



Early Literacy Matters






State-by-State Policy Implementation Report

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



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 Georgia'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

17 out of 18



STATE POLICY ADOPTION REFERENCE MATERIALS

- [Georgia Code 20-2-153.1 Georgia Early Literacy \(2024\)](#)
- [House Bill 307, Georgia Legislature \(2025\)](#)
- [GaDOE, Literacy & Dyslexia](#)
- [GaDOE, Literacy and Dyslexia Resource Repository](#)
- [GaDOE, Aligning State Literacy Policies & Practices 2.0 – House Bill 307 \(2025\)](#)
- [GaDOE, Georgia's K–12 ELA Standards](#)

Science of Reading (SOR) Training



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The state offers science of reading training or requires districts to adopt a policy to identify science of reading training, providers of the training, and personnel who will be trained. Participation in science of reading training may be optional for teachers and/or administrators.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Georgia DOES require all K–3 teachers to complete a state-approved literacy training program. ([GaDOE, Aligning State Literacy Policies & Practices 2.0 – House Bill 307 \(2025\)](#))
- Georgia HAS partnered with the Rollins Center/Cox Campus to create the [Georgia Literacy Academy](#) to provide [IDA accredited coursework](#) free of charge for all K–3 teachers in Georgia. The Academy provides for 10 courses and over 157,000 courses have been successfully completed by educators since 2023.
- Georgia HAS developed [guidance](#) to support educators in implementing Georgia’s [K–12 English Language Arts Standards](#) and to be used along with the Georgia Literacy Academy’s courses, lessons, and instructional steps. (See also [GaDOE, Correlating Georgia’s K-12 ELA Standards with the Georgia Early Literacy Act](#))

NOTEWORTHY

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

- Through statute, Georgia created a [Council on Literacy](#) tasked with making professional development recommendations for current teachers to improve literacy instruction in the state.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Georgia should expand its policy to require that all K–3 *administrators* complete a state-approved literacy training program.

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:

- Georgia regulations DO establish the [Literacy Specialist](#) designation that can be added to certificates through the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, which allows individuals to support and work collaboratively to implement effective literacy strategies and quality literacy programs in PreKindergarten–12th grade.
- Georgia HAS placed [60 structured literacy trained coaches](#) in each Comprehensive Support and Improvement elementary school and the work is guided by the Structured Literacy Coaching Coordinator at the Georgia Department of Education. (See [GaDOE, Structured Literacy Coaching in Georgia’s Highest-Need Elementary Schools – Initial Rollout and Early Impacts](#))
- Georgia DID provide funds for regional literacy coaches within each of the state’s RESA districts for the 2025–2026 school year in the 2026 General Assembly budget and state guidance indicates the legislature increased funds in 2025–2026 to provide for additional regional literacy coaches. (See [Georgia Legislature, House Budget & Research Office \(FY2026\)](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Georgia 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:

- Georgia [regulations](#) relating to program content and curriculum requirements DO require GaPSC-approved EPPs to ensure that candidates seeking certification demonstrate the appropriate level of competence in the teaching of reading, described in regulations relating to the Foundations of Reading, Literacy, and Language.
- Georgia [regulations](#) relating to the Foundations of Reading, Literacy, and Language DO require EPPs preparing candidates to teach early childhood, elementary students, and students with disabilities to incorporate standards aligned to the science of reading for programs leading to initial teacher certifications.
- Georgia [regulations](#) DO require GaPSC-approved EPPs to ensure candidates demonstrate knowledge of dyslexia and other related disorders, competence in the use of evidence-based instruction, structured multisensory approaches to teaching language and reading skills, accommodations for students displaying characteristics of dyslexia, and competence in the use of multi-tiered system of supports framework addressing reading, writing, mathematics, and behavior, which includes universal screening, scientific, research-based interventions, and progress monitoring.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Georgia should expand policy to require that educator preparation program coursework prohibits the use of course materials that include three-cueing instructional strategies.

Educator Preparation Program (EPP) Assessment



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

FULL IMPLEMENTATION

Elementary education candidates must pass a science of reading aligned assessment to obtain teacher licensure.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Georgia currently DOES require a licensure test that addresses reading and is aligned with the science of reading: GACE Literacy Assessment. ([GaDOE, Aligning State Literacy Policies & Practices 2.0 – House Bill 307 \(2025\)](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

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:

- Georgia DOES provide direct funding specifically to support state and/or local implementation of SOME early literacy fundamental principles. These include:
 - Funds for costs of the [literacy and dyslexia screening](#) requirement
 - Contracts between the Georgia Department of Education and Regional Service Agencies to provide literacy professional learning (LETRS, Orton-Gillingham and Wilson Reading) for rural school districts
 - Funding for literacy initiatives and to support implementation of the Georgia Early Literacy Act in the FY26 state budget, including:
 - \$18,480 – Literacy Coach Initiative
 - \$1,995,000 – State provided literacy and dyslexia screener
 - \$2,028,970 – Funding for a research group for competency-based standards and evaluation for literacy coaches
 - \$1,004,203 – Funds for personnel and operations for Georgia Council on Literacy

Funding for Literacy Efforts

CONTINUED**IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL****PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION****RESOURCES**

- [GaDOE, Aligning State Literacy Policies & Practices 2.0 – House Bill 307 \(2025\)](#)

**CONSIDERATION(S) FOR
STRENGTHENING POLICY**

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



Universal Reading Screener



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

FULL IMPLEMENTATION

A state-approved universal reading screener is administered to K–3 students three times per year to identify students at risk for reading failure.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Georgia DOES require all students in Kindergarten–3rd grade to be [screened](#) three times per year using the state-adopted universal reading screener.
- Georgia HAS adopted a [list](#) of Reading and Dyslexia Screeners.

RESOURCES

- [GaDOE, Literacy & Dyslexia](#)
- [GaDOE, Aligning State Literacy Policies & Practices 2.0 – House Bill 307 \(2025\)](#)

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.



Screeners for Characteristics of Dyslexia



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

FULL 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, at minimum, administered to all students at the end of Kindergarten and the beginning of 1st and 2nd grade.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Georgia DOES require LEAs to annually conduct universal screening of all students in Kindergarten–3rd grade for characteristics of [dyslexia](#).
- The Georgia State Board HAS adopted a list of [qualified dyslexia screening tools](#) to be used by school districts for the identification of students with characteristics of dyslexia.
- By 2027, Georgia [law](#) WILL require all approved screeners to meet the requirements for both reading and dyslexia screening. These approved screeners must assess the following: phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, alphabet knowledge, phonics, oral reading fluency, spelling, vocabulary, reading comprehension, oral language, and rapid automatized naming.
- Georgia DOES require each of the dyslexia screeners on the state’s [adopted list](#) screen for the following: phonological awareness and phonemic awareness, sound symbol recognition, alphabet knowledge, decoding skills, encoding skills, rapid naming, accuracy of word reading on grade-level text, and sight word reading efficiency skills.
- Georgia DOES monitor district compliance with dyslexia screenings as school districts are required to provide data to the Department relating to dyslexia screenings. ([GaDOE, Aligning State Literacy Policies & Practices 2.0 – House Bill 307 \(2025\)](#))



Screeners for Characteristics of Dyslexia

CONTINUED

IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

FULL IMPLEMENTATION

RESOURCES

- [GaDOE, Literacy & Dyslexia](#)
- [GaDOE, Dyslexia Informational Handbook](#)
- [GaDOE, Georgia Reading and Dyslexia Screening Process 2025–26](#)
- [GaDOE, Characteristics of Dyslexia Rubric](#)
- [GaDOE, Aligning State Literacy Policies & Practices 2.0 – House Bill 307 \(2025\)](#)

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

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:

- Georgia [policy](#) DOES require schools and districts to report the results of the administration of the universal screener to parents and guardians of students who participated in the administration.
- Georgia [policy](#) DOES require schools to provide notice to parents when students are identified as having a significant reading deficiency within 15 days of identification.

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:

- The Georgia State Board HAS adopted a list of high-quality instructional materials for K–3 reading. ([GaDOE, Aligning State Literacy Policies & Practices 2.0 – House Bill 307 \(2025\)](#); see also [Georgia Language Arts Supervisors, High-Quality Instructional Materials \(K–3\) Advisory List \(2025\)](#))
- Georgia HAS established a partnership with the Georgia Language Arts Supervisors (GLAS) to vet instructional materials. ([GaDOE, Aligning State Literacy Policies & Practices 2.0 – House Bill 307 \(2025\)](#))
- Georgia DOES require all school districts to use instructional programs and interventions aligned to foundational literacy skills and the science of reading. ([GaDOE, Aligning State Literacy Policies & Practices 2.0 – House Bill 307 \(2025\)](#))
- Georgia DOES require each public school and system to annually certify they are using high-quality instructional materials. ([GaDOE, Aligning State Literacy Policies & Practices 2.0 – House Bill 307 \(2025\)](#); [GaDOE, Reporting Requirements for the Georgia Early Literacy and Dyslexia Act \(HB 307\)](#))
- Georgia DOES encourage schools and districts to align supplemental materials for K–3 reading to the definition of high-quality instructional materials to ensure a more cohesive instructional program. ([GaDOE, Aligning State Literacy Policies & Practices 2.0 – House Bill 307 \(2025\)](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Georgia requires school districts to report core or supplemental materials to the GA DOE. The state should expand policy to require districts to post their adopted materials on the district website.

Elimination of Three-Cueing Instructional Materials



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

FULL IMPLEMENTATION

The state has adopted a policy to eliminate the use of all instructional materials that include the three-cueing systems model for teaching word reading with a clear timeline for the elimination of the use of these materials.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Georgia HAS adopted a [policy](#) that bans three-cueing instructional materials. The new law enacted in 2025 prohibits local school systems and public schools from using programs of foundational reading instruction for students in K–3 that is based on any curriculum, instructional materials, instructional practices, or other interventions that use the three-cueing systems model for teaching word reading.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

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:

- Georgia DOES require schools to develop and implement an individual reading plan for students who are identified as being significantly at risk of not attaining grade-level proficiency based upon screening results and other pertinent data. Parents must be notified that a plan will be developed and implemented and parents must be notified of their child’s progress toward grade-level reading – this must occur no later than 15 school days after the determination that a plan will be developed. ([GaDOE, Aligning State Literacy Policies & Practices 2.0 – House Bill 307 \(2025\)](#))
- Georgia DOES require the reading intervention plan to describe the evidence-based interventions that will be used. Tiered reading intervention plans shall be implemented for students significantly at risk of not attaining grade-level proficiency no later than 30 days after such determination has been made. ([GaDOE, Aligning State Literacy Policies & Practices 2.0 – House Bill 307 \(2025\)](#); see [GaDOE, Georgia Reading and Dyslexia Screening Process 2025–26](#))
- Georgia DOES allow LEAs to use existing MTSS frameworks and processes. ([GaDOE, Aligning State Literacy Policies & Practices 2.0 – House Bill 307 \(2025\)](#))

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:

- Georgia DOES allow LEAs to use existing MTSS frameworks and processes in providing evidence-based interventions to students per the students' reading intervention plans. ([GaDOE, Aligning State Literacy Policies & Practices 2.0 – House Bill 307 \(2025\)](#))
- Georgia HAS adopted a [list](#) of universal reading and dyslexia screeners which law requires each to be capable of progress monitoring.

RESOURCES

- [GaDOE, Georgia Reading and Dyslexia Screening Process 2025–26](#)

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

Evidence-Based Interventions



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The state requires school districts to target students' needs by adopting evidence-based interventions grounded in the science of reading and may provide guidance in the selection of the interventions. Interventions are provided before, during or after school.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Georgia DOES require LEAs to use interventions aligned to foundational literacy skills and the science of reading. ([GaDOE, Aligning State Literacy Policies & Practices 2.0 – House Bill 307 \(2025\)](#))
- Georgia DOES monitor this requirement for interventions by requiring LEAs to use interventions aligned to the science of reading in order to receive early intervention program funding. ([GaDOE, Aligning State Literacy Policies & Practices 2.0 – House Bill 307 \(2025\)](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Georgia should establish a vetted and approved list of interventions that are grounded in the science of reading, from which schools can select interventions to use.

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:

- Georgia DOES NOT have a policy requiring districts to offer summer reading camps for students in 1st–4th grade who are at risk of reading failure.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Georgia should expand policy to require districts to offer summer reading camps for students in 1st–4th grade at risk of reading failure to remediate learning loss and/or build reading skills.
- Georgia should require all staff at 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:

- Georgia DOES require that notice to parents of students who exhibit a significant reading deficiency must include strategies for parents to use at home to help their child succeed in reading.
- Georgia DOES provide resources to parents and families through the [Get Georgia Reading At Home](#) page.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

Initial Determinant Retention at 3rd Grade Based on State Assessment



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

FULL IMPLEMENTATION

The state requires that a student who is unable to demonstrate sufficient reading skills on the state test-based options provided – and does not meet a good cause exemption – *to be retained*.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Georgia [law](#) and [rules](#) DO require students who are unable to demonstrate sufficient reading skills on the state test-based options provided to be retained.
- Georgia [policy](#) DOES provide that principals or designees may retain students who perform satisfactorily on the state-adopted assessment but who does not meet promotion standards and criteria established by the local board of education.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

Multiple Options for Promotion



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

FULL IMPLEMENTATION

The state offers at least three pathways to 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:

- Georgia [law](#) DOES offer at least three pathways for promotion to 4th grade, including by achieving a predetermined level on the state assessment; the retest of an end-of-grade assessment or alternative assessment; or the opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

Good Cause Exemptions for Some Students



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The state permits districts to determine good cause exemptions for some students who do not demonstrate sufficient reading skills on the state-based option for promotion to 4th grade.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Georgia [policy](#) DOES establish a placement committee, comprised of the parent or guardian, teacher(s), and principal or designee, which must come to a unanimous decision to promote students during a meeting. Discussion during this meeting may include the possibility of promotion through good cause exemptions.
- Georgia [policy](#) DOES specify that the unanimous decision of promotion by the placement committee must include a determination that if promoted and given accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction during the next year, the student is likely to perform at grade level by the conclusion of the school year.
- Georgia [policy](#) DOES require the placement committee to provide for a plan of continuous assessment during the subsequent year in order to monitor the progress of the student.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Georgia should expand policy and specifically provide for good cause exemptions for promotion to 4th grade, including exemptions that recognize the special needs of some students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who were previously retained.

