Early Literacy Matters
State-by-State Policy Implementation Report

Explore Idaho’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.

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

ADOPPTION IMPLEMENTATION

8 out of 18

STATE POLICY ADOPTION REFERENCE MATERIALS

- Idaho Code 33, Chapter 18 Idaho Literacy Achievement and Accountability Act
- Idaho Department of Education, English Language Arts/Literacy
Science of Reading (SOR) Training

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:

- Idaho DOES offer training and coaching to K–3 educators in the state, through the Striving to Meet Achievement in Reading Together (SMART) program.
- Idaho DOES ensure the SMART program training is rooted in the science of reading. (ISDE, Idaho K–3 Reading Project)
- Idaho DOES require administrators, who have SMART-participating educators, to attend virtual meetings to support teacher implementation, understand teacher learning and gain resources and information relevant to the work as a leader in early literacy. (ISDE, Idaho K–3 Reading Project)

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Idaho should adopt science of reading training that is required for all K–3 teachers and administrators.
- In adopting the science of reading training, the state should consider creating an implementation plan that is clearly communicated to all educators to ensure the training is completed by all teachers and administrators.
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:

- Idaho DOES NOT provide for literacy coaches in policy.
- In May of 2021 Idaho launched its K–3 reading project Striving to Meet Achievement in Reading Together or SMART, a multiyear cohort project that provides training and coaching to K–3 educators across Idaho.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Idaho should provide for literacy coaches in policy and 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:

- Idaho DOES have standards (Idaho Comprehensive Literacy Standards) for educator preparation programs that address the components of scientifically based reading instruction. (NCTQ, Idaho Summary 2023)

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Idaho should ensure that EPP required coursework for elementary, early childhood and special education candidates prohibits the use of course materials that include three-cueing.

- Idaho should ensure that EPP required coursework for elementary, early childhood and special education candidates includes evidence-based literacy instruction, how to administer reading assessments and how to identify students with reading difficulties.
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:

- Idaho DOES require elementary education candidates to pass an assessment to obtain teacher licensure: Idaho Comprehensive Literacy Assessments, Praxis Multiple Subject Test Reading and Language Arts subtest, or Praxis Content Knowledge for Teaching, Reading and Language Arts - CKT; however, these licensure tests DO NOT align to the science of reading. ([NCTQ, Idaho Summary 2023](https://www.nationalcenterformanagingquality.org/report/idaho) & [NCTQ, False Assurances: Many states’ licensure tests don’t signal whether elementary teachers understand reading instruction (Nov. 2023)](https://www.nationalcenterformanagingquality.org/report/false-assurances-many-states-licensure-tests-dont-signal-wheth))
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:

• Idaho DOES provide direct funding specifically to support state and/or local implementation of early literacy fundamental principles. These include:
  • Funds to provide professional development focused on dyslexia training, screening measures and other dyslexia requirements
  • Literacy intervention ($72 million) for FY23 and FY24
  • Funds to higher education institutions to ensure course offerings and graduation requirements are consistent with the state’s literacy plan

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

• Idaho 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 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:

• Idaho HAS adopted a universal reading screener, the Idaho Reading Indicator.

• Idaho DOES require the Idaho Reading Indicator to be administered in K–3. (ISDE, Idaho Reading Indicator)

• Idaho DOES NOT require the Idaho Reading Indicator to be administered three times per year.

• Idaho DOES require administration two times per year, once in the fall and once in the spring. (ISDE, Idaho Reading Indicator)

  • Note that schools and districts have the discretion to administer a winter assessment if they choose.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

• Idaho should require the Idaho Reading Indicator screener to be administered to K–3 students three times per year to identify students at risk for reading failure.
Screener 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:

- Idaho HAS adopted a screener for dyslexia. The Idaho Reading Indicator is used as a tier 1 dyslexia screening measure to identify students with characteristics of dyslexia. (ISDE, Idaho Dyslexia Handbook (2022))
- Idaho DOES require the Idaho Reading Indicator to be administered to all students two times per year in Kindergarten–3rd grade. (ISDE, Idaho Reading Indicator)
- Idaho DOES require schools to administer additional diagnostic assessments for students who are identified as having characteristics of dyslexia. These student-specific diagnostics are aligned to areas of concern. (ISDE, Idaho Dyslexia Handbook (2022))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Idaho should ensure the screener that is being used to screen for characteristics of dyslexia assesses 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
PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION

States require parental notification of students identified with reading difficulties based on the state-approved universal reading screener and/or dyslexia screener results. Timeline and frequency of parental notification may vary.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Idaho law DOES require schools to notify parents when a student has been identified as having a reading deficiency.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Idaho should require in policy that notice to parents of students identified as having a reading deficiency must occur within 30 days of identification.
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:

- Idaho law DOES specify the intent of the legislature that curricular materials must be tied to evidence-based best practices and aligned with the state’s literacy plan.

- Idaho’s Literacy Plan DOES specify that curriculum should be aligned with the domains and components of reading represented in valid and reliable models of reading.

- Idaho’s Literacy Plan DOES specify that the Department ensures Idaho districts and schools have access to adopt high-quality reading curriculum at a state-contracted cost, through the curriculum review process.

- Idaho law DOES require the State Board to identify national evidence-based practices and proven effective state intervention practices which must be shared with districts.

- Idaho HAS created a K–12 ELA/Literacy Adoption Guide that provides a list of programs that have been vetted by the Idaho State Department of Education. For each program on the list, the state lists the strengths and weaknesses, as well as other information that may be needed when selecting programs and instructional materials.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Idaho should create a vetted and approved list of high-quality instructional materials.

- Idaho should require districts to post their adopted materials on the district website.
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:

- Idaho HAS NOT adopted a policy that prohibits three-cueing instructional materials.
**Individual Reading Plans**

**IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL**

**PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION**

The state requires schools to develop and implement an individual reading plan for students who are identified as having a reading deficiency based upon screening results. Timeline and monitoring may vary.

**EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE**

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

- Idaho DOES require individual reading plans for students who are determined not to be proficient on the universal reading screener. ([ID SBE, Comprehensive Literacy Plan (2020)](https://example.com))
- Idaho DOES provide [guidance](https://example.com) on what to include in student individual reading plans for those students who have been identified as having characteristics of dyslexia.

**CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY**

- Idaho should be sure that individual reading plans are being created for _any student_ identified with a reading deficiency _within 30 days_ of receiving screening results.
- Idaho should provide further information and guidance on how the requirements for individual reading plans are being implemented.
IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The state requires schools to monitor students’ progress within a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS). 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:

- Idaho DOES require ongoing progress monitoring. ([ID SBE, Comprehensive Literacy Plan (2020)](https://example.com))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Policy requires regular monitoring of student progress; however, there is no evidence of how this is being implemented. Idaho should consider posting guidance and further information on this process.
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:

• Idaho HAS created a literacy tools approved vendors list that has been vetted and approved by the Idaho State Board of Education. (ID SBE, FY23 Literacy Tools Approved Vendors Effectiveness Review)

RESOURCES

• ID SBE, Literacy Intervention Tools

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

• The Idaho approved list of vendors for literacy interventions is focused only on available computer-based literacy intervention programs; however, the state should consider expanding the approved and vetted list to include interventions that can be delivered in-person before, during or after school.
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:

- Idaho DOES NOT require, in policy, that districts must offer summer reading camps to students in 1st–4th grade who are at risk of reading failure.

**CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY**

- Idaho should require, in policy, districts to offer summer reading camps to 1st–4th grade students at risk of reading failure to remediate learning loss and/or build reading skills.
- Idaho should require all staff at summer reading camps to be trained in the science of reading.
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:

- Idaho DOES provide online resources to parents that may support reading at home. (Parent Corner)

**CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY**

- Idaho should require schools to provide read-at-home plans to parents as soon as a student is identified with a reading deficiency.
- The strategies that schools share with parents in the read-at-home plans should target students’ needs based on data and be aligned to the science of reading.
Initial Determinant Retention at 3rd Grade Based on State 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:

• Idaho HAS NOT established policy, in statute or regulation, relating to 3rd grade retention.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

• Idaho should establish retention as intensive intervention policies in 3rd grade for students who are not able to demonstrate sufficient reading skills on the state test-based options.
Multiple Options for Promotion

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:

- Idaho HAS NOT established policy, in statute or regulation, relating to 3rd grade retention.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Idaho should consider establishing retention as intensive intervention policies for students who are not able to demonstrate sufficient reading skills on the state test-based options, which would also include establishing multiple options for promotion.
Good Cause Exemptions for Some Students

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:

• Idaho HAS NOT established policy, in statute or regulation, relating to 3rd grade retention.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

• Idaho should consider establishing retention as intensive intervention policies for students who are not able to demonstrate sufficient reading skills on the state test-based options, which would also include establishing good cause exemptions for some students.