Early Literacy Matters

State-by-State Policy Implementation Report

Explore Louisiana’s adoption and implementation of the 18 Early Literacy Fundamental Principles.
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><strong>FULL IMPLEMENTATION</strong></th>
<th>The fundamental principle is adopted in policy, and there is evidence of full implementation.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 Louisiana’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.

ADOPITION IMPLEMENTATION

18 out of 18

• Louisiana Department of Education, Louisiana Comprehensive Literacy Plan
• Louisiana Department of Education, Louisiana Literacy
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:

• Louisiana DOES require all K–3 teachers and administrators to participate in early literacy training. ([LDOE, Literacy Foundations Training Approved Providers])

• Louisiana DOES require the early literacy training for K–3 teachers and administrators to be based on the science of reading and include extensive training in the five components of reading. ([LDOE, Literacy Foundations Training Approved Providers])

• Louisiana HAS created an approved list of professional development course providers. ([LDOE, Literacy Foundations Training Approved Providers])

• Louisiana HAS created an implementation plan, requiring educators to complete at least one approved professional development course beginning in the 2023–2024 school year; anyone hired after August 1, 2023 must provide proof of successful completion within 2 years of employment. ([LDOE, Literacy Foundations Training Approved Providers])

• Louisiana DOES require reporting on participation, which began in May 2022. ([LDOE, Literacy Foundations Training Approved Providers])

• Louisiana DOES require school literacy plans that are submitted to the Department to include a description of the professional development in foundational literacy skills instruction provided to K–3 teachers. ([LDE, Guidance for Literacy Plan Submission])
IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL
FULL IMPLEMENTATION

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

• Louisiana requires all LEAs and individual campuses to develop a Literacy Plan. Louisiana provides guidance for creation of these plans through several resources, including the Louisiana Literacy Plan Development Guide & Rubric 2022-2023.

RESOURCES
• LDE, Act 108 Reporting: Frequently Asked Questions
• LDE, School System Literacy Roadmap

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY
This principle currently meets full implementation.
Literacy Coaches

IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL
PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Literacy coaches are present in policy and trained in the science of reading, and they may provide job-embedded professional development and coaching to K–3 teachers based on student data or other models.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Louisiana policy DOES require public school governing authorities to provide for literacy coaches for reading teachers in K–3 to provide on-site teacher training on evidence-based reading instruction, demonstrating lessons, co-teaching or observation and providing feedback for improving instruction. (LDE, 2021-2022 Supporting High-Quality K–2 Literacy Instruction)

- Louisiana HAS created a Literacy Coaching Model, which provides that literacy coaches must provide high-quality professional development around effective literacy practices and the foundations of reading, provide feedback and engage in one-on-one coaching and other responsibilities. (LDE, 2021-2022 Supporting High-Quality K–2 Literacy Instruction)

- Louisiana HAS created a vetted list that identifies vendors to provide job embedded professional development and support to early childhood through high school literacy coaches.

- Louisiana DOES allow approved partners on the vetted list to contract directly with school districts for the Literacy Coaching Program. (LDE, Literacy Specialist Support Providers)

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Louisiana should ensure that a literacy coach that is trained in the science of reading is assigned to each elementary school to provide job-embedded professional development and coaching to K–3 teachers.
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:

- Louisiana DOES require EPPs, through Bulletin 996, to provide coursework that includes evidence-based literacy instruction, how to administer literacy assessments, and how to differentiate instruction for teaching students with advanced literacy skills and students with significant literacy deficiencies.

- Louisiana DOES require EPPs to provide courses that develop and assess candidate mastery of certain literacy competencies. (Louisiana BESE, Bulletin 996 – Standards for Approval of Teacher and/or Educational Leader Preparation Programs)

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Louisiana should expand policy to ensure that EPP required coursework prohibits the use of course materials that include three-cueing.
Educator Preparation Program (EPP) Assessment

IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL
FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION

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

• Effective January 1, 2024, Louisiana law WILL require candidates who are seeking to teach K–3 to pass a rigorous test of scientifically-researched, evidence-based reading instruction and intervention.

• Louisiana WILL require in 2024, a licensure test that addresses reading: Praxis Elementary Education Teaching Reading: Elementary or Teaching Reading: K–12, which DOES adequately address all required components of the science of reading. (NCTQ, False Assurances: Many states’ licensure tests don’t signal whether elementary teachers understand reading instruction (Nov. 2023))

• Louisiana currently DOES require a licensure test that addresses reading: Praxis Elementary Education Multiple Subjects, Reading and Language Arts subtest; however this licensure tests DOES NOT adequately address all required components of the science of reading. (NCTQ, Louisiana 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
At this time, we have no considerations for strengthening this principle.
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:

- Louisiana DOES provide direct funding specifically to support state and/or local implementation of early literacy fundamental principles. These include:
  - Funding in the 2024 budget for the Center for Literacy and Learning for a pilot program to create a framework for statewide family literacy engagement.
  - Microgrants through REAL for families to select services aligned to their needs — REAL provides devices, connectivity and tutoring services to eligible students in Pre-Kindergarten–3rd grade.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Louisiana 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:**

- Louisiana HAS approved a universal reading screener to identify students who may be at risk for experiencing reading difficulties. ([LDE, Literacy Screener](#))

- Louisiana DOES administer this screener to K–3 students *three times per year* (beginning, middle, and end of year). ([LDE, 2023-2024 Louisiana Assessment Calendar](#))

- Louisiana DOES monitor districts’ use of screener data to identify students at risk of reading failure through regular data submissions three times per year. ([LDE, 2023-2024 Louisiana Assessment Calendar](#))
IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL
FULL IMPLEMENTATION

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

• Louisiana has created a new K–2 accountability system that is part of the state’s comprehensive literacy strategy. Students in Kindergarten – 2nd grade will take a literacy indicator that measures early literacy skills. These will be reflected in the annual School Performance Scores and District Performance scores.

• Louisiana requires 4th grade students who score below Mastery on the 2023 Spring ELA assessment to be given the beginning of the year literacy screener to determine if intervention is needed and to inform families. (LDE, Fall 2023 K–3 Literacy Screener)

RESOURCES

• LDE, Fall 2023 K–3 Literacy Screener

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.
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:

• Louisiana DOES require all students in Kindergarten–3rd grade to be administered an early literacy screener and if a student’s score indicates a deficit, additional screening will occur to determine if a student has characteristics of dyslexia. (LDE, A Guide to Dyslexia in Louisiana)

• Louisiana DOES provide guidance to districts on dyslexia, including information on identification and instruction of students with characteristics of dyslexia in Louisiana.

• Louisiana HAS created a Dyslexia and Related Disorders Checklist to provide additional guidance and support to schools and districts.

• Louisiana DOES require the additional screening for Kindergarten and fall semester 1st grade students to include: phonological awareness and/or rapid automatic naming skills. (LDE, A Guide to Dyslexia in Louisiana)

• Louisiana DOES require the additional screening for students in 1st–3rd grade to include: phonological/phonemic awareness, rapid automatic naming skills, encoding skills and oral and written language skills. (LDE, A Guide to Dyslexia in Louisiana)

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

• Louisiana should expand policy to require the Department of Education to approve a screener for characteristics of dyslexia that will be administered to all students and that 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.

• Louisiana should expand policy to require the screener to be administered to all students at the end of Kindergarten and the beginning of 1st and 2nd grade.
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:

• Louisiana DOES require schools to notify parents when a student has been identified with a reading difficulty. (LDE, Fall 2023 K–3 Literacy Screener)

• Louisiana DOES require notice to occur within 15 days of administration of the screener. (LDE, Fall 2023 K–3 Literacy Screener)

• Louisiana HAS created parent reporting forms for each grade level that districts can use as a template for parent notification.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.
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:

- Louisiana DOES provide guidance to districts through online reviews of instructional materials and information on the Academic Content Professional Learning Partner Guide to identify vendors who provide initial and ongoing training for high-quality instructional materials.

- Louisiana DOES require school literacy plans that are submitted to the Department to include a list of ELA textbooks and instructional materials adopted by the school, and the school literacy plan must be posted on the school’s website. (LDE, Guidance for Literacy Plan Submission)

- Louisiana DOES provide a weekly report on instructional materials that the Department is reviewing.

- Louisiana DOES provide local school systems with the option to select materials that the LDE has reviewed, engage in a local review process of materials not reviewed by LDE, or adopt a combination of state-reviewed materials and materials reviewed locally. (LDE, Guidance for Instructional Materials Reviews)

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Louisiana should expand policy to require school districts to adopt high-quality instructional materials from a vetted and approved list.
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:

- Louisiana HAS adopted a policy to eliminate the use of all instructional materials that include the three-cueing systems model for teaching word reading. (R.S. 24.10 Early literacy instruction and screening; parental notification; reporting)
- Louisiana HAS released guidance on the three-cueing system ban.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY
This principle currently meets full implementation.
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:

• Louisiana DOES require schools to create Reading Improvement Plans for students in K–3 identified as reading below level. ([LDE, Fall 2023 K–3 Literacy Screener](#))

• Louisiana DOES require creation of a Reading Improvement Plan within 30 days of identification. ([LDE, Fall 2023 K–3 Literacy Screener](#))

• Louisiana DOES require parent participation in the creation of the Reading Improvement Plans. ([LDE, Fall 2023 K–3 Literacy Screener](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.
IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

FULL 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). Parents of students with literacy skills below grade level must receive updates.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

• Louisiana DOES provide guidance on using progress monitoring data to adjust intervention. (LDE, School System Literacy Roadmap)

• Louisiana DOES require each school to provide mid-year and end-of-the-year updates to the parent or legal guardian of each student identified as having literacy skills below grade level.

RESOURCES

• LDE, K–2 Literacy Intervention Guidance

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:

- Louisiana HAS created a list of literacy instruction, intervention, and extension resources that have been vetted and aligned to the science of reading; however schools may use interventions provided through the statewide literacy screener platform (mCLASS) or through interventions provided through the HQIM.

- Louisiana HAS created guidance related to K–2 literacy interventions.

- Louisiana HAS created guidance related to targeted literacy interventions and extensions, which includes information on high quality instructional materials, tutoring and literacy extensions.

- Louisiana HAS created the LIFT (Literacy Interventions and Foundational Tools) Kit Library, which includes information on the LIFT diagnostic assessment and interventions that may be needed.

- Louisiana DOES require school literacy plans that are submitted to the Department to include a description of the interventions and supports available to students identified as having literacy skills below grade level. (LDE, Guidance for Literacy Plan Submission)
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:

• Louisiana DOES require 3rd and 4th grade students who score below grade level on an end-of-year literacy assessment to receive 30 hours of summer literacy interventions for the 2022–2023 and 2023–2024 school years only. (LDE, Summer Literacy Intervention Guidance for Grades 3 & 4)

• Louisiana DOES require the summer literacy interventions to consist of explicit, targeted literacy instruction based on the science of reading. (LDE, Summer Literacy Intervention Guidance for Grades 3 & 4)

• Louisiana DOES provide guidance on summer literacy instructional materials.

RESOURCES

• LDE, Fall 2023 K–3 Literacy Screener

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

• Louisiana should expand policy to require summer literacy interventions for students in Kindergarten–2nd grade, in addition to 3rd and 4th grade students.

• Further, Louisiana should require all staff at summer reading camps to be trained in the science of reading.
Parent Read-At-Home Plan

IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION

Full implementation of this principle requires the following: The state requires schools to provide parents notification which includes activities for home as soon as a student is identified with a reading deficiency. Read at home plans will be required for 3rd grade students in 2024–2025. 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:

• Louisiana DOES require schools to provide parents with activities and resources that can be used at home, through parent notification letters.

• Louisiana HAS created a Family Literacy Engagement webpage with resources for families relating to literacy, which include Building Literacy Skills at Home resources and Literacy Activities for Families resources.

• Louisiana HAS created a Family Literacy Engagement Strategic Plan for schools and school systems to improve communication to families around literacy, including providing at-home literacy activity ideas.

• Louisiana HAS created the R.E.A.D. program to distribute books to students in PreKindergarten–5th grade with a demonstrated need for support in improving literacy. (LDE, Louisiana R.E.A.D. Program Report October 2022)

• Louisiana DOES encourage school systems to provide parents with activities to do at home to promote literacy skills, in alignment with the Family Literacy Engagement Pillar in the state’s Comprehensive Literacy Plan.

• Beginning in the 2024–2025 school year, Louisiana policy WILL require read-at-home plans for 3rd grade students who have not met the reading proficiency level required for promotion.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

• Louisiana should expand policy to require schools to provide read-at-home plans to parents of students in K–3 as soon as a student is identified with a reading deficiency.
Initial Determinant Retention at 3rd Grade Based on State Assessment

IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION

Full implementation of this principle requires the following: 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:

- Beginning with the 2024–2025 school year, Louisiana policy DOES provide that if a student has a reading deficiency that is not remedied by the end of 3rd grade as demonstrated by the student scoring at the lowest achievement level in reading on the literacy screener, and after the student has been given three opportunities to score a higher achievement level, the student shall not be promoted to 4th grade.

- Beginning with the 2024–2025 school year, Louisiana policy WILL allow parents to have the option to have their children retained in 3rd grade, even if a principal and superintendent determine otherwise.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- The state should amend the policy that will be enacted beginning in the 2024–2025 school year to require schools to use a summative assessment for 3rd grade retention determinations, and not the literacy screener.
Multiple Options for Promotion

IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION

Full implementation of this principle requires the following: The state offers 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.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

• Beginning with the 2024–2025 school year, Louisiana policy WILL offer at least three pathways to promotion for 4th grade, including achieving a certain level on the state reading assessment, additional retests on the reading assessment, if the student is identified as having dyslexia, as well as demonstrating an acceptable level of reading proficiency on an alternative standardized assessment.

• Louisiana DOES provide that a student qualifying for summer literacy intervention who fails to participate, but attains a certain score on the current year Spring ELA LEAP 2025 assessment may be promoted to the next grade level. (LDE, Summer Literacy Intervention Guidance for Grades 3 & 4)

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

• Louisiana may want to consider expanding policy to allow students to submit a portfolio of work as an additional pathway for promotion to 4th grade.
Good Cause Exemptions for Some Students

IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Beginning with the 2024–2025 school year, Louisiana policy WILL provide for good cause exemptions for promotion to 4th grade, including exemptions for students who are limited English proficient, students with disabilities on IEPs, and intensive intervention for two years and previously retained.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

At this time, we have no considerations for strengthening this principle.