Early Literacy Matters
State-by-State Policy Implementation Report

Explore Maine’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>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<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><strong>ABOVE &amp; BEYOND BADGE:</strong></td>
<td>This badge recognizes efforts that exceed full implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION</strong></td>
<td>The fundamental principle is adopted in policy, but there is limited evidence of implementation.</td>
</tr>
<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 Maine’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

2 out of 18

STATE POLICY ADOPTION

REFERENCE MATERIALS

- 20-A MRSA 4710-B Dyslexia
- Maine 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:

- Maine DOES NOT require all K–3 teachers and administrators to participate in state-adopted science of reading training.
- Maine policy DOES require the dyslexia coordinator at the Department of Education to implement training in evidence-based screening practices.

NOTEWORTHY

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

- Maine created the Literacy for ME Statewide Literacy Plan to set a vision for the Department’s efforts to support literacy achievement and provide guidance and resources for schools.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Maine should expand policy to require all K–3 teachers and administrators to participate in state-adopted science of reading training.
- In adopting this policy, Maine should ensure there is an implementation plan for rollout that is clearly communicated to all educators.
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:

• Maine DOES NOT provide for literacy coaches in policy.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

• Maine should ensure that a literacy coach that is trained in the science of reading is assigned to each elementary school to provide job-embedded training and coaching to K–3 teachers.
Educator Preparation Program (EPP) Alignment

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:

• Maine DOES NOT have standards for educator preparation programs that address all core components of scientifically based reading. (NCTQ, Maine Summary 2023)

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

• Maine should expand policy to ensure that EPP required coursework is aligned to the science of reading and prohibits the use of course materials that include three-cueing.

• Maine should further require that coursework includes evidence-based literacy instruction, how to administer reading assessments, and how to identify students with reading difficulties, such as dyslexia.
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:

- Maine DOES provide for a licensure test that addresses reading: Praxis Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects, Reading and Language Arts subtest. However, this licensure test DOES NOT adequately address all five core components of reading and it is optional. ([NCTQ, Maine Summary 2023; NCTQ, False Assurances: Many states’ licensure tests don’t signal whether elementary teachers understand reading instruction (Nov. 2023)](NCTQ, Maine Summary 2023; NCTQ, False Assurances: Many states’ licensure tests don’t signal whether elementary teachers understand reading instruction (Nov. 2023)))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

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

- Maine DOES NOT provide direct funding specifically to support state and/or local implementation of early literacy fundamental principles.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Maine should determine the adequate funding level to ensure implementation of the fundamental principles are fully funded.
Universal Reading Screener

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:

• Maine DOES NOT require schools to administer a state-approved universal reading screener to K–3 students three times per year to identify students at risk for reading failure.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

• Maine should expand policy to require a state-approved universal reading screener to be administered to all K–3 students three times per year to identify students at risk for reading failure.
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:

- Maine policy DOES require a school administrative unit to screen for dyslexia students from Kindergarten–2nd grade who have difficulty, as identified by a classroom teacher.

- Maine policy DOES require the screening to be administered in the area in which the student has difficulty as identified by a classroom teacher in the following areas: phonological and phonemic awareness, sound-symbol recognition, alphabet knowledge, decoding skills, rapid naming skills and encoding skills.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Maine should expand policy to require schools to administer a state-approved screener for characteristics of dyslexia that assess 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.

- Maine should require the dyslexia screener to be administered, at a minimum, to all students at the end of Kindergarten and at the beginning of 1st and 2nd grade.
Parental Notification

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:

• Maine policy DOES NOT require parental notification of students identified with reading difficulties on the dyslexia screener.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

• In addition to expanding policy relating to universal reading screeners and dyslexia screeners, Maine should further expand policy to require parental notification of students identified with reading difficulties within 30 days of each administration of the state-approved universal reading screener and dyslexia screener.
District Adoption of High-Quality Instructional Materials

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:

• Maine DOES NOT require school districts to adopt high-quality instructional materials that are aligned to the science of reading.

• Maine DOES provide some guidance on the adoption of instructional materials that encourages local districts to ensure the instructional programming adopted is aligned to standards and addresses key elements of literacy learning.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

• Maine should expand policy to require school districts to adopt high-quality instructional materials aligned to the science of reading.

• Maine should further require districts to post their adopted materials on the district website.
Elimination of Three-Cueing Instructional Materials

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:

• Maine DOES NOT, through policy, guidance, training or other avenues, prohibit or discourage the use of instructional materials that include three-cueing.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

• Maine should adopt a policy, clearly in statute or regulation, that prohibits the use of three-cueing.
Individual Reading Plans

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:

- Maine DOES NOT provide for individual reading plans for students identified as having a reading deficiency.
- Maine policy DOES require individual school districts to develop and implement a system of interventions for K–12 students that assist students who are not progressing toward meeting the content standards of the parameters for essential instruction and graduation requirements; the interventions must be based upon ongoing formative assessments that continuously monitor student progress.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Maine should expand policy to require 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.
- Maine should establish a process for monitoring the implementation of the individual reading plans and a timeline for notifying parents of the development of the plan.
Regularly Monitor Student Progress

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:

• Maine DOES NOT track district/school monitoring of students’ progress within a MTSS.

• Maine policy DOES require individual school districts to develop and implement a system of interventions for K–12 students that assist students who are not progressing toward meeting the content standards of the parameters for essential instruction and graduation requirements; the interventions must be based upon ongoing formative assessments that continuously monitor student progress.

• Maine DOES encourage districts to implement an MTSS framework as part of the local district’s comprehensive literacy plan. ([Local Level Matrix for Comprehensive Literacy Planning, K–Grade 3](#))

• Maine DOES have a MTSS to address the academic, behavioral and social-emotional needs of each student. ([Maine Department of Education, MTSS](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

• Following policy expansion that requires screening of all K–3 students for reading deficiencies three times per year and screening for dyslexia, Maine should expand policy to require schools to regularly monitor and document students’ progress within a multi-tiered system of supports and utilize data from the universal reading screener that should be administered to all K–3 students three times per year to inform instruction and interventions as needed and in a timely manner.

• Maine should ensure monitoring takes many forms, including observations, assessments, screeners and student work.
Evidence-Based Interventions

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:

- Maine DOES NOT require school districts to target students’ needs by adopting interventions grounded in the science of reading.

- Maine policy DOES require individual school districts to develop and implement a system of interventions for K–12 students that assist students who are not progressing toward meeting the content standards of the parameters for essential instruction and graduation requirements.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Maine should expand policy to require school districts to target students’ needs by adopting interventions grounded in the science of reading from a vetted and approved list.
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:

- Maine DOES NOT have a policy requiring districts to offer summer reading camps to rising 1st–4th grade students at risk of reading failure.
- Maine policy DOES contemplate general summer schools by requiring the state board and commissioner to establish standards consistent with basic school approval requirements for summer schools offering credit.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Maine should expand policy to 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.
- Maine should further 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:

- Maine **DOES NOT** require schools to provide read-at-home plans to parents as soon as a student is identified with a reading deficiency.
- Maine **DOES** provide some online resources for parents to support reading at home. (Local Level Matrix for Comprehensive Literacy Planning, K–Grade 3)

**CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY**

- Maine should expand policy to require schools to provide read-at-home plans to parents as soon as a student is identified with a reading deficiency.
- Further, Maine should require strategies that are shared with parents and must target students’ needs based on data and are aligned with the science of reading.
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:

- Maine DOES NOT have a policy that requires a student who is unable to demonstrate sufficient reading skills on the state test-based options be retained.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Maine should expand policy to require that a student who is unable to demonstrate sufficient reading skills on the state test-based options be retained.
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:

- Maine DOES NOT have a retention policy and DOES NOT offer at least three pathways for promotion to 4th grade.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Maine should expand policy to require that students who are unable to demonstrate sufficient reading skills (on the state test-based options provided) be retained. Policy should include 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.
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:

- Maine DOES NOT have a retention policy and DOES NOT allow specific good cause exemptions for promotion to 4th grade.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Maine should expand policy to require that students who are unable to demonstrate sufficient reading skills (on the state test-based options provided) be retained. Policy should include 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.

- Maine should further require intensive interventions to continue in 4th grade for students promoted for good cause.