



New Mexico Statewide Literacy Framework

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Teaching, Learning and Assessment Division of Curriculum & Instruction

New Mexico Statewide Literacy Framework

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Required Notice

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Notes

This document is available on the NMPED Literacy and Humanities website at <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/literacy-humanities/>

This document is intended to be Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant in its entirety. Should a reader encounter any difficulties in accessing the document, please contact the PED to assist in accessing information.

A Message Regarding COVID-19

On March 12, 2020, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham ordered all New Mexico Public School buildings to close temporarily in response to the ongoing international novel coronavirus pandemic (<https://www.governor.state.nm.us/2020/03/12/new-mexico-schools-to-temporarily-close/>). In light of this, students should not be coming to school sites, unless attending childcare at a designated, open site or coming to pick up meals. Instead:

- Follow the guidance, policies, and procedures of the New Mexico Department of Health. <https://cv.nmhealth.org/>
- Stay informed and know where to go for the most current information. The best source of accurate information for our state is: <https://www.newmexico.gov/>.
- To the extent feasible, virtual meetings are recommended for staff rather than any face-to-face meetings; however, staff members may need to retrieve supplies or materials from the building. Additionally, staff who may meet in person should practice self-care, personal hygiene, and social distancing. They should follow all workplace policies and general guidance that includes staying home if sick, washing hands regularly and for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, and covering coughs and sneezes (in the arm/elbow). PED recommends requiring administrative approval for any in-person meetings and developing guidelines for how to interact during meetings that ensure social distancing including adhering to a six-foot personal distance.

The New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) is providing the following guidance to support the state's school districts, charter schools, and communities in determining their plans and strategies for reopening schools in 2020-2021: https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/20NMPED_ReentryGuide_Hybrid.pdf

The PED has compiled guidance to New Mexico educators to meet the needs of supporting learning outside of normal educational practices. Following our colleagues in Kansas, PED has adopted the term "continuous learning," recognizing that instructional modalities will vary by community and, importantly, should be student centered. Purposefully, PED avoids terms such as "virtual learning," "e-learning," or "distance learning" in an attempt to support the individualized learning needs of all students. New Mexico is a state that is grounded in diversity, and this strength should allow us to demonstrate equity, inclusivity, and creativity in supporting the needs of all students. For continuous learning support, please visit <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/continuous-learning-plan-support/>.

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New Mexico's Vision and Goals

New Mexico is on a strategic course to ensure all literacy instruction aligns with the science of reading because, as author Louisa C. Moats says, teaching reading *is* rocket science ([Moats, 2020](#)). As stated by Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham in her position paper *A New Direction for New Mexico Schools*, it is the shared responsibility of all New Mexicans to ensure every child is prepared with the right skills so they can reach their full potential and help drive our state forward to a better future ([Lujan Grisham, 2018](#)).

This work is grounded in PED's mission, vision, and four strategic goals to infuse equity, excellence, and relevance into education statewide ([NMPED, 2019d](#)).

Mission: The PED partners with educators, communities, and families to ensure that all students are healthy, secure in their identity, and holistically prepared for college, career, and life.

Vision: Students in New Mexico are engaged in a culturally and linguistically responsive educational system that meets the social, emotional, and academic needs of all students.

Strategic Goals:

1. An educational system that benefits the whole child
2. A vibrant educator ecosystem
3. Equitable access to educational opportunities for students and families
4. College and career pathways aligned with the profile of a New Mexico graduate

The PED believes literacy is a fundamental civil right. Literacy is cognitive, social, and cultural. Language and culture are linked; you cannot have one without the other. E.D. Hirsch Jr.

developed the term “cultural literacy” with the awareness that literacy cannot be developed in isolation from the culturally assumed knowledge that shapes the context and content of communication ([Hirsch, E.D., Kett, J., & Trefil, J., 1987](#)). Language and culture are intrinsically linked together from the foundation of *New Mexico's Statewide Literacy Framework*.

Research shows bilingual and multicultural education programs are beneficial for all students. The state Bilingual Multicultural Education Act, Sections 22-23-1 to 22-23-6 NMSA 1978, requires full implementation of evidence-based bilingual and multicultural education programs, including instruction and assessment for students and professional learning for teachers. The PED is working to expand from a monolingual literacy framework to a biliteracy framework. This work will be ongoing. This means this is a living document, so please refer back to this framework for ongoing updates. Students in New Mexico have varying social and cultural backgrounds, and individual communities in New Mexico have different assets and unique needs. This framework strives to reflect New Mexico's cultural and linguistic needs and diversity.

Literacy Framework Purpose

The ultimate responsibility of all educators is to prepare ALL students for meaningful post-secondary opportunities, including further education, meaningful employment, lifelong learning, and roles as contributing members of communities. Reading, while not the only skill necessary to access these opportunities, is the foundation for academic and long-term success. Literacy is one of the great equalizers that can assure a person can pursue a happy, engaged life for themselves and others. The ability to read affects society on the individual level and lays the foundation for a collective just society.

The critical importance of a well-coordinated literacy effort that begins at birth and proceeds persistently and systematically through high school is clear to any New Mexico educator who embraces the idea that every child—regardless of background or zip code—is capable of achieving at the highest levels. This enormous and complex task must be embraced and implemented at the state, district, school, and classroom levels.

The *New Mexico Literacy Framework* provides clear guidance on the components of a comprehensive literacy system to build, implement, and strengthen literacy instruction

in New Mexico. It is designed to strategically address the persistent achievement gap for New Mexico students by developing common evidence-based practices based in the science of reading and a sense of urgency around literacy.

The *New Mexico Literacy Framework* serves as the cornerstone to ensure positive learning outcomes for New Mexico's children and is in direct alignment with PED's *New Mexico's State Plan for the Every Student Succeeds Act* ([New Mexico](#)

[Public Education Department, 2017](#)) and the PED's mission, vision, and strategic goals.

DEFINITION OF LITERACY

Traditional definitions of literacy target specific subject areas, particularly the ability to read and

write. Expanded definitions sometimes include reading, writing, listening, and speaking ([Moats, 2000](#)). More recent definitions, which also frequently incorporate additional literacy areas such as quantitative literacy and technology literacy, emphasize the application of literacy skills for personal and

“Literacy is a bridge from misery to hope. It is a tool for daily life in modern society. It is a bulwark against poverty ... a platform for democratization, and a vehicle for the promotion of cultural and national identity. Especially for girls and women, it is an agent of family health and nutrition. For everyone, everywhere, literacy is, along with education in general, a basic human right ...”

Kofi Annan

Seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations
January 1997 to December 2006

social purposes. UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, defines literacy as the “ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, compute and use printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning to enable an individual to achieve his or her goals, to develop his or her knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in the wider society” ([Australian Literacy Educators' Association, n.d.](#)).

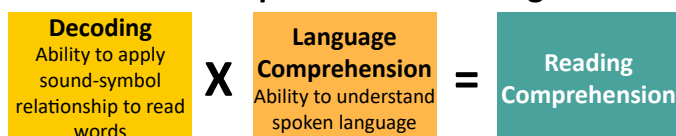
In the 21st century, literacy includes the ability to locate, evaluate, and communicate through a wide range of resources including text, visual, audio, and video sources. In other words, literate individuals: demonstrate independence; build strong content knowledge; respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline; comprehend as well as critique; value evidence; use technology and digital media strategically and capably; and come to understand other perspectives and cultures ([Common Core State Standards Initiative, n.d.](#)).

THE SCIENCE OF READING

New Mexico is working to provide students with a proven approach to improve literacy. As Dr. Suzanne Carreker explains, the science of reading “is evidence: Evidence from the accumulation of research on reading acquisition and instruction that has been conducted using gold-standard methodologies and has identified effective practices. Simply put, the Science of Reading is not an opinion, nor is it a philosophical belief. The accumulated Science of Reading evidence should be trusted to inform the why, what, and how of reading instruction” ([Carreker, 2020](#)).

As Gough and Tunmer depict in their graphic “The Simple View of Reading,” ([Gough & Tunmer, 1986](#)), reading comprehension is the product of two factors: word recognition and language comprehension. Both are critical factors to success, and difficulty with one can have a negative impact on the other. Yet both also comprise underpinning components.

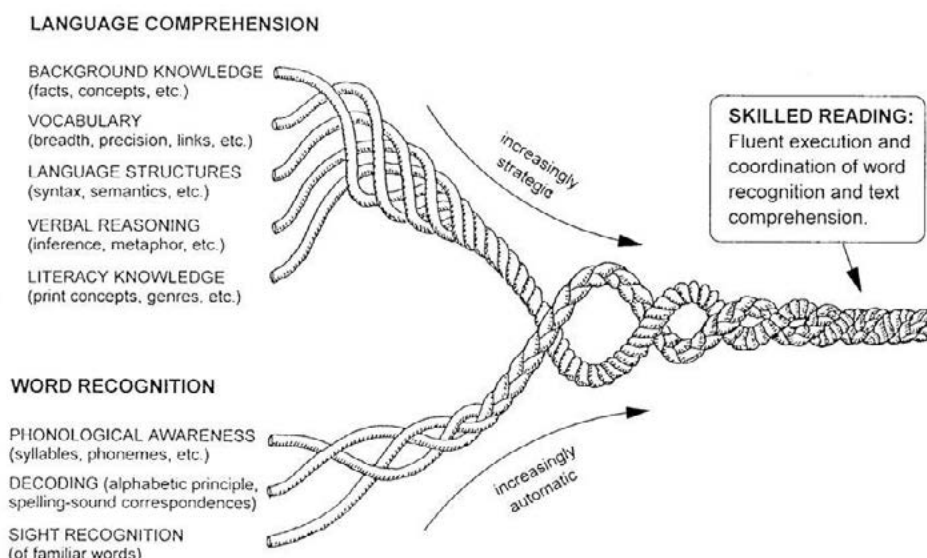
The Simple View of Reading



(Gough & Tunmer, 1986; Hoover & Gough, 1990)

Dr. Hollis Scarborough expanded “The Simple View of Reading” with the image of a rope comprising many strands and tightly woven together to develop a skilled reader. As the International Dyslexia Association explains the infographic, “The word-recognition strands (phonological awareness, decoding, and sight recognition of familiar words) work together as the reader becomes accurate, fluent, and increasingly automatic with repetition and practice. Concurrently, the language-comprehension strands (background knowledge, vocabulary, language structures, verbal reasoning, and literacy knowledge) reinforce one another and then weave together with the word-recognition strands to produce a skilled reader. This does not happen overnight; it requires instruction and practice over time.” ([International Dyslexia Association, 2018](#))

The Strands of Skilled Reading



The image, courtesy of the author, originally appeared in the following publication: Scarborough, H. S. (2001). Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis)abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice. In S. Neuman & D. Dickinson (Eds.), *Handbook for research in early literacy* (pp. 97–110). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

STRUCTURED LITERACY

New Mexico is on a strategic path to ensure all literacy instruction is evidence-based. Structured literacy is an umbrella term coined by the International Dyslexia Association in 2016 to describe a science-based, explicit, systematic, cumulative approach to reading and writing instruction. Structured literacy is an approach to reading instruction where teachers carefully structure important literacy skills, concepts, and the sequence of instruction, to facilitate children’s literacy learning and progress as much as possible. This approach is helpful for all students and can be beneficial not only for students with

reading disabilities, but also for other at-risk students including English learners and struggling adolescents (IDA, 2019).

Structured literacy is the embodiment of the science of reading in the classroom (Carreker, n.d.). While all students can benefit from structured literacy instruction, it is critical for students with characteristics of dyslexia because it provides methodical instruction in the area of word recognition while also embedding support for language comprehension. This is because structured literacy is marked by several elements and is distinctive in the principles that guide how these elements are taught.

ELEMENTS OF STRUCTURED LITERACY	PRINCIPLES GUIDING THE TEACHING OF THE ELEMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Phonology – the study of the sound structure of spoken words (includes rhyming, counting words in spoken sentences, clapping syllables in spoken words, as well as blending, segmenting, and manipulating phonemes within words)• Sound-Symbol Association - the ability to map phonemes to printed letters (involves visual to auditory -reading- and auditory to visual -spelling-• Syllable Instruction – instruction of the six basic syllable types in the English language: closed, vowel-consonant-e, open, consonant-le, r-controlled, and vowel pair as well as division rules for decoding and spelling multisyllabic words• Morphology – the study of morphemes including base words, roots, prefixes, and suffixes (this instruction assists students with decoding, encoding, and comprehension)• Syntax – the set of principles that dictate the sequence and function of words in a sentence in order to convey meaning (includes grammar, sentence variation, and the mechanics of language).• Semantics – the aspect of language concerned with meaning (instruction includes comprehension of written language)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Systematic and Cumulative – instruction is organized to follow the logical order of language progressing methodically from easiest and most basic to more difficult concepts and elements – each additional step continues to fold in previously mastered concepts (For example, the /f/ phoneme (sound) is initially taught as being represented by the grapheme (letter) f before additional spellings such as ff, ph, or gh are introduced. Furthermore, the teacher is careful about the quantity of information to present so that the student can truly master concepts before adding additional information. For example, each short vowel sound and letter may be gradually introduced, practiced, and mastered for reading and spelling before introducing additional short vowels)• Explicit – the teacher explains each concept directly and clearly with modeling and guided practice with continuous student-teacher interaction (It is not assumed that students will naturally deduce concepts on their own) Research shows the highly explicit teaching characteristic of structured literacy instruction benefits the majority of students, not just those with disabilities.• Diagnostic – Instruction is designed to meet individual student need based on careful and continuous formal and informal assessments (through both observation and with standardized measures) – content is mastered to a degree of automaticity and the teacher uses the student’s response to instruction to make adjustments in pacing, presentation, and practice opportunities <u>This progress monitoring also allows the identification of needs for entire schools or school districts if there is a high occurrence of data showing widespread weaknesses to adjust the core instructions of these areas.</u>• Multisensory/Multimodal – Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are paired together – students are encouraged to physically move tactile objects such as letter tiles

These elements and principles build the ability to both recognize words and develop language comprehension, the two critical factors necessary to gain reading comprehension. Developing skills are practices and applied through ample opportunities both in isolation and continuous texts. When students encounter unfamiliar words, the science of reading provides evidence that skilled readers use knowledge of letters and sounds to solve the unknown words until the word is added to long-term memory through the process of orthographic mapping for automatic recognition. In contrast, unsuccessful readers often compensate by relying on pictures and context clues. This ineffective practice, sometimes referred to as the three-cueing system or meaning, structure, visual approach may even be encouraged by teachers and programs, but this instructional approach is not guided by the science of reading. In actuality, these poor habits impede the orthographic mapping process and can prevent students from comprehending text accurately. This difficulty with comprehension may actually be due to struggles with word recognition. Thus, it is critically important that instruction targets these skills for word recognition while also developing language comprehension ([Carreker, 2020](#)).

READING COMPREHENSION		
WORD RECOGNITION		LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phonology Sound-Symbol Correlation Syllable Instruction Morphology 	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Morphology Syntax Semantics Verbal Reasoning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systematic and Cumulative Explicit Diagnostic Multisensory/Multimodal

A new state law, 22-13-32 NMSA 1978, requires universal dyslexia screening for first-grade students, and early interventions for students displaying characteristics of dyslexia. This law additionally requires all school districts to develop and implement a literacy professional learning plan to implement structured literacy training for all elementary school teachers and for evidence-based reading intervention for all reading interventionists, and all special education teachers. To assist school districts in meeting this state law in the 2020-2021 school year, PED convened a dyslexia/structured literacy working group. As a result, school districts will be provided with structured literacy training and two English dyslexia screeners, which will be offered to school districts free of charge. In addition, a Spanish dyslexia screener will be available. Regarding Native American languages, only two of the 23 tribal languages have given permission for their languages to be written for educational purposes; there is currently no known dyslexia screener for Navajo or Zuni. Screenings should be administered in the language of instruction.

WHY A FOCUS ON READING

The ability of a student to read and write tends to be a common, if not a simplistic, definition of literacy. This basic definition of literacy has expand-

STRUCTURED LITERACY PRIMER

Effective reading instruction for most children *all* this.



Inner Circle: Elements
Outer Circle: Teaching Principles

ed to include reading, writing, listening, speaking, and similar skills. In addition, to be truly be literate includes

- The integration of listening, speaking, writing and critical thinking across all media types
- The knowledge to recognize and use language appropriate to a situation
- The ability to think, create, question, solve problems and reflect

These are indisputedly critical skills for student success. Reading follows oral language. However, for the purpose of this framework, reading will be the primary focus because it is a critical skill and research provides clear guidance on how and what to teach in terms of reading.

In addition, starting with reading allows educators to identify and delineate variables directly under the school's control—such as group size, instructional time, or materials—to optimize student learning.

“Successful literacy instruction and interventions ... provide a strong core of highly explicit, systematic teaching of foundational skills such as decoding and spelling skills, as well as explicit teaching of other important components of literacy such as vocabulary, comprehension, and writing.”

International Dyslexia Association

The *New Mexico Literacy Framework* provides a roadmap for designing reading systems and instruction that are well-designed, implemented, and evaluated throughout kindergarten through 12th grade. The framework is designed to be systematic, strategic, and dynamic.

Systematic: The framework contains implementation steps and practices crucial for achieving reading outcomes and goals for all students in New Mexico.

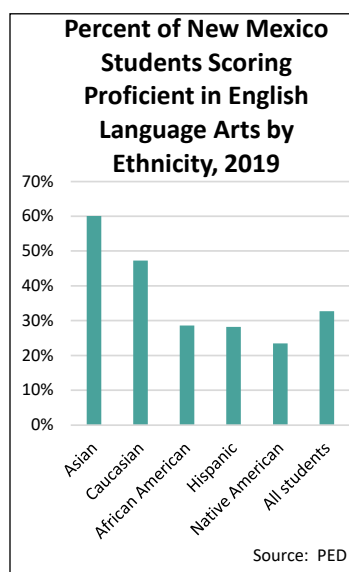
Strategic: The framework is thoughtfully designed to ensure progress toward the goal that all students acquire the reading skills that will prepare them for college or career.

Dynamic: The document was designed with the expectation it will continue to evolve by incorporating new information and research as warranted.

New Mexico Current Achievement

The use of data lay the foundation for education reform efforts by improving systemic processes and student learning. Data can assist reform efforts by providing a clear understanding of student achievement gaps, identifying needs to target programs and services, ensuring effective and efficient use of funding, and continuing effective practices. ([Bernhardt, n.d.](#)) .

New Mexico's demographics are distinctive: 62 percent of the state's population is Hispanic, 23 percent is White, 10 percent is Native American, 2 percent is African American, 1 percent is Asian, and 2 percent is multi-racial or other ethnicity. New Mexico is ranked 36th in overall population size, has the fifth largest landmass in the United States (121,665 square miles), and ranks 45th in the nation in population density. Further, with only 17.27 people per square mile, New Mexico faces unique

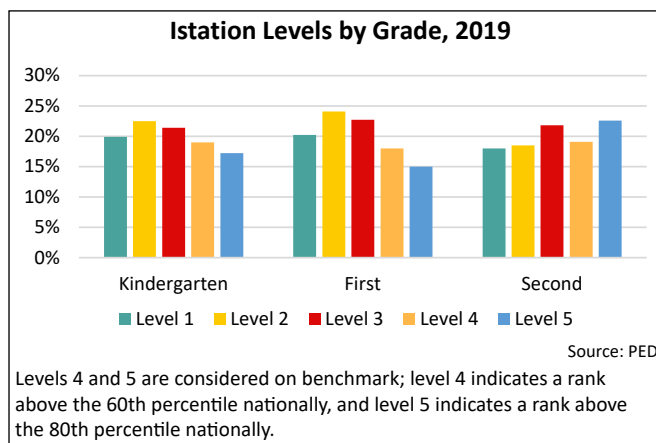
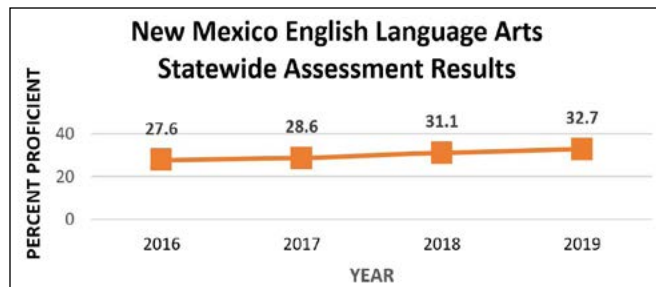


challenges educating students in rural areas, including on vast Native American lands.

LITERACY ACHIEVEMENT IN NEW MEXICO

From kindergarten to grade three, children focus on reading acquisition, learning to read. From fourth grade on, children's focus shifts to the application of these skills when reading and analyzing complex text, reading to learn. The goal for all students to acquire critically-needed early literacy skills by the end of third grade is paramount in reaching New Mexico's literacy goals. A 2011 report by the Annie E. Casey Foundation found that students who were not proficient readers by the end of grade three were four times more likely to drop out before graduation ([Hernandez, n.d.](#)).

Despite incremental growth year-over-year, data indicate less than one-third of New Mexico students earn a score of proficient on New Mexico English Language Arts statewide assessment results.



Too few students in the early grades are on benchmark in reading as measured by ISIP, Istation's Indicators of Progress. Levels four and five are considered on benchmark; level four indicates a student ranks above the 60th percentile nationally, and level five indicates a student ranks above the 80th percentile nationally. ISIP Early Reading provides growth information in the five critical domains of early reading: phonemic awareness, alphabetic knowledge and skills, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. It is designed to (a) identify children at risk for reading difficulties, (b) provide automatic continuous progress monitoring of skills that are predictors of later reading success, and (c) provide immediate and automatic linkage of assessment data to student learning needs, which facilitates

differentiated instruction ([Mathes, P., Torgesen, J., & Herron, J., 2016](#)).

In reviewing the Istation early literacy indicator data, only 36.2 percent of kindergarten students in New Mexico met this important literacy benchmark, 33 percent of first graders met the benchmark, 41.7 percent of second graders met the benchmark, and only 38.7 percent of third graders met the benchmark. These data indicate too many New Mexico students are at risk for not reaching subsequent reading benchmarks or grade-level goals without highly effective and systematic instruction and interventions.

PERFORMANCE ON A NATIONAL READING ASSESSMENT

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the largest nationally representative and continuing assessment of America's academic achievement ([NAEP](#),

[n.d.](#)). Every two years, fourth grade and eighth grade students across the United States take the NAEP reading assessment, which provides an opportunity to compare New Mexico students performance with other students across the nation.

In 2019, 24 percent of fourth graders scored proficient or above in reading, and 24 percent of eighth graders scored proficient or above on the NAEP reading assessment. This percentage was not significantly different from that in 2017 (25 percent) and in 1998 (21 percent). In 2019, the average score of fourth-grade students in New Mexico was 208. This was lower than the average score of 219 for students across the nation. The average score of students in New Mexico in 2019 (208) was not significantly different from their average score in 2017 (208) and in 1998 (205). Correspondingly, the average score of eighth-grade students in New Mexico in 2019 was 252, lower than the average national score of 262. This average score was lower than the average scores

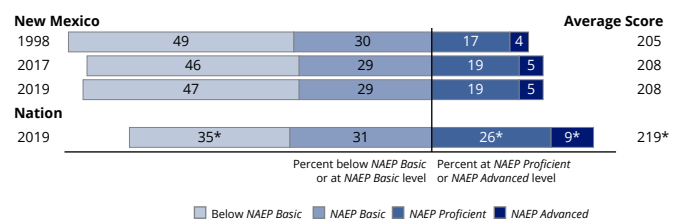


2019 Reading State Snapshot Report New Mexico ■ Grade 4 ■ Public Schools

Overall Results

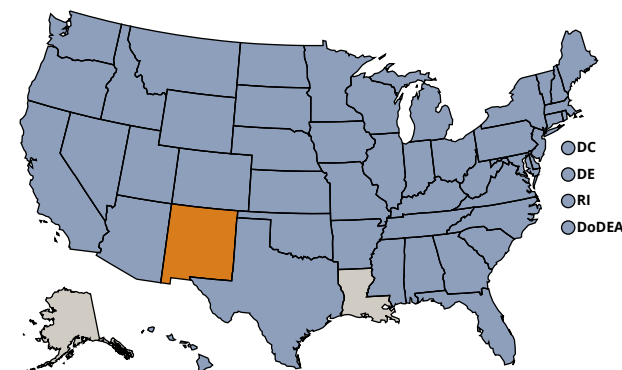
- In 2019, the average score of fourth-grade students in New Mexico was 208. This was lower than the average score of 219 for students in the nation.
- The average score for students in New Mexico in 2019 (208) was not significantly different from their average score in 2017 (208) and in 1998 (205).
- The percentage of students in New Mexico who performed at or above the *NAEP Proficient* level was 24 percent in 2019. This percentage was not significantly different from that in 2017 (25 percent) and in 1998 (21 percent).
- The percentage of students in New Mexico who performed at or above the *NAEP Basic* level was 53 percent in 2019. This percentage was not significantly different from that in 2017 (54 percent) and in 1998 (51 percent).

NAEP Achievement-Level Percentages and Average Score Results



* Significantly different ($p < .05$) from state's results in 2019. Significance tests were performed using unrounded numbers.
NOTE: NAEP achievement levels are to be used on a trial basis and should be interpreted and used with caution. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

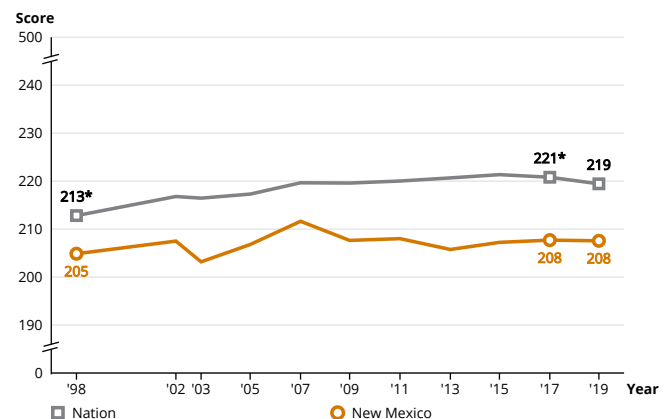
Compare the Average Score in 2019 to Other States/Jurisdictions



- In 2019, the average score in New Mexico (208) was
- lower than those in 49 states/jurisdictions
 - higher than those in 0 states/jurisdictions
 - not significantly different from those in 2 states/jurisdictions

DoDEA = Department of Defense Education Activity (overseas and domestic schools)

Average Scores for State/Jurisdiction and Nation



* Significantly different ($p < .05$) from 2019. Significance tests were performed using unrounded numbers.

in 2017 (256) and 1998 (258). The data clearly reveal New Mexico is not sufficiently closing the literacy gap. New Mexico must improve student literacy to improve student achievement. A statewide focus on literacy through the systematic use of the *New Mexico Literacy Framework* will align efforts and supports to improve student achievement and to close the pervasive achievement gap.

NEW MEXICO GRADUATION RATE

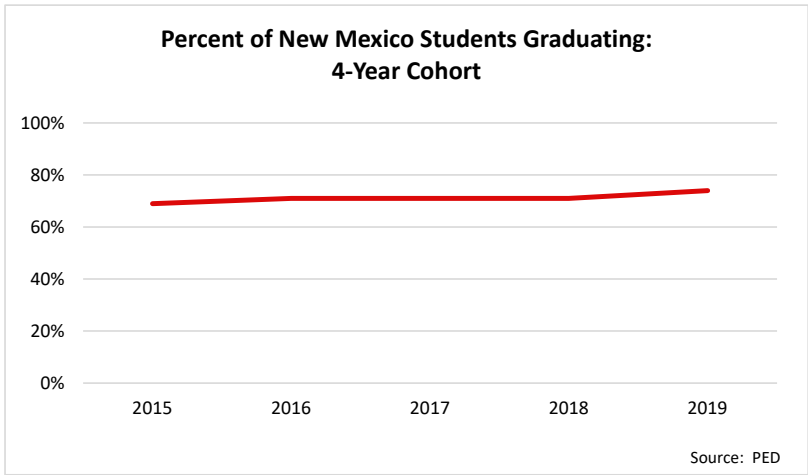
The ultimate goal of educators is for students to graduate with the skills necessary to be college- and career-ready and contributing members of society. Research is clear that literacy is highly correlated with graduation rates. Additional findings of the 2011 report by the Annie E. Casey Foundation included ([Hernandez, n.d.](#))

- About 16 percent of children who are not reading proficiently by the end of third grade do not graduate from high school on time, a rate four times greater than that for proficient readers.
- For children who were poor for at least a year and were not reading proficiently in third grade, the number who did not graduate rose to 26 percent. That is more than six times the rate for all proficient readers.
- Graduation rates for Black and Hispanic students who were not proficient readers in third grade lagged far behind those for White students with the same reading skills.

A review of the New Mexico graduation data (four-year cohort) indicates, despite efforts, significant numbers of New Mexico students still do not graduate from high school. Collectively, New Mexico educators and communities must have a sense of urgency in addressing New Mexico’s persistent achievement shortfalls—targeting early literacy, leveraging effective instruction and interventions from kindergarten through 12th grade, and engaging students so they are college- and career-ready.

“There is no such thing as a child who hates to read; there are only children who have not found the right book.”

Frank Serafini
Professor of Literacy Education and Children’s Literature
Arizona State University
CEO, Southwest Educational Consultants



New Mexico Birth to Preschool

Scientific research demonstrates that early childhood is a vital period in children's learning, care, and development. Brains are built and grow through touch, talk, sight and sound in early childhood experiences. This experimental learning starts long before a child steps foot into kindergarten and is strengthened through regular interaction and stimulation in the home and in quality early learning settings. During the first five years, a child's brain is at its most flexible, making this a critical period for learning and growth. The developing brain is built on neural connections that are the foundation for learning, health, and behavior. This construction of the developing brain depends on a strong foundation to continue to build more advanced cognitive, social and emotional skills. Therefore, it is essential for a young child's brain to have a growth-promoting environment and strong early experiences to prepare the brain to function at its fullest capacity ([Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, 2016](#)).

Science tells us children who face adversity in the first years of life, often related to living in poverty, are more at risk for experiencing lifelong effects from chronic stress. Prolonged stress during childhood can do damage to a child's brain

architecture, which can lead to long term problems in learning, behavior, and physical and mental health. Prevention through high-quality early learning and care provides the support children need to build a foundation for a

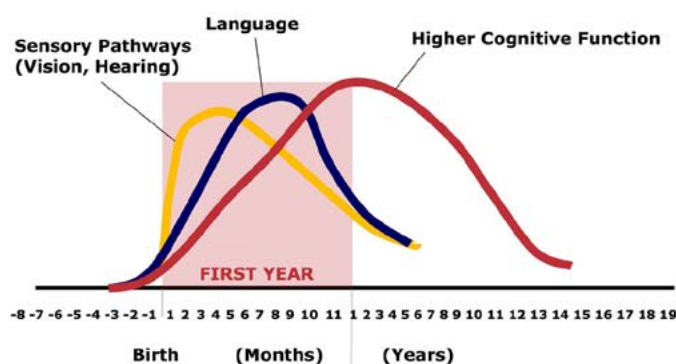
healthy and productive future. Supportive, responsive relationships with caring adults as early in life as possible can prevent or reverse the damaging effects of toxic stress in children. Often, these relationships exist between parent and child, but many children experiences these "serve and return" interactions from other

adults, like teachers. Waiting until kindergarten is too late – children who receive quality early education demonstrate greater cognitive and socio-emotional growth than children who do not ([Joughin, 2020](#))



Center on the Developing Child
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Human Brain Development Neural Connections for Different Functions Develop Sequentially



Source: C.A. Nelson (2000)

Every child in New Mexico has diverse strengths rooted in his or her family's unique culture, heritage, language, beliefs, and circumstances. Early learning programs that support the full participation of every child build on these strengths by promoting a

sense of belonging, supporting positive social relationships, and enabling families and professionals to gain advocacy skills that positively impact the life of every child. The programs provide structures and opportunities to support children in developing physically, socially, emotionally, and academically. Caregivers, teach-

ers, and families are given the tools to support children by being present, responsive, and knowledgeable adults.

New Mexico has created a coordinated system under the Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD), in collaboration with the PED. This approach focuses on building high quality, comprehensive, public school and community programs that are able to work together towards a common focus ensuring that each child has equitable access to appropriate services and supports that acknowledge his or her uniqueness and enable him or her to reach his or her full potential ([NMPED & University of New Mexico, 2020](#)).

“
Today a reader, tomorrow a leader.
”

Margaret Fuller

New Mexico’s Early Learning System					
Ages					
PRENATAL	BIRTH TO ONE	ONE	TWO	THREE	FOUR TO KINDERGARTEN ENTRY
Home Visiting					
	IDEA Part C Early Intervention—NM FIT			IDEA Part B EC Special Education PROGRAM	
	Title 1				
	Child Care				
Early Head Start				Head Start	
				Early PreK (CYFD Only)	NM PreK

New Mexico Prekindergarten

New Mexico's state funded prekindergarten program is operated in two agencies: the ECECD and the PED. All funding flows through the ECECD. ECECD manages programs for three- and four-year-old children in private and non-profit childcare, tribal programs, Head Start, and private schools, while PED supports four-year-olds in public schools, including state charter schools. In FY20, state-funded prekindergarten was provided to 10,885 four-year-old children and 1,497 three-year-old children. Private providers were funded to serve 3,807 four-year-olds, 1,497 three-year-olds, and 147 children in mixed-age programs. The PED served 7,078 four-year-old children in 71 of the 89 school districts and six state charter schools, with 4,718 of these children attending full-day programs.

These agencies have aligned program standards, with differences in professional development, staff degree, and licensure requirements. New Mexico prekindergarten met nine of 10 of the National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER) benchmarks for 2019; PED-funded prekindergarten programs met all 10 of the NIEER benchmarks ([National Institute for Early Education Statistics, 2019](#)).

1. All New Mexico prekindergarten programs must adhere to their respective agency's *FOCUS Quality Rating and Improvement System* criteria, with the exception of nationally accredited ECECD programs ([NMPED & UNM, 2020](#)). PED developed the agency's FOCUS criteria through the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant (RTT-ELC) to improve instructional practices and increase the number of children educated in the least restrictive environment. Through the support of PED executive leadership, preschool program in "Title I" schools (defined as low income in federal law) and special education preschool programs (as defined in Section 609 of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) also adopted the FOCUS quality standards. While FOCUS requires the following in all three public school preschool programs, each superintendent, principal and prekindergarten coordinator in a district or charter that receives the New Mexico prekindergarten grant must sign assurances to ensure daily, intentional, developmen-

tally appropriate structured early literacy practices, including the following:

- phonological awareness activities (i.e., songs, finger-plays, rhyming, beginning sounds, blending, segmenting)
- oral language and vocabulary activities
- alphabet knowledge activities
- concepts of print activities
- daily read-alouds with comprehension strategies (first read, second read, third read); twice per day in 900-hour classrooms
- daily small group (four to six children) early literacy activities; twice per day in 900-hour classrooms
- daily, ongoing individual and small group (two to three children) read-alouds with documentation that each child is read to at least once weekly in 450-hour programs and twice weekly in 900-hour programs, in addition to larger group reading activities
- daily opportunities for developmentally appropriate writing activities

In addition:

- a. All teachers must complete a weekly lesson plan using the prekindergarten form and maintain archived lesson plans for the consultant and PED site monitoring team.
- b. All teachers and administrators must successfully complete Language Essential for Teachers of Reading and Spelling for Early Childhood (LETRS-EC) training in structured literacy.

- c. Teachers must weave literacy activities throughout the day, in addition to intentional, targeted lessons in large and small groups; the required public school preschool lesson plan form provides a framework. Daily language development practice should also be explicitly included.

All public school preschool programs must implement an evidence-based curriculum. Curriculum must align with the *New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines*, be evidence-based, and rated by independent research as having strong or moderate evidence of positive effects on improving child outcomes. The strongest early childhood curricula includes components to teach oral language, vocabulary, knowledge of letters, and phonological awareness.

PRESCHOOL EARLY LITERACY PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

As required by FOCUS, teachers and administrators across New Mexico public school preschool programs must successfully complete LETRS–EC training either completely in-person or in the hybrid model of the online LETRS–EC modules with two days of in-person *Bridge to Practice* sessions. The training is also open to kindergarten teachers.

The PED implemented a train-the-trainer model to build the capacity of FOCUS and district early childhood instructional coaches. The PED has also developed follow-up training modules to reinforce specific early literacy skills and to support educational assistants and Head Start providers. In addition, the state worked with national experts to create one-page evidence-based literacy resources for teachers on early literacy strategies and a required lesson plan format that addresses daily early structured literacy practices.

All PED prekindergarten teachers and educational assistants receive practice-based coaching in two-week cycles, with coaching goals drawn from effective early literacy and social-emotional practices. Coaching includes feedback and reflection sessions to refine and cement the practice. Teachers report this targeted coaching, combined with LETRS–EC training, has helped to improve child outcomes in early literacy.

NEW MEXICO EARLY LEARNING GUIDELINES

The *New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines* (ELG) were developed for educators working with young children and their families across the early childhood system ([NMPED, 2019b](#)). The ELG align with the *Common Core State Standards*, the *New Mexico Standards for Excellence*, the *Early Childhood Outcomes* (ECO) for preschool special education, and the *Head Start Child Outcomes*.

ASSESSMENT

The New Mexico ELG are the foundation of a criterion referenced assessment process by all early childhood sectors. New Mexico prekindergarten programs have implemented the *PreK Observational Assessment Tool* for over 15 years. Through the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant, the state, and partner WestEd, extended the prekindergarten assessment as

“Let us remember: one book, one pen, one child, and one teacher can change the world.”

Malala Yousafzai

the foundation to develop a kindergarten entry assessment, the New Mexico kindergarten observation tool, fully implemented in all kindergarten classrooms across the state in fall 2016. The PED Information Technology Bureau developed a web-based application that allows teachers to store observation notes, assign ratings, and print reports for teacher, administrator, family, and state use. The prekindergarten assessment was incorporated into this application, now called the early childhood observation tool (ECOT), used by teachers in all public school preschool programs starting in 2017-18 school year. The child-level reports track progress across the preschool years through the beginning of kindergarten.

Teachers assess the PED preschool children in New Mexico prekindergarten, Title I and special education preschool classrooms three times per year:

- Beginning of Year: within 30 instructional days of the first day of school (special education within 30 calendar days to meet federal reporting guidelines)
- Middle of Year: due the first Friday in February
- End of Year: two weeks prior to the last day of child attendance.

Educators determine each child's performance related to the indicators through observation supported by anecdotal documentation and work sampling and compared with rubrics for each age level. This information

is used to individualize instruction and formulate goals and objectives meaningful for the child and family. When considering a referral for special services, the ECOT results can be used to indicate the need for further assessment with norm-referenced screening tools or other assessment instruments. The ECOT is also used as the assessment that informs early childhood outcomes for preschool students with individualized education plans (IEPs) and federal reporting.

The ELG contain 10 early literacy essential indicators used to assess preschool programs. The chart below illustrates the literacy indicators in both the preschool assessment and the kindergarten entry assessment. The indicator with an asterisk is documented through a portfolio form, which includes the anecdotal description of the child's performance that may be accompanied with a work sample, photo, or video.

DOMAIN 2 > Literacy			
Outcome	Essential Indicator	2019-20 PreK Els	2019-20 KOT Els
5. The child demonstrates understanding and function of both receptive and expressive vocabulary.	5.2 Demonstrates the ability to attend, understand, and follow increasingly complex directions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	5.3 Demonstrates increasing abilities to understand and use language by the number, variety, and complexity of words across varied purposes.		<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The child communicates experiences, ideas, and feelings through speaking or American Sign Language.	6.1 Demonstrates the ability to effectively engage in a range of conversational skills in his or her home language (including ASL) for a variety of purposes relating to real experiences and different audiences.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. The child engages in activities that promote the acquisition of foundational reading skills.	7.2 Demonstrates comprehension of a story "read aloud" by asking relevant questions or providing key details in literacy texts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	7.3a Shows an understanding of the basic concepts of print.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	7.3b Understands that print carries meaning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	7.4a Recognizes and generates rhyming sounds in spoken language.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	7.4b Demonstrates understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	7.5a Shows an understanding of alphabetic knowledge.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. The child engages in activities that promote the acquisition of emergent writing skills.	7.5b Knows and applies letter-sound correspondence and beginning sound- recognition skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	8.3 Understands how to apply the early stages of drawing and writing to convey meaning.	<input type="checkbox"/> *	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total Essential Indicators > Domain 2:		10	10

New Mexico Literacy Framework's Critical Components

*The New Mexico Literacy Framework (NMLF) comprises the five critical components of an effective literacy program, rooted in a foundation of evidence-based reading and writing programs and practices, and a continuous improvement model. The five critical components rooted in evidence-based programs and practices include informed and *effective leadership*, , *instruction and interventions within a multi-layered system of supports*, *assessment*, *professional learning*, and *family engagement*.*

Leadership: Leaders at the national and tribal, state and local education agencies, building, and classroom levels—and even at the student leader level—collaborate to build shared ownership and direction toward sustaining an effective approach to literacy. Leaders include aligned collaborative relationships among people and programs to create stronger alignment among programs and to eliminate working in silos.

Instruction and Intervention: Instruction is based on evidence and meets individual student needs within a multi-layered system of support; clear expectations for what children will know and be able to do. Quality standards combined with evidence-based curriculum and high-quality instructional material serve as the foundation of literacy instruction in New Mexico.

Assessment: A balanced assessment system includes literacy assessments at different levels of the system (e.g., classroom, district, state) that are coherently linked to clearly -defined instructional learning targets, comprehensively support multiple purposes and uses, and provide continuous documentation of student progress over time.

Professional Learning: Coordinated professional learning activities and resources enhance literacy learning for learners, educators and providers.

Family Engagement: Authentic school-home relationships, rooted in

mutual trust and reciprocal accountability, cultivate academic partnership opportunities that support student growth and equip families to monitor literacy development at home, provide culturally relevant and linguistically accessible resources for families to set high expectations, support a community culture of learning, and advocate for individual children's needs.

The subsequent sections within this framework will guide New Mexico educators in gaining a working understanding of each of these critical components as well as provide an effective roadmap to effectively implement these components to optimize literacy outcomes for all students in New Mexico. This document provides the framework for literacy across New Mexico. It is grounded in the most rigorous and robust body of research available and founded on lessons learned from other high performing states. Just as important, it is developed to meet the unique cultural and linguistic needs of New Mexico students and communities.

Essential Elements of NMLF Components



THE FOUNDATION
Why is this principle important?



ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS
What do I need to know?



IMPLEMENTATION
What do we need to do?

Leadership

LEADERSHIP GOAL: To create school district, community, state, and tribal-level capacity for organizing and implementing a strategic and rigorous approach to literacy development for all students.



THE FOUNDATION - WHY IS THIS PRINCIPLE IMPORTANT?

Successful implementation of an evidence-based literacy framework requires effective leadership that promotes shared responsibility and commitment for supporting children's literacy development.

At the local education agency (LEA) and school levels, leaders will establish and maintain the infrastructure necessary to support teachers in the delivery of effective reading instruction that enables students to meet key reading goals. In addition, school leaders are responsible for collecting and analyzing valid and reliable data to determine whether students have met key reading benchmarks. School leadership will also regularly observe classrooms to gather both formal and informal information (and share timely, specific feedback) as well as evaluate classroom-reading instruction to determine how professional learning and other resources can be used to support teachers to provide the highest quality reading instruction.

Positive student literacy outcomes start with informed and effective leadership committed to implementing, supporting, and sustaining a quality literacy program. Effective leadership incorporates extended time for literacy, collaborative teacher teams, and collective instructional leadership focused on improvements in student achievement.

For the school's literacy plan to endure, school leaders will intentionally implement

and build the plan by expanding and adapting it over time, reflecting on what is (and is not) working, and how the school can do better. Leadership from committed administrators, teachers, and parents will promote sustainability by anticipating, influencing, and effectively responding to changing conditions that affect progress.

“Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.”

John F. Kennedy



ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS - WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

Research is clear. Effective school leadership is positively correlated with student learning, second only in magnitude to effective instruction. The impact of leadership on student performance is particularly important in schools that serve students at risk for learning difficulties or dropping out of school ([Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004](#)).

The essential elements of school leadership include that school administrators and leadership teams:

- work together to create a coherent reading plan
- focus on ALL students meeting or exceeding grade-level reading proficiency goals
- are knowledgeable about reading standards, assessments, and instructional programs and materials
- ensure leadership structures exist at multiple levels

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP: SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND LEADERSHIP TEAMS WORK TOGETHER TO CREATE A COHERENT PLAN FOR READING INSTRUCTION

Research shows teachers are the most critical school-based lever for increasing student achievement, followed by principals ([Oppen, 2019](#)).

The principal, literacy coach, and school leadership team will work together to create a coherent plan for literacy ([Torgesen, Houston, Rissman & Kosanovich, 2007](#)). Ongoing communication and consistency within and between each of these levels of shared leadership is critical. Combining knowledge, experiences, and shared expertise, these leaders will develop a schedule that:

- maximizes and protects instructional time
- organizes resources and personnel to efficiently support all students in the building
- ensures instruction in special programs (e.g., Title I, special education, English learners) is coordinated with and is complementary to the reading instruction provided in general education.

Through grade-level and department-level teams, professional learning communities and communities of practice, and the school leadership team, educators will leverage

the opportunity to collaborate and plan instruction for students aligned with a coordinated school's literacy plan and their NM DASH (Data, Accountability, Sustainability, and High Expectations) 90-day plan.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND LEADERSHIP TEAMS FOCUS ON ALL STUDENTS MEETING OR EXCEEDING GRADE-LEVEL READING GOALS

School-level leadership will prioritize the attainment of reading goals for ALL students. If students are not meeting reading goals, school leadership will provide clear communication about which reading goals have not been met and which goals have been achieved. School leaders will examine and present data to identify possible reasons why students did not meet reading goals and will make clear those variables the school has the ability to change.

The causes can vary from ineffective scheduling, grouping, and selection of instructional and intervention materials to barriers to high-quality, and implementation. In some instances, multiple structural, quality of instruction, and implementation variables may be causing insufficient reading development among students. If a leadership team sees that students are struggling to meet literacy goals, it should assess if structured literacy is being provided with appropriate frequency and intensity.

Successful school leaders will identify the variables under the school's control that may be contributing to poor reading outcomes then facilitate the continuous improvement process by establishing plans to change or alter those variables, implementing the plan, and collecting data to determine whether the changes resulted in better student reading outcomes.

For example, analyzing school-based data may reveal

- an unusually high percentage of students began the school year reading below grade level
- some students made less progress than expected
- after implementation data is collected and analyzed, some students may have received less instructional time directly with the teacher than was specified in the school's literacy plan

Part of the solution to improve reading outcomes for these groups of students could be to arrange the reading schedule for the following year so that these students spend more time directly with the teacher each day for explicit reading instruction. Then, data would be collected to determine how well the plan was implemented and whether it resulted in better reading progress and outcomes for this group of students. This would be considered a structural change.

If a sufficient number and percentage of students are meeting reading goals, and other data indicate the quality of daily reading instruction is strong, then school leadership will focus on reinforcing the instruction that school staff is providing to students. In this case, the school leader will engage in the following:

- acknowledging and celebrating the dedicated work of staff, which is directly tied to successful outcomes for students and is powerful within the school community
- highlighting details of effective classroom practices associated with im-

“Leadership is the capacity to transform vision into reality.”

Warren G. Bennis

proved outcomes for students, which affirms these effective practices and provides specificity for replication

- acknowledging the attainment of challenging reading goals, which will help the school maintain its focus on reading goals and effective instruction
- celebrating these significant accomplishments, which communicates the central importance of effective instruction in the school's service to its students and families

In schools where students are meeting reading goals, effective leadership will emphasize the importance of continuous improvement. The leadership will identify effective specific instructional practices and supports for teachers and other staff, including the school leaders themselves. This process will assist in developing and maintaining a cohesive and collaborative group and facilitate continued success.

Specific instructional goals can also be identified for small group instruction based on student reading performance, classroom observations, and other sources of trustworthy data. Identifying school goals and instructional goals demonstrates a school's commitment to success through continuous improvement and also supports the vision of providing instruction for all students so poor readers become good readers and good readers become great readers. This assures that both the school-wide programmatic and classroom based instructional systems of the school are working in tandem to support all students.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND LEADERSHIP TEAMS ARE KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT READING STANDARDS, ASSESSMENTS, THE SCIENCE OF READING, AND INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND MATERIALS.

To effectively work toward all students being grade-level readers or above, educators need to understand how reading standards, assessments, and instruction work together to support successful outcomes for all students. The five components of the *New Mexico Literacy Framework* provide guidance for implementing a school plan; one that is based on student data and supports every reader to reach the grade level reading goal. Principals and school leadership teams will have a thorough understanding of what the priority reading skills are, when they are to be met, and how the instruction necessary for successful reading development will be delivered. Principals accumulate this knowledge over time by studying the standards, attending professional learning activities designed for teachers alongside their teacher teams, and working closely with consultants provided to assist

with implementation of specific reading programs and practices. Finally, principals and leadership staff will have thorough knowledge of the assessment system, including what the measures are, the schedule for administration, how to interpret the results, and how to use the data collected to make sound decisions regarding the instruction provided to students.

A deep knowledge of classroom reading instruction and the school wide assessment plan enables principals to make informed instructional decisions. For example, a principal who understands essential and detailed aspects of instruction and assessment will schedule initial student screening within the first few weeks of school so targeted instructional pedagogy can be utilized in instructional design and lesson planning (grouping for instruction and other strategies to support all learners) and to support the immediate implementation of differentiated reading instruction.

Similarly, a principal who understands the importance of intense reading instruction will place the most effective reading teachers with groups of students who need the most intensive

support ([Gresten, Compton, Connor, Dimino, Santoro, Linan-Thompson, & Tilly, 2009](#)). Understanding that only teachers with special training in the necessary interventions can effectively teach students with instructional needs that cannot be met within the core-reading program is critical to successful instruction for these students.

Principals and the school leadership staff will be well-versed in the Common Core Standards.

[Common Core State Standards Initiative](#)

LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES EXIST AT MULTIPLE LEVELS TO MAINTAIN THE FOCUS ON ALL STUDENTS READING AT GRADE LEVEL OR ABOVE AND TO ESTABLISH MECHANISMS TO SUPPORT STUDENTS' READING PROGRESS.

Leaders at the district and schools levels will not only relentlessly invest in pursuing successful outcomes for students and fostering a culture of authentic and effective family engagement, they also will be actively invested in consistently promoting connection, communication and collaboration among distributed leadership to sustain successes. Two concepts guide how effective leadership at the school level can be organized:

1. **Distributed leadership:** Distributed leadership helps ensure that the range of important leadership tasks

can be accomplished through multiple individuals sharing responsibility for school-wide leadership. Distributed leadership builds the capacity within the school to provide effective reading instruction, and it promotes shared accountability among the staff for ensuring that students reach reading goals.

- 2. Leadership Functions:** Leadership tasks and responsibilities are conceptualized as leadership functions, and are not linked to specific individuals or even positions. Certainly, the dedication and skill that individuals bring to their leadership responsibilities will influence leadership quality and student reading achievement. However, important leadership positions are described in terms of the key functions they address, and these key functions are integrated within the culture of the school.

For example, instead of relying on the position of a reading coach to successfully implement the literacy plan, the key functions a coach performs and how these functions can be carried out must be determined and described. One typical coaching function is observing instruction in classrooms and providing feedback. A school might use a peer coaching model to accomplish this task, or a grade-level team leader in each grade might conduct observations and provide feedback, other schools may implement peer observation systems in addition to feedback from principals. Providing high quality, timely and relevant feedback after classroom observations is the key function, and the school should specify in the school's literacy plan how this function is to be carried out. Likewise, for the most rural schools in New Mexico or smaller charter schools, these tasks may be delegated to a smaller group of strong leaders in addition to the principal.

Within the school, functions associated with the principal, a reading coach, grade-level and department-level teams and professional learning communities, and the school leadership team will contribute to effective implementation of the New Mexico Literacy Framework. Key functions within and among these levels of distributed leadership are described in the following sections.

Principal: Within the school, the principal is most responsible for developing the infrastructure necessary for teachers to provide effective reading instruction to all students. Given the extensive range of a principal's responsibilities, principals may require time and assistance to become knowledgeable in all areas of the framework and the school's literacy plan. However, even initially, principals will understand essential issues in key areas and be engaged in school decision-making in relation to these areas. Ultimately, the principal ensures all components of the literacy plan are implemented consistently with the school's NM DASH (Data, Accountability, Sustainability, and High Expectations) 90-day plan and the district's literacy framework. The principal also ensures that teaching and learning in the classroom is continually enhanced. Below, the key responsibilities for principals in developing and supporting the school's literacy plan are outlined.

PRINCIPALS FACILITATE PLANNING FOR INSTRUCTION

Effective classroom instruction is the centerpiece of a school's reading program. To that end, planning done by teachers and others to prepare for effective instruction in the classroom is a critical school priority. That is why it is essential that principals designate time for teachers to plan reading instruction.

As personnel within the school change over time, foundational features of the reading program, including leadership functions, do not change simply as a consequence of staff turnover or elimination of certain positions.

By participating in the planning process in an active and supportive way, principals also will ensure the planning time is used effectively. While principals' schedules will not allow them to participate in all of the instructional planning meetings, principals must be as engaged as possible, particularly at the beginning of the year when screening data are used to form instructional groups and develop instructional support plans.

Part of this planning for elementary schools will involve how the core reading program, supplemental materials, and intervention programs will be used as part of daily reading instruction. If elementary schools utilize a structured literacy curriculum to teach the reading foundational skills standards that is separate from the complex texts used to address the comprehension standards, principals must guide teachers in appropriately allocating instructional time for each strand. Furthermore, teachers may need guidance in providing access to complex text for students who may not have developed the decoding skills yet but are still capable of comprehending grade level text. In middle schools and high schools, much of the planning will focus on how to integrate reading strategies into course content so students can access the information from their subject-area textbooks. Principals will know enough about the programs and textbooks to engage meaningfully in these initial planning sessions and throughout the year as teachers use data to make instructional changes.

PRINCIPALS MAKE DATA-BASED DECISIONS

Principals will have strong expertise in all facets of the school's assessment system to determine whether students are meeting goals. Because principals ensure that school-wide assessment data (<https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/accountability/achievement-data/>) used for formative or summative purposes are appropriate for those purposes, they must understand how to interpret data. Specifically:

- When students are screened for reading progress at the beginning of the year, or when outcome data collected at the end of year are used as screening data for the following year, principals will ensure interpretations about reading performance are appropriate.
- When progress-monitoring data are analyzed, principals will determine whether individual students, or groups of students, are making progress, and whether progress is sufficient for students to reach reading goals.
- When outcome data are analyzed, principals, as part of a collaborative team, will determine when students have met reading goals and how well the school is doing over time (e.g., successive years) in improving reading instruction and student outcomes.

Principals must then utilize screening, progress monitoring, and outcome data to drive decision making (Vaughn, Wanzek, Murray, & Roberts, n.d.). For example, a principal and staff will begin by determining the most important goals and objectives for students to accomplish by the middle of the year and by the end of the year in each of the five foundations of reading (see Instruction and Interventions). The principal then leads the staff through an examination of the data from the middle of the year. As they consider how they are doing, they can ask questions, such as:

- "Are students demonstrating characteristics of dyslexia?"
- "Are students receiving and responding to structured literacy instruction?"
- "Are students in each class at each grade level on track for successful reading outcomes?"
- "What percentage of students made adequate reading progress from the beginning of the year to the middle of the year (fall to winter)?"

If student progress is not sufficient to meet reading goals, it is critical that the principal and staff identify those grades or groups of students that are not making adequate progress and devise a plan to change instruction and improve performance. An additional question to ask when analyzing reading data would be:

- "What steps will we take to address the needs of the students who are not making progress toward proficiency and how do we address the needs of students that are exceeding proficiency goals?"

PRINCIPALS OBSERVE READING INSTRUCTION IN THE CLASSROOM

Classroom observations conducted by principals serve several purposes:

- Classroom observations of reading instruction are one of the most important and valuable ways for principals to gather information about effective reading instruction in the classroom and to offer valuable, timely specific feedback and support. Principals can use what they observe in the classrooms of their master teachers to gain a vision of what instruction could look like in all classrooms.
- By dedicating time to observe in classrooms on a regular basis, principals demonstrate to staff that effective reading instruction is an essential school priority.
- Most importantly, regular observations and walk-throughs allow principals to understand how reading instruction is being delivered in the classrooms and to use that information to support teachers' efforts to provide effective instruction.

District-Supported Reading Coaches: Whenever possible, a reading coach is assigned to each school to work

with classroom teachers and school-based teams to support effective reading instruction in reading classes and effective reading instruction across the instructional areas. Coaching is a critical part of professional learning ([Desimone & Pak, 2016](#)).

In elementary schools, a coach's key role is typically to improve reading instruction by facilitating the implementation of multiple layers of reading support aligned with student need. In middle schools and high schools, the typical role of literacy coaches is to improve instruction for all students by working collaboratively with teachers across the content areas ([WesEd National Center for Systemic Improvement, 2014](#)), although secondary coaches also support reading teachers working with struggling readers.

Across coaching models in which the key role of the coach is to help improve classroom instruction, there is consensus that coaches should support, guide, and mentor teachers. Moreover, these models suggest that at different times, coaches take on the role of instructor, curriculum expert, school-level planner, data analyst, and researcher ([Walpole & McKenna, 2012](#)). Please note: the functions described can be distributed among team members; however, for the purposes of description, they are delineated as part of coaching duties.

These different roles can be summarized into three major coaching functions.

1. Coaches work with teachers in the classroom to help them provide robust reading instruction and subject-specific instruction aligned to state standards and the instructional needs of students. To accomplish this challenging agenda, teachers need feedback and support. The coach serves this supportive function.
2. Coaches ensure the objectives of the school reading plan are being implemented throughout the school. These objectives include having established measurable goals, conducting reading assessments, providing effective instruction, providing leadership, engaging in ongoing professional learning, and sustaining a commitment to all students reading at grade level or higher. A coach, for example, can ensure that assessments are administered on schedule, that staff is trained to reliably administer the measures, and that the data are entered into a database in a timely fashion. Coaches can also assist with data analysis and using data to drive instruction. Coaches can also play an important role in fostering equity.
3. Coaches assist grade-level and department-level teams and professional learning communities in using student reading data to make decisions about reading instruction and reading instruction across the content areas.

Instructional and literacy coaches should be excellent classroom teachers who have received extensive professional learning on how to be an effective coach, including specific preparation in the skills coaches need to work effectively with adults ([International Literacy Association, 2015](#)).

Coaches need professional learning beyond classroom teachers on the following:

- effective reading instruction grounded in structured literacy
- *Common Core State Standards*
- reading assessments
- data-based decision making

- expertise in supporting students with special needs and English learners
- the use of course textbooks to teach reading programs and strategies

School Implementation Teams: School teams oversee the day-to-day implementation of reading instruction across the content areas throughout the school. Two types of teams serve this purpose:

1. One team includes members that cut across multiple grades or departments, frequently referred to as the school leadership team.
2. A second type of team is a grade-level team at each grade in elementary school or a department-level team in middle school and high school. The focus of both types of teams is on the attainment of reading goals and objectives. The teams use assessment data and other data to make decisions about the overall system of teaching reading across the instructional areas. The teams also focus on the reading development of individual students who are not making sufficient reading progress.

The foundation of effective coaching communication is to focus on what students need instructionally to meet reading goals, not on what teachers should do differently to teach more effectively, or whether the teacher is doing a “good job.”

tional programs and implementation of practices in each classroom. At the beginning of the school year, these teams examine screening data to determine the level of instructional support in reading each student needs to meet reading goals and academic expectations.

Within each grade, three layers of support are provided to differentiate the type of reading instruction students will receive to meet reading goals and reading demands across the content areas. These layers are aligned to meet the needs of students who are at no, moderate, or high risk for not meeting formative and summative reading goals. This multi-layered framework is consistent with New Mexico’s *Multi-Layered System of Supports* (MLSS) ([NMPED, n.d.c.](#)). The teams must determine how instruction will be differentiated for students in each layer. Importantly, students can move back and forth between the layers of support fluidly rather than stagnate at a layer for a long amount of time.

During the school year, grade-level and department-level teams and PLCs closely examine progress-monitoring data to evaluate the effectiveness of each of the multiple layers of instructional support. When progress is not sufficient, these teams identify ways to change instruction in the relevant layer of support. When students are not making adequate reading progress, the team targets the manipulation of variables most directly under the school’s control and likely to have the greatest positive impact on progress.

Professional Learning Communities: PLCs provide structure and enhance the effectiveness of these teams, specifically by providing a system and protocol to facilitate and ensure teachers are engaging in ongoing action research and collective inquiry. Establishing PLCs within a school culture and ensuring that the foundational structure of the PLC is implemented with fidelity is an essential role of school leadership.

Within a PLC model (<https://www.solutiontree.com/learning-by-doing-third-edition.html>), school educators come to consensus on a shared mission, vision, values, and goals ([DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, Many & Mattos, 2016](#)). Then, they systematically and continuously ask these four essential questions:

1. What do we want students to learn? (essential standards)
2. How will we know if they have learned? (team-developed common assessments)
3. What will we do if they do not learn? (systematic interventions)
4. What will we do if they already know it? (extended learning)

Regular meetings focus on using formative and summative assessment data to guide the selection of instructional



IMPLEMENTATION - WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO?

To ensure students graduate from New Mexico schools college- and career-ready, district and school leaders must ensure effective and robust implementation of a literacy model, evidence-based instruction, and an ambitious literacy goal. [See Appendix A](#) for School Leadership Implementation Checklist.

Instruction and Interventions

INSTRUCTION AND INTERVENTION GOAL: Implement evidence-based instruction, strategies, and interventions that promote active student engagement while meeting the literacy needs of all children, including children with diverse learning needs in a developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant manner.



THE FOUNDATION - WHY IS THIS PRINCIPLE IMPORTANT?

In New Mexico, educators are committed to ensuring that every student is a graduate who has successfully completed a rigorous, meaningful curriculum that will prepare them for careers, college, and citizenship.

Effective reading instruction should recognize and honor cultural and linguistic diversity. At the same time, students must receive the highest quality, engaging instruction to optimize acquiring essential literacy skills and subject area content. This requires that all teachers firmly understand:

- the elements and principals of structured literacy
- the stages of reading development
- how to effectively teach reading
- how to scaffold instruction
- how to align instruction to the *Common Core State Standards* (CCSS)
- how to identify and implement interventions for students who are identified as at-risk
- how to measure student's progress and use data to inform instruction

Early literacy plays a key role in enabling the kind of early learning experiences that research shows are linked with academic achievement, reduced grade retention, higher graduation rates and enhanced productivity in adult life.

Through explicit instruction, students will be taught how, why, and when to use reading strategies to support comprehension. When teachers model through “thinking out loud” to teach a strategy, students can better understand the process. Guided practice follows modeling as students use the strategy with support from the teacher and peers. Students then need opportunities to independently practice the strategy and apply it to different texts.

The goal is for students to learn the alphabetic system (phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, fluency) and comprehension skills before grade three, but all students will have a thorough command of it no later than grade three. A deep knowledge of the alphabetic system allows students to transition from “learning to read” to “reading to learn.” During grades 4-12, directing students’ academic focus toward learning deep, grade-level reading comprehension skills and strategies is important for them to apply the skills and strategies across the instructional areas—allowing students full content access ([Oregon Department of Education, n.d.](#)).

For students who are not successful readers in grade 3, it will be more difficult for them to direct their academic attention on developing reading comprehension strategies or on using their reading skills to develop subject-area knowledge. After grade 3, the odds are against students becoming grade-level readers without intense intervention. Therefore, what schools do to teach children to read in the early years of schooling matters greatly.

Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework
Oregon State Board of Education, 2009

According to the National Reading Panel, students should have a firm understanding of the *5 Big Ideas of Reading*—phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary. In the later grades, effective reading instruction is characterized by explicitly teaching students how to read, comprehend, and engage in higher order conversation with an array of texts including descriptive, narrative, expository, argumentative, and literature.

Stages of Reading

Jeanne S. Chall, in *Stages of Reading Development* (1983), outlined six stages of reading development from birth through adulthood. To adequately prepare students for college, career, and life, educators must be highly attentive to the needs of the learner at each stage.

Stage 0 (pre-reading; typically between the ages of six months to six years old): This stage covers more changes than any of the others. Children pretend to read and develop the ability to retell stories previously read to him or her while looking at the pages. The child begins to name letters, print his or her name, and play with books, pencils, and papers. By age 6, the child may only be able to read a few words, if any, but can likely understand thousands of words. Oral language develops exponentially during this stage. Because of this, adults should seek opportunities to engage in conversations with the child and expand on their verbalizations, encouraging questions and inquiry. Many of the books read to students during this stage should include those that include rhyming, alliteration, and those that may begin to introduce the alphabet.

Stage 1 (initial reading, writing, and decoding; typically between the ages of six and seven years): During this stage the child is learning the relationship between letters and sounds as well as between print and spoken words. The child begins to decode simple texts containing phonically regular words. The child applies the knowledge of sounds and symbols to “sound out” or decode unknown words. The child is also developing automaticity with some high frequency words. and some high frequency words. While writing, the student is progressing from scribbling to non-phonetic letter strings. Adults begin to encourage the child to listen to the sounds within the word to write unknown words. This may include invented spellings. Thus, segmentation and blending of phonemes is beginning to be mapped to print. Children should be given ample opportunities to manipulate, trace, and hear the sounds of letters and to apply practices and strategies to decodable texts. Instruction should also incorporate listening to both narrative and informational texts and engage in dialogue about the texts. Listening to texts above

the child’s decoding ability support growth of background knowledge and vocabulary.

Stage 2 (confirmation and fluency; typically between the ages of seven and eight): Early readers can read simple, familiar stories with increasing fluency as a result of the consolidation of basic decoding elements and increasing sight vocabulary. Adults encourage repeated and monitored oral reading and model fluent reading by continuing to read aloud to the child daily. Practice opportunities for the student should provide opportunities to successfully decode a variety of text genres and may include echo reading, choral reading, and partner reading. Vocabulary is taught explicitly and implicitly within texts while reading aloud to the child to model strategies such as using context clues, text dependent questions, and morphemic analysis. Discussion of texts continue to support oral language development, background knowledge and vocabulary. This child begins to transition from learning to read, to reading to learn.

Stage 3 (reading to learn the new; typically between the ages of 9 and 13 years old): In this transitional stage students are reading to learn new ideas, gain new knowledge, experience new feelings and attitudes, and considering multiple points of view. At this stage significant emphasis is placed on reading to learn and writing for different purposes. Adults provide increased instruction in comprehension strategies such as monitoring, using graphic and semantic organizers, asking and answering questions, and identifying text structure. These skills continue to be explicitly introduced with modeling and guided practice before students are expected to apply the skills independently.

Stage 4 (synthesizing information and applying multiple perspective; typically between 14 and 17 years old): Students in this stage are reading a wide range of complex materials, both expository and narrative, and are asked to consider the varying viewpoints expressed. These students are required to access, retain, critique, and apply knowledge and concepts from these texts while developing more sophisticated disciplinary knowledge and perspectives. Ample opportunities to engage in dialogue pertaining to the learning topics should continue.

Stage 5 (critical literacy in work and society): During this stage, reading is used for the individual’s own purposes whether personal or professional. In the college and career settings, individuals are required to synthesize information from a variety of sources to draw conclusions, shape the view of an audience, and navigate multiple perspectives.

Pacific Resources for Education and Learning has identified five stages of reading development ([Pacific Resource-](#)

[es for Education, 2012](#)). The *Stages of Reading Development* is a continuum that explains how students progress as readers. These stages are based on the students experience and not their age or grade level. This continuum is helpful to educators in a different way: these stages might allow them to communicate to parents the importance of reading to their children. *The New Mexico Statewide Literacy Framework* suggests the following:

Emergent readers need enriching and enjoyable experiences with books, especially picture books. Students can become comfortable with books even before they can read independently, capable of recognizing letters and words and even language patterns. They are able to work with concepts of print and are at the beginning stages of developing the ability to focus attention on letter-sound relationships. Sharing books over and over, extending stories, relating experiences to both print and pictures, and guiding students to “read,” helps children begin to enjoy and value what they are reading.

Early readers can discuss the background of the story to better understand the actions in the story and the message the story carries. It is this time in the reader’s development that the cueing systems are called upon significantly, so they must pay close attention to the visual cues and language patterns and read for meaning. Educators are explicitly teaching skills and parents can learn from these and model at home.

Transitional readers often like to read books in a series as a comprehension strategy; the shared characters, settings, and events support their reading development. They read at a good pace; reading rate is one sign of a child’s overall comprehension. At this stage, children generally have decoding ability and phonemic awareness that allows them to identify most words, but continue to need help with understanding more difficult text. Academic vocabulary and context clues becomes increasingly important.

Fluent readers are confident in their understanding of text and how text works, and they are reading independently. Students are maintaining meaning through longer and more complex stretches of language. An effective reader has come to understand text as something that influences people’s ideas.

The New Mexico Literacy Framework addresses the critical role schools play in teaching all students to be grade-level readers or above in grades K-3 and the equally critical role schools play in teaching all students to maintain and advance grade-level reading skills in grades 4-12.



ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS - WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

The ability to read proficiently is critical for school success and learning throughout life. Teaching all students how to read is an essential school responsibility and plays a central role in education throughout kindergarten through 12th grade, not just in the first few years of school.

High-quality reading instruction in kindergarten through 12th grade involves the integration of eight essential elements ([Oregon Department of Education, n.d.](#)):

1. sufficient time for reading instruction and using that time effectively
2. data to form fluid instructional groupings
3. focused instruction on the essential elements of reading

4. a *Multi-Layered System of Supports* (MLSS) for students and families
5. evidence-based strategies, programs, and materials to target the essential elements of reading
6. instruction aligned to CCSS
7. use of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM)
8. differentiated instruction based on student need

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF INSTRUCTION AND INTERVENTION: SUFFICIENT TIME FOR READING INSTRUCTION AND USING THAT TIME EFFECTIVELY

One of the essential elements of high-quality reading instruction is the sufficient allocation of time and efficient use of that time. Adequate time during the school day for explicit structured literacy instruction is critical. This allocation of time in the school's master schedule should be of the highest priority and considered nonnegotiable. In elementary schools, assemblies, fire drills, class parties, class pictures, or other special events should be routinely scheduled outside of the literacy block. In secondary schools, instructional time across instruction areas should be protected, not only to provide sufficient time for students to master the course content and skills, but also because the teaching of reading specific to the content area occurs in all middle school and high school classes ([Oregon Department of Education, n.d.](#)).

As noted in the table, for students who are not yet reading at grade level, the number of minutes of daily or weekly reading instruction will be increased above the minimum amounts to allow for a *Multi-Layered System of Supports*. The amount of extra time is based on how far students are below grade level. Additionally, students who have not yet developed the decoding ability necessary to access grade level text may need accommodations such as the opportunity to listen to the text read aloud to participate in lessons and strive to meet comprehension standards.

DATA TO FORM FLUID INSTRUCTIONAL GROUPINGS

In birth-preschool settings, programs will adjust the time allocated for whole/large group and small group instruction to meet the needs of individual children in the program. As children progress towards preschool programs, time in whole group settings could be expanded to up to fifteen minutes. Small group instruction (two to six children) will be used to target specific early literacy skills for durations of time not to exceed 15 minutes. Additionally, all children in birth-preschool settings will have books read to them in whole group and individual settings daily.

For preschool, ECOT data is used to create flexible groups to meet the needs of individual children across all developmental domains. Teachers use the various ECOT reports to plan small group instruction each day to target specific academic and social skills. With targeted instruction, children gain the skills necessary to succeed academically and socially.

In kindergarten through third grade, schools will use time allocated for reading instruction to provide both whole or large group and small group instruction. All students will receive both large and small group instruction each day. While large group instruction is important, small group instruction is the most effective way to provide students with intense reading instruction that focuses on their specific learning needs ([Torgesen, Wagner, Rashotte, Lindamood, Conway & Garvan, n.d.](#)). Student reading skills will be used to determine the composition of reading groups, particularly for small group instruction. If all students in the group are at approximately the same instructional level, teachers can target a narrower range of skills, which intensifies the instruction.

To make small group instruction as effective as possible for all students, it is critical for reading teams at each school to review student data regularly and use this information in revising the composition of small and large groups to ensure fluidity. Data will be used to make decisions about the initial grouping, and also for movement among groups. The size of small groups and other recommendations are depicted in the table below ([Oregon Department of Education, n.d.](#))

RECOMMENDATION FOR SMALL GROUP INSTRUCTION IN GRADES K-3		
STUDENT SKILL LEVEL (MLSS)	NUMBER PER GROUP	COMMENTS
Layer 2/3: Well Below Grade Level	3-5	At least 30-60 minutes per day in small group instruction
Layer 2: Somewhat Below Grade Level	<9	At least 30 minutes per day in small group instruction
Layer 1: At Grade Level Or Above	<13	Opportunity to work in small group formats each day throughout grades K-3. For those exceeding reading goals, small group instruction is one of the best ways for schools to provide the accelerated instruction higher performing students need.

RECOMMENDED TIME ALLOCATIONS FOR READING INSTRUCTION FOR ALL STUDENTS

AGE GROUP	AMOUNT OF INSTRUCTION PER DAY	PURPOSE
INFANT TODDLER	Literacy instruction should be embedded in all activities throughout the day.	The primary language task of infants and toddlers is learning the language of their families. Educators should communicate with the children in their home language, modeling language usage for infants and toddlers. Teachers should elicit language from them and build on their communication through meaningful conversations, descriptions of what they are doing, and open-ended questioning. In addition, looking at and reading books and giving children opportunities to draw and make marks with writing tools build on their communication skills as they move toward understanding of the written word. The essential elements of beginning reading with infants and toddlers are phonological awareness, vocabulary, oral language development, oral comprehension, and environmental print.
PRESCHOOL	Literacy instruction should be embedded in all activities throughout the day.	<p>PED preschool programs are required to implement daily, intentional, developmentally appropriate early literacy practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • phonological awareness activities • oral language and vocabulary activities • alphabet knowledge activities • concepts of print activities • large group read-alouds with comprehension strategies • small group (4-6 children) early literacy activities • ongoing individual and small group (2-3 children) read-alouds • opportunities for developmentally appropriate writing activities
K-3	90-minute reading block	<p>The 90-minute block is dedicated to providing instruction on the five essential elements of beginning reading: phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Additional instructional time will need to be scheduled to ensure adequate time to teach other areas of literacy, such as writing.</p> <p>For grades K-3, more than 90 minutes of daily reading instruction should be provided to students who have not met grade-level reading goals.</p>
4-5	90-minute reading block and literacy-connected learning across the instructional areas	During the 90-minute block, students receive daily, focused reading instruction on the essential elements of reading with an emphasis on advanced phonics skills, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Students begin working regularly with texts in social sciences, science, math, and other instructional areas. More than 90 minutes of daily reading instruction should be provided to students who have not met grade-level reading goals.
6-8	40- to 60-minute reading class for all students (grouped by skill level) and separate from English language arts, 2-4 hours of literacy-connected learning across the instructional areas	<p>A 40-60 minute class designated specifically for reading instruction is recommended for all students. Students should be assigned to a reading class based on reading proficiency data (this reading class may range from remedial to high enrichment).</p> <p>In addition to the reading class, students should receive reading instruction across all content areas on content-specific advanced word study, comprehension, and vocabulary.</p> <p>If resources are limited and a separate reading class for all students is not feasible, another option is to make the language arts period longer than other classes to provide extra time to focus on reading instruction for all students. Students who are reading well below grade level could participate in both the extended language arts period as well as an additional reading intervention class.</p>
9-12	2-4 hours of literacy connected learning across the instructional areas	The recommendation is for two to four hours of literacy-connected learning across the content areas daily. High school teachers provide increasingly more rigorous vocabulary and comprehension instruction and practice to students each year of high school across the content areas, preparing them to exit grade 12 reading at grade level or above.

In grades four to eight, reading instruction is provided in two ways:

1. Students are explicitly taught strategies and skills common to both informational and literary text and that will help them read at grade level or above. ALL students should be taught reading as a separate class from English language arts; the composition of the class is homogenous but fluid based on reading proficiency data, and the contents of the class is aligned to the CCSS. These reading classes are designed to
 - help students continue to develop foundational reading skills
 - support students by providing instruction followed by practice on those specific essential elements of reading that will accelerate their growth as readers.
2. In addition to receiving reading instruction in a separate class, reading strategies and skills are taught across all content areas, with a portion of the instructional time devoted to teaching students the reading strategies necessary to access and comprehend subject-specific texts and extend foundational skills and comprehension.

In grades six to eight, within the content area, teachers support and expand on the strategies and skills students learn in reading classes.

In grades 6-12, where students in most cases attend separate classes for each subject, a subject-specific approach to teaching and supporting reading across all instructional areas is essential ([Heller & Greenleaf, 2007](#)).

In grades 9-12, teaching and supporting subject-specific reading across the instructional areas is critical because high school teachers are the sole providers of reading instruction for most high school students. High school students who are reading below grade level or significantly below grade level must receive reading instruction through a separate reading class that will allow the teacher to target the specific skill deficits of the student.

There are exceptions to the value of homogeneously grouping students for reading instruction. An important exception is with English learners when the instructional focus is specifically on vocabulary and reading comprehension. For these instructional focus areas, it is valuable for English learners (and English only students also) if students with differing levels of English proficiency are taught in the same group. In this case, more proficient students will have the opportunity to serve as stronger language models for less proficient English learners. Because instruction during these specific times should be highly rich in student language, it is best if small groups of students with different levels of English language proficiency are convened. The recommended size of these groups should range from 3 – 6 students. If adequate time is devoted to this instruction, each English learner will have multiple opportunities to actively engage in high-quality instructional interactions with the teacher and peers focusing on vocabulary and comprehension.

Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework
Oregon State Board of Education.

ENGLISH LEARNER STUDENT FOCUS: SMALL GROUPS

When students work in small groups, the grouping strategies must be consistent with the learning goals and are based on student data. Homogeneous groupings may be best when used for discrete skill development, whereas heterogeneous groupings can be beneficial for language development ([Samsudin & Rai, 2006](#)). Grouping should always be varied and by no means considered permanent. The recommended size of small groups should range from three to six students. If adequate time is devoted to this instruction with the intentional use of instructional supports and strategies, each English learner will have multiple opportunities to actively engage in high-quality instructional interactions with the teacher and peers focusing on the learning goals.

Please note, per state policy, all English learner students must have a daily dedicated English language development (ELD) block or course of a minimum of 45 min-

utes based on the English language proficiency level of the students. This block or course is tailored to and builds upon students' English language proficiency levels to help students develop their English language skills ([Saunders, Goldenburg & Marcelletti, 2013](#)). Please see the *New Mexico English Language Development Instructional Framework* (ELDIF) for further information ([NMPED, 2019e](#)).

FOCUSED INSTRUCTION ON THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF READING

For children birth to third grade, systematic, explicit instruction on the five components of reading is essential. When students acquire these essential skills by the end of third grade, they are prepared to make the transition from learning to read to reading to learn.

5 Big Ideas of Early Reading ([Langenberg, Correro, Ehri, Ferguson, Garza, Kamil, Marrett, Samuels, Sanahan, Shaywitz, Trabasso, Williams, Willows & Yatvin, 2000](#))

Phonemic awareness: the knowledge that spoken words can be broken apart into smaller segments of sound known as phonemes.

1. Phonological awareness instruction is heavily emphasized from birth through the first part of first grade. Beginning in kindergarten and continuing into first grade students are taught to blend and segment sounds for reading and spelling. For some students, additional opportunities to engage with print continue to extend the phonological awareness and they develop advanced phonemic awareness skills beyond blending and segmenting; these include deleting, substituting, or reversing phonemes within words. For children with a phonological-core deficit, these skills will need to be directly developed to develop the orthographic mapping and efficient sight vocabulary development needed for reading fluency ([Kilpatrick, 2015](#))
2. Phonics: the knowledge that letters of the alphabet represent phonemes and that these sounds are blended together to form spoken words and the letters that represent these sounds from written words. Readers skilled in phonics can sound out words they haven't seen before without first having to memorize them. For typically developing readers, phonic decoding of unfamiliar words will result in the development of instantly recognizing the word (sight word learning) within one to four exposures. However, for students with poor phonological awareness skills, particularly advanced phonological awareness skills, significantly more exposures are needed ([Kilpatrick, 2015](#)).

Phonological awareness activities can strengthen a student's response to phonics instruction. Preschool programs target oral sound-play, including rhyming, alliteration, onset-rime, and blending and segmenting syllables. Phonics instruction begins in kindergarten and first grade, with lessons on sound/symbol relationships and decoding many simple words. In birth to preschool programs exposure to text and environmental print sets the foundation for phonics instruction in kindergarten and first grade. Phonics instruction progresses in grades two and three to include letter and vowel combinations and more difficult word types. (Students in grades four and above focus on advanced word study, including morphemes.)

3. **Fluency:** the ability to recognize words easily, read with greater speed, accuracy, and expression, and to better understand what is read. Children gain fluency by practicing reading until the process becomes automatic. The process of orthographic mapping enables the storage of printed words in long term memory for instant recognition and fluent reading. This process requires advanced phoneme awareness, letter-sound knowledge, and phonological long-term memory. As students' sight vocabularies grow, their reading becomes more fluent because there is less cognitive effort needed for phonic decoding. Guided oral repeated reading is one approach to helping children become fluent readers. Guided oral reading is reading aloud while getting guidance and feedback from skilled readers. The combination of practice and feedback promotes reading fluency. For typically developing students needing only 1-4 exposures to develop automaticity with unfamiliar words, guided oral repeated reading may provide these opportunities. However, struggling readers will likely need opportunities to develop advanced phonemic awareness as well.

Fluency instruction receives greater instructional attention as students develop proficiency in phonics. Fluency instruction begins in first grade and is heavily emphasized in two and three. (For some students, fluency should continue to be a major instructional focus through grade eight and above.)

4. **Vocabulary:** teaching new words, either as they appear in text, or by introducing new words separately. This type of instruction also aids reading ability.

Vocabulary instruction is systematically taught throughout kindergarten through 12th grade. In birth to preschool programs, vocabulary is introduced in the context of the language-rich environment and activities. Teachers introduce new concepts and words throughout the day, and embed language development in all activities and through high-quality children's books. In the early grades, much of the content of vocabulary instruction is from books and other curriculum materials. As students begin to read on their own and read increasingly complex texts across the content areas, they encounter words that are not a part of their oral vocabulary, and their vocabulary expands more rapidly.

5. **Reading comprehension:** techniques for helping individuals to understand what they read. Such techniques involve having students summarize what

they have read, to gain a better understanding of the material. Techniques such as close reading and asking questions, which gradually increase the depth of knowledge, can help students to more critically analyze a text. Oral language comprehension serves as the foundation for reading comprehension and is developed through language-rich interactions in the birth to preschool settings. Comprehension instruction shifts from a listening comprehension focus in kindergarten and first grade to a mostly reading comprehension focus beginning in grade 1 and continuing on through grade 12. Many children can comprehend text above their decoding ability. Therefore, some students may need to be provided access to their grade level texts through opportunities such as listening to text to engage in comprehension activities.

MULTI-LAYERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

The *Multi-Layered System of Supports* (MLSS) framework integrates instruction, assessment, and intervention in a way that allows schools to match the level of intensity and instructional support to student needs in essential academic areas, such as reading.

In New Mexico, MLSS is an organizational framework by which schools assess student needs, strategically allocate resources, and design and deliver instruction to all students within the school. The MLSS framework addresses student achievement and positive behavior for all students through the use of appropriate, evidence-based instruction, and interventions. Student progress is monitored over time and then that data are used to guide instructional decisions and behavioral strategies. These discussions occur during general education PLC time. MLSS further recommends that special education, curriculum specialists, administration, and interventionists be regularly scheduled to attend general education PLC discussions to further inform the team on relevant academic and behavioral supports.

New Mexico's MLSS framework, supported by state rule, consists of a three-layered, problem-solving model that uses a set of increasingly intensive academic and behavioral supports:

LAYER 3 – INTENSIVE LEARNER SUPPORTS are individualized, intensive, specially-designed instruction and services for any student in general education or with a specific learning disability who needs additional support.

LAYER 2 – TARGETED LEARNER SUPPORTS are supplemental, targeted individualized interventions for some students.

LAYER 1 – UNIVERSAL LEARNER SUPPORTS are universal screening, appropriate core instruction with universal interventions for all students.

In New Mexico, the seven core MLSS components are

- 1. data-driven instruction and data-informed decision-making
- 2. high-quality core instruction and interventions
- 3. informed and effective school leadership and systems
- 4. collaboration and processes for providing a layered continuum of supports
- 5. positive school culture and climate
- 6. health and wellness supports
- 7. family and community supports

For more information on New Mexico’s *Multi-Layered System of Supports* framework, visit <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/multi-layered-system-of-supports-mlss/>

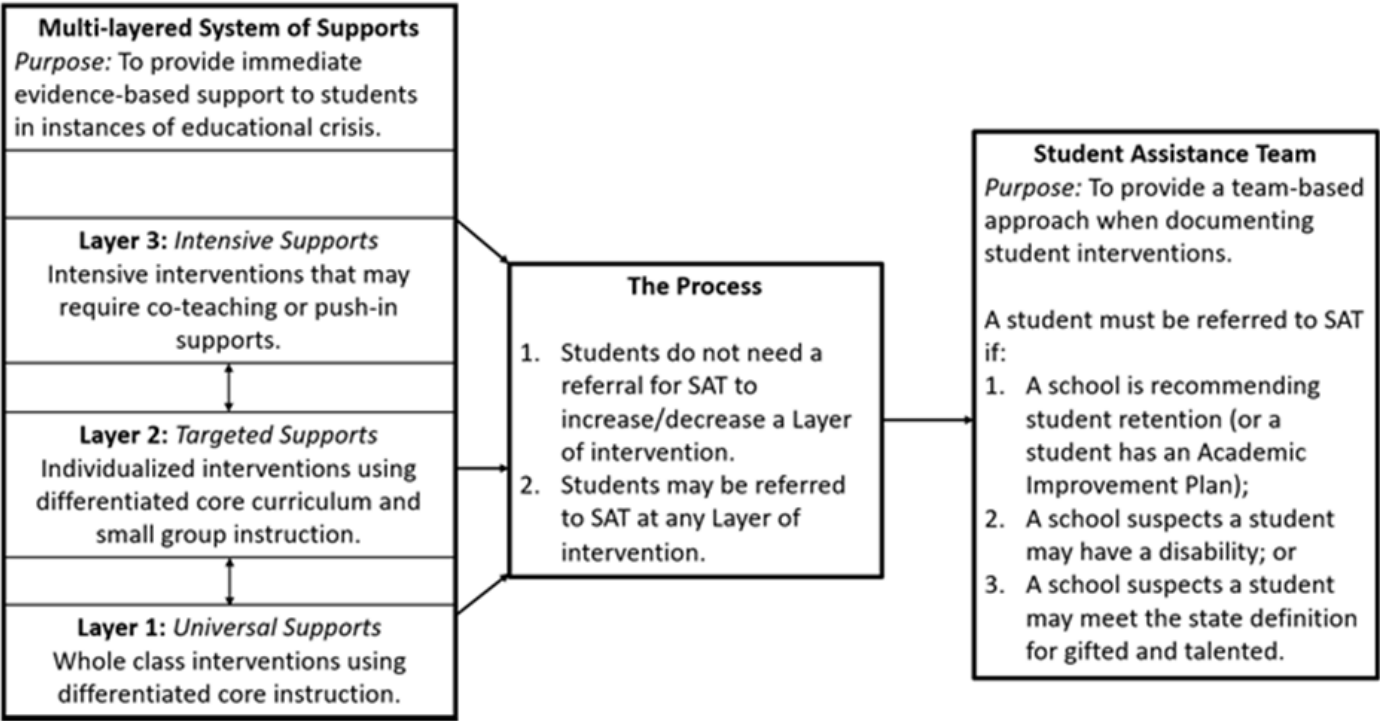
EVIDENCE-BASED STRATEGIES, PROGRAMS, AND MATERIALS ARE ADOPTED AND USED SCHOOLWIDE WITH A HIGH LEVEL OF FIDELITY

Reading strategies, programs, and materials must be aligned to the best research evidence available on design of instruction.

Core, Supplemental, and Intervention Instructional Material

Regardless of the grade level, schools will have a continuum of instructional reading materials to meet the needs of ALL students (Layer 1, Layer 2, and Layer 3, as well as the diverse needs within each layer). Schools will systematically research and identify programs to provide evidence-based core, supplemental, and intervention instruction.

Infant-Toddler: Infant-toddler programs follow the *New Mexico Developmental Interaction Approach* to engage children ([Cahill & Theilheimer, 2015](#))



Preschool: Curricula used in preschool programs must align to the *NM Early Learning Guidelines* (ELG). The ELG serve as the framework to connect academic and social skills instruction to content expectations in subsequent grades. The NM ELG are aligned to CCSS, *Head Start Child Outcomes*, and the *Early Childhood Outcomes* (ECO) for special education. Curriculum used in public school preschool programs must be evidence-based with strong evidence of improving child outcomes.

Kindergarten to Grades K-5/6: Most elementary schools’ reading initiatives include a core reading

program, supplemental programs and materials, and intervention programs (specifically designed for students well below desired reading expectations).

Grades 6-12: In secondary schools, reading textbooks, subject-area texts, and other materials will be used effectively with students reading at grade level or somewhat below. Supplemental programs may also be implemented with students reading somewhat below grade level. However, for students well below grade level, intervention programs that systematically target the foundational aspects of reading (*5 Big Ideas of Reading*) will be used.

CONTINUUM OF READING INSTRUCTION AND MATERIALS ACROSS GRADES	
CORE	
ELEMENTARY	SECONDARY
<p>In elementary schools, a core program consists of a carefully sequenced approach to the structure of the English language and includes decodable texts for students to apply their learning of reading acquisition in continuous text. A core program also includes complex grade level texts that provide opportunities for students to engage in comprehension activities. These complex texts may be read aloud. These materials are used with students who are meeting or exceeding reading goals or students who are close to meeting reading goals.</p> <p>Note that students who are performing well below grade level should also be instructed in parts of the core program as well.</p> <p>Keys to effective implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • should comprehensively address all five “big ideas” of beginning reading • provide explicit and systematic instruction • be sequenced in a way so that, if taught with fidelity, students will develop the necessary skills to meet reading goals and expectations • should be taught by teachers with extensive professional development in using a core program effectively and with fidelity (Professional development provided by publishers is insufficient for effective implementation of the program to occur.) <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If implemented with fidelity, students have the greatest opportunity to learn the knowledge and skills they need to meet the common core standard in English language arts. • A quality core program is sequenced Carefully within and between grades, so as students move through the grades, the content knowledge addressed builds on previous knowledge. • A common core program makes planning easier for teachers and provides a basis for effective staff communication about goals and objectives, instruction, and student performance. • For districts with high mobility, a common core program provides consistency in instruction from school to school. 	<p>Similar to elementary programs, basal reading programs can be used in grades six to eight as part of the curriculum for reading classes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the secondary level, some teachers do not implement a core reading program, rather reading instruction is taught across the content areas • “Core instruction” at the secondary level refers to the reading instruction that all teachers provide in every course. • Subject-area texts are analogous to core reading programs in earlier grades

SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAM AND MATERIALS	
ELEMENTARY	SECONDARY
<p>Supplemental programs :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides deeper instruction and additional practice on a particular essential element or subset of essential elements • may focus on phonological awareness and phonics for students in kindergarten and grade one or a supplemental fluency program with students in grades four and five • may provide deeper instruction for a particular concept or skill, which is more extensive than it would normally be presented in the core program • provides teachers with more extensive opportunities to model a skill or task • provides students with more opportunities to practice applying what they have learned in the core program <p>Why use a supplemental program?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After analyzing the core reading program, the school-based team may find the design for teaching all five essential elements of reading is not strong, and the school may “supplement” the core program. In this case, the supplemental program would be used with ALL students who receive instruction • Schools may consider the use of supplemental programs to address the needs of a subset of students for whom the instruction provided in the core program, though designed well, is not sufficient to meet their specific needs for Layer 1 and Layer 2. 	<p>Supplemental programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allow reading teachers and specialists to use utilize assessment data to determine specific areas of need for students who are not reading at grade level and provide supplemental instruction—for example, some students may need explicit instruction on strategies to decode multisyllabic words, while others may need to build reading fluency. The school can then select a supplemental program to target the specific data-based needs of their students. <p>How to schedule supplemental time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In grades six through eight, where the recommended practice is to include a reading class for all students, schools can include the supplemental program as part of the reading instruction provided during reading class to those groups of students who need it. • A common method to implement a supplemental program in grades 9-12 is to use homeroom, study hall, or elective periods to implement the supplemental programs. <p>For all teachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is critical secondary teachers provide opportunities for advanced word study, fluency building activities with subject-area texts, explicit vocabulary instruction, and direct comprehension strategy instruction across all content areas • While secondary teachers do not implement supplemental reading programs in their courses, their role in helping all students to access required text or other text specific to a subject area is significant • It is important that all students, including struggling readers, be given opportunities to read texts across the content areas.
INTERVENTION PROGRAMS	
ELEMENTARY	SECONDARY
<p>Intervention programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are intense reading programs designed to address the needs of students who are well below grade-level goals • provide explicit instruction that is systematic and more intensive than core instruction • emphasize the concept of mastery learning with clear criteria for what students must do to demonstrate they have learned instructional content before teachers move to the next lesson in the sequence • carefully monitor student progress with the goal that students will make sufficient progress in the intervention program to exit the program and receive their instruction in the core program or in a grade-level reading class instruction being provided in the core program or grade-level class <p>Keys to effective Implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To select the most effective intervention programs, schools should identify evidence-based programs—intervention programs may just target one skill such as fluency or comprehension. • Interventions should target the needs of the student. For example, some students may be reading or decoding with a high level of accuracy, but their rate of oral reading continues to be slow. Thus, the intervention should be designed to increase reading rate. • Many core reading programs now include intervention materials. One benefit of • using intervention programs designed to go with a core reading program is the consistency in the scope and sequence between the core and intervention for items, such as the order of introduction of sounds, high frequency words, and word types. • In some cases, the core-based intervention programs may not be intensive enough to meet the needs of the students and a more intensive intervention is needed. 	<p>Intervention programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are designed to differentiate instruction to close the gap for intensive struggling readers • typically are provided by reading specialists or teachers who have undergone thorough professional learning to help them understand the program and intensive reading instruction • begin with an initial screening to identify those students who need extra help, which is followed by a deeper diagnostic assessment to provide details on the student’s literacy strengths and weaknesses

INSTRUCTION ALIGNED TO COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

Effective literacy programs require a well-articulated, coherent set of goals based on THE CCSS. Standards provide schools with necessary information for identifying what students need to know and be able to do at each grade level. Articulation is needed between all levels but especially at important transition points (i.e., preschool to kindergarten, elementary school to middle school, and middle school to secondary school). For more information on these critical transitions as detailed in the *New Mexico Rising: New Mexico's State Plan for the Every Student Succeeds Act*, [see Appendix A](#).

GUIDELINES FOR ALIGNING INSTRUCTION TO THE STANDARDS ([Bean, Hall, Javorsky & McKee, 2014](#))

Birth-Preschool

The *New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines* (ELG) provide parents and educators with the guidelines for content that can be taught prior to the kindergarten year. Implications for instruction include the following:

- Modeling correct language (e.g., describing what a child is doing or restating what a child has communicated) provides rich exposure to language and provides the foundation for children to learn new words and expand their ability to communicate.
- Very young children benefit from a great deal of teacher support in the form of modeled instruction. In reading, this includes the Read Aloud, where teachers or parents read a story to the child, thinking aloud to model their thought processes.
- Reading to young children exposes learners to various skills and strategies that must be developed for successful reading.
- Re-reading familiar books allows young learners to participate in the reading
- Emergent learners need to have access to a variety of books.
- Independent “pretend reading” leads to practice with text reading. This can also enhance oral language and vocabulary development.
- Phonological awareness skills can be acquired through oral sound-play, including rhyming, alliteration, on-set-rime, and blending and segmenting syllables.

Kindergarten to Grade Five

The CCSS for English Language Arts provide the content that needs to be addressed at each grade level. These standards are the expectations for all students. Systematic and effective literacy instruction in the primary grades is essential for preventing future reading difficul-

ties and provide the students with the skills they need to be college and career ready. (To view the CCSS, visit <http://www.corestandards.org/>):

- teach the foundational skills (print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics, blending routines, spelling dictation, fluency) explicitly and provide opportunities for students to apply what they are learning with decodable texts
- coordinate and integrate the teaching of word-identification skills and comprehension skills and strategies
- provide explicit instruction that enables students to apply decoding and encoding skills in isolation and continuous text
- provide explicit instruction for monitoring and self-correcting strategies when they are reading
- provide opportunities for students to read and discuss a variety of interesting and appropriate complex texts from multiple genres, possibly through reading aloud
- recognize that reading, writing, speaking, and listening are closely intertwined, and classroom practices should be planned so they emphasize these connections (e.g., writing in response to reading)
- seek out evidence-based practices that support students in the classroom and enable educators to effectively implement standards-based instruction

Refer to the Institute of Education Sciences’ (IES) *Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade: A Practice Guide* ([IES What Works Clearinghouse, 2012](#)). Five specific recommendations include

- teach students how to use reading comprehension strategies
- teach students to identify and use the text’s organizational structure
- guide students through focused, high-quality discussion on the meaning of text through close reading
- select texts purposefully to support comprehension development
- establish an engaging and motivating context in which to teach reading comprehension

Grades 6-12

The CCSS for English Language Arts provide the content that needs to be addressed at each grade level. These standards set the expectations New Mexico educators should have for all students. Implications for instruction:

- expose students to a variety of texts for a variety of purposes, providing explicit explanations and guidance as needed so that learners can comprehend texts across the content areas
- teach specific strategies for navigating informational text across content areas

- increase text complexity to develop strategic readers with strong analytical skills
- provide instruction in the analysis and evaluation of a variety of texts to determine theme, style, likenesses, etc.
- provide opportunities for students to examine text from a literary perspective to understand the craft of the writer

Refer to the Institute of Education Science’s publication titled *Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices: A Practice Guide* ([IES What Works Clearinghouse, 2008](#)). This guide recommends that educators:

- provide explicit vocabulary instruction
- provide direct and explicit comprehension strategy instruction
- provide opportunities for extended discussion of text meaning and interpretation through close reading
- increase student motivation and engagement in literacy learning
- make available intensive individualized interventions for struggling readers
- that can be provided by qualified specialists

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION BASED ON STUDENT NEED

For ALL students to be able to meet yearly reading goals, instruction should be differentiated based on student need. This is a critical component of providing highly quality instruction within a multi-layered system of support.

Students on track for successful reading achievement require core reading instruction that

- meets the CCSS at grade level
- allows students to meet or exceed the CCSS at grade level
- allows students to read or listen to grade-level complex texts and other material across the content areas with comprehension

For students who are not on track (students who are not meeting formative reading goals and are not meeting proficiency on the summative assessment)—additional reading instruction will be provided to supplement core instruction, so that students can make progress toward reading at grade level. Core instruction may need to be accommodated (such as listening to texts, utilizing graphic organizers to aid comprehension, etc.) and should be differentiated to ensure students make progress.

EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION

Whereas the essential elements of reading instruction can be clearly defined and program materials analyzed to determine their alignment with the essential elements, these variables do not hold power if they are not utilized in the classroom by effective teachers. How teachers deliver reading instruction through the use of strong programs and materials plays a major role in whether students are actively or passively engaged in learning and the degree to which students learn.

Teachers who deliver reading instruction effectively by utilizing effective teaching practices and engaging students make potentially difficult (at

grade level) material accessible to all students, from advanced learners to struggling students. Scaffolding to allow access to grade level content is a critical element of strong instructional design and lesson planning. The effective delivery of instruction is what most people think of when they think of an effective teacher.

The nine features of effective teacher delivery are applicable for kindergarten through 12th grade; they are essential for initial reading instruction in kindergarten and continue to be essential through elementary, middle, and high school as teachers instruct students on how to access content from texts.

EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS

Schools throughout New Mexico are striving to meet the academic and linguistic needs of English Learners (ELs). New Mexico classrooms serve the highest percentage of Hispanic students in the nation and, after Alaska, the second highest percentage of Native American students. In addition to Spanish, there are eight different indigenous languages spoken in New Mexico, some of which are oral languages only. It is the goal of NM educators to reach all students and provide opportunities for achieving at high linguistic and academic levels in an environment that recognizes, values, and celebrates students’ linguistic and cultural diversities.

Through activities (including interpersonal), discussions, and reading materials teachers can help students make the connection between what they know and the academic literacy of school. Effective reading instruction for English learners will include providing high-quality academic language instruction throughout the day. Another way to describe academic language is that it is the “ability to construct meaning from oral and written language, to relate complex ideas and information, to recognize features of different genres, and to use various linguistic strategies to communicate” ([Dutro & Moran, 2002](#)). Thus, academic language serves as the bridge between the content standards and the state’s English language development (ELD) standards. Teachers

will model and students will practice relating what they already know to the text, making predictions about the text before reading, constructing mental images and summaries during reading, and asking questions and seeking clarification after reading.

The framework for the *English Language Development Standards* produced by WIDA, a collaborative of state and federal agencies, organizes social, instructional, and academic language into three features: discourse, sentence, and word/phrase level. How well students understand and express themselves is analyzed at all three levels of language use—words, sentences, and full discourse. To assess students’ ability to recognize

and express singular words and phrases, the performance criterion is vocabulary usage. This measure includes general, specific, and technical language as well as multiple meanings of words and phrases, nuance and shades of meaning, and idiomatic expressions.

To assess how proficient students are in understanding and expressing themselves at the sentence level, the criterion used to measure performance is language forms and conventions. Aspects of language such as types of grammatical structures; matching of language forms to purpose;

and conventions, mechanics, and fluency—provide an understanding of students’ facility at this level. The performance criterion at the discourse level is linguistic complexity, which includes such features of language as the amount and structure of speech or written text and the organization and cohesion of ideas ([NMPED, 2019c](#)).

New Mexico is a WIDA Early Years state. Young multilingual children learn and develop language across all domains of learning in standards-based curricula. The *WIDA Early English Language Development Standards* help support the unique language needs of multilingual children, ages 2.5-5.5 years, and are used in conjunction with the *New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines* to provide linguistically appropriate care, instruction, and assessment. All public school preschool staff complete five one-hour modules on the language development of young multilingual learners and appropriate strategies to

NINE FEATURES OF EFFECTIVE TEACHER DELIVERY*

1. Teacher models instructional tasks
2. Teacher provides explicit instruction
3. Teacher engages students in meaningful interactions with language
4. Teacher provides multiple opportunities for students to practice instructional tasks
5. Teacher provides corrective feedback after student responses
6. Teacher encourages student effort
7. Teacher engages students during teacher-led instruction
8. Teacher engages students during independent work
9. Teacher facilitates student success

* Additional, specific guidance on how to implement these features will be incorporated in supplemental *New Mexico Literacy Framework* materials.

increase language development. In addition, the state has a cohort of early childhood instructional coaches who are trained to provide support to individual teachers and school districts ([NMPED, n.d.c.](#)).

HIGH QUALITY INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

A growing body of research shows access to high-quality instructional materials will increase student learning. Creating New Mexico's *Adopted Multiple List* is a way to ensure new and experienced educators vet materials across the state for alignment to high standards. However, providing teachers with high-quality instructional materials is not enough; professional development should be aligned to the rigorous materials so educators can fully implement them to meet the diverse learning needs of all students while creating engaged, culturally relevant, and academically competitive learning environments.

Across New Mexico, all students must have access to HQIM. With input from teachers, teacher leaders, administrators, curriculum specialists, PED staff, national experts, and other stakeholders, the state in 2018 developed this definition: High-quality instructional materials (HQIM) are content-rich, fully accessible, culturally and linguistically relevant, free from bias, evidence-based, and aligned to New Mexico state standards. They are written with clear purpose, effective lesson structure, and pacing to provide flexibility for teachers to best suit the learning styles of all students, encouraging inquiry and curiosity. HQIM may also provide a variety of relevant assessments to equip teachers with professional tools to evaluate student comprehension of the content and provide deeper understanding of the standards. HQIM also provide support to identify the linguistic and cultural lenses that students use to make meaning in the content area.

COUNCIL OF CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS HIGH-QUALITY CURRICULUM STATE RESOURCES

CCSSO runs the High-Quality Instructional Materials and Professional Development (IMPD) Network that currently supports eight states, including New Mexico. Its purpose is to significantly increase the number of districts selecting high-quality, standards aligned instructional materials and to increase the number of pre-service and in-service teachers receiving professional learning grounded in the use of those materials. Through the work of these network states to identify and leverage high-quality instructional materials, CCSSO is sharing recommendations for high-quality materials to be used for remote learning due to COVID-19 school closures: ([CCSSO, n.d.](#))

HIGH QUALITY CURRICULUM INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS: A RESOURCE MANUAL FOR IDENTIFYING, SELECTING, AND IMPLEMENTING HQIM

This HQIM resource manual is designed to walk teachers, schools, and districts through the research behind high quality instructional materials; how materials are selected for adoption on the list in New Mexico; and how districts can navigate options for essential considerations and ongoing implementation. View and download the [HQIM Manual](#) (NMPED, n.d.b.).



IMPLEMENTATION - WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO?

[See Appendix A](#) for School Instruction and Intervention Implementation Checklist.

Assessment

ASSESSMENT GOAL: Use a balanced assessment approach that includes assessments at different levels of the system (e.g., classroom, district, state) that are coherently linked to clearly-defined instructional learning targets, comprehensively support multiple purposes and uses, and provide continuous documentation of student progress over time.



THE FOUNDATION - WHY IS THIS PRINCIPLE IMPORTANT?

The use of formative, interim, and summative assessments is critical to improve literacy outcomes in New Mexico. Effective assessment data and information enable evidence-based decision-making in the state, tribe, district, school and classroom.

The role of assessments in an educational system, as identified by the Student Success Taskforce, created to reimagine New Mexico’s assessment system, include the following:

- clearly identify specific areas of student need and provide detailed feedback that serves to inform instruction and help students improve
- evaluate student progress within and across years on instructed standards
- inform instruction throughout the school year through the provision of actionable feedback tied to instructional resources

- inform the development and establishment of individual education plans
- provide information about the whole child to help educators understand a student’s strengths and needs beyond the standards
- inform decisions about professional learning needs at the teacher, school, and district level
- monitor trends in performance at the student and aggregate level
- predict performance on the end-of-year summative assessment

A BALANCED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

A balanced assessment system is a critical element of an effective plan for improving literacy instruction. Key to meeting this goal is accurate, timely assessment that allows the teacher to differentiate instruction according to individual student needs. Using a balanced assessment approach to literacy instruction requires deploying a variety of assessment strategies. Different types of

assessments serve different purposes for different users of the data.

NEW MEXICO'S

BALANCED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

FORMATIVE	INTERIM	SUMMATIVE
<p>Formative assessment is a process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback necessary to adjust ongoing instruction in relationship to the curricular standards. They can take the shape of informal checks (e.g., thumbsup/thumbs down), embedded checks for understanding, or questions sets that can be integrated into the lesson planning sequence.</p>	<p>Interim assessments are administered during the instructional year to measure students' progress in their development of grade-level knowledge and skills. These grade-level knowledge and skills are defined by the curricular standards. New Mexico's interim assessments are developed to periodically measure student performance in relation to the standards.</p>	<p>Summative assessments are administered after the instructional cycle has been completed and are designed to determine levels of proficiency on grade-level knowledge and skills.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• provide feedback necessary to adjust ongoing day-to-day instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• track student performance and growth toward grade-level proficiency• identify students who need additional attention• evaluate curricular programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify a student's level of performance against grade level standards• inform accountability policies• inform curriculum needs following academic year
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Classroom teachers• Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Classroom teachers• Instructional/curriculum leads• School & district administrators• Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Classroom teachers• Instructional/curriculum leads• School administrators• Parents• Community, State, & Policy Makers

Progress monitoring is a formative, scientifically based practice that teachers should use to evaluate the effectiveness of their instruction for individual students and their entire class. Teachers identify goals for what their students will learn over time, measure their students’ prog-

ress toward meeting these goals by comparing expected and actual rates of learning, and adjust their teaching as needed. According to researchers, the benefits of progress monitoring include ([Fuchs & Fuchs, n.d.](#)):

- accelerated learning for students
- higher expectations of students by teachers
- more efficient and appropriately targeted instructional techniques and goals
- faster attainment of important state standards

Further, according to Torgesen, the use of reading assessments for kindergarten through second grade is supported by three evidence-based findings:

1. Patterns of reading development are established early and are stable over time unless interventions are implemented to increase student progress.
2. Without intense interventions, struggling readers do not eventually “catch up” to their average performing peers—in fact, the gap between strong and weak readers’ increases over time.
3. Reading interventions that begin in grade three and extend beyond are likely to be less successful and less cost effective than interventions that begin in the earlier grades. The later interventions begin, the longer they take to work, the longer they need to be implemented each day, and the less likely they are to produce desired effects.



ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS - WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

A comprehensive, meaningful assessment system provides an essential component for a literacy program. To help schools and districts obtain this critical early literacy data, the PED provides a screening and progress monitoring assessment for planning data-driven instruction in early elementary. Monitoring student progress and tailoring instruction to meet student needs will support all children’s proficiency in reading by the end of third grade.

Older students are assessed in English language arts and math using the New Mexico’s Measure of Student Success (NM-MSSA) assessments. Students in grades 5, 8, and 11 are assessed in science using the New Mexico’s Assessment of Science Readiness (NM-ASR). Students in grade 9 and 10 take the PSAT (preliminary SAT) designed for their grade level (PSAT 8/9 or PSAT 10), and students in grade 11 are administered the SAT to demonstrate college and career readiness. The NM-ASR, PSAT 10, and SAT are also used for graduation assessment requirements.

Educator in New Mexico need to know the following to have a solid understanding of the essential elements of assessment:

- the quality of the data collection
- the types and purpose of assessment
- the meaning of reliability and validity
- the New Mexico assessments

HOW TO ENSURE THE QUALITY OF DATA COLLECTION

Reliable and valid data are essential for making any education decision. Here are steps to ensure the data are as reliable and valid as possible.

“Reading should not be presented to children as a chore or duty. It should be offered to them as a precious gift.”

Kate DiCamillo

1. Provide high-quality professional learning on the administration and scoring of all reading assessments.
2. Provide brief “refresher” trainings for teachers and staff who conduct reading assessments.
3. Have an assessment expert “shadow score” alongside individuals collecting assessment data. The expert can provide feedback to the tester on the standardized administration and scoring procedures and efficient and effective administration.
4. Conduct a retrospective check of scoring accuracy. After all testing is completed, choose a random sample of the tests (approximately 20 percent) and check scoring according to the guidelines. If scoring errors are identified in more than 10 percent of the booklets, re-check all of the booklets.
5. Conduct a retrospective check of the data entry of a random sample of scores. If errors in data entry were made in more than 10 percent of the scores, re-check all data entries.

PURPOSE AND FREQUENCY OF ASSESSMENTS

PURPOSE	EXPLANATION	FREQUENCY
OBSERVATION TOOLS	<p><i>Does the child have the knowledge and skills that would predict later academic success?</i></p> <p>The purpose of the observation tools is to identify the knowledge and skills that students have at the time of program entry and to monitor progress throughout their time in the program.</p> <p>The information collected through authentic observations inform instruction to meet the unique needs of children in birth to kindergarten programs.</p> <p>Who is assessed? All students</p>	<p>Preschool: three observation periods (beginning, middle, and end of year)</p> <p>Kindergarten: first 30 instructional days of school</p>
SCREENING/ BENCHMARK ASSESSMENTS	<p><i>Is the student at risk for reading problems?</i></p> <p>The purpose of a screening assessment in reading is to identify those students at risk for reading difficulties and those students on track for successful reading outcomes.</p> <p>Screening data are used to make decisions about the level of instructional support students need. Students at high risk—this means, students well below grade-level reading expectations—should receive more instructional support than students who are on track for meeting grade-level reading expectations.</p> <p>Who is assessed? All students</p>	<p><i>Grades K-8:</i> A screening should be administered to all students at least three times per year (beginning, middle, and end of the school year).</p> <p><i>Grades K-3:</i> Screening should focus on the early literacy foundational skills.</p> <p><i>Grades 4-8:</i> Screening should focus on reading fluency and comprehension.</p> <p><i>Grades 9-12:</i> A screening assessment, focused on reading fluency and comprehension, should be administered at the beginning of the year in grade 9. Schools should consider additional screenings in grade 9 and screening assessments in grades 10-12 to some students, particularly to students who are not yet reading at grade-level.</p>
PROGRESS MONITORING	<p><i>Is the student making enough progress to reach summative reading goals?</i></p> <p>Progress monitoring in reading is essential.</p> <p>The reading progress of students who are not reading at grade level should be monitored frequently in between school-wide screening assessments. Frequent progress monitoring is necessary for students reading below grade-level expectations because the must make more progress than would be normally expected if they are going to “catch up” to grade-level expectations. To reach this goal, schools need timely information on whether students are making enough progress to reach the outcomes in the timeframe for which outcome goals are set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress monitoring continues to drive instruction by asking • Is the student responding? • How much progress is the student making? • Should the intervention increase, end, change? <p>Who is assessed? Students not reading at grade level or not reaching key reading goals</p>	<p><i>Layer 1</i> (meeting benchmark): Screening only need to be conducted three times a year.</p> <p><i>Layer 2</i> (at moderate risk): Screenings need to be conducted twice per month (once per month at a minimum).</p> <p><i>Layer 3:</i> Screenings need to be conducted once a week (twice a month at a minimum).</p>



IMPLEMENTATION – WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO?

Refer to the PED Assessments Bureau website for the most up-to-date assessment information: <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/assessment-3/>. See Appendix A for Formative, Interim, and Summative Assessment Activities Checklist.

SUMMATIVE EVALUATIONS	<p><i>Is the student reading at grade level and meeting other reading goals?</i></p> <p>Grades K-2: The foundation for reading development occurs in grades K-3. NM-MSSA is not administered prior to grade 3; thus, formative measures (screenings and progress monitoring) of reading in grades K-2 are even more significant. In grades K-2, these measures indicate whether students are on track to read at grade level by grade 3, and they may also be used as summative or outcome measures for specific essential elements of reading (phonological awareness, alphabetic principle, and fluency).</p> <p>Grades 3-12: Summative assessments are administered at the end of the school year to determine whether students have reached important grade-level reading goals for that year. The most important purpose is to determine whether students: (a) are able to read a variety of grade-level materials with comprehension, (b) have met key formative goals that are important benchmarks of successful overall grade-level reading, and (c) are on track for grade-level reading.</p> <p>Who is assessed? All students</p>	<p>Grades K-2: Formative (screening) assessment should be conducted at a minimum of three times a year (beginning, middle, and end).</p> <p>Grades 3-12: Summative assessment is conducted at the end of every school year.</p>
DIAGNOSING INSTRUCTIONAL NEEDS	<p><i>What precise instructional needs does a student have that, if identified, will improve their rate of progress toward important reading goals?</i></p> <p>Even when provided with evidence-based interventions and quality instruction, some students continue to fall further behind grade-level expectations.</p> <p>Continued lack of progress increases the urgency of designing and implementing an instructional plan that will improve the students' reading outcomes. In this case, the use of a reliable and valid standardized diagnostic reading assessment may provide information that educators need to identify reading challenges and more precisely meet the students' instructional needs.</p> <p>Who is assessed? Students who are not making adequate progress despite the implementation and documentation of intense intervention</p>	<p>Rarely.</p> <p>It should be noted the administration of formal diagnostic reading assessments means very intense instructional interventions are needed to increase the reading progress of the student.</p>

Professional Learning

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING/RESOURCES GOAL: Develop learning opportunities, web-based resources, and coordinated support services to enhance literacy learning for educators. Such opportunities will be based on best practice concepts, including

- ongoing
- job-embedded when possible
- use of coaches and mentors
- differentiated to accommodate needs of both novice and veteran educators



THE FOUNDATION - WHY IS THIS PRINCIPLE IMPORTANT?

Professional learning is critical for teachers to expand knowledge of how to provide the instruction students need to be successful readers. High-quality professional learning at the school level provides teachers with both evidence of effective practice and the “how-tos” of delivering effective instruction ([National Staff Development Council, 2001](#)).

The most effective professional learning plans are systematic, intentional, coordinated, ongoing, and guided by student achievement data. In addition to workshops and conferences, job-embedded professional learning aligned to the school’s literacy plan and its NM DASH 90-day plan provides an effective, ongoing, sustained, and focused approach to teacher learning. Examples of professional learning within the school setting are professional learning communities, teacher study groups, grade-level and department level meetings to analyze data and to plan and reflect on instruction, focused professional development offered by a master teacher or a coach on a specific aspect of implementation, and ongoing observations by instructional experts and mentors ([Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman & Yoon, 2001](#)). High-level professional learning is also not a onetime opportunity. It is a series of related events on a focused area, based on providing teachers professional development in sync with student need. Ongoing professional learning should allow teachers to have access to professional content, have an opportunity to add that information to their instructional planning, allow the opportunity to safely practice and apply the learning, allow time for discussion and reflection how students responded, and finally with time for adjusting and reapplying new realizations. Strong professional learning is reflective and provides both individual and collaborative time for doing so as teachers adjust strategies and lessons to meet the needs of students.



ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF HIGH QUALITY PROFESSIONAL LEARNING: WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

1. Seven essential elements of high-quality professional learning:
2. guided by assessment data to attain school reading goals
3. focused on the implementation of evidence-based programs and practices
4. consistent time allocated for educators to reflect on, refine, and plan instruction
5. inclusive of multifaceted, coordinated, and ongoing to support teachers and instructional staff on the assessment and instruction of reading priorities
6. differentiated by position and need
7. resultings in a thorough understanding of, and ability to implement reading priorities and practices effectively
8. connected to the curriculum and instructional materials teacher use day to day ([Lynch, Hill, Gonzalez & Pollard, 2019](#))

ASSESSMENT DATA TO ATTAIN SCHOOL READING GOALS

To systematically improve reading outcomes, professional learning for teachers and those who support teachers must be data-driven.

The goal is to implement professional learning that will impact student learning with a high degree of certainty. The selection of the type and content must be driven by data and be intentional. For example, at a middle school, eighth grade data may indicate that fewer than 60 percent of the students are meeting formative reading goals. In this case:

- the school needs to analyze school-level data and perhaps also data from previous grades to pinpoint possible skill deficits of this overall low performance
- after the possible skill deficits have been identified, then the school needs to specifically target the pro-

professional learning necessary to address this need, such as professional learning on how to intensify instruction (e.g., using an intervention program designed to accelerate the progress of students at risk)

IMPLEMENTATION OF EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES

Professional learning will be differentiated based on the purpose of the instruction. Specifically, the professional learning on how to teach students to read differs significantly from the professional learning on teaching reading across the content areas.

TEACHING READING

In elementary schools, and in middle schools and high schools when reading is taught separately as a subject, schools must use evidence-based reading tools to address one or more of the five essential elements of reading: phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. When teaching a reading class, teachers typically use a combination of the core reading program, supplemental materials, and intervention programs. Each of these require high-quality professional learning that focuses precisely on how to use these materials to provide effective explicit reading instruction.

Notably, while publishers of the programs and materials could provide initial exposure in how programs are organized and a basic overview of how they should be taught in the classroom. However, that is not enough. More than learning to use the materials, educators need continued professional learning in the science of reading in order to dig deep into how to best use the materials in the context of the classroom, based on data and student needs.

TEACHING READING ACROSS CONTENT AREAS

Teaching reading across the content areas can be challenging but is necessary to help students become life-long learners and develop higher-level thinking skills. Professional learning targeting the teaching of these advanced skills is very different from professional learning on how to use texts that focus on reading instruction ([O'Brien, 1995](#)). Teachers for grades 4-12 need effective professional learning that addresses two major areas ([Torgesen, Houston & Rissman, 2007](#)):

1. effective and explicit content instruction that ensures that students learn key content in their classes, even if students do not have the decoding skills to learn this content from reading the course textbooks and other materials independently
2. effective and explicit instruction necessary for teaching students to read subject-area texts and ensuring students learn how to read subject-specific texts and materials so they can access content through reading

When teaching reading across the content areas, instruction will focus on the following concepts:

- key vocabulary
- the organization of content in the text (text structure)
- reading strategies students need to use to understand the text.

“Regardless of how schools are formed or reformed, structured or unstructured, the renewal of staff members’ professional skills is considered fundamental to improvement.”

Guskey, T.R., & Huberman, M. (1995)
Professional development in education:
New paradigms and practices
New York: Teachers College Press

Although teaching reading across the content areas is different from teaching reading separately as a subject, it contains some pedagogical similarities. Systematically integrating explicit content instruction with explicit reading instruction to teach students how to read and understand content text is critical in grades 4-12.

CONSISTENT TIME ALLOCATED FOR EDUCATORS TO PLAN, REFLECT ON, AND REFINE INSTRUCTION

If Louisa Moats is correct, that *Teaching Reading IS Rocket Science*, then professional learning must involve much more than detailed descriptions of what teachers should do in the classroom to teach reading effectively ([American Federation of Teachers, 2004](#)). To provide effective instruction in the classroom, teachers need sufficient time to prepare for instruction. Teachers need time before instruction to prepare lessons, and they need time after instruction to evaluate the lessons and determine what changes need to be made. While this can be done individually, it is best accomplished through grade-level and department-level team meetings and professional learning communities, time should be allocated for planning reading lessons and determining how reading will be taught across the content areas. Similarly, having a coach, expert teacher, peer, or administrator regularly observe instruction and provide feedback assists teachers in reflecting on and refining their instruction ([Gersten & Dimino, 2002](#)).

By noting the degree to which lessons balance both content instruction and reading instruction for enhanced content understanding, observers can provide valuable information teachers can use to improve their planning and delivery of instruction.

Tips for a utilizing a reading coach:

- In prekindergarten through eighth grade reading classes, even brief, five-minute observations can provide teachers with useful feedback on how to refine their instruction to meet student needs.
- Scheduling longer observations by a coach or expert teacher can provide additional benefit.
- Observers can collect detailed information on student responses to instruction and this can be used to determine areas of student mastery and difficulty.
- In grades 4-12 reading across the content areas, observations can focus on what teachers do to help students with text comprehension.
- Observers can look for instruction that targets subject-specific vocabulary and the use of reading comprehension strategies as they are applied to understanding material.
- Observers can note the depth of knowledge teachers expect on target vocabulary.

- In advancing subject-specific comprehension, observers can provide feedback to teachers on the concreteness of the modeling teachers use to help students understand what is expected when they read the text and what they should do if they encounter difficulty.
- Observers can prepare comments on the feedback that teachers provide students as students attempt to apply these comprehension strategies during supported practice and during independent practice.
- Observers can prepare feedback on how often students use a text to make an argument of their own, by citing an author's claim, as well as utilizing what they read to extend their own thinking.

MULTIFACETED, COORDINATED, AND ONGOING SUPPORT

Professional learning that is provided through multiple avenues or sources may result in the adoption of successful new teaching strategies as long as the different activities are focused on a common goal and are based on data.

Although the initial presentation of new teaching strategies or content may be in a large-group format

such as a state-level or district-level institute, follow-up formats should assist with embedding new skills within the context of actual classroom practice.

Professional learning activities include:

- state or regional institutes
- district-level professional learning
- web-based platforms
- school-based consultation and professional learning
- grade-level/department-level teams or staff meetings
- classroom observations and feedback

In seeking new or deeper content knowledge, educators should determine the most effective manner to gain the knowledge.

DIFFERENTIATED BY POSITION AND NEED

At the school level, principals, coaches, classroom teachers, specialists, instructional assistants, new staff members, and substitutes should receive appropriate professional learning in how to implement the school literacy plan. Because responsibilities differ by position, professional learning should be differentiated by position.

TYPE OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING: ADVANTAGES AND SHORTCOMINGS		
TYPE	ADVANTAGES	SHORTCOMINGS
Training: <i>Presenter or a team of presenters share ideas and expertise through a variety of group based activities. Training format includes large group presentations and discussions, workshops, seminars, etc.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient and cost-effective • Provides a shared knowledge base and common vocabulary for participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers few opportunities for choice or individualization • May not be appropriate for varied levels of educators' skill and expertise • Follow-up activities are needed to provide feedback and coaching necessary for the successful implementation of new ideas
Observation/assessment: <i>Educators' colleagues observe educators to provide feedback on their performance.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide important benefits to both the observer and the one being observed (Showers & Bruce, 1996) • The observer gains expertise by observing colleague, preparing feedback, and discussing common experiences • The person being observed benefits from another's point of view, gains new insights, and received helpful feedback • Helps break down the isolation of teaching by having colleagues work together on shared goals (Ackland, 1991) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires the commitment of significant time by both the observer and the person being observed • Both must be willing to coordinate calendars • Care must be taken to separate the observation with the evaluation process
Involvement in development/improvement processes: <i>Participants are involved in the research, discussion, and development/improvement of a program, system, or activity.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants increase specific content knowledge and skills • Enhance their ability to work collaboratively and engage in shared decision making • Become aware of perspective of others • Become more appreciative of individual differences • Learn about group dynamics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement generally restricted to a relatively small portion of the staff • Persuasively argued opinions tend to take precedence over research evidence and knowledge of best practices
Study groups: <i>Entire staff finds solutions to common problems.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brings focus and coherence to improvement efforts • Breaks down isolation of staff • Reinforce the idea of schools as learning communities for both students and educators • Emphasize the continual and ongoing nature of professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for some individuals to take over while other remain uninvolved • Tendency for the study group discussion to be opinion-based rather than research-based
Inquiry/action research: Educators engage in a. selecting a problem or question of collective interest b. collecting, organizing, and interpreting information related to the problem c. studying the professional literature and research d. determining possible actions e. taking action and documenting results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility and opportunities they offer for choice and individualization • Format for self-analysis, reflection, and thoughtful decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little collaboration or professional sharing • Notions of shared mission and united purpose can be lost
Individually guided activities: Educators determine their one individual professional development goal and select the activities they believe will result in the achievement of that goal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility and opportunities offer choice and individualization • Format for self-analysis, reflection, and thoughtful decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little collaboration or professional sharing • Notions of shared mission and united purpose can be lost
Mentoring: An experienced and highly successful educator is paired with a less experienced colleague.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers a highly individualized approach for professional development that benefits both educators • Cfooster lifelong, highly productive professional relationship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May limit opportunities for broader collaboration and collegial sharing
Adapted from <i>Evaluating Professional Development</i> (Guskey, 2000)		

However, because the school team must work as a unit toward common goals, professional learning must include opportunities for the school staff to learn to work together to implement the school's literacy plan and to focus instructional programming and instructional planning on student need.

Individuals bring different background experiences, previous professional learning experiences, and skills and talents related to their positions. Professional learning content should be adjusted based on these factors. A systematic professional learning plan differentiated by position and need will be detailed in schools' literacy plans and within the NM DASH 90-day plan.

Professional learning should have a measurable impact on both teachers' conceptual understanding of the instruction they are being asked to provide as well as on the effective use of instructional practices in the classroom. Effective professional learning results in a thorough understanding of, and ability to implement reading priorities and practices.

A major goal in the *New Mexico Statewide Literacy Framework* is that professional learning will target both the mechanics of instruction and the underlying concepts that support the use of specific programs and instructional approaches. That is, professional learning must address teachers' understanding of the scientific basis of reading instruction and give clear demonstrations of what effectively translating that knowledge into classroom practice means.

Whether professional learning focuses on the use data to provide instruction more sensitive to student needs, more effective grouping arrangements with students, better use of instructional time, or the effective implementation of new programs, the end result should be professional learning guided by student reading data and focused on the attainment of student reading goals.

The value or success of professional learning will be determined largely by whether students are improving reading achievement, rather than the professional learning evaluation ratings. Educators must engage in action research and objectively look at the impact of professional learning activities as it relates to more effective teaching practices and increased student learning. For more information on evaluating professional learning, visit <http://tguskey.com/wp-content/uploads/Professional-Learning-1-Gauge-Impact-with-Five-Levels-of-Data.pdf>.

CONNECTED TO THE CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS TEACHERS USE DAY TO DAY

Teachers deserve both instructional materials and professional learning experiences that address the decisions they are making with their students in the context of the actual materials they are using. Providing teachers with generic strategies divorced from their day-to-day reality makes it less likely teachers will apply what they learn to improve practice or student outcomes ([Magee & Jensen](#)).

Professional learning cannot live up to its potential unless it is rooted in the content teachers teach in their classrooms. Similarly, the resulting professional learning will not be excellent unless the underlying instructional materials are excellent. System leaders who want to foster effective and relevant professional learning using instructional materials should focus on making sure the instructional materials reflect the full aspiration of college and career readiness.

For professional learning to be optimally relevant and useful to teachers, it needs to build on the instructional materials teachers use in their classrooms. Separating the work of implementing standards aligned curriculum from the ongoing professional learning in which teachers engage is not only inefficient but also incoherent; it undermines the success of both. System leaders have a responsibility to intentionally weave these work streams together. By making these two parts of a whole, they can accelerate and deepen progress to the benefit of teachers and their students.



IMPLEMENTATION - WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO

[See Appendix A](#) for School Professional Learning Implementation Checklist.

Family Engagement

FAMILY/COMMUNITY/BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT GOAL: Foster authentic school-home relationships, rooted in mutual trust and reciprocal accountability; cultivate academic partnership opportunities that support student growth and equip families to monitor literacy development at home; provide culturally relevant and linguistically accessible resources for families to set high expectations, support a community culture of learning and literacy, and advocate for individual children's needs.



THE FOUNDATION - WHY IS THIS PRINCIPLE IMPORTANT?

The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory report, *A New Wave of Evidence*, synthesizes research from 51 studies over the preceding decade to reach conclusions about the effect of parent and family involvement on student learning ([Henderson & Mapp, 2002](#)).

The results indicate students with “involved” parents are more likely to

- earn higher grades and test scores, and enroll in higher-level programs
 - be promoted, pass their classes, and earn credits
 - attend school regularly
 - have better social skills, show improved behavior and adapt well to school
 - graduate and go on to post-secondary education
-
- When educators practice effective family engagement, families are equipped with the information and resources needed to:
 - communicate high expectations
 - monitor their child's progress at home
 - support learning at home
 - advocate for their child's educational needs

According to research, when families play these roles in their child's education, it directly and positively impacts student outcomes.



ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS – WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

New Mexico is committed to providing learning opportunities, technical assistance and resources for parents, families and communities that will support student learning in the home and community. New Mexico must ensure that such interactions are culturally respectful, linguistically appropriate, and inclusive of the many diverse populations of the state.

The *New Mexico Framework for Family-School Partnerships* (NMSFP) includes six focus areas (www.NMengaged.com):

- welcoming ALL families into the school community
- communicating effectively
- supporting student success
- speaking up for every child
- sharing leadership
- collaborating with the community

Effective family engagement relies on developing authentic relationships between educators and families, sustaining trust through open communication, and fostering meaningful partnership that links families to student-specific, culturally relevant, and linguistically accessible information that supports their child's success in school and beyond. In addition, educators must be equipped with a differentiated set of resources that promote a culture of learning in the community and support literacy development at home.

DEVELOPING AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS

Perhaps one of the most meaningful and effective ways to promote family engagement is to develop relationships built on mutual trust, respect, and reciprocal accountability. The NMFSP addresses relationships in its discussion of how to welcome families into the school community.

Developing authentic relationships begins with the self. Educators are encouraged to explore their cultural and linguistic identities and how they “show up” in the classroom. To develop authentic relationships, educators and administrators must be aware of and address implicit biases. In addition, educators must approach relationship building through a lens of equity and empathy. A school-wide culture of family engagement is essential to promoting relationship building. There are two main goals for welcoming all families in to the school community:

1. Create a welcoming environment

Students need to feel a sense of belonging, self-efficacy, and that learning is relevant, to be successful at school. How does your school create opportunities for relationship building? Are school-wide events open and accessible to all families?

2. Build a respectful, inclusive school community

Does the school staff work with families to identify and address barriers to involvement and engagement? Is the atmosphere “family-friendly” and reflective of the cultures and languages of the community?

Some additional strategies for building authentic relationships include

- welcome phone calls prior to the first day of school
- relationship-building home visits
- “putting out the welcome mat” (e.g., reserved parking spots for parents and visitors, welcome signs, directions in multiple languages)
- getting to know and engaging the whole family (e.g., welcome siblings on tours of the school, home visits)
- mentorship programs

- creating a warm, friendly building that reflects the cultural and linguistic diversity of the community
- displaying student work throughout the school
- making sure the principal or other school spokesperson is always accessible (while prioritizing primary communications between teachers and families)
- maintaining “customer service” standards for office staff and others that greet families and guests

SUSTAINING TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS

Developing relationships with parents is the first step, but just like any relationship, the trust must be sustained through ongoing, two-way communication and additional opportunities to engage. Individual communication is key to deepening the school-home relationship and ensuring families are equipped to play the roles in their child's education.

The NMSFP encourages the following practices to deepen school-home relationships:

- showing respect at all times
- asking parents for their advice—and taking it (e.g. expectations of the teacher and school, communication preferences, opportunities for engagement, etc.)
- creating structures for including parents in major decisions about the school
- recognizing families' contributions and thanking them for their help
- acknowledging and responding to individual family circumstances (e.g. offer interpretation, flexibility in scheduling, childcare, etc.)
- sharing leadership and setting ground rules together (e.g. procedures for classroom observations, accountability for student homework, etc.)
- identifying student strengths and co-creating solutions to address challenges or areas of growth

Communicating effectively also means establishing and honoring clear boundaries. Families and educators should clarify their preferred mode of communication and times during which they will make themselves available. Translation and interpretation services should be offered, when appropriate and the line of communication should be two-way. Listening to understand (rather than to respond) is critical when nurturing trust in a relationship. Communication should always be student-centered and differentiated to meet each family's needs.

FOSTERING MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS

Linking families to student learning and sustaining these essential relationships should be an intentional and integral part of a school's culture.

The goals of supporting student success and speaking up for every child include:

- 1. Sharing information about student progress**
 - a. Educators regularly provide families with timely and specific information about their child's literacy development.
 - b. Information is provided in a culturally relevant and linguistically accessible manner.
 - c. Conferences are held at mutually convenient times and with consideration for family transportation and childcare needs.
- 2. Support learning at home**
 - a. Family activities are linked to what students are learning and doing in class.
 - b. Family structures and routines are taken into consideration.
 - c. Families and educators co-create learning goals and use a shared language to communicate high expectations for every child.
 - d. Materials for learning promote literacy while honoring the child's home language.
- 3. Equipping and empowering families to play an active role in their child's education**
 - a. Classroom teachers exhibit student work and send graded assignments home so families can monitor their child's success.
 - b. School staff establish a family resource center at the school, while also providing information and materials for the home.
 - c. Administrators inform families of their rights and responsibilities and provide them with a clear avenue for advocacy.
 - d. School policies are transparent and accessible.
 - e. School staff model effective advocacy practices on behalf of students and families.
 - f. Educators equip families with information on how to monitor their child's literacy growth development (e.g., "look-fors").

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT RESOURCES THAT SUPPORT LITERACY

The link below provides access to additional websites and resources to support parent engagement in New Mexico schools: <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/nm-literacy-framework-resources/>



IMPLEMENTATION – WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO?

[See Appendix A](#) for School/Family/Community Engagement Implementation Checklist.

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Appendix A: Critical Component Checklists

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

adapted from the [State of Oregon's Literacy Framework for Reading](#)

- ☐ Ensure leadership is distributed among different individuals and groups within the school and conceptualized as leadership functions, not linked to specific key individuals (i.e., principal, vice principal, literacy coach).
- ☐ Ensure that the instructional leadership is knowledgeable in evidence-based practices including the elements and principles of structured literacy in elementary and secondary literacy, as well as have strong communication and instructional leadership skills.
- ☐ Identify, articulate, and monitor grade-level reading goals.
- ☐ Prioritize the attainment of reading goals for all students.
- ☐ Actively ensure that all teachers provide classroom instruction that meets student needs through thorough and frequent walk-throughs and meaningful feedback and dialog.
- ☐ Ensure there is sufficient time for planning instruction and that this time is used productively.
- ☐ Regularly observe classroom reading instruction to understand how instruction is being delivered and use this information to support teachers so they provide effective instruction to all students.
- ☐ Ensure that classroom teachers and school-based teams have ample opportunity to work with a literacy coach on: (a) reading instruction this is highly effective, (b) evidence-based interventions for students in Layer 2 and Layer 3, and (c) assessment and progress monitoring.
- ☐ For elementary schools, Schedule an uninterrupted reading block that includes structured literacy as well as opportunities to engage in analysis of complex text and specified time for layered interventions.
- ☐ Ensure the day-to-day implementation of reading instruction and subject-specific reading instruction during each literacy block and across the content areas.
- ☐ Ensure that subject-specific reading instruction and literacy instruction across the content areas is based on the *Common Core State Standards*.
- ☐ Ensure a targeted focus on the attainment of reading goals and objectives.
- ☐ Develop an environment that fosters common planning time and collaboration for instructional improvements within a Professional Learning Community including elementary to middle grade and middle to high school transitions.
- ☐ Develop, implement, and evaluate a school literacy plan that aligns with NM DASH 90-Day Day Plan.

SCHOOL INSTRUCTION AND INTERVENTION IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

- ☐ District and school leaders purchasing a variety of programs will study how programs will align. Often the scope and sequence of intervention programs and core curriculums are not aligned. Minimally, special planning time will be provided to teachers to make the necessary adjustments so as not to confuse struggling learners who are receiving instruction in several programs.
- ☐ Provide professional learning activities for teachers to develop a critical understanding of the CCSS.
- ☐ Provide ongoing professional learning in the effective use and implementation of core curriculum and supplemental materials.
- ☐ Ensure K-3 goals target how well students are learning phonological awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension skills; goals in 4-12 focus on both foundational reading skills and the ability to apply skills and strategies to read proficiently across the instructional areas.
- ☐ Ensure literacy goals are clearly defined and quantifiable at each grade level.
- ☐ Ensure that the school's literacy plan allocates a sufficient amount of time for instruction and follows minimal recommended times for daily reading instruction as presented in the *New Mexico's Literacy Framework*:
 - ☐ Birth-Preschool: literacy will be embedded throughout the course of all daily interactions
 - ☐ Grades K-3: 90 minute reading block daily
 - ☐ Grades 4-5: 90 minute reading block daily and literacy-connected learning across the instructional areas
 - ☐ Grades 6-8: 40-60 minutes daily dedicated specifically to a reading class for all students (as data dictates) in addition to the literacy-connected instruction and practice that takes place across the instructional areas
 - ☐ Grades 9-12: 2-4 hours of daily literacy-connected instruction and practice.
- ☐ Ensure that in elementary, the school uses time allocated for reading instruction to provide both whole-class and small- group instruction to all students on a daily basis. In middle school, the size of reading groups is determined by student need and the number of students appropriate for the type of instruction being delivered.
- ☐ Ensure English learners receive a daily dedicated English language development block/course with an ELD/ESL teacher trained in structured literacy.
- ☐ Ensure a layered instructional system (Layer 1, Layer 2, Layer 3) is used to group students for instruction. Reading groupings are fluid and revised regularly based on student reading progress. Ensure instructional materials and programs align with and support evidence-based practices (including the recommendation of the National Reading Panel) as well as CCSS.
- ☐ Ensure that explicit and systematic instruction on the essential elements of reading is taught at each grade level.
- ☐ Ensure that core, supplemental, and interventions materials and programs are implemented with fidelity.

FORMATIVE, INTERIM, AND SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES CHECKLIST

- ☐ Develop and implement a site-based a balanced assessment system approach to include formative, interim, and summative assessments.
- ☐ Schedule regular data meetings or Professional Learning Communities to analyze data and engage in data based decision making, collective inquiry, and action research.
- ☐ Ensure all assessment administrators receive ongoing training and follow-up observations on standard administration procedures, scoring, and data interpretation on all measures.
- ☐ Ensure screening measures are administered to all students as early as possible in the school year to identify each student's level of reading performance (Layer 1, Layer 2, Layer 3) and determine students' instructional strength, weaknesses, and needs.
- ☐ Ensure progress-monitoring measures are administered formatively at least three times per year to all students in Grades K-5. Students below grade level and all students at risk of reading difficulties in Grades 6-12 are administered progress-monitoring assessments more often (2-4 times per month) based upon each student's level of risk (Layer 2 or Layer 3).
- ☐ Ensure student performance data are analyzed in a timely, meaningful manner and routinely used by grade or department-level teams/professional learning communities for education decision making.
- ☐ Use summative data for decision making at school, department, grade, and student levels (K-12).
- ☐ Share timely, specific, and accessible data with families aligned to actionable, differentiated strategies for monitoring student progress and supporting learning at home.

SCHOOL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Ensure that the school has a systemic plan for professional learning that is data-based including student achievement data, educator's skill level, and role within the school.
- ☐ Ensure professional learning resources (time and funding) are aligned with the school's reading goals and sustained in focus across years.
- ☐ Develop and implement a 3-year literacy professional learning plan to meet the needs of school-based educators (prekindergarten through 12th grade). Ensure that it reflects the characteristics of effective professional learning including the following:
 - ☐ Focused on school goals and guided by data collected toward reaching these goals
 - ☐ Ongoing and includes time for staff to reflect, refine, and plan instruction
 - ☐ Engaging and interactive
 - ☐ Collaborative
 - ☐ Job-embedded.
- ☐ Provide quality professional learning that is designed to build content knowledge and application (e.g., job-embedded professional learning, coaching ,etc.) in the areas of the following:
 - ☐ Multi-Layered System of Supports (MLSS)
 - ☐ Aligning instruction to the CCSS
 - ☐ Grade-level instructional effective teaching practices in literacy
 - ☐ Data-based decision making
 - ☐ Family engagement.

SCHOOL/FAMILY/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Follow the steps of the NMSFP Framework:
 1. Orient yourself to the framework
 2. Build a team and assess your school's current family engagement practices
 3. Conduct a needs-assessment and choose a focus area
 4. Build a strategic plan for school-wide family engagement
 5. Implement your action plan
 6. Check in with stakeholders and seek feedback
 7. Iterate.
- ☐ Check in with families throughout the process of establishing and maintaining a school-wide culture of family engagement (e.g. co-create solutions, strategies, and plans).
- ☐ Ensure that staff and families feel safe, welcomed, and a sense of belonging in the school community.
- ☐ Build and sustain trusting relationships with families and critical community partners.
- ☐ Set high expectations and co-create strategies for effective family engagement that promotes students' success.
- ☐ Establish routines, systems, and procedures for ongoing communication and academic partnering.
- ☐ Seek support from local, literacy-focused organizations.