



Early Literacy Matters

State-by-State Policy Implementation Report

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






RI

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 Rhode Island'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

6 out of 18



STATE POLICY ADOPTION REFERENCE MATERIALS

- [R.I. Gen. Laws 16-11.4-6, Right to Read Act](#)
- [RIDE, Literacy](#)

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:

- Rhode Island DOES require all K–3 classroom educators, reading specialists and coaches, special education teachers, English to speakers of other languages teachers, and bilingual and dual language teachers to demonstrate proficiency in the knowledge and practices of the science of reading and structured literacy. ([RIDE, The Rhode Island Right to Read Act](#))
- Rhode Island DOES require all K–3 teachers in certain work assignments to exhibit awareness of the science of reading and structured literacy, including art teachers, career and technical education teachers, music teachers, physical education teachers, and others. ([RIDE, The Rhode Island Right to Read Act](#))
- Rhode Island DOES strongly suggest other personnel, including curriculum directors, school counselors, and school and district administrators participate in science of reading and structured literacy training. ([RIDE, The Rhode Island Right to Read Act](#))
- Rhode Island DOES provide a list of approved providers and programs for proficiency expectations. ([RIDE, The Rhode Island Right to Read Act](#))

Science of Reading (SOR) Training

CONTINUED

IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE (CONTINUED)

- Rhode Island DID partner with [Bridge-RI](#) to develop courses that fulfill the awareness requirements of the Right to Read Act.
- Rhode Island DOES allow educators to apply for a Literacy/Dyslexia Endorsement following completion of an approved proficiency training. ([RIDE, The Rhode Island Right to Read Act, LEA Guidance Document](#))
- Rhode Island DOES require all districts that do not provide training per policy to send a notice to parents that the district has not met the requirements. ([RIDE, The Rhode Island Right to Read Act, LEA Guidance Document](#))
- Rhode Island DOES require all districts that do not meet the compliance expectations, per regulations, to send a notice to parents that the district has not met the science of reading and structured literacy expectations.

NOTEWORTHY

- Rhode Island has developed a [collaborative learning laboratory](#) to assist and promote training for parents, guardians, caregivers, and teachers in recognition of the characteristics of dyslexia, related disorders, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia, as well as evidence-based interventions and accommodations.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Rhode Island should expand policy to require all K–3 *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:

- Rhode Island DOES NOT provide for literacy coaches in policy.
- Rhode Island HAS created tools to be used by [Rhode Island READS](#) literacy coaches.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

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

Educator Preparation Program (EPP) Alignment



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

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:

- Rhode Island DOES have standards for educator preparation programs that address all core components of scientifically based reading. ([NCTQ, Rhode Island Summary 2023](#))
- Rhode Island DOES require all Department-approved undergraduate educator preparation programs to provide instruction on how to identify students with reading difficulties, such as dyslexia. ([RIDE, The Rhode Island Right to Read Act, LEA Guidance Document](#))
- Rhode Island [policy](#) DOES require educator preparation programs to ensure candidates can demonstrate proficient knowledge and skills to teach reading consistent with the best practices of scientifically based reading instruction and structured literacy instruction.
- Rhode Island [policy](#) DOES require each Department-approved educator preparation program to post, on its website and in its annual report, information describing its literacy program, including how coursework is aligned to the content measured by the stand-alone reading assessment adopted by the Rhode Island Board of Education Act.
- Rhode Island HAS created guidance and refinement tools to assist educator preparation programs in refining their syllabi to meet the requirements of the Rhode Island Right to Read Act. ([RIDE, The Rhode Island Right to Read Act](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Rhode Island should expand policy to require that EPP required coursework for elementary, early childhood, and special education candidates prohibits the use of course materials that include three-cueing.

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:

- In 2025, Rhode Island DID adopt a new licensure test that addresses reading: Praxis Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (7001) and Teaching Reading Subtest (7002); which IS aligned to the science of reading. ([RIDE, Certificate Areas and Requirements](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

This principle currently meets full implementation.

Funding for Literacy Efforts



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:

- Rhode Island DOES NOT provide direct funding specifically to support state and/or local implementation of early literacy fundamental principles.
- The Rhode Island Department of Education DOES receive \$250,000 annually to support work related to dyslexia, which includes funding a full-time staff member to support dyslexia initiatives.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Rhode Island should determine the adequate funding level to ensure implementation of the fundamental principles are fully funded.

Universal Reading Screener



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PRINCIPLE NOT ADOPTED

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

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Rhode Island DOES NOT require a state-approved universal reading screener to be administered to K–3 students three times per year to identify students at risk for reading failure.
- Rhode Island [policy](#) DOES require all school districts providing elementary education to screen all children prior to, or upon, their first entry to school, which includes screening relating to literacy skills.
- Rhode Island DOES provide [guidance](#) on the state's Comprehensive Assessment System, which includes measures of student performance for the purposes of formative, interim, and summative evaluation of all students in core content areas. (See also [RIDE, Rhode Island Comprehensive Literacy Guidance \(2017\)](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Rhode Island should require a state-approved universal reading screener to be administered to all K–3 students three times per year to identify students at risk for reading failure.

Screeners for Characteristics of Dyslexia



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:

- Rhode Island HAS NOT approved a screener for characteristics of dyslexia.
- Rhode Island DOES provide guidance on dyslexia and screeners for characteristics of dyslexia. ([RIDE, Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, & Dyscalculia Resources](#))
- For the [2024 CLSD grant](#), Rhode Island IS requiring K-2 awardees to select from a RIDE-approved list of screeners.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Rhode Island should expand policy to require schools to administer a state-approved screener for characteristics of dyslexia that assesses the following skills, as developmentally appropriate: phonological and phonemic awareness, sound-symbol recognition, alphabet knowledge, decoding, rapid naming, encoding, and oral reading fluency.
- Rhode Island should require the dyslexia screener to be administered, at a minimum, to all students at the end of Kindergarten and at the beginning of 1st and 2nd grade.

Parental Notification



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PRINCIPLE NOT ADOPTED

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

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Rhode Island HAS NOT established a policy relating to parental notification.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Following approval of a universal screener and dyslexia screener to be administered to students, Rhode Island should further expand policy to require parental notification of students identified with reading difficulties within 30 days of each administration of the state-approved universal reading screener and dyslexia screener.

District Adoption of High-Quality Instructional Materials



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

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:

- Rhode Island DOES provide guidance to ensure that school districts adopt high-quality instructional materials aligned with structured literacy. ([RIDE, Structured Literacy: Curriculum](#))
- Rhode Island HAS created a [curriculum materials review](#) to confirm the high-quality curriculum relating to literacy selected by the district is aligned with structured literacy.
- Rhode Island HAS created a [K–12 Curriculum Survey Report](#) that lists all LEAs in the state and the instructional materials that each individual LEA uses for English language arts.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Rhode Island should expand policy to require districts to post their adopted materials on the district website.

Elimination of Three-Cueing Instructional Materials



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PRINCIPLE NOT ADOPTED

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

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

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

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Rhode Island 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:

- Rhode Island [policy](#) DOES require districts to develop and implement Personal Literacy Plans for any K–5 student performing below grade level. Strategies must be based on adequate yearly progress expected for students and schools.
- Rhode Island DOES provide [guidance](#) on the state's assessment system and provides information on how a district might consider administering interim reading assessments to identify or verify students for Personal Literacy Plans.
- Rhode Island HAS released [guidelines](#) for the Personal Literacy Plans.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- In addition to establishing policy relating to universal reading screeners, Rhode Island should 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.
- Further, Rhode Island should establish a process for monitoring the implementation of those plans and a timeline for notifying parents of the development of the plan.

Regularly Monitor Student Progress



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The state requires schools to monitor students' progress within a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS). Monitoring can take many forms (i.e., observations, screeners, assessments, and student work).

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Rhode Island DOES track district/school monitoring of students' progress within the MTSS. ([RIDE, Multi-Tiered System of Supports \(MTSS\)](#); see also [Rhode Island MTSS District Practice Profile](#))
- Rhode Island DOES specify that the MTSS is a component of the [Rhode Island Comprehensive Literacy Guidance](#). The guidance includes strategies, methods, and resources for assessment, intervention, and literacy in the content areas.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- To strengthen the state's use of the MTSS, Rhode Island should expand its policy relating to universal reading screeners. Rhode Island can then use data from the screeners to inform instruction and interventions, as needed.

Evidence-Based Interventions



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PRINCIPLE NOT ADOPTED

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

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Rhode Island DOES NOT have a policy relating to the use of evidence-based science of reading interventions for students who have been identified as having a reading deficiency.
- Rhode Island DOES provide [guidance](#) on interventions and the selection of interventions.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

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

Summer Reading Camps



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PRINCIPLE NOT ADOPTED

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

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Rhode Island DOES NOT have a policy requiring districts to offer summer reading camps to rising 1st–4th grade students at risk of reading failure.
- Rhode Island [policy](#) DOES provide the option to offer summer school to students in districts in which more than 20% of the students do not meet grade-level expectations of at least proficient or its equivalent on the Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System exam.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Rhode Island 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.
- Rhode Island should further require all staff at summer reading camps to be trained in the science of reading.



Parent Read-At-Home Plan



IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The state or district provides online resources to parents to support reading at home.

EVIDENCE/GUIDANCE

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

- Rhode Island DOES provide online resources to parents to support reading at home. ([RIDE, Structured Literacy: Structured Literacy At Home](#))

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Rhode Island should expand policy to require schools to provide targeted read-at-home plans to parents as soon as a student is identified with a reading deficiency.

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:

- Rhode Island 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.
- Rhode Island HAS created [retention policy guidance](#) for LEAs to help with the creation, or revision, of grade retention policies for “students who are significantly off-track in both student attendance and academic performance.” In this guidance, the state notes that students should be defined as “significantly off-track” if they perform below grade-level expectations in English language arts based on the prior year state assessment, starting with 4th grade students based on 3rd grade state assessment results and is off-track in English language arts in the current school year, based off of locally defined academic performance criteria.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Rhode Island 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:

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

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

- Rhode Island should expand policy to require that students who are unable to demonstrate sufficient reading skills on the state test-based options provided be retained. Policy should include at least three pathways for promotion to 4th grade, including achieving a predetermined level on the state reading assessment, passing an alternative assessment or retest, or successfully demonstrating sufficient 3rd grade reading skills through a portfolio of student work.

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:

- Rhode Island DOES NOT have a retention policy and DOES NOT allow specific good cause exemptions for promotion to 4th grade.
- Rhode Island HAS created [retention policy guidance](#) for LEAs to help with the creation, or revision, of grade retention policies for “students who are significantly off-track in both student attendance and academic performance.” In this guidance, the state indicates that certain evidence may be considered by LEAs for good cause exemptions, which may include student’s differently-abled or multilingual learner status, being identified as a youth in care, medical issues that may have impacted the student’s attendance or performance, and others.
- Rhode Island’s [retention policy guidance](#) DOES require LEAs to create Individualized Learning Plans for any student who is retained which ensures the student receives attendance, academic, and student-focused supports that are needed.

CONSIDERATION(S) FOR STRENGTHENING POLICY

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

