

Early Literacy

The Goal

Substantially increase Kindergarten to 3rd grade literacy proficiency in each Stand affiliate state working on early literacy through evidence-based supports and practices to improve early literacy.

Early Literacy and Why It Matters

Early literacy encompasses many domains:

- oral language, including vocabulary
- phonics and spelling (knowing the associations between sounds and letters and letter combinations)
- phonemic awareness (the ability to hear, recognize and manipulate phonemes, the smallest unit of sound)
- reading fluency
- reading comprehension (which requires not only vocabulary but also subject matter and world knowledge)
- print concepts and writing
- word analysis strategies (especially phonemic decoding with monitoring for meaning)
- handwriting and word processing
- knowledge and abilities required specifically to comprehend text (e.g., text structure knowledge, comprehension strategy use, genre knowledge)
- knowledge and abilities required specifically to compose text (e.g., planning, drafting, revising, and editing strategies; text structure, genre and craft knowledge; spelling and sentence construction strategies; capitalization and punctuation)
- literacy motivation and engagement ¹

Literacy proficiency by the end of third grade is perhaps the single most essential educational milestone. Students who do not read proficiently by third grade are **four times more likely to drop out of high school** than proficient readers, and a student who is low-income and cannot read at grade level by the end of third grade is **13 times less likely** to graduate from high school with their peers, as cited in Hernandez, 2011.² Outside of the academic consequences, struggling readers are also far more likely to end up in the criminal justice system: at least a third of youth in juvenile correction facilities have a specific learning disability³ and 40 percent of state, federal, and local prisoners have not completed high school.⁴

¹ Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators General Education Leadership Network Early Literacy Task Force (2016). *Essential instructional practices in early literacy: K to 3*. Lansing, MI: Authors

² Hernandez, D. J. (2011). Double jeopardy: How third-grade reading skills and poverty influence high school graduation. *Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, Maryland*.

³ Quinn, M. M., Rutherford, R. B., Leone, P. E., Osher, D. M., & Poirier, J. M. (2005). Youth with disabilities in juvenile corrections: A national survey. *Exceptional Children, 71*(3), 339-345.

⁴ US Department of Justice, [Bureau of Justice Statistics](#) (2003)

Solutions

Stand's view on how to achieve significant statewide impact on third-grade literacy proficiency is to secure adequate, targeted funding for proven strategies that result in:

- Effective Tier 1 or core literacy instruction,
- Early identification of struggling literacy learners through evidence-based screeners,
- Impactful Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions by reading specialists or interventionists who employ essential intervention practices,
- Evidence-based summer reading programs,
- Literacy-promoting pre-K, and
- Quality full-day Kindergarten.

There is no “magic bullet” for improving literacy proficiency. It isn't something that can just be bought, via a new curriculum, a new bundle of interventions, or a new assessment. Above all else, improving literacy proficiency requires that teachers learn and incorporate essential, research-backed literacy practices in their daily instruction.

Improving Tier 1 literacy instruction in an elementary classroom requires significant professional development and ongoing support for teachers, who generally do not learn essential literacy practices let alone master them during their pre-service preparation. Research shows that investing in literacy coaches with the expertise to support teachers to deliver literacy instruction that aligns with essential practices, can be a highly effective in-school literacy support.^{5,6,7} States and districts must not only invest in and then effectively recruit and train these literacy coaches, but support their success by positioning them as central to the school's work, ensuring sufficient time to observe and work with teachers in their classrooms, and providing ongoing opportunities for professional learning. Research also shows⁸ that evidence-based, resource-intensive classroom-based and home-based summer reading programs can support students' literacy development.

Classroom Instruction

Students in elementary classrooms often represent a diversity of literacy strengths and weaknesses. For example, some students could be virtual non-readers, while others are developing on grade level, while others might read above grade level and still others might be learning the English language. To meet the diversity of student needs, educators need to know evidence-based strategies for supporting all students in their classrooms.

⁵ Carlisle, J. F., & Berebitsky, D. (2011). Literacy coaching as a component of professional development. *Reading and Writing, 24*(7), 773-800.

⁶ Elish-Piper, L., & L'Allier, S. K. (2010). Exploring the relationship between literacy coaching and student reading achievement in grades K–1. *Literacy Research and Instruction, 49*(2), 162-174.

⁷ Bean, R. M., Draper, J. A., Hall, V., Vanderمولen, J., & Zigmund, N. (2010). Coaches and coaching in Reading First schools: A reality check. *The Elementary School Journal, 111*(1), 87-114.

⁸ Kim, J. S., & Quinn, D. M. (2013). The effects of summer reading on low-income children's literacy achievement from kindergarten to grade 8: A meta-analysis of classroom and home interventions. *Review of Educational Research, 83*(3), 386-431.

In Tier 1 instruction, **all** students receive high quality, research-supported literacy instruction. In these classrooms, students are also assessed using a valid and reliable embedded formative assessment (not the same as a screener or diagnostic assessment) to identify individual students' literacy strengths and needs. Using the information obtained from these assessments, instructors with sufficient expertise differentiate⁹ their classroom instruction, forming small groups of students with similar strengths and needs, planning instruction to target those needs, and implementing reading instruction in both small-group and whole-class formats.¹⁰ If Tier 1 instruction is implemented with a high degree of integrity and by highly trained teachers, most of the students¹¹ will show outcomes upon assessment that indicate a level of proficiency that meets minimal benchmarks for performance in the skill areas.¹²

Some children may be identified as needing additional literacy support through diagnostic assessment^{13,14} which can be used, along with teacher observations, to identify specific strengths and areas of need. Students identified as needing additional literacy support should receive Tier 2 interventions.¹⁵ These interventions should be additional, targeted, evidence-based instruction that occur in small groups or one on one and should not occur during core literacy, science, or social studies instruction or during recess or extracurricular activities¹⁶. During Tier 2 interventions, student progress is monitored using assessments and teacher observation and decisions are then made to: a) discontinue additional support; b) continue additional support; c) change the approach within the focus area. For example, shifting to a different intervention program or increasing emphasis on morphological approaches to teaching word decoding and spelling.

When a student continues to need additional literacy support after receiving Tier 2 interventions they should receive Tier 3 interventions¹⁷ which include additional evidence-based instruction, outside of core class time. For example, at Tier 3, a student whose reading proficiency falls significantly below that of his or her peers, despite Tier 2 interventions, might receive intensive literacy support multiple times per week¹⁸ from a reading specialist with close monitoring of his or her progress.

⁹ Differentiation means different instruction is provided for different students depending upon the results of assessments and observations of students' strengths and needs.

¹⁰ Denton, C.A., (n.d.), *Classroom reading instruction that supports struggling readers: Key components for effective teaching*. Retrieved from: <http://www.rtinetwork.org/essential/tieredinstruction/tier1/effectiveteaching>.

¹¹ It is typically recommended that 80-85% of students should have their needs met exclusively through tier 1 instruction.

¹² Shapiro, E.S., (n.d.), *Tiered instruction and intervention in a response-to-intervention model*. Retrieved from: <http://www.rtinetwork.org/essential/tieredinstruction/tiered-instruction-and-intervention-rti-model>.

¹³ These are assessments a student might need if they have not performed well on a screener and instructors need more information.

¹⁴ All screeners, benchmarks and diagnostics must be standards-aligned.

¹⁵ It is typically recommended that 10%-15% of students receive Tier 2 interventions; tier 2 interventions offer more focused instruction than typical classroom (Tier 1) instruction, for example pre-teaching and reviewing skills for Tier 1 lessons.

¹⁶ Duke, N. K. (2017, April). *Differentiated literacy instruction kindergarten to grade 3*. Retrieved from: <https://sites.google.com/a/umich.edu/nkduke/publications/differentiation>.

¹⁷ 5% of student receive Tier 3 interventions; Tier 3 interventions are focused on individualized goals and more intense than Tier 2 interventions

¹⁸ Frequency depends on the intensity and type of the intervention

As with any complex skill, there are a range of opportunities to improve literacy proficiency. When a student is struggling with literacy, many parents and educators assume the issue is ‘dyslexia’.¹⁹ Although it is possible that a student might ultimately have dyslexia, their literacy improvement opportunities are more likely related in whole or in part to another domain of literacy.²⁰ Therefore, standards-aligned and evidence-based screeners and diagnostic assessments paired with teacher and literacy specialist observations should be used when assessing why a student is struggling with literacy proficiency.

Outside of the Classroom

Research indicates that summer vacation may have detrimental effects on reading proficiency for many students, particularly students growing up in poverty.²¹ Various research studies show that students can lose one to three months of their school-year learning over the summer.^{22,23} This summer learning loss,²⁴ is cumulative, and over time, the differential learning rates between low-income and higher-income students contribute substantially to the opportunity gap.²⁵ Interventions, such as home- or classroom-based summer reading programs, are effective at combatting the summer slide.

Social and Emotional Learning

Additionally, students must attend school to receive quality instruction; therefore, states and districts should address issues of chronic absenteeism.²⁶ Students who are chronically absent in kindergarten are more likely to read at a lower level of proficiency than their peers who attend school regularly (missing less than 5% of school)²⁷. When students are at school, they should also feel safe and supported because of a nurturing and positive school climate. There is some research that shows a literacy curriculum is

¹⁹International Dyslexia Association Definition: Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

²⁰ Jones, J. S., Conradi, K., & Amendum, S. J. (2016). Matching interventions to reading needs: A case for differentiation. *The Reading Teacher*, 70(3), 307-316.

²¹ On average, students lose 1 month of schooling during the summer, particularly low SES students

²²Cooper, H., Nye, B., Charlton, K., Lindsay, J., Greathouse, S. (1996). The effects of summer vacation on achievement test scores: A narrative and meta-analytic review. *Review of Educational research*, 66(3), 227-268.

²³ Atteberry, A., & McEachin, A. (2016). School’s out: Summer learning loss across grade levels and school contexts in the United States today. In Alexander, K., Pitcock, S., & Boulay, M. (Eds). *Summer learning and summer learning loss*, (pp. 35-53). New York: Teachers College Press.

²⁴ This is also known as the “summer slide.”

²⁵ McCombs, J. S., Augustine, C. H., Schwartz, H. L., Bodilly, S. J., McInnis, B., Lichter, D. S., & Cross, A. B. (2011). *Making summer count: How summer programs can boost students' learning*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

²⁶ Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10 percent or more of school days for any reason.

Romero, M. & Lee, Y. (2007). *A national portrait of chronic absenteeism in the early grades*. New York, NY: National Center for Children in Poverty: The Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia.

enhanced when it is intentional about developing social and emotional learning (SEL) core competencies.^{28,29}

Early Learning Opportunities

Finally, many American preschoolers do not have access to high-quality early learning opportunities, resulting in significant disparities in children’s early learning experiences. Research demonstrates that students who are enrolled in quality pre-kindergarten³⁰ and full day kindergarten³¹ learn foundational skills that support their continued literacy development. Stand for Children strongly supports high quality full-day kindergarten and high-quality pre-k. Quality is crucial and, in the case of pre-k, scale is as well given that fade out is more likely in situations in which only a fraction of kindergartners have had quality pre-k because kindergarten teachers often end up teaching based on the level of the less prepared students. Where it’s possible to secure funds for full-day kindergarten and scaled, high quality pre-k and there is a need for our leadership, we strongly support affiliates’ leadership. That said, given funding limitations and the presence of early childhood focused advocacy organizations in several of our states, we have tended to focus on strategic K-3 investments, our strategy for which varies depends on the level of funds available.

Funding

How is the funding distributed?

If only a small amount of funding is available (e.g. \$5-\$15 million annually), funding is best allocated via grants to districts that meet eligibility requirements, and attention needs to be paid to structure the grants to the greatest extent possible not to favor districts that simply have more grant writing capacity and to cover whole districts or at least a cluster of schools to account for high student mobility in high poverty schools.

If a higher level of funding is possible (e.g. the equivalent of \$300-\$1000 per K-3 student; with an additional allocation for 4th and 5th graders who continue to struggle) funding should be allocated on a per-pupil basis, with a higher level of per pupil funding (often called “weighted funding”) for low-income students and students with disabilities and English Language Learners. It is strongly preferred to allocate funding in this manner to allocating funding based on students with significant challenges as that does not incentivize improving Tier 1 instruction, which is most impactful.

What are conditions, or eligibility requirements, for receiving funding?

Districts or, in the case of a district-level solution, schools that serve K-5 students must:

²⁸ CASEL. (2017). *Examples of social and emotional learning in elementary English Language Arts instruction*. Retrieved from: <http://www.casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/SEL-in-Elementary-ELA-8-20-17.pdf>.

²⁹ Core competencies include self-awareness and self-management, social awareness, and responsible decision making. See resources for more detail.

³⁰ Weiland, C., & Yoshikawa, H. (2013). Impacts of a prekindergarten program on children's mathematics, language, literacy, executive function, and emotional skills. *Child Development*, 84(6), 2112-2130.

³¹ Lee, V. E., Burkam, D. T., Ready, D. D., Honigman, J., & Meisels, S. J. (2006). Full-day versus half-day kindergarten: In which program do children learn more? *American Journal of Education*, 112(2), 163-208.

- **Supplement not supplant** existing investments in student and educator supports related to K-5 literacy (i.e., not moving current literacy related funding to other priorities and use this targeted funding to backfill, resulting in no net gain of service for students)
- **Require annual submission (before the start of the school year) of a school level literacy plan** detailing how they will use the funding to lift third-grade literacy proficiency levels and help 4th and 5th graders who continue to need additional literacy learning support. The plan must:
 - Include a school-wide early literacy educational needs assessment.
 - Include using standards-aligned, evidence-based assessments to identify K-5 students who need additional literacy support, supporting Tier 1 instruction that aligns with essential literacy practices, and implementing evidence-based interventions and literacy curricula as intended.
 - Include evidence-based (in content and the process of coaching) and state standards aligned literacy coaching and evidence-based and standards-aligned professional development for teachers.
 - Specifically address how the funds will be used to increase literacy rates.
 - Include provisions for how the school will differentiate Tier 1, 2, and 3 level instruction to address the various reasons students are not within grade-level expectations in literacy.
 - Differentiated tiers must be high-quality, evidence-based instruction informed by appropriate assessments.
 - Be developed in consultation with a school’s principal, literacy coach(es), literacy specialist(s), librarian(s), and classroom teachers.
 - Be shared with all school staff and implementation progress reviewed regularly with relevant staff.
- **Require Vision and hearing screenings** for all kindergarten through second grade students, and all students entering the school system for the first time, and **access to hearing aids and eyeglasses as needed.**³²

How should dedicated funds be used to support third-grade literacy?

Educator Supports

Professional Development

It is important to acknowledge that supporting literacy coaches is a time-intensive effort. These individuals must not only have specific knowledge about literacy, but they must also have expertise in teaching and working with adult learners.

- **Literacy coaches** trained in evidence-based,³³ standards-aligned literacy assessment, instruction and supports. At least one literacy coach is needed per school; however, some campuses might require more literacy coaching support given the classroom teacher literacy expertise.
 - In a report by Elish-Paper and L’Allier (2011), teachers had 9 to 21 teachers per coach, with the median number of 14 teachers. They found higher gains in classrooms in which teachers received more coaching. Reference: Elish-Paper, L., & L’Allier, S. (2011). Examining the

³² According to the American Optometric Association, 25 percent of school-aged children have undiagnosed eye problems that inhibit their ability to read properly or cause fatigue, among other effects.

³³ See resources for specific list of evidence

relationship between literacy coaching and student reading gains in grades K-3. *The Elementary School Journal*, 112(1), 83-106.

- **Adequate support**
 - Literacy coaches must spend at least half of their time in classrooms, observing and supporting literacy instruction. See the Essential Coaching Practices for Early Literacy in the Resources section below.
 - Continued training and professional development for literacy coaches³⁴ in literacy instruction and working with adult learners.
- **Professional development** conducted by literacy coaches in evidence-based, standards-aligned literacy assessment, instruction, and supports that are age, developmentally, and culturally appropriate.
 - Professional development can provide opportunities to train educators in the use of additional evidence-based, standards-aligned instructional resources.
- **State-wide Literacy Professional development initiatives** created with the intent of building up the capacity of school literacy coaches as the primary delivery system for professional development.³⁵
- **Enable every school to ensure at least one literacy specialist** is certified to provide Tier 3 (intensive) support to students who are not making sufficient progress through their current intervention; have been unable to learn with other teaching strategies instruction; or who require more intensive structured literacy instruction due to a language-based learning disability, such as dyslexia.
- **Training** for school counselors, social workers, teachers, and other school personnel to effectively support the social emotional learning needs of students, including addressing effects of student trauma.

Student Supports

- **Literacy assessments aligned with state standards** that have demonstrated reliability and validity and effectively evaluate K-5 students' progress towards literacy proficiency as well as identify students with literacy difficulties.
- **Multi-tiered system of supports** across all tiers of intervention.
 - These supports must be evidence-based and standards aligned. As noted earlier in this brief, effective Tier 1 instruction by the classroom teacher is critical. Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports must be delivered by or under the guidance of literacy specialists trained in evidence-based, standards-aligned literacy assessment and instruction.
- **When a student is identified as in need of additional literacy learning support, a literacy support plan is created by district and/or school literacy specialists for each student:**

³⁴ State-wide professional development for literacy coaches is an effective modality for the continued professional development of literacy coaches. For example, see the work of the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators' General Education Leadership Network the Early Literacy Task Force in Michigan.

³⁵ For example, as enacted in Just Read, Florida! Since the program began in 2004, Florida had demonstrated steady improvements on the NAEP assessment. In 2011, the percentage of Florida fourth graders at or above proficient in reading was higher than their peers across the nation. See resources for more information.

- Each student identified as needing additional literacy learning support receives a collaboratively designed intervention plan that remains in place, with revisions as needed based on progress and evolving strengths and needs, until the student reaches proficiency.
 - Plan must include a parent³⁶ engagement component,³⁷ with information about parents' rights under IDEA (the federal special education law).
- The plan must include timely, accurate measurement of student progress and appropriate data feedback loops during the tiered intervention approach and to determine exit from interventions.
- [Evidence-based³⁸ summer school programing or other extended learning opportunities³⁹](#) using standards-aligned literacy instructional practices provided by educators who have received support in these practices. The Kim and Quinn study found suggestive evidence that resource-intensive programs with the following factors had a positive effect on reading achievement:
 - Small class sizes (13 or fewer)
 - 4-8 hours of daily instruction time
 - 70-175 hours of total program time

Some additional key findings from this research:

- The authors call out the importance of explicitly teaching vocabulary learning strategies during the school year if that is a goal for the summer months.
- They continue to make the case to examine the relationship between the quality of classroom instructional practices and reading outcomes.

Dr. Kim's findings from many of his studies, include the ABCs of Improved Reading:

- Access to books
- Books that match readers' ability levels and interests
- Comprehension, monitored and guided by an adult, teacher or parent.

Oversight and Accountability

- **Require the state department of education** to have a director of literacy or a structured literacy department embedded within the agency to oversee statewide initiatives in literacy , provide technical assistance to regional centers or districts, and implement the funding application, evaluation, and reporting process.⁴⁰
- **Districts or, in the case of a district policy, schools must participate in an annual audit** to ensure funds are directed toward evidence-based, standards-aligned activities.

³⁶ By "parent," we mean the parent, legal guardian, or their designee.

³⁷ Parent engagement includes informing them about the plan and offering strategies and techniques they can use with their child outside of school. Parent engagement does NOT include approval of the plan. Parents are not literacy experts and should not determine the actions that occur in the classroom used to support their child's literacy.

³⁸ Resource intensive programming includes the following: 1) 13 or fewer students per class, 2) 4-8 hours of instruction per day, and 3) 70-175 hours of total instruction

³⁹ See the READs program description in the Resources section of the document.

⁴⁰ Between 1.5% and 5% of the funding is allocated to the state department of education for oversight and accountability. The exact level is contingent on whether and how extensively the department will administer or contract to administer Reading Academies.

- **Districts or, in the case of a district policy, schools that do not meet eligibility requirements will not receive funds** and districts or, in the case of a district policy, schools that do not comply with the uses of funds or reporting requirements will have funding put on hold until there is a suitable resolution.

Additional Policies Beyond Dedicated K-5 Funding to Improve Early Literacy

Early Learning Opportunities

- **Ensure all students** in affiliate states have access to high quality pre-kindergarten and full day kindergarten programs
 - Require teachers to have adequate early childhood training and preparation

Chronic Absenteeism

- **Establish a data collection and monitoring system** to identify how many and which students are chronically absent.
 - Use this data in a strategic and ongoing way to identify truant student, and monitor efforts to improve their attendance.⁴¹

Preparation and Certification

- **Ensure teacher preparation standards** are rigorous and include a high degree of specificity about a range of evidence-based literacy instructional practices.
 - Require teacher preparation programs to incorporate at least 12 credit hours of literacy instruction coursework.
- **Ensure grade band- certification**⁴² aligns with evidence-based early literacy practices
 - Preschool to 2nd or 3rd grade
 - Specialize in early literacy
- **Require that all teachers pass** a rigorous examination regarding evidenced based literacy instruction as a requirement of certification.

Accountability

- **State accountability** systems should be weighted toward growth in 3rd grade literacy on standards-aligned assessments.

⁴¹ This is context specific, see Jacob and Lovett (2017) [report](#) *Chronic absenteeism: An old problem in search of new answers*, for specific examples.

⁴² Grade levels teachers are certified to teach

- In an independent analysis of state ESSA plans,⁴³ Bellwether determined that Minnesota’s academic achievement indicator created sufficient incentive for schools to prioritize both student proficiency and growth over time.⁴⁴

What about the District Level?

Our point of view on how to improve district level literacy mirrors our state-level approach. Additional areas of focus include:

- Assessing specifically how much literacy coaching is available to elementary school teachers and how effective the coaching is and making recommendations as appropriate to help the district align with best practices;
- Assessing the quality of the district’s pre-k and K-3 English Language Arts and Literacy curriculum and instructional materials and making recommendations as appropriate to help the district align with best practices;
- Assessing the quality of the district’s literacy assessment, instruction, literacy coaching and interventions and making recommendations as appropriate to help the district align with best practices;
- Assessing the length, level of access, and quality of summer reading programs and making recommendations as appropriate to help the district align with best practices.

Next Steps

The National Stand Team is excited to partner with you to craft an initiative specifically aligned to your state or district to substantially increase early literacy proficiency through evidence-based supports and practices to improve K-3 literacy.

We are incredibly fortunate to have preeminent literacy expert Nell Duke on our team as a consultant to help you and your SOM craft the most impactful initiative possible.

Please your SOM know if you would like to schedule a start work conversation.

⁴³ Bellwether Education Partners. (2017). *An Independent Review of ESSA State Plans [PDF document]*. Retrieved from: https://bellwethereducation.org/sites/default/files/Bellwether_ESSA_PlanReview_MN_Final.pdf.

⁴⁴ See the Resources of this document for a link to the Minnesota state plan; specific achievement indicators for third-grade literacy are on p. 10.

Resources

Core Features of professional development from Desimone's research

- Content Focus
 - A link between activities that focus on subject matter content and how students learn that content increases teacher knowledges and skills, improvement in practice, and to a more limited extent-increases in student achievement.
- Active Learning
 - Including observations followed by interactive feedback and discussion; reviewing student work; and leading discussions.
- Coherence
 - Teacher learning is consistent with teacher knowledge and beliefs
- Duration
 - Activities that last longer than a few days, at least 20 hours or more of contact time.
- Collective participation
 - Can be accomplished through participation of teachers from the same grade, school, or department. Such arrangements can set up potential interaction and discourse.

ESSA Evidence-Based Intervention Definition

“...the term ‘evidence-based,’ when used with respect to State, local educational agency, or school activity, means an activity, strategy, or intervention that

- A) Demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other *relevant outcomes* based on-
 - a. *Strong evidence* from at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study;
 - b. *Moderate evidence* from at least one well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study; or
 - c. *Promising evidence* from at least one well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias; or
- B)
 - a. *Demonstrates a rational* based on high-quality research findings or positive evaluation that such an activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve student outcomes or other *relevant outcomes*; and
 - b. Includes ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such activity, strategy, or intervention

Just Read, Florida!

Example of a state-wide early literacy initiative with promising evidence of its effectiveness. Website include reading plan, parent, educator, and coaching resources.

Michigan Early Literacy Initiative

LiteracyEssentials.org is home to a series of resources created to guide leaders and educators on the Essential Instructional Practices for Early Literacy. An executive summary of the initiative and educator support network can be found [here](#).

[Minnesota- ESSA Plan Accountability](#)

This is a portion of Minnesota's approved ESSA plan for Accountability

[READS for Summer Learning](#)

How READS Works (see graphic [here](#)):

Responsibilities shared between the school and the READ program.

- At school, the student completes a READS reading survey, this survey asks questions about the books students like to read. The READS program match students to 10 free books using student reading preferences from the survey and reading level from spring reading comprehension assessments. The READS program uses an algorithm that matches each student's interest with books that are the appropriate difficulty given the student's baseline reading skill level.
- At school, the teacher leads 6 READS lessons just prior to the end of the school year. These lessons are focused around reading strategies that are designed to help beginning readers to read outside of school, with limited or no adult supports. Teachers receive training during the school year (typically a 2-hour training) by the READS program. The READS program then mails 10 matched books and comprehension activities to students over the summer.
- The school hosts a READS Family Night event at their school. The READS program provides data and consultation to the schools. This data is generated from spring and fall reading comprehension tests. The spring test serves as a baseline measure of reading skills, and the fall test serves as a post-test.

[Social and Emotional Learning in Elementary English Language Arts Instruction](#)

The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) compiled examples of SEL instruction in Elementary classrooms. This document has examples of lessons, activities and teaching practices for elementary classrooms looking that incorporate SEL in their literacy instruction.

[Essential Coaching Practices for Elementary Literacy](#)

This research articulates seven research-based principles for effective elementary literacy instruction.

1. Coaching requires specialized knowledge
2. Time working with teachers is the focus of coaching
3. Collaborative relationships are essential for coaching
4. Coaching that supports student reading achievement focuses on a set of core activities
5. Coaching must be both intentional and opportunistic
6. Coaches must be literacy leaders in the school
7. Coaching evolves over time

[The What Works Clearinghouse](#)

The What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) is an excellent resource that reviews research on programs, products, practices, and policies in education. When searching for evidence-based instruction and interventions, this is an excellent place to begin.