



Early Literacy Matters

State-by-State Policy Implementation Report

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






MN

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 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.

 <p>FULL IMPLEMENTATION</p>	<p>The fundamental principle is adopted in policy, and there is evidence of full implementation.</p> <p> ABOVE & BEYOND BADGE: This badge recognizes efforts that exceed full implementation.</p>
 <p>PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION</p>	<p>The fundamental principle is adopted in policy, but there is limited evidence of implementation.</p>
 <p>FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION</p>	<p>The fundamental principle is adopted in policy with a future date for implementation.</p>
 <p>PRINCIPLE NOT ADOPTED</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 Minnesota'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

11 out of 18



STATE POLICY ADOPTION REFERENCE MATERIALS

- [Minnesota Statutes 120B.12 Read Act Goal and Interventions](#)
- [Minnesota Department of Education, READ Act](#)

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:

- By 2026 and through 2027, Minnesota [policy](#) DOES require each district to provide teachers and instructional support staff with responsibility for teaching reading with training on evidence-based reading instruction that is approved by the state's Department of Education.
- Minnesota [policy](#) DOES require each district to provide access to the training to all classroom teachers of students in Kindergarten–3rd grade and special education teachers, as well as instructional support staff who provide reading instruction and employees who select literacy instructional materials for a district.
- By July 2027, Minnesota [policy](#) DOES require all other teachers and instructional staff required to receive training under the act to complete the training.
- Minnesota HAS approved several options for professional development that will satisfy the READ Act requirements. ([MDE, READ Act](#); [MDE, The Read Act Frequently Asked Questions](#); [MDE, READ Act: Professional Development](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Minnesota should expand policy to require all K–3 teachers and administrators to participate in state-adopted science of reading training.

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:

- Minnesota DOES NOT require literacy coaches that are trained in the science of reading to be assigned to each elementary school to provide job-embedded professional development and coaching to K–3 teachers.
- Minnesota [policy](#) DOES require each district to employ a literacy lead to collaborate with administrators and staff to implement the requirements under the READ Act.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Minnesota 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.

Educator Preparation Program (EPP) Alignment



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION

EPP required coursework is aligned to the science of reading and includes evidence-based literacy instruction.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Minnesota DOES have standards for teacher preparation programs that address all core components of scientifically based reading. ([NCTQ, Minnesota Summary 2023](#))
- Minnesota [policy](#) DOES require teacher preparation programs to include instruction in applying evidence-based, structured literacy reading instruction programs that teach students to read using foundational knowledge, practices, and strategies. The program must also teach specialized instruction in reading strategies, interventions, and remediations that enable students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia to become proficient readers.
- Minnesota [policy](#) DOES require board-approved programs for teachers of elementary education, early childhood education, special education, and reading intervention to include instruction on dyslexia.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Minnesota should expand policy to require that educator preparation program coursework prohibits the use of course materials that include three-cueing instructional strategies.
- Minnesota should further require that coursework includes how to administer reading assessments.

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:

- Minnesota DOES require a licensure test that addresses reading that has an acceptable alignment to the science of reading: Minnesota Teacher Licensure Examinations (MTLE) Elementary Education (Grades K–6) – Subtest 1. ([NCTQ, Minnesota 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

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:

- Minnesota DOES provide direct funding specifically to support state and/or local implementation of early literacy fundamental principles. These include:
 - Funds for implementation of the READ Act
 - Literacy Incentive Aid
 - Funding for professional development

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Minnesota 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:

- Minnesota [policy](#) DOES require each school district to screen every student in Kindergarten–3rd grade using a state-approved universal screener. ([MDE, Screening](#))
- Minnesota HAS approved [screeners](#): DIBELS 8th Edition from Amplify or FastBridge earlyReading and CBM Reading from Renaissance. ([MDE, The Read Act Frequently Asked Questions](#); [MDE, READ ACT: K–3 Universal and Dyslexia Literacy Screening Tool Review Criteria and Process](#))
- Minnesota [policy](#) DOES require the screener to be administered three times per year.
- Minnesota DOES require districts to submit data on student performance in Kindergarten–3rd grade on foundational reading skills to the Department of Education in the annual local literacy plan. ([MDE, The Read Act Frequently Asked Questions](#))

RESOURCES

- [MDE, The READ Act: K–3 Universal Literacy and Dyslexia Screening Guidance](#)

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:

- Minnesota [policy](#) DOES require districts to screen students in Kindergarten–3rd grade for characteristics of dyslexia using a screening tool approved by the Department of Education, which may be integrated with universal screening for mastery of foundational skills and oral language. (See also [MDE, The READ Act: K–3 Universal Literacy and Dyslexia Screening Guidance](#); [MDE, Dyslexia](#))
- Minnesota HAS created a list of dyslexia screeners and DOES specify that the screening tools must screen for the following skills: phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, fluency, and oral language. ([MDE, Screening and Identifying Characteristics of Dyslexia](#))
- Minnesota DOES provide guidance to additionally screen for letter naming and word reading fluency. ([MDE, Screening and Identifying Characteristics of Dyslexia](#))

RESOURCES

- [MDE, The READ Act: K–3 Universal Literacy and Dyslexia Screening Guidance](#)

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Minnesota should expand policy to require the screener for characteristics of dyslexia to assess all skills as developmentally appropriate, including encoding.



Parental Notification



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The state requires 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:

- Minnesota [policy](#) DOES require schools to provide notice to parents of students identified with reading difficulties at least biannually after administering each screener. ([MDE, Family and Community Engagement](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Minnesota should 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

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:

- Minnesota HAS identified evidence-based literacy curricula and supporting materials that districts can select from. (See [MDE, Curricular Resources – Tier 1](#))
- Minnesota DOES require the curriculum used by districts to be evidence-based and aligned to the science of reading. ([MDE, The Read Act Frequently Asked Questions](#))
- Minnesota DOES require districts to use the approved curriculum only when the curriculum was purchased with state funds that require curriculum to be selected from a list of approved curricula. ([MDE, The Read Act Frequently Asked Questions](#))
- Minnesota [policy](#) DOES require districts to report the curricula being used by school site and grade level to the Department through the local literacy plan, which then must be posted on the official school district website. (See also [MDE, Local Literacy Plan](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Minnesota should expand policy to require school districts to adopt high-quality instructional materials aligned to the science of reading and state standards 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:

- Minnesota DOES through [policy](#) require curriculum and materials used in classrooms to be evidence based. Evidence based, per [policy](#), DOES NOT include the three-cueing system. (See also [MDE, READ Act: Curricular Resources – Tier 1](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

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:

- Minnesota [policy](#) DOES strongly encourage districts to provide personal learning plans for students who are unable to demonstrate grade-level proficiency, as measured by the statewide reading assessment in 3rd grade or a screener identified by the Department of Education. (See also [MDE, READ Act: Intervention](#))
- Minnesota [policy](#) DOES specify that if a personal learning plan is created, it must include targeted instruction that is evidence-based and ongoing progress monitoring.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Minnesota 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.
- Minnesota 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

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:

- Minnesota [policy](#) DOES strongly encourage districts to adopt a MTSS framework in order to monitor students' progress, evaluate program fidelity, and analyze student outcomes and needs in order to design and implement ongoing evidence-based instructions and interventions.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Minnesota 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 to inform instruction and interventions as needed and in a timely manner.
- Minnesota should ensure monitoring takes many forms, including observations, assessments, screeners, and student work.

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:

- Minnesota [policy](#) DOES require students identified as having reading deficiencies to be provided with reading intervention that specializes in evidence-based instructional practices and measures mastery of foundational reading skills. (See also [MDE, Intervention](#))
- Minnesota [policy](#) DOES require the state to monitor the interventions that schools are providing to students by providing a summary of efforts to screen, identify, and provide interventions in the literacy plan.
- Minnesota [policy](#) DOES require intervention programs to be taught by intervention teachers or special education teachers who have successfully completed training in evidence-based reading instruction approved by the state's Department of Education.
- Beginning in 2026–2027, Minnesota [policy](#) WILL require a paraprofessional or other unlicensed person, including a volunteer, who will provide Tier 2 interventions be supervised by a licensed teacher who has completed training in evidence-based reading instruction approved by the Department of Education, and has completed evidence-based training.
- Minnesota HAS created a [list](#) of identified evidence-based intervention programs.
- Beginning in 2026–2027, Minnesota [policy](#) WILL require districts to use only evidence-based literacy interventions.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Minnesota should expand policy to require the Department to create a vetted and approved list of evidence-based interventions that are grounded in the science of reading from which districts can select interventions to target students' needs.

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:

- Minnesota DOES NOT have a policy requiring districts to offer summer reading camps to rising 1st–4th grade students at risk of reading failure.
- Minnesota [policy](#) DOES specify that attendance in summer school is one option for interventions that schools may offer to students who have been identified with a reading deficiency.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Minnesota 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.
- Minnesota should further 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:

- Minnesota [policy](#) DOES require parental notification to include strategies for parents to use at home in helping their student succeed in becoming grade-level proficient in reading in English.
- Minnesota DOES provide online resources to parents. ([MDE, Family and Community Engagement](#); [MDE, Families and Communities as Partners](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

Initial Determinant Retention at 3rd Grade Based on State Assessment



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PRINCIPLE NOT ADOPTED

The state has not adopted policy (statute or regulation) that meets the fundamental principle for this area.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Minnesota 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.
- Minnesota [policy](#) DOES specify that the optional personal learning plan may include grade retention and students MAY NOT be retained solely due to delays in literacy or not demonstrating grade-level proficiency.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Minnesota should adopt 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 multiple pathways for promotion to 4th grade including achieving a predetermined level on the state reading assessment or qualifying for a good cause exemption.

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:

- Minnesota DOES NOT have a retention policy and DOES NOT offer at least three pathways for promotion to 4th grade.
- Minnesota [policy](#) DOES specify that the optional personal learning plan may include grade retention and students MAY NOT be retained solely due to delays in literacy or not demonstrating grade-level proficiency.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Minnesota should adopt 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.

Good Cause Exemptions for Some Students



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PRINCIPLE NOT ADOPTED

The state has not adopted policy (statute or regulation) that meets the fundamental principle for this area.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Minnesota DOES NOT have a retention policy and DOES NOT allow specific good cause exemptions for promotion to 4th grade.
- Minnesota [policy](#) DOES specify that the optional personal learning plan may include grade retention and students MAY NOT be retained solely due to delays in literacy or not demonstrating grade-level proficiency.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

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

