



# Early Literacy Matters






## State-by-State Policy Implementation Report

Explore Tennessee'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 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. The policy also requires 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students to demonstrate sufficient reading skills for promotion to 4<sup>th</sup> 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><b>FULL IMPLEMENTATION</b></p>	<p>The fundamental principle is adopted in policy, and there is evidence of full implementation.</p> <p> <b>ABOVE &amp; BEYOND BADGE:</b> This badge recognizes efforts that exceed full implementation.</p>
 <p><b>PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION</b></p>	<p>The fundamental principle is adopted in policy, but there is limited evidence of implementation.</p>
 <p><b>FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION</b></p>	<p>The fundamental principle is adopted in policy with a future date for implementation.</p>
 <p><b>PRINCIPLE NOT ADOPTED</b></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

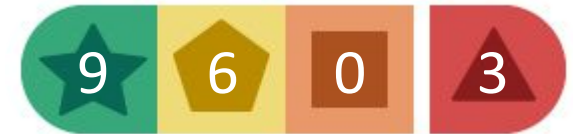
The purpose of this document is to provide an analysis of states' implementation of K–3 reading policies aligned to ExcelinEd's [fundamental principles](#) of an early literacy policy. It builds on an analysis of states' adoption of statutes and regulations establishing requirements for each component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

- [Tennessee Code](#) (Lexis) (*See* 49-1-901, et al. Tennessee Literacy Success Act; and 49-6-1501, et al. Tennessee Learning Loss Remediation and Student Acceleration Act)
- [Tennessee's Commitment to Early Literacy \(October 2023\)](#)
- [TN Department of Education, Reading 360](#)

# 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:

- Tennessee DOES require all teachers and administrators holding a license with an endorsement that allows them to teach reading in Kindergarten–5<sup>th</sup> grade to complete at least one approved foundational literacy skills course and/or pass an assessment covering training content prior to license issuance or renewal. ([TDOE, Tennessee Literacy Success Act: Training and Licensure Requirements](#); [Foundational Literacy Skills Plan Toolkit Spring 2025](#))
- Tennessee DOES offer free [early reading training](#) and secondary literacy training that meets the requirements of the Literacy Success Act.
- Tennessee DOES offer science of reading training through the [Reading 360 Trainings](#) on the Tennessee Best for All Central website.

## NOTEWORTHY

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

- Tennessee released [Tennessee’s Commitment to Early Literacy](#) (October 2023), which provides updates on key policies, initiatives, and investments.

## CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Tennessee should expand policy to require all K–3 teachers and administrators to complete the state-adopted science of reading training.
- In expanding this policy, Tennessee should ensure an implementation plan for rollout is created and clearly communicated to all educators.

# Literacy Coaches



## 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:

- Tennessee DOES NOT provide for literacy coaches in policy.

## CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Tennessee should adopt policy to 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

### FULL 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:

- Tennessee DOES have standards for teacher preparation programs that address all five core components of scientifically based reading. ([NCTQ, Tennessee Summary 2023](#))
- Tennessee [policy](#) DOES require EPPs to provide coursework that includes reading instruction focused primarily on foundational literacy skills (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) standards for candidates seeking licensure to teach Kindergarten–3<sup>rd</sup> grade and candidates seeking instructional leader licenses. ([TDOE, Literacy in Educator Preparation](#))
- Tennessee [policy](#) DOES require coursework to include standards relating to how to identify the characteristics of dyslexia and effective instruction for teaching students with these characteristics using evidence-based, multisensory interventions; as well as how to administer the universal reading screener and using data to improve reading instruction for students.
- Tennessee DOES monitor the coursework by requiring candidates seeking to obtain a teaching license with at least one qualifying endorsement to provide evidence documenting the completion of an approved foundational literacy skills course. ([TDOE, Tennessee Literacy Success Act: Training and Licensure Requirements](#))

# Educator Preparation Program (EPP) Alignment

**CONTINUED**

## IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

### FULL IMPLEMENTATION

#### EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE (CONTINUED)

- Tennessee [policy](#) DOES require candidates to use “routines and structures that encourage students to decode text systematically rather than to guess at its meaning using “cueing” methods such as “MSV” (meaning, syntax, visual) that divert attention from the words themselves.”
- Tennessee HAS established an EPP Foundational Literacy Skills standards review process to ensure EPPs are implementing foundational literacy skills standards in all programs that lead to specific endorsements, which are to be included in EPP annual reports and published in the State Board of Education Educator Preparation Report Card. The review process considers alignment to standards, course materials used, and syllabi to ensure that EPPs are not including three-cueing. (See [TDOE, Educator Preparation Program Foundational Literacy Skills Standards – 2025 Guidance Document](#))

#### CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

# 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:**

- Tennessee DOES require elementary education candidates to pass a science of reading aligned assessment to obtain licensure: Praxis Elementary Education: Teaching Reading: Elementary. ([NCTQ, Tennessee Summary 2023](#); [NCTQ, False Assurances: Many states’ licensure tests don’t signal whether elementary teachers understand reading instruction \(Nov. 2023\)](#))
- Candidates may also take the [TeachALL early literacy assessment](#) as one of two ways educators can receive certification that meets the standards of the Tennessee Literacy Success Act.

## 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:

- Tennessee DOES provide the following direct funding specifically to support state and/or local implementation of early literacy fundamental principles:
  - Governor's Early Literacy Foundation
  - [Funding](#) for students in grades K–3 for early literacy supports [\$500 per student] and additional funding for rising 4<sup>th</sup> grade students [\$500 per student] who scored below proficient on the ELA portion of the third grade TCAP assessment for further literacy support
  - Weighted [funding](#) of 20% of the base for each student identified with characteristics of dyslexia through an approved universal reading screener

## CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Tennessee 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:**

- Tennessee HAS approved a [list](#) of universal reading screeners. ([TDOE, Reading 360: Tennessee Universal Reading Screener](#); [Foundational Literacy Skills Plan Toolkit Spring 2025](#))
- Tennessee DOES require schools to administer the universal reading screener to K–3 students *three times per year* to identify students at risk for reading failure. ([TDOE, Reading 360: Tennessee Universal Reading Screener](#))
- Tennessee DOES allow LEAs and public charter schools to request approval from the State Board to use a locally identified universal reading screener, in accordance with procedures outlined in Board Rule. ([Tennessee SBE, Universal Screener Policy 3.302](#))
- Tennessee DOES monitor districts’ use of universal reading screeners by requiring school districts to submit the results from universal reading screeners to the Department of Education. ([Foundational Literacy Skills Plan Toolkit Spring 2025](#))

## RESOURCES

- [TDOE, Grades K–3 Minimum URS Matrix](#)

## 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 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.

## EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Tennessee DOES require districts to screen for characteristics of dyslexia through their existing Response to Instruction and Intervention procedures and universal screenings, which are administered to students in K–3 three times per year. ([TDOE, Dyslexia Advisory Council](#); [Tennessee Code 49-1-229 Dyslexia screening procedures – School based problem solving team – Dyslexia advisory council](#); [TDOE, Dyslexia Resource Guide](#); [TDOE, Screening for Characteristics of Dyslexia](#))
- Tennessee DOES require districts to screen for characteristics of dyslexia through the universal screening process. ([Tennessee Code 49-1-229 Dyslexia screening procedures – School based problem solving team – Dyslexia advisory council](#); *see also* [Dyslexia Advisory Council Report: 2021–22 and 2022–23 Report to the Education Committees](#))
- Tennessee DOES require screeners to assess the following identified skills, as developmentally appropriate: phonological and phonemic awareness, sound-symbol recognition, alphabet knowledge, decoding, rapid naming, and encoding skills. ([TDOE, Dyslexia Advisory Council](#); [Dyslexia Advisory Council Report: 2021–22 and 2022–23 Report to the Education Committees](#))



# Screeners for Characteristics of Dyslexia

CONTINUED



## IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

### FULL IMPLEMENTATION

#### EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE (CONTINUED)

- Tennessee DOES require districts to report information on the use of screeners and students identified as needing interventions for dyslexia through the screening to the Department of Education. ([TDOE, SIS Coding for Characteristics of Dyslexia; Dyslexia Advisory Council Report: 2021–22 and 2022–23 Report to the Education Committees](#))
- Tennessee HAS created a Dyslexia Resource Guide to assist districts in their implementation of the dyslexia requirements in statute. ([TDOE, Dyslexia Advisory Council; TDOE, Dyslexia Resource Guide; TDOE, Screening for Characteristics of Dyslexia](#))

#### NOTEWORTHY

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

- Tennessee established a Dyslexia Advisory Council through statute that guides the statewide dyslexia strategy and supports districts. ([TDOE, Dyslexia Advisory Council](#))

#### CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

# 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:**

- Tennessee [policy](#) (See Tenn. Code 49-1-905) DOES require parental notification “immediately upon determining” that a child has a significant reading deficiency.
- Tennessee DOES require notification to parents of students’ literacy progress, through Home Literacy Reports, which must be sent after each administration of a universal reading screener to students in Kindergarten–3<sup>rd</sup> grade. ([Foundational Literacy Skills Plan Toolkit Spring 2025](#))
- Tennessee DOES require notification to parents where a child demonstrates characteristics of dyslexia. ([TDOE, Dyslexia Resource Guide](#); [TN Rules Chapter 0520-01-22 Dyslexia Individualized Learning Plans](#))
- Tennessee [policy](#) enacted in 2025 DOES require local boards of education to develop policies to provide on or with a report card of a student in grades K–8 the results from the most recently administered universal reading screener and dyslexia screener.

## CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Tennessee should expand policy to require notification to parents of students identified with reading difficulties *within 30 days* of each administration of the universal reading screener and dyslexia screener.

# District Adoption of High-Quality Instructional Materials



## IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

### FULL IMPLEMENTATION

The state requires school districts to adopt high-quality instructional materials aligned to the science of reading and state standards from a vetted and approved list. Districts must post their adopted materials on the district website.

## EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Tennessee DOES require textbooks and instructional materials used to teach students to read to be based on foundational literacy skills instruction and aligned to the state’s standards. ([TDOE, Tennessee Foundational Skills Instructional Materials Adoption Guidance for Districts](#))
- Tennessee DOES require districts to adopt High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) from a vetted and approved [list](#). ([TDOE, Tennessee Foundational Skills Instructional Materials Adoption Guidance for Districts](#))
- Tennessee DOES provide guidance and resources to support the identification and selection of HQIM aligned to the science of reading and state standards. ([TDOE, Tennessee Foundational Skills Instructional Materials Adoption Guidance for Districts](#))
- Tennessee DOES require all districts to submit a [Foundational Literacy Skills Plan](#) to the State Department of Education, which also must be posted on the district’s webpage, within 10 business days of approval. The plan MUST include the district’s list of adopted foundational skills instructional materials. ([TDOE, Tennessee Foundational Skills Instructional Materials Adoption Guidance for Districts](#))

## CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

# 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:**

- Tennessee DOES NOT, through guidance, training, or other avenues, discourage the use of instructional materials that include three-cueing.
- Tennessee [guidance](#) for districts relating to the creation of the Foundational Literacy Skills Plan specifies for the “Daily Foundational Skills Instructional Time Component” that “No references to the three-cueing model, guided reading, or balanced literacy should be included.”

#### CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Tennessee 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:

- Tennessee DOES require student needs be identified through data-based decision-making and supported through intervention as determined appropriate. ([TDOE, Response to Instruction and Intervention Manual](#))
- Tennessee DOES require notification to parents regarding students who are at risk of a reading deficiency, which should include information about the specific reading interventions and supports that are recommended for the student. ([Foundational Literacy Skills Plan Toolkit Spring 2025](#))
- Tennessee DOES outline requirements through [policy](#) and [Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement](#) (TISA) for individualized learning plans for students with characteristics of dyslexia who are screened and identified as needing dyslexia specific intervention pursuant to T.C.A. Section 49-1-229 and who also meet specific score criteria on the universal reading screener. These are not a requirement, as they are linked to a funding mechanism.

#### CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Tennessee should expand policy to require schools to develop and implement an individual reading plan for *all students* who are identified as having a reading deficiency within 30 days of receiving screening results.
- Tennessee 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

### 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:**

- Tennessee DOES track monitoring of students' progress within an RTI<sup>2</sup> Reading Intervention Structure. ([Foundational Literacy Skills Plan Toolkit Spring 2025](#); [TDOE, About Response to Instruction and Intervention \(RTI<sup>2</sup>\) in Tennessee](#))
- Tennessee DOES require reading interventions to align to the students' areas of need through the RTI<sup>2</sup>. ([Foundational Literacy Skills Plan Toolkit Spring 2025](#))
- Tennessee DOES require districts to provide a list of interventions that will be used through the RTI<sup>2</sup> to the Department of Education in the district's [Foundational Literacy Skills Plans](#). (See also [Foundational Literacy Skills Plan Toolkit Spring 2025](#))

## RESOURCES

- [TDOE, Response to Instruction and Intervention Manual](#)

## 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:**

- Tennessee DOES monitor districts’ adoption and use of evidence-based science of reading interventions in targeting student supports, by requiring districts to submit information on what interventions are being used through the RTI<sup>2</sup>. ([Foundational Literacy Skills Plan Toolkit Spring 2025](#))
- Tennessee DOES provide guidance to districts relating to interventions. ([TDOE, Response to Instruction and Intervention Manual](#))
- Tennessee DOES offer the TN ALL Corps program for students in 1<sup>st</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> grade who need some support in reading; and this is required for some students who are “approaching” expectations on the ELA TCAP and all students who are “below” expectations. ([TDOE, Learning Acceleration](#))
- Tennessee [policy](#) DOES require evidence-based dyslexia-specific interventions for students identified with characteristics of dyslexia.

### RESOURCES

- [TDOE, Reading Associated Areas of Deficit](#)

### CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Tennessee should expand policy and create a *vetted and approved list* of evidence-based interventions from which school districts can adopt interventions that target students’ needs and are grounded in the science of reading.

# Summer Reading Camps



## IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

### PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The state requires districts to offer summer reading camps to students at risk of reading failure to remediate learning loss and/or build reading skills.

#### EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Tennessee [policy](#) (See Tenn. Code 49-6-1501, et al.) DOES require districts to offer summer learning camps for rising Kindergarten through rising grade 9 students at risk of academic failure in certain subjects, including literacy.
- Tennessee DOES specify that the district has flexibility to design the summer camps as needed by the individual district. ([TDOE, Learning Acceleration](#))
- Tennessee DOES recommend that K–3 literacy teachers enroll in the online section of the [Reading 360 Early Literacy Training](#) series in preparation to support younger learners and their reading development. ([TDOE, 2026 Summer Programming Staffing and Training Guidance](#))

#### RESOURCES

- [TDOE, Summer Programming Enrollment and Attendance Reporting \(SPEAR\)](#)
- [Tennessee Learning Loss Remediation and Student Acceleration Act: 2025 Annual Report](#)

#### CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Tennessee should expand policy to 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:**

- Tennessee DOES provide online resources to parents to support reading at home. ([TDOE, Tennessee's Commitment to Early Literacy October 2023](#); [TDOE, Family Reading Resources](#))
- Tennessee DOES require districts to include information on reading intervention activities for families for students who have been identified as "at-risk" for a significant reading deficiency through Home Literacy Reports. ([Foundational Literacy Skills Plan Toolkit Spring 2025](#))
- Tennessee DOES monitor districts' provision of resources to parents to support reading at home, by requiring districts to submit information through Home Literacy Plans through the districts' [Foundational Literacy Skills Plans](#). (See also [Foundational Literacy Skills Plan Toolkit Spring 2025](#))

## CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

# Initial Determinant Retention at 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 4<sup>th</sup> grade with provisions for additional support through transitional classes, tutoring and/or intensive interventions.

## EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Tennessee [law](#) (See Tenn. Code 49-6-3115) DOES require that a student who is not proficient in ELA, as determined by the student's achieving a performance level rating of “approaching” on the ELA portion of the student's most recent TCAP test may be promoted if the student meets certain exemptions, or the student successfully completes certain requirements. ([TDOE, Learning Acceleration](#))
- Tennessee DOES allow parents to appeal the retention decision where a student is “approaching” expectations, so long as the appeal is filed within 14 days of receiving the decision from the student’s school, which includes showing student growth on an approved benchmark or the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener or an event that impacts the student’s ability to perform – appeals MAY be granted where a student scores in the approaching category of the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade ELA TCAP and the student participates in summer camp programming and/or year long high-dosage, low-ratio tutoring. ([TDOE, Learning Acceleration](#))

## RESOURCES

- [TDOE, Frequently Asked Questions on the Promotion and Retention of Third Grade Students](#)
- [TDOE, Promotion & Retention Guidelines and Toolkit](#)

## CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- The state should amend the policy to *not* allow the use of a literacy screener to determine promotion or 3<sup>rd</sup> grade retention.

# Multiple Options for Promotion



## IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

### FULL IMPLEMENTATION

The state offers *at least three pathways for promotion to 4<sup>th</sup> grade* including achieving a predetermined level on the state reading assessment, passing an alternative assessment or retest, or successfully demonstrating sufficient 3<sup>rd</sup> 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:**

- Tennessee DOES offer some pathways for promotion to 4<sup>th</sup> grade:
  - For students who are “approaching” expectations on the ELA TCAP, they may be promoted if the student retests and scores proficient on ELA TCAP; maintains a 90% attendance at summer camp and demonstrates improvement; participates in TN ALL Corps tutoring during the 4<sup>th</sup> grade; or the parent appeals the decision within 14 days of receiving scores. ([TDOE, Learning Acceleration](#))
  - For students who are “below” expectations on the ELA TCAP, a student may be promoted if the student retests and scores proficient on the ELA TCAP or the student maintains a 90% attendance at summer camp and receives free TN ALL Corps tutoring during 4<sup>th</sup> grade. ([TDOE, Learning Acceleration](#))

## RESOURCES

- [TDOE, Frequently Asked Questions on the Promotion and Retention of Third Grade Students](#)
- [TDOE, Promotion & Retention Guidelines and Toolkit](#)
- [TDOE, Summer Programming Enrollment and Attendance Reporting \(SPEAR\)](#)

## 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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 4<sup>th</sup> grade for students promoted for good cause.

## EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Tennessee DOES allow specific good cause exemptions for promotion to 4<sup>th</sup> grade, including for English learners, previously retained students, disabilities, and suspected disabilities. ([TDOE, Learning Acceleration](#))

## RESOURCES

- [TDOE, Frequently Asked Questions on the Promotion and Retention of Third Grade Students](#)
- [TDOE, Promotion & Retention Guidelines and Toolkit](#)

## CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

