



# Early Literacy Matters

## State-by-State Policy Implementation Report

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






AL

PRINCIPLE ADOPTION  
IMPLEMENTATION



# Early Literacy Policy Implementation Rubric

Comprehensive Early Literacy Policy establishes support and intensive reading interventions for all K–3 students to ensure they read on grade level by the end of 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

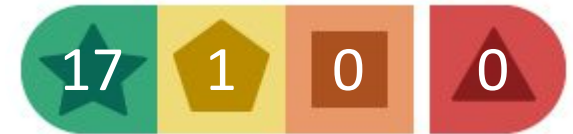
The purpose of this document is to provide an analysis of states' implementation of K–3 reading policies aligned to ExcelinEd's [fundamental principles](#) of an early literacy policy. It builds on an analysis of states' adoption of statutes and regulations establishing requirements for each component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

18 out of 18



## STATE POLICY ADOPTION REFERENCE MATERIALS

- [Alabama Code, Title 16 Education \(See 6G Alabama Literacy Act\)](#)
- [ALSDE, Alabama Reading Initiative](#)
- [ALSDE, Semi-Annual Report: Alabama Reading Initiative \(2025\)](#)
- [ALSDE, Quick Links to Support the Alabama Literacy Act Implementation & Achievement Toward Grade-Level Reading](#)

# Science of Reading (SOR) Training



## IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

### FULL IMPLEMENTATION

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

## EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Alabama DOES offer science of reading training through a local reading specialist who provides support for all districts relating to literacy instruction, including focusing on providing training to new teachers and/or K–3 teachers who have the most “at-risk” or “struggling” students. ([ALSDE, The Alabama Literacy Act Implementation Guide \(2020\)](#))
- Alabama HAS adopted and requires science of reading training for K–3 teachers through LETRS. ([Lexia, Alabama Expands Use of LETRS Professional Learning Course Statewide](#))
- Alabama HAS adopted and requires science of reading training for K–3 administrators through LETRS. ([Memo, Alabama Reading Initiative \(ARI\) Comprehensive Planning for the 2025–2026 School Year \(2025\)](#))
- Alabama DOES monitor the requirement that all K–3 teachers meet state-adopted science of reading training requirement through the [Comprehensive Data Report](#), submitted annually by districts, which collects data on the number of faculty members participating in LETRS training (considered the “gold standard”), and other trainings offered. ([Memo, 2024–2025 K–5 Mathematics and Reading Reporting Requirements \(2025\)](#))
- Alabama HAS established an [implementation plan](#), through various cohorts, to provide LETRS training to educators and administrators. According to the state, at the beginning of the fiscal year 2024–2025 school year, all educators should have met the [Initial Literacy Certification \(Inservice Teachers\)](#) requirements in the Alabama Reading Initiative – Continuum for Teacher Development. (See [Memo: Alabama Reading Initiative \(ARI\) Comprehensive Planning for the 2025–2026 School Year](#))

# Science of Reading (SOR) Training

**CONTINUED**

## IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

### FULL IMPLEMENTATION

#### NOTES

- Note that Alabama’s Literacy Task Force worked collaboratively with state public teacher preparation programs and Regional Inservice Centers to develop a state [Continuum for Teacher Development](#) for approved science of reading.

#### NOTEWORTHY

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

- Educators scoring mastery status in the LETRS 3E course or LETRS EC course can request that it be added to the Alabama State Department of Education’s Educator Certification portal. Mastery status for LETRS 3E is defined as scoring 80% or above on the volume 1 and volume 2 post-assessments. Mastery status of LETRS EC is defined as scoring 80% or above on the course post-assessment. To request LETRS mastery be added to the ALSDE Specialized Training section of the TCERT platform, each educator must complete this [link](#). Qualifying educators, once verified, are submitted to ALSDE’s Educators Certification section semi-annually for posting.

#### RESOURCES

- [ALSDE, Semi-Annual Report: Alabama Reading Initiative \(2025\)](#)

#### CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

# Literacy Coaches



## IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

### FULL IMPLEMENTATION: Above & Beyond

Literacy coaches are trained in the science of reading and are assigned to each elementary school to provide job-embedded professional development and coaching to K–3 teachers.

## EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Coaches ARE trained in the science of reading, as Alabama requires reading specialists to have received a bachelor’s degree or advanced coursework or professional development in the science of reading, multisensory language instruction such as Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS), or a comparable alternative training approved by the State Board of Education. ([ALSDE, The Alabama Literacy Act Implementation Guide \(2020\)](#))
- Coaches ARE providing job-embedded training and coaching to K–3 teachers as local reading specialists, hired by each district, and providing support relating to literacy instruction, including focusing on providing training to new teachers and/or K–3 teachers who have the most “at-risk” or “struggling” students. ([ALSDE, The Alabama Literacy Act Implementation Guide \(2020\)](#))
- Alabama DOES assign [local reading specialists](#) (building coaches) to K–3 schools: 757 out of 762 schools agreed to hire local reading specialists and are awarded \$85,000 to support such efforts. ([The Alabama Reading Initiative, About ARI: Semi-Annual Report \(2025\)](#))
- Alabama DOES assign a Regional Literacy Specialist to districts to support local reading specialists - these specialists are designated for each elementary school with any combination of a kindergarten, first grade, second grade, or third grade including virtual and charter schools. ([ALSDE, Semi-Annual Report: Alabama Reading Initiative \(2025\)](#); [The Alabama Reading Initiative: 2025–2026 Comprehensive Memo](#))

# Literacy Coaches

**CONTINUED**

## IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

### FULL IMPLEMENTATION: Above & Beyond

#### EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE (CONTINUED)

- Alabama DOES assign a Regional Literacy Leadership Specialist (administrative coach) to support principals and district leadership who is designated for each elementary school with any combination of Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> grade, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, or 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, including virtual and charter schools. ([The Alabama Reading Initiative: 2025–2026 Comprehensive Memo](#))

#### NOTEWORTHY

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

- Alabama created a [Coaching Framework](#) to set the standard for how many coaches in any content area conduct their work in Alabama. This evidence-based coaching framework provides a foundation for the work of Alabama Literacy Coaches, including English Learner coaches hired through the Alabama Literacy Act to support instruction in Kindergarten–3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

#### CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

# Educator Preparation Program (EPP) Alignment



## IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

### FULL IMPLEMENTATION

EPP required coursework (elementary, early childhood, and special education) is aligned to the science of reading and prohibits the use of course materials that include three-cueing. Coursework includes evidence-based literacy instruction, how to administer reading assessments, and how to identify students with reading difficulties, such as dyslexia.

## EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- EPPs DO require coursework aligned to science of reading and this coursework must include how to administer reading assessments and how to identify students with reading difficulties. ([NCTQ, Alabama Summary 2023](#); [2024 Education Trust Fund](#); [Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-3-.06 Literacy Coursework: Science of Reading \(SoR\)](#))
- Required coursework mandates DO extend to elementary education, early childhood, and special education students. ([See Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-3 Teacher Education – Professional Services](#))
- Alabama DOES prohibit using the three-cueing system within coursework, materials, and instructional strategies. ([Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-3-.06 Literacy Coursework: Science of Reading \(SoR\)](#); [Memo, Three-Cueing System Prohibition \(2024\)](#))

# Educator Preparation Program (EPP) Alignment

**CONTINUED****IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL****FULL IMPLEMENTATION****NOTEWORTHY**

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

- [House Bill 135](#) (2022) – a budget bill specifying that each college or university receiving an appropriation from the Education Trust Fund that operates a public teacher preparation program leading to initial certification must be in compliance with the credit hour requirements of reading or literacy coursework, based on the science of learning to read.

**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:**

- Alabama DOES require a licensure test that addresses reading: Foundations of Reading. ([NCTQ, Alabama Summary 2023](#); [NCTQ, False Assurances: Many states’ licensure tests don’t signal whether elementary teachers understand reading instruction \(Nov. 2023\)](#); see also [Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-3-.46 Alternative Teacher Preparation Organizations \(ATPO\)](#))
- Alabama DOES monitor required EPP science of reading assessments, through data compiled to create EPP Report Cards. ([ALSDE, Educator Preparation Institutional Report Card](#))
- Alabama DOES use education candidate science of reading scores for licensure. ([Alabama Foundations of Reading](#))

#### RESOURCES

- [ALSDE, Teacher Certification](#)

#### CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

# Funding for Literacy Efforts



## IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

### FULL IMPLEMENTATION

Adequate funding is dedicated to support the sustainability of the implementation of each of the fundamental principles of the early literacy policy.

## EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Alabama DOES direct funding specifically to support state and/or local implementation of early literacy fundamental principles. These include:
  - Funding for the Alabama Literacy Act, as part of the Education Trust Fund - in 2025, the state allocated \$142,839,601 to the Alabama Literacy Act ([Education Trust Fund Budget Summary FY2025](#); [Education Trust Fund Comparison Sheet for FY 2025 – HB145/SB75 2024 Regular Session](#))
  - Funding for early childhood classroom assessments
  - Funding for professional development for educators
  - Local reading specialist allocations, including coaching books
  - Regional literacy specialist allocations

## RESOURCES

- [The Alabama Reading Initiative, 2025–2026 Comprehensive Memo](#)

## CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

# 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:**

- Alabama HAS approved universal reading screeners to be administered to K–3 students. (See [ARI, High Quality Instructional Materials \(HQIM\)](#))
- Alabama DOES require the universal screeners to be administered three times per year and the state provides a [timeline](#) for administration of these three assessments (beginning of year, middle of year, and end of year).
- Alabama DOES monitor districts’ use of screener data to identify students at risk of reading failure as districts must submit information to the state on the percentage of students identified as having a deficiency through the screener. ([Memo, 2024–2025 K-5 Mathematics and Reading Reporting Requirements \(2025\)](#))

#### CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

# Screeners for Characteristics of Dyslexia



## IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

### PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION

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

## EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Alabama DOES use the state-approved universal screener, administered 3 times per year, which assesses phonological awareness; oral language; alphabetic principle, including letter naming, letter sound, and sound letter correspondences; decoding; encoding; accuracy; vocabulary; and comprehension to identify students who may have [characteristics of dyslexia](#). ([ALSDE, RFQ: Alabama Literacy Task Force K–3 Universal Screeners Review \(2025\)](#))
- Alabama DOES use the results of universal screenings that have been vetted and approved annually by the Literacy Task Force to “identify students who have a reading deficiency, including identifying students with characteristics of dyslexia”. ([Alabama Dyslexia Resource Guide \(2022\)](#))
- Alabama DOES administer the dyslexia diagnostic assessment “as indicated” when a student has presented as struggling and fails to make progress through the Student Reading Improvement Plan. ([The Alabama Reading Initiative, 2025–2026 Comprehensive Memo](#); [Alabama Dyslexia Resource Guide \(2022\)](#))
- Alabama HAS identified additional dyslexia-specific screening recommendations and examples in the [Alabama Dyslexia Resource Guide \(2022\)](#).

## CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Alabama should make clear that any state-approved screener for dyslexia should 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.



# 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:**

- Alabama DOES require [notice](#) to parents of students identified with reading difficulties within 15 days of each administration of the state-approved screener.

## RESOURCES

- [ALSDE, The Alabama Literacy Act Implementation Guide \(2020\)](#) (sample parent notification)

## CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

# 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:**

- Alabama DOES provide guidance and resources to support the identification and selection of HQIM aligned to science of reading and state standards through a [memo](#) to districts.
- Alabama HAS created a [vetted and approved list](#) of high-quality instructional materials that have been approved by the Literacy Task Force based on the science of reading.
- Alabama [policy](#) DOES require schools to post classroom curricula to the school’s website at the beginning of each school year, and no later than 30 days after a new or revised curriculum is adopted. (See also [Memo, Posting of Classroom Curricula on School Website \(2024\)](#))

#### CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

# 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:**

- Alabama HAS adopted a [policy](#) that bans three-cueing instructional materials. ([Memo, Three-Cueing System Prohibition \(2024\)](#))

## 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:**

- Alabama DOES require schools to develop and implement an individual reading improvement plan for students identified as having a reading deficiency. ([ALSDE, The Alabama Literacy Act Implementation Guide \(2020\)](#))
- Individual reading improvement plans **MUST** be developed no later than 30 days after the reading deficiency is identified. ([ALSDE, The Alabama Literacy Act Implementation Guide \(2020\)](#))
- Alabama DOES require parent notification of the development of an individual reading improvement plan and the state provides a [template](#) for this notice.

# Individual Reading Plans

CONTINUED



## IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

### FULL IMPLEMENTATION

#### NOTEWORTHY

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

- The state requires schools to create reading portfolios for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students who scored at the lowest achievement level on the reading subtest of the ACAP Summative Assessment in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. These are considered an option for promotion to 4<sup>th</sup> grade. ([ALSDE, Alabama Literacy Act: Third-Grade Literacy Act Portfolio](#))

#### RESOURCES

- [ALSDE, The Alabama Literacy Act Implementation Guide \(2020\)](#) (sample Student Reading Improvement Plan)

#### 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:

- Alabama DOES track district/school monitoring of students' progress within a [MTSS](#), that utilizes a data-based decision-making process, as progress monitoring results are used to "inform principals, local reading specialists, and teachers to further refine differentiated instruction." ([ALSDE, The Alabama Literacy Act Implementation Guide \(2020\)](#))
- Alabama DOES provide [guidance](#) on tools that may be used for monitoring, focusing mainly on screeners.

## CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

# Evidence-Based Interventions



## IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

### FULL IMPLEMENTATION

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

### EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Alabama DOES require interventions adopted by school districts to be [grounded in the science of reading](#) and implemented during regular school hours.
- Alabama HAS released guidance for districts and the Literacy Task Force has created a [vetted and approved list](#).
- Alabama DOES provide guidance on how LEAs must provide services for students identified with a reading deficiency before and after school, including information on additional intervention time before school or after school.
- Note that the state DOES monitor compliance with the selection of interventions for students identified as having dyslexia. (See [Comprehensive Data Report](#))

### CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

# Summer Reading Camps



## IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

### FULL IMPLEMENTATION

The state requires districts to offer summer reading camps to rising 1<sup>st</sup>–4<sup>th</sup> grade students at risk of reading failure to remediate learning loss and/or build reading skills. Staff are required to be trained in the science of reading.

## EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Alabama DOES require districts to offer summer reading camps to Kindergarten–3<sup>rd</sup> graders. ([Memo, 2025 K–12 Guidance for Summer Programming in Alabama: Including Planning, Implementation Monitoring, and Funding for the Alabama Reading Initiative \(ARI\) Summer Reading Programs \(K–3\) and Office of Mathematics Improvement \(OMI\) Summer Math Programs \(K–5\) \(2025\)](#))
- Alabama DOES monitor compliance with district’s summer reading camp offerings and participation through the [Comprehensive Data Report](#) submitted by districts annually and the state requires submission of a planning document through the ALA Monitoring site. (*See, for example, [Alabama Literacy Act \(ALA\) Quarter Three \(Q3\) Implementation Monitoring](#); see also [Alabama Literacy Act \(ALA\) Reporting Inside PowerSchool \(2023\)](#)*)
- Alabama DOES require districts to use staff trained in the science of reading for summer reading camps and districts must provide assurances that summer personnel are highly effective teachers of reading; and if personnel are not trained in the science of reading, the district must provide training. (*See, for example, [Alabama Literacy Act \(ALA\) Quarter Three \(Q3\) Implementation Monitoring](#)*)

# Summer Reading Camps

CONTINUED



## IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

### FULL IMPLEMENTATION

#### NOTEWORTHY

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

- Reporting requirements for the summer reading camps include reporting whether intervention programs include direct, explicit, and systematic reading intervention services; and, at a minimum, the programs must include 60 hours of scientifically based reading instruction and intervention. ([2025 K–12 Guidance for Summer Programming in Alabama](#))

#### RESOURCES

- [ARI Summer Reading Camp FY25](#)
- [Memo, Alabama Summer- and After-School Program \(ASAP\) Grant \(2024\)](#)

#### CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

# 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:**

- Alabama DOES require schools to provide read-at home plans to parents with reading deficiencies. Alabama created the [The Alabama Family Guide for Student Reading Success – Kindergarten through Third Grade: A Read-At-Home Plan](#).
- Alabama DOES provide additional online resources to parents to support reading at home – Alabama has created an [Alabama Literacy Act Frequently Asked Questions](#) document that provides information on several online resources to support reading at home. (See also [ALSDE, The Alabama Literacy Act Implementation Guide \(2020\)](#))
- Alabama DOES monitor districts' provision of online resources to parents to support reading at home; districts are required to submit Reading-At-Home Plans through the state's quarterly monitoring of ALA. (See [Memo: Alabama Reading Initiative \(ARI\) Comprehensive Planning and Alabama Literacy Act 2019–523 \(ALA\) Reporting Requirements for the 2022–2023 School Year](#))

## 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

### 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 – *be retained*.

## EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Alabama DOES require students to be retained in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade if they are unable to demonstrate sufficient reading skills on the state test-based options provided. Alabama collects data on 3<sup>rd</sup> grade retention through the [Comprehensive Data Report](#) to ensure that districts are complying with the retention requirements.

## 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 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:

- Alabama DOES offer at least three pathways for promotion to 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Third grade students may demonstrate an acceptable level of reading proficiency on the reading screener, or an ALSDE-approved supplemental standardized reading assessment, or through a reading portfolio. ([Alabama Literacy Act, Frequently Asked Questions for K–3 Grade Families](#); [ALSDE, Alabama Literacy Act: Third-Grade Literacy Act Portfolio](#); see also [ARI, Pathways to Promotion: Grade Level Ready Performance Outcomes](#))

## 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:**

- Alabama DOES allow specific good cause exemptions for promotion to 4<sup>th</sup> grade including exemptions for students identified as English language learners, students with disabilities, students who have received intensive reading interventions for two or more years and meet other requirements, portfolio-based promotions, supplemental assessment promotions, among others.
- Alabama DOES collect data relating to good cause exemptions through the [Comprehensive Data Report](#) that districts must submit annually. (See [Memo: 2024–2025 K-5 Mathematics and Reading Reporting Requirements \(2025\)](#))
- Alabama DOES require intensive interventions to continue in 4<sup>th</sup> grade for students promoted for [good cause](#).

## CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

