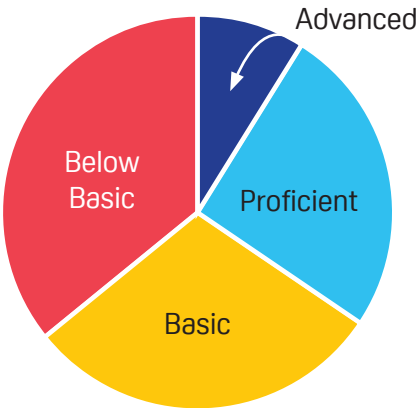


# THE ILLINOIS RIGHT TO READ ACT

HB5032 (Mayfield) | SB3900 (Lightford)

## The Problem: Only 1/3 of Illinois Fourth Grade Students Are Proficient Readers

2019 Grade 4 NAEP Reading Results



The Annie E. Casey Foundation found that, compared to grade-level readers, third graders who do not read proficiently are:



more likely to drop out of high school, and

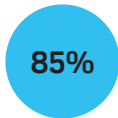


more likely to drop out of high school if their family is low-income.

The Prison Literacy Foundation estimates that:

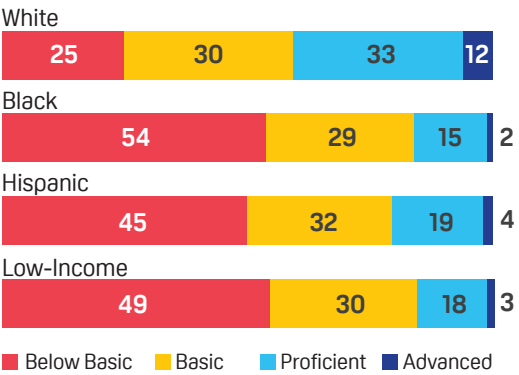


of prison inmates are not proficient readers, and



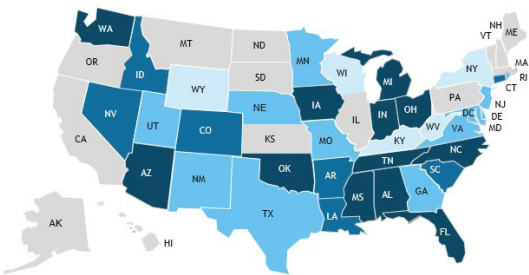
of court-involved juveniles struggle with reading.

2019 Grade 4 NAEP Reading Results



Literacy achievement is too low in Illinois—across the board. However, children from less-advantaged communities are inarguably harmed the most. Many factors drive Illinois’ deep demographic gaps in academic outcomes, starting at birth with disparities in access to high-quality childcare and pre-school, inequitably funded schools, and lack of access to books and other extracurricular resources at home. These inequities are compounded by the lack of: effective literacy instruction, culturally-inclusive curricula, and awareness of linguistic features of English language variations that would enable more effective reading instruction.

## Most States Have Taken Action, But Not Illinois... Yet



Most other states have undertaken significant policy change over the last decade to improve literacy. Some have achieved incredible results, most notably Mississippi, where fourth grade reading scores have climbed ten points since their literacy law was enacted in 2013. This map demonstrates states’ alignment with the Foundation for Educational Excellence’s model policies for reading improvement; Illinois is among just thirteen states that have not enacted even minimal literacy policies.

- Comprehensive K-3 Reading Policy
- Majority of Fundamental Principles with Intervention and/or Promotion Policy
- Same Fundamental Principles
- Minimal Fundamental Principles with Intervention
- Minimal or No Fundamental Principles

## The Right to Read Act Is a Solution

The Illinois Right to Read Act supports current and future teachers to understand the brain science behind learning to read and includes three components:

- **Pre-service teachers would demonstrate their knowledge of evidence-based reading instruction** by passing a foundations of reading exam before earning their license.
- **The State Board of Education (ISBE) would offer support to districts to adopt evidence-based literacy curricula** and structured literacy training for educators to effectively use the curricula. This would include generating a list of evidence-aligned curricula and educator training in structured literacy for districts' consideration, and providing Early Literacy Grants to help pilot districts transition to evidence-based literacy practices.
- **ISBE would offer support to educators to improve their practice in literacy instruction.** This could include development of a micro-credential, creation of a professional development guidance tool, and development of state-level evidence-based literacy professional development modules available to teachers, administrators, and faculty at teacher preparation programs.

## Illinois Early Literacy Coalition Members



For more information: The Early Literacy Coalition ([LEarlyLiteracy.org](http://LEarlyLiteracy.org) or [jhandy@stand.org](mailto:jhandy@stand.org), 312-404-0223)