadOhio schools to support district and building-level implementation with fidelity and building sustainability.

Appendix E: Emergent Literacy Skills that Relate to Later Forms of Conventional Reading and Writing (Whitehurst and Lonigan, 2001)

Component	Definition	Connection to Later Reading and Writing
Phonological Processing	Activities requiring sensitivity to, manipulation of, and use of sounds in words.	Strongly related to the ability to sound out words. Children who are better at detecting rhymes, syllables, and phonemes tend to learn to read quicker.
Print Knowledge	The ability to understand that pictures and written symbols (including alphabet letters) have meaning. Recognizing and naming individual letters of the alphabet. Understanding that letters represent sounds. Understanding the function of print: • Print is organized in a particular way • Print carries meaning • Print contains words • Print words are made up of letters	Knowledge of print facilitates text decoding and has a reciprocal role in developing phonological sensitivity and emergent writing.
Oral Language	The ability to use gestures, words, and sentences to express and understand wants, needs, thoughts, ideas, and emotions.	Children who have larger vocabularies and greater understanding of spoken language tend to have higher reading abilities. Learners with more vocabulary knowledge of a topic are better able to comprehend the text.

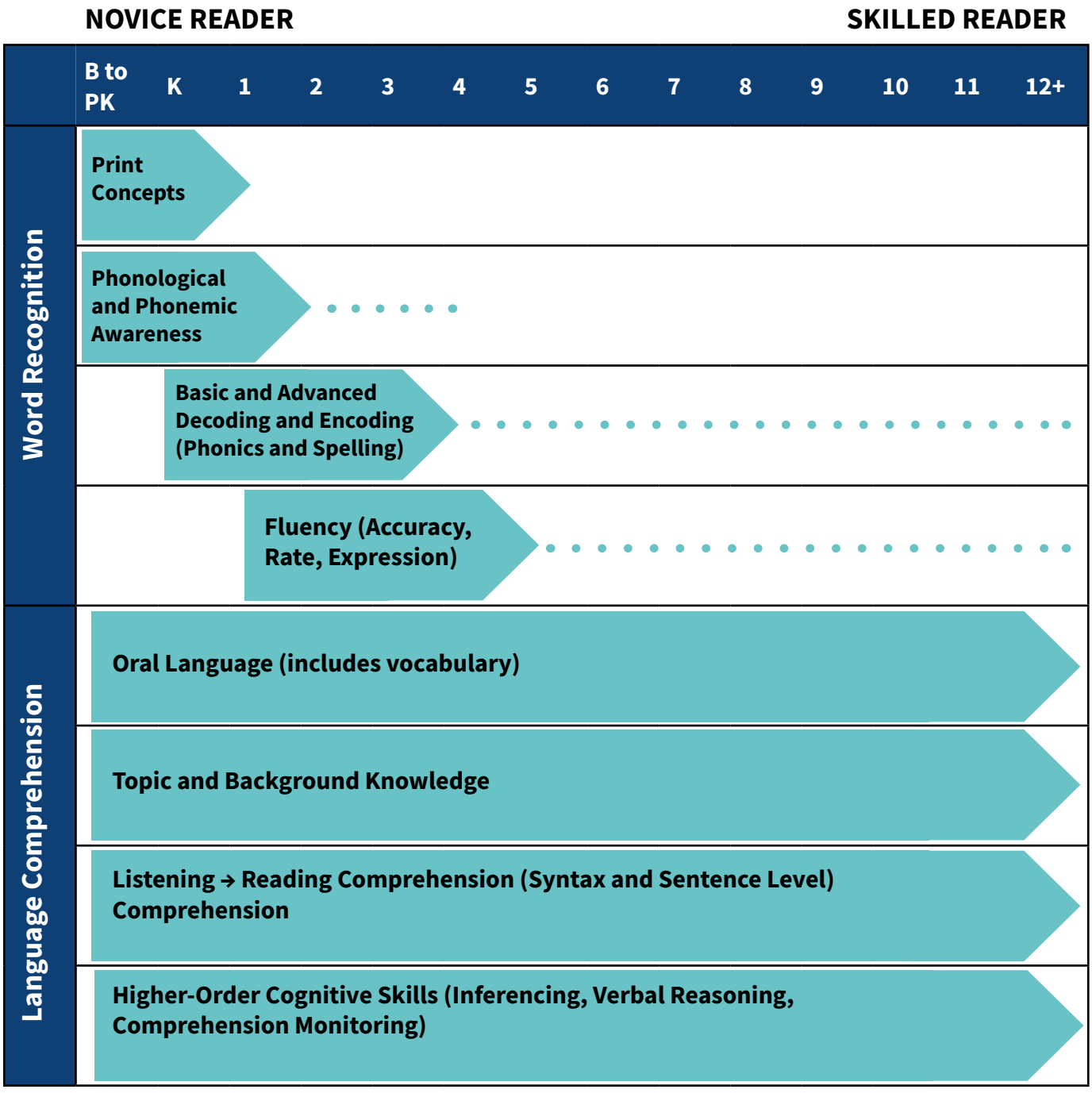
Appendix F: National Early Literacy Panel: Literacy Variables (NELP, 2008)

Variables with a medium to large predicative relationship with later measure of literacy development	Variables that are moderately correlated with at least one measure of later literacy achievement
Alphabet Knowledge: Knowledge of the names and sounds associated with printed letters	Concepts of Print: Knowledge of print conventions, such as left–right or front–back, and concepts such as book cover, author, or text
Phonological Awareness: The ability to detect, manipulate, or analyze the auditory aspects of spoken language, including the ability to distinguish or segment words, syllables or phonemes, independent of meaning	Print Knowledge: A combination of elements of alphabetic knowledge, concepts about print, and early decoding
Rapid Automatic Naming of Letters or Digits: The ability to rapidly name a sequence of random letters or digits	Reading Readiness: Usually a combination of alphabetic knowledge, concepts of print, vocabulary, memory, and phonological awareness
Rapid Automatic Naming of Objects or Colors: The ability to rapidly name a sequence of repeating, random sets of pictures of objects, for example, “car,” “tree,” “house,” “man,” or colors	Oral Language: The ability to produce or comprehend spoken language, including vocabulary and grammar
Writing or Writing Name: The ability to write letters in isolation, when asked, or to write one’s own name	Visual Processing: The ability to match or discriminate visual symbols
Phonological Memory: The ability to remember spoken information for a short period of time	

Appendix G: Learning Progression for Developing Skilled Readers

Learning Progression for Developing Skilled Readers

(Adapted from Intensifying Literacy Instruction: Essential Practices, 2020)



Department of Education & Workforce

Appendix H: Evidence-Based Practices for Improving Adolescent Literacy Instruction and Providing Reading Interventions

Evidence-Based Practices for Improving Adolescent Literacy

Adapted from Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices: A Practice Guide (Kamil et al., 2008).

Evidence-Based Practices for Improving Adolescent Literacy: Practices and Evidence-Level	
Provide explicit vocabulary instruction.	Strong Evidence
Provide direct and explicit comprehension strategy instruction	Strong Evidence
Provide opportunities for extended discussion of text meaning and interpretation.	Moderate Evidence
Increase student motivation and engagement in literacy learning.	Moderate Evidence
Make available intensive and individualized interventions for struggling readers that can be provided by trained specialists.	Strong Evidence

Evidence-Based Practices for Providing Reading Interventions

Adapted from Providing Reading Interventions for Students in Grades 4–9: Educator's Practice Guide (Vaughn et al., 2022).

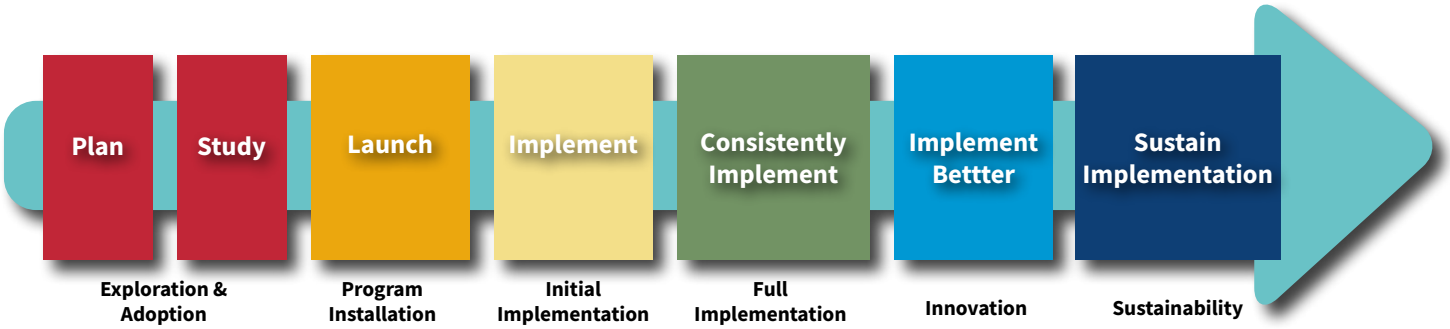
Evidence-Based Practices for Providing Reading Interventions in Grades 4-9: Practices and Evidence-Level	
Build students' decoding skills so they can read complex, multisyllabic words.	Strong Evidence
Provide purposeful fluency-building activities to help students read effortlessly.	Strong Evidence
Routinely use a set of comprehension-building practices to help students make sense of the text. • Part 3A. Build students' world and word knowledge so they can make sense of the text. • Part 3B. Consistently provide students with opportunities to ask and answer questions to better understand the text they read. • Part 3C. Teach students a routine for determining the gist of a short section of text. • Part 3D. Teach students to monitor their comprehension as they read.	Strong Evidence
Provide students with opportunities to practice making sense of stretch text (challenging text) that will expose them to complex ideas and information.	Moderate Evidence

Appendix I: Measurements of Interim Change

English Language Arts Achievement – Includes Grades 3-8 ELA, ELA I and ELA II											
	2020-2021 Base-line	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030	2030-2031
All Students	76.18 %	48.56 %	80.94 %	83.33 %	85.71 %	88.09 %	90.47 %	92.85 %	95.24 %	97.62 %	100 %
Economic-Disadvantaged	62.33 %	64.22 %	66.10 %	67.98 %	69.87 %	71.75 %	73.63 %	75.52 %	77.40 %	79.28 %	81.17 %
Students with Disabilities	48.04 %	50.64 %	53.24 %	55.84 %	58.43 %	61.03 %	63.63 %	66.23 %	68.83 %	71.42 %	74.02 %
English Learners	60.63 %	62.60 %	64.57 %	66.54 %	68.51 %	70.48 %	72.44 %	74.41 %	76.38 %	78.35 %	80.32 %
Black, non-Hispanic	52.41 %	54.79 %	57.17 %	59.55 %	61.93 %	64.31 %	66.69 %	69.07 %	71.45 %	73.83 %	76.21 %
American Indian or Alaskan Native	68.07 %	69.67 %	71.26 %	72.86 %	74.46 %	76.05 %	77.65 %	79.24 %	80.84 %	82.44 %	84.03 %
Asian or Native Hawai-ian/Other Pacific Islander	86.20 %	86.89 %	87.58 %	88.27 %	88.96 %	89.65 %	90.34 %	91.03 %	91.72 %	92.41 %	93.10 %
Hispanic or Latino	64.50 %	66.28 %	68.04 %	69.83 %	71.60 %	73.38 %	75.15 %	76.93 %	78.70 %	80.48 %	82.25 %
Multi-racial	70.15 %	71.64 %	73.14 %	74.63 %	76.12 %	77.61 %	79.11 %	80.60 %	82.09 %	83.58 %	85.08 %
White	83.43 %	84.26 %	85.09 %	85.92 %	86.74	87.57 %	88.40 %	89.23 %	90.06 %	90.89 %	91.72 %

Appendix J: Protocol for Selecting and Supporting High-Quality Instructional Materials and Evidence-Based Practices

Protocol for Selecting and Supporting High-Quality Instructional Materials and Evidence-Based Practices (adapted from Fixsen et al., 2005, 2009)



EXPLORATION/ADOPTION: PLAN

Objective: Focus on identifying instructional needs and priorities, systems, and processes for successful adoption.

- ☐ Create a selection team that is representative of different roles, responsibilities, and stakeholders.
- ☐ Define the goals and vision in alignment with state/district policies, curriculum goals, standards, and the needs of all learners.
- ☐ Conduct a needs assessment to determine gaps in current instructional materials and practices.
- ☐ Set timelines and milestones to plan for a strategic roll-out of the new materials or strategy.
- ☐ Assess resources and budgets.
- ☐ Consider professional learning needs to support the adoption process.
- ☐ Define criteria for the selection of high-quality instructional materials from Ohio's approved lists.

EXPLORATION/ADOPTION: STUDY

Objective: Focus on evaluating fit and feasibility.

- ☐ Review available evidence on the effectiveness of materials and practices.
- ☐ Utilize additional rubrics to evaluate alignment to Simple View of Reading and Learning Progression of Reading (Appendix G).
- ☐ Evaluate the feasibility, acceptability, impact, and relevance of the materials/strategy.
- ☐ Refine selection based on feedback and data.
- ☐ Identify professional learning needs and create a process for building internal capacity.
- ☐ Identify and allocate resources and other support needs.

INSTALLATION: LAUNCH

Objective: Focus on preparing for implementation.

- ☐ Plan and deliver initial training and support, fostering a culture of collaboration.
- ☐ Communicate what makes the materials high-quality and evidence-based.
- ☐ Communicate expectations and non-negotiables for use of the materials.
- ☐ Secure and distribute resources needed for successful implementation.
- ☐ Set up classroom environments to support implementation.
- ☐ Create a plan for monitoring and evaluating implementation fidelity and integrity.
- ☐ Develop a plan for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the practices on student outcomes.
- ☐ Determine how data will be used to evaluate effectiveness and make necessary adjustments.

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION: IMPLEMENT

Objective: Focus on beginning to implement.

- ☐ Build leaders' capacity, ensuring building leaders provide resources and support.
- ☐ Identify key performance indicators to track progress and assess early successes or barriers.
- ☐ Begin collecting initial data on the integrity of implementation.
- ☐ Provide ongoing professional learning and coaching to ensure educators have the skills needed for effective implementation. Use feedback to address initial challenges and provide implementation support.

FULL IMPLEMENTATION: IMPLEMENT CONSISTENTLY

Objective: Focus on achieving widespread, consistent implementation.

- ☐ Establish onboarding that prioritizes ongoing professional learning and coaching.
- ☐ Continue to support leaders' capacity to lead this work.
- ☐ Conduct ongoing assessments of implementation fidelity and integrity.
- ☐ Collect student and adult implementation data to provide targeted support.
- ☐ Make necessary adjustments to staffing, funding, and resource allocation.
- ☐ Create feedback loops based on data, observations, and experiences from the field.

INNOVATION: IMPLEMENT BETTER

Objective: Focus on data-informed adaptations to better meet the needs of all learners.

- ☐ Develop a process for vetting, testing, and documenting modifications/adaptations.
- ☐ Excluding established non-negotiables, create opportunities for educators to experiment with modifications/adaptations.
- ☐ Rigorously evaluate the impact of innovations.
- ☐ Create systems for sharing lessons learned from adaptations.
- ☐ Continue to provide continuous professional learning and coaching to scale and support innovations to implementation.

SUSTAINABILITY: SUSTAIN IMPLEMENTATION

Objective: Focus on institutionalizing implementation for sustainability and long-term success.

Activities:

- ☐ Integrate the practice/program into routine practices, policies, and the organizational culture.
- ☐ Ensure implementation is supported by sustainable funding, staffing, and infrastructure.
- ☐ Provide veteran educators with ongoing professional learning, including refreshers.
- ☐ Provide instructional leaders with ongoing professional learning and systems coaching.
- ☐ Continue to encourage collaboration within and across teaming structures.
- ☐ Continue to collect and analyze student and adult data to maintain effectiveness.
- ☐ Use data to inform professional learning, coaching, and ongoing refinements.

Appendix K: Regional Support Teams for Literacy

Regional Support Teams for Literacy consist of state support teams and educational service center consultants that support literacy improvement in regions in the following areas identified by *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*:

- Data-driven decision-making using a collaborative problem-solving process.
- Developing improvement plans focused on literacy.
- Supporting the fidelity of implementation of evidence-based practices aligned to the science of reading.

To provide local entities support in developing literacy improvement plans and implementing evidence-based practices, regional support teams for literacy must:

- Have expertise in science of reading, specifically the components of the Simple View of Reading, including development of oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, sight vocabulary, fluent word recognition, comprehension, writing, and literacy across the disciplines.
- Provide system support, including facilitating system-level needs assessments and data-driven systems coaching.
- Provide support to teacher-based teams in identifying and implementing evidence-based practices based on data-driven decision-making.
- Possess a thorough understanding of the unique and varied needs of learners.
- Collaborate with families and community partners to foster literacy development.

REGIONAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING SERIES IN LITERACY 2018-2024

Timeframe	Intensive Professional Learning Topic
Year 1: September 2018 – May 2019	Building a disposition to improve literacy achievement through which all educators understand and apply the breadth and depth of Ohio's Learning Standards, believe all students are competent and part of the educational system, and believe they are responsible for all students.
Year 2: September 2019 – December 2019	Word recognition: Phonemic Awareness (Beginning, Early, Advanced)*
Year 2: January 2020 – May 2020	Word Recognition: Phonics (Early and Advanced)*
Year 3: September 2020 – December 2020	Language Comprehension: Oral Language and Vocabulary Development*
Year 3: January 2021 – May 2021	Language Comprehension: Reading Comprehension
Year 4: September 2021 – December 2021	Writing*
Year 4: January 2022 – May 2022	Disciplinary Literacy*
Year 5: September 2022 – May 2023	Adolescent Literacy
Year 6: September 2023 – May 2024	Data-Driven Decision-Making in Literacy
Year 7: September 2024 – May 2025	High-Quality Instructional Materials in English Language Arts and Literacy

*Assessment, fluency, and differentiation to coaching service delivery plan are embedded within topic areas.

CRITICAL COMPONENTS OF THE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

1. Meet the criteria for professional learning described in the Every Students Succeeds Act: sustained, intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data-driven, and instructionally focused.
2. Each intensive professional learning topic weaves the following concepts throughout: (a) presumed competence, (b) related coaching practices (focusing heavily on systems coaching for regional support teams), (c) engaging in productive dialogue, and (d) practices to support all learners, including English learners and students with complex needs.
3. Intentional integration of topics that will develop a system where all educators:
    - Understand and apply the breadth and depth of Ohio's Learning Standards
    - Believe all students are competent and a part of the educational system
    - Believe they are responsible for all students