



Early Literacy Matters

State-by-State Policy Implementation Report

Explore Alaska's adoption and implementation of the 18 Early Literacy Fundamental Principles.






AK

PRINCIPLE ADOPTION
IMPLEMENTATION



Early Literacy Policy Implementation Rubric

Comprehensive Early Literacy Policy establishes support and intensive reading interventions for all K–3 students to ensure they read on grade level by the end of 3rd grade. The policy also requires 3rd grade students to demonstrate sufficient reading skills for promotion to 4th grade. For students severely below grade level and who do not qualify for a good cause exemption, retention provides struggling readers the additional time and intensive interventions they need to catch up with their peers.

 <p>FULL IMPLEMENTATION</p>	<p>The fundamental principle is adopted in policy, and there is evidence of full implementation.</p> <p> ABOVE & BEYOND BADGE: This badge recognizes efforts that exceed full implementation.</p>
 <p>PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION</p>	<p>The fundamental principle is adopted in policy, but there is limited evidence of implementation.</p>
 <p>FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION</p>	<p>The fundamental principle is adopted in policy with a future date for implementation.</p>
 <p>PRINCIPLE NOT ADOPTED</p>	<p>The fundamental principle is not adopted in policy, does not meet minimum implementation requirements or is grant-based and not sustainable.</p>

Early Literacy Policy Implementation Rubric

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide an analysis of states' implementation of K–3 reading policies aligned to ExcelinEd's [fundamental principles](#) of an early literacy policy. It builds on an analysis of states' adoption of statutes and regulations establishing requirements for each component of the four fundamental principle areas, which are:

1. [Supports for Teachers & Policy](#)
2. [Assessment & Parent Notification](#)
3. [Instruction & Intervention](#)
4. [Retention & Intensive Intervention](#)

This report summarizes evidence of Alaska's early literacy policy implementation using an implementation rubric designed to gauge state progress toward full implementation of early literacy policies. Each of the fundamental principles is addressed in a separate table.

ADOPTION IMPLEMENTATION

15 out of 18



STATE POLICY ADOPTION REFERENCE MATERIALS

- [Alaska Statute 14.03.072](#)
- [Alaska Statute 14.30.765 Reading Intervention Services and Strategies](#)
- [4 AAC 06.300 – 4 AAC 06.390 Department Reading Program](#)
- [4 AAC 06.400 – 4 AAC 06.490 District Reading Intervention Services and Strategies](#)
- [Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. The Alaska Reads Act](#)

Science of Reading (SOR) Training



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

FULL IMPLEMENTATION

State-adopted science of reading training is required for all K–3 teachers and administrators, and an implementation plan for rollout is clearly communicated to all educators.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

Evidence of the state’s policy implementation and/or guidance in this area includes:

- Alaska HAS adopted evidence-based training on the science of reading for both educators and administrators. ([Alaska DEED, Alaska Reads Act Endorsements: DEED Approved Courses and Exams](#))
- Alaska DOES require all certified educators who teach, provide, and/or supervise reading instruction to students in Kindergarten–3rd grade to complete the evidence-based training. ([Alaska DEED, Alaska Reads Act Endorsements: DEED Approved Courses and Exams](#))
- Alaska DOES monitor these requirements through [endorsement requests](#) – educators may submit Endorsement: Alaska Reads Act forms to request endorsements be added to educator certificates.
- Alaska DOES offer other resources for educators relating to reading, including the [Reading Playbook Training Guides](#).
- Alaska DOES have an implementation plan to ensure educators receive evidence-based training, as outlined in the state’s [Strategic Reading Plan](#).
- Alaska DOES allow educators to meet the Alaska Reads Act Educator Qualifications by scoring minimum scores on science of reading aligned assessments: ETS Praxis II Teaching Reading: Elementary, ETS Praxis II Teaching Reading: K–12, Pearson Foundation of Reading. ([Alaska DEED, Alaska Reads Act Endorsements](#))
- Educators MUST be endorsed prior to teaching in a K–3 classroom. ([Alaska DEED, Alaska Reads Act Endorsements](#))

Science of Reading (SOR) Training

CONTINUED

IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

FULL IMPLEMENTATION

NOTEWORTHY

The following aspects of the state's work are particularly noteworthy:

- As of March 3, 2025, 1,642 educators have received an Alaska Reads Act endorsement, including: 1,534 teachers and 228 administrators have received the Alaska Reads Act endorsement for teachers/administrators, 108 reading teachers have completed the Alaska Reads Act endorsement for reading teachers, and 52 early education lead teachers have completed the endorsement for early education lead teachers. Approximately 2,000 educators have completed the science of reading coursework. ([Alaska Reads Act Evaluation Report: Year 1 \(March 2025\)](#))
- Alaska DEED covered the cost for educators to participate in one FREE training course to meet the Alaska Reads Act educator requirements ([Keys to Literacy](#) and [LETRS](#)). (See also [Alaska DEED, Alaska Reads Act Endorsements: DEED Approved Courses and Exams](#))
- Alaska holds a Science of Reading Symposium annually. ([Alaska DEED, Alaska Science of Reading Symposium](#))

RESOURCES

- [Alaska DEED, AK Reads Act Verified Reading Teacher – District Assurance Form](#)
- [Alaska DEED, Alaska Reads Act Endorsements](#)

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

Literacy Coaches



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Literacy coaches are present in policy and trained in the science of reading, and they may provide job-embedded professional development and coaching to K–3 teachers based on student data or other models.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

Evidence of the state’s policy implementation and/or guidance in this area includes:

- Alaska DOES allow educators to receive Reading Specialist Endorsements to add to their certification. ([Alaska DEED, Follow-up on hearing April 3, 2024; Prepared by DEED Staff](#))
- Alaska DOES assign reading specialists to the lowest performing 25% of schools through the Department of Reading Program – this program is voluntary and qualifying schools have the opportunity to apply. ([Alaska DEED, Department Reading Program; see also Alaska Reads Act Evaluation Report: Year 1 \(March 2025\)](#))
- As of April 2024, Alaska HAS 97 district reading specialists and 23 Department Reading Specialists. ([Alaska DEED, Follow-up on hearing April 3, 2024; Prepared by DEED Staff](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Alaska should ensure that a literacy coach that is trained in the science of reading is assigned to each elementary school to provide job-embedded professional development and coaching to K–3 teachers.

Educator Preparation Program (EPP) Alignment



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION

EPP required coursework is aligned to the science of reading and includes evidence-based literacy instruction.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

Evidence of the state's policy implementation and/or guidance in this area includes:

- EPPs DO offer coursework related to standards that address the components of the science of reading. ([NCTQ, Alaska Summary 2023](#))
- The Alaska Department of Elementary and Early Education DOES work with Alaska universities to ensure pre-service educators receive training in the science of reading. ([Alaska's Literacy Blueprint 2023](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Alaska should expand policy to ensure that required coursework used by EPPs prohibits the use of course materials that include three-cueing.

Educator Preparation Program (EPP) Assessment



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PRINCIPLE NOT ADOPTED

The state has not adopted policy (statute or regulation) that meets the fundamental principle for this area.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

Evidence of the state's policy implementation and/or guidance in this area includes:

- Alaska DOES require licensure tests that address reading: Praxis Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment; Praxis Elementary Education Assessment; Praxis Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects; Praxis Elementary Education: Content Knowledge for Teaching; however, these licensure tests DO NOT adequately address all five core components of reading. ([NCTQ, Alaska Summary 2023](#); [NCTQ, False Assurances: Many states' licensure tests don't signal whether elementary teachers understand reading instruction \(Nov. 2023\)](#))
- Alaska DOES allow educators to meet the Alaska Reads Act Educator Qualifications by scoring minimum scores on science of reading aligned assessments: ETS Praxis II Teaching Reading: Elementary, ETS Praxis II Teaching Reading: K–12, Pearson Foundation of Reading. ([Alaska DEED, Alaska Reads Act Endorsements](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Alaska should require elementary education candidates to pass an assessment that is aligned to the science of reading to obtain teacher licensure.

Funding for Literacy Efforts



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Funding is dedicated to some but not all early literacy fundamental principles and may be temporary or grant based.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

Evidence of the state's policy implementation and/or guidance in this area includes:

- Alaska DOES direct funding specifically to support state and/or local implementation of SOME early literacy fundamental principles. These include:
 - Funding for the Department Reading Program [increase of \$3 million in first year; \$30 increase to base student allocation]

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Alaska should determine the adequate funding level to ensure implementation of the fundamental principles are fully funded.



Universal Reading Screener



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION

States require districts to adopt a universal reading screener to be administered at least one time per year with optional mid-year and end-of-year screening.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

Evidence of the state’s policy implementation and/or guidance in this area includes:

- Alaska HAS adopted a universal reading screener, [Amplify mClass](#), for all districts to use.
- Alaska DOES indicate through guidance that Amplify mClass screeners will be administered three times per year for all K–3 students: beginning of the year, middle of the year, and end of the year. ([Alaska DEED, Literacy Screener](#); see [Alaska DEED, K–3 District Reading Improvement Plan \(DRIP/MTSS\) Checklist](#))
- Alaska DOES allow districts to use [locally selected literacy screeners](#), but any such waiver request must include requisite evidence and documentation and is subject to approval by the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development.
- Alaska policy DOES require districts to administer the reading screener at the *beginning of the year to all K–3 students*. ([4 AAC 06.400 Statewide literacy screening and support](#))
- Alaska policy DOES NOT require administration of the universal screener three times per year for all K–3 students. Alaska DOES require districts to administer the reading screener to students who have been identified with reading deficiencies on the beginning of the year screener an additional two times per year, for a total of three times per year. ([4 AAC 06.400 Statewide literacy screening and support](#); [Alaska DEED, K–3 District Reading Improvement Plan \(DRIP\) Multi-Tiered System of Supports \(MTSS\)](#); [Alaska DEED, 2025–2026 Assessment Calendar](#))
- Alaska DOES allow for the use of a Reading Portfolio to be used as an alternative to the statewide screening tool data, if measurable evidence is provided for each skill listed in the Portfolio. ([Alaska DEED, Reading Portfolio](#))

Universal Reading Screener

CONTINUED

IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION

NOTEWORTHY

The following aspects of the state’s work are particularly noteworthy:

- When using the Reading Portfolio in place of the statewide screening tool, the student must master the skills in their grade level, as well as master all of the skills in each of the previous grades. ([Alaska DEED, Reading Portfolio](#))
- Alaska [regulations](#) require the Department to provide “associated training” to all school districts relating to the statewide screening tool.

RESOURCES

- [Alaska DEED, Literacy Screener FAQ](#)

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Alaska should administer the state-approved universal reading screener to all students in Kindergarten–3rd grade three times per year.

Screeners for Characteristics of Dyslexia



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION

A state-approved screener for characteristics of dyslexia assesses the following skills as developmentally appropriate: phonological and phonemic awareness, sound-symbol recognition, alphabet knowledge, decoding, rapid naming, encoding, and oral reading fluency. The screener is administered only to students who are flagged as at risk on the universal reading screener or upon teacher or parent request.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

Evidence of the state’s policy implementation and/or guidance in this area includes:

- Alaska HAS approved a screener for the characteristics of dyslexia. ([Alaska DEED, Literacy Screener FAQs](#))
- Alaska REQUIRES the dyslexia screener to be given to students identified on the universal mClass screener as scoring well below benchmark — Kindergarten: RAN and 1st–3rd: Spelling. ([Alaska DEED, Literacy Screener FAQs](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Alaska should administer the dyslexia screener to all students, at a minimum, at the end of Kindergarten and the beginning of 1st and 2nd grade, not just to those students identified as at risk on the universal reading screener.
- Alaska should ensure the screeners are assessing all of the following skills, as developmentally appropriate: phonological and phonemic awareness, sound-symbol recognition, alphabet knowledge, decoding, rapid naming, encoding, and oral reading fluency.



Parental Notification



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

FULL IMPLEMENTATION

The state requires parental notification of students identified with reading difficulties within 30 days of each administration of the state-approved universal reading screener and/or dyslexia screener.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

Evidence of the state’s policy implementation and/or guidance in this area includes:

- Alaska DOES require parental notification of students identified with reading difficulties within 15 days of the administration of the reading screener. ([AS 14.30.765 Reading intervention services and strategies; progression; Alaska DEED, K–3 District Reading Improvement Plan \(DRIP/MTSS\) Checklist](#))
- Alaska DOES require a meeting with parents or guardians to develop the Individual Reading Improvement Plans for students within 30 days of student identification. ([Alaska DEED, K–3 District Reading Improvement Plan \(DRIP/MTSS\) Checklist](#))
- Alaska DOES require progress reporting to parents ten times each year, for those students who have an Individual Reading Improvement Plan. ([Alaska DEED, Student Individual Reading Improvement Plan \(IRIP\) Template](#))
- Alaska DOES offer guidance and resources for parental notification. (See [Alaska DEED, AK Reads Act: Parent Notification of Reading Deficiency; Alaska DEED, K–3 District Reading Improvement Plan \(DRIP/MTSS\) Checklist](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

District Adoption of High-Quality Instructional Materials



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The state provides guidance and resources to assist districts in the identification and selection of high-quality instructional materials aligned to the science of reading and state standards.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

Evidence of the state’s policy implementation and/or guidance in this area includes:

- Alaska HAS created resources for districts and schools that includes vetted lists of evidence-based programs and materials that are grounded in the science of reading. ([Alaska Evidence-based Core Program List 2023](#); [Alaska Evidence-based Reading Interventions and Supplemental Programs 2023](#); [Alaska Evidence-based Early Education Literacy Curricula 2023](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Alaska should expand policy to require districts to post their adopted materials on the district website.

Elimination of Three-Cueing Instructional Materials



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PRINCIPLE NOT ADOPTED

The state discourages the use of instructional materials that include the three-cueing systems model for teaching word reading and provides guidance and resources for districts to evaluate their own materials, but the principle is not prohibited in policy.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

Evidence of the state's policy implementation and/or guidance in this area includes:

- Alaska DOES provide guidance for [Evidence-Based Resources](#) that specifies certain resources for reading do not include three-cueing instructional practices in the foundational skill instruction for Core Programs.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Alaska should adopt a clear policy, with a timeline for implementation, that would eliminate the use of all instructional materials that include the three-cueing systems model for teaching reading.

Individual Reading Plans



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

FULL IMPLEMENTATION

The state requires schools to develop and implement an individual reading plan for students who are identified as having a reading deficiency *within 30 days of receiving screening results*. There is an *established process for monitoring the implementation of those plans and a timeline* for notifying parents of the development of the plan.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

Evidence of the state’s policy implementation and/or guidance in this area includes:

- Alaska DOES require the development of Individual Reading Improvement Plans for students identified as having a reading deficiency, to be implemented within 30 days of identification of the reading deficiency. ([Alaska DEED, K–3 District Reading Improvement Plan \(DRIP/MTSS\) Checklist](#))
- Alaska HAS created a [template](#) to provide guidance for the creation of Individual Reading Improvement Plans.
- Alaska DOES require notice to parents of the development of the plan and DOES require parents to sign the Reading Improvement Plan after review. ([Student Individual Reading Improvement Plan \(IRIP\) Template](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.



Regularly Monitor Student Progress



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

FULL IMPLEMENTATION

The state requires schools to regularly monitor and document students' progress within a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) and utilize the data to inform instruction and interventions as needed and in a timely manner. Monitoring can take many forms (i.e., observations, screeners, assessments, and student work).

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

Evidence of the state's policy implementation and/or guidance in this area includes:

- Alaska DOES require schools to monitor students' progress within an MTSS, which is completed through the [K–3 MTSS District Reading Intervention Plan Rubric](#). (See also [Alaska DEED, The Alaska Reads Act: District Reading improvement Plan/Multi-Tiered System of Support](#))
- Alaska DOES monitor the MTSS requirement as each district must submit a K–3 MTSS Plan that outlines the core curriculum, intervention, group sizes, screening, and progress monitoring. ([Alaska DEED, Alaska Reads Act Frequently Asked Questions](#))
- Alaska DOES provide [MTSS planning tools](#) that are then transferred to the K–3 MTSS Reading Plan, which must be submitted by September 1 of each year.
- Alaska DOES require the use of data through progress monitoring to adjust plans based on student needs. (See [Alaska DEED, K–3 District Reading Improvement Plan \(DRIP\) Multi-Tiered System of Supports \(MTSS\)](#))

Regularly Monitor Student Progress

CONTINUED**IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL****FULL IMPLEMENTATION****EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE (CONTINUED)**

- Alaska DOES provide resources to assist educators in using students' test data to determine appropriate diagnostic measures. ([Alaska DEED, Alignment of Literacy Screener with Diagnostic Measures, Grades K–3](#))
- Alaska DOES require progress reports to parents ten times per year, if the student has an Individual Reading Improvement Plan. ([Alaska DEED, Student Individual Reading Improvement Plan \(IRIP\) Template](#))

RESOURCES

- [Alaska DEED, The Alaska Reads Act](#)

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

Evidence-Based Interventions



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

FULL IMPLEMENTATION

The state requires school districts to target students' needs by adopting interventions grounded in the science of reading *from a vetted and approved list*. Interventions are provided before, during, or after school.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

Evidence of the state's policy implementation and/or guidance in this area includes:

- Alaska DOES require districts to adopt interventions grounded in the science of reading from a [vetted and approved list](#).
- Alaska DOES require interventions during school as well as after school interventions if a student is identified with a reading deficiency on the lowest level, using the state-approved literacy screener. ([Alaska DEED, Student Individual Reading Improvement Plan \(IRIP\) Template](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

Summer Reading Camps



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PRINCIPLE NOT ADOPTED

The state has not adopted policy (statute or regulation) that meets the fundamental principle for this area.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

Evidence of the state’s policy implementation and/or guidance in this area includes:

- Alaska DOES NOT require districts to offer summer reading camps to rising 1st–4th grade students at risk of reading failure to remediate learning loss and/or build reading skills.
- Alaska DOES require *summer reading plans* for those students advancing to 4th grade with a waiver due to non-proficient reading skills. ([Alaska DEED, Student Individual Reading Improvement Plan \(IRIP\) Template](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Alaska should expand policy to require summer reading camps that are offered to *all students* in 1st–4th grade who are at risk of reading failure.
- Further, Alaska should require all staff at the summer reading camps to be trained in the science of reading.

Parent Read-At-Home Plan



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

FULL IMPLEMENTATION

The state requires schools to provide read-at-home plans to parents as soon as a student is identified with a reading deficiency. Strategies shared with parents target students' needs based on data and are aligned with the science of reading.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

Evidence of the state's policy implementation and/or guidance in this area includes:

- Alaska DOES require schools to provide read-at home plans to parents through the student's [Individual Reading Improvement Plan](#).
- Alaska DOES provide recommendations to parents of students identified with reading deficiencies of culturally relevant, evidence-based instructional activities at home to support classroom intervention. ([Alaska DEED, Student Individual Reading Improvement Plan \(IRIP\) Template](#))
- Alaska DOES provide other resources for parents, for example [Alaska DEED, Family Engagement Resources](#) and [reports](#) to support at-home reading from the mClass by Amplify assessments.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

Initial Determinant Retention at 3rd Grade Based on State Assessment



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The state requires that a student who is unable to demonstrate sufficient reading skills on the state test-based options be promoted to 4th grade with provisions for additional support through transitional classes, tutoring and/or intensive interventions. The state *should not allow the use of a screener to determine promotion.*

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

Evidence of the state's policy implementation and/or guidance in this area includes:

- Alaska DOES require, through [statute](#), retention of students who are unable to demonstrate sufficient reading skills on the state test-based options provided.
- Alaska DOES allow the use of a screener to determine promotion/retention decisions.
- Alaska DOES allow promotion to 4th grade if a parent or guardian signs a waiver agreeing that the student will participate in an additional 20 hours of individual reading improvement plan intervention services during the summer before the student enters 4th grade.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Alaska should remove universal screeners as one of the state test-based options for determining promotion/retention decisions.

Multiple Options for Promotion



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

FULL IMPLEMENTATION

The state offers *at least three pathways for promotion to 4th grade* including achieving a predetermined level on the state reading assessment, passing an alternative assessment or retest, or successfully demonstrating sufficient 3rd grade reading skills through a portfolio of student work.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

Evidence of the state's policy implementation and/or guidance in this area includes:

- Alaska DOES offer at least three pathways for promotion to 4th grade, including scoring at grade level or higher on statewide screening tool or summative assessment; achieving an acceptable score on alternative standardized reading screening; or demonstrating mastery through a [student reading portfolio](#). ([AS 14.30.765 Reading intervention services and strategies; progression](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

Good Cause Exemptions for Some Students



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

FULL IMPLEMENTATION

The state allows *specific* good cause exemptions for promotion to 4th grade that recognize the special needs of some students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who were previously retained. Intensive interventions are required to continue in 4th grade for students promoted for good cause.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

Evidence of the state's policy implementation and/or guidance in this area includes:

- Alaska DOES provide for good cause exemptions, for example when the Superintendent or designee determines it is in the student's best interests to progress, including considering the student's primary language and whether the student has a disability.
- Alaska DOES provide for a [parent waiver](#) to request that their student progresses to 4th grade, despite having significant reading deficiencies.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

