



With NAEP data showing stagnant reading proficiency rates since 2015, states are equipping educators to support students with the literacy skills they need to learn and succeed.

This week's newsletter highlights how states are working to ensure that all students are fluent readers.

Visit StatesLeading.org and follow #StatesLeading on social media to learn more and join the conversation.

State Spotlights



With an increased emphasis on literacy achievement, the **Michigan** Department of Education created Michigan's Action Plan for Literacy Excellence.

This resource is built from the 2010 Michigan's Literacy Plan and offers an understanding of literacy in Michigan that spans from 1985 to current efforts. The new plan also includes the status of literacy achievement for Michigan students in preschool through grade 12.

The plan aims to align policies, funding, and resources; support instructional skills; and develop a statewide literacy leadership network.

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In 2016, **Tennessee** launched the Read to be Ready campaign, which aims to ensure more Tennessee students are reading on grade level by third grade.

The campaign includes Read to be Ready summer camps, which in 2018 helped 7,700 students in need gain access to literacy learning and free, high-quality books during the summer. The Tennessee Department of Education also provides educators with a number of resources to support literacy instruction, including [unit starters](#), a [how-to guide](#), and professional coaching.

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New York State
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
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In honor of International Literacy Day on September 8 and throughout the school year, the **New York** State Education Department (NYSED) is emphasizing the importance of literacy across all content areas.

The New York State Next Generation English Language Arts Standards include specific guidance on how the literacy standards connect to the content areas. The literacy standards address goals for instruction in reading and writing embedded in content area instruction.

NYSED also provides a series of briefs that focus on linguistically diverse learners and the New York State Next Generation P-12 Learning Standards.

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ExcelinEd worked closely with state literacy leaders in **Colorado**, **Nevada**, **North Carolina**, and **South Carolina** to conduct interviews and focus groups with state and district leaders, as well as teachers, to evaluate the impact of K-3 reading policy on districts and schools.

These states are leading the way in communicating the importance and details of reading programs to parents and stakeholders.

[Colorado's READ Act](#)

[Nevada's Read by Grade Three](#)

North Carolina's Read to Achieve

South Carolina's Read to Succeed

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The **Iowa** State Department of Education announced a new early literacy blueprint to strengthen early educators' skills in reading instruction.

The state has seen steady progress in K-3 students' reading skills. The new blueprint builds on that progress by equipping teachers with effective literacy practices, strengthening their instructional skills, and providing schools a starting point for evaluating literacy plans and ensuring developmental milestones are met.

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The **Arkansas** Department of Education launched R.I.S.E (Reading Initiative for Student Excellence) Arkansas to encourage a culture of reading. This statewide campaign aims to establish the importance of reading in homes, schools, and communities.

Arkansas offers a variety of resources to sharpen the focus on reading, strengthen instruction, create community collaboration, and build a culture of reading.

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OKLAHOMA
STATE DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION
—— JOY HOFMEISTER ——
STATE SUPERINTENDENT *of* PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

The **Oklahoma** State Department of Education's (OSDE) Oklahoma Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Grant supports 25 districts in their efforts to improve literacy outcomes for students from birth to high school.

OSDE provides these districts with literacy coaching, leadership, and improvement tools such as the Oklahoma State Literacy Plan and the IMPACT Element Improvement Rubrics.

These rubrics focus on instruction and curriculum, multi-tiered system of support, professional learning, assessments, collaboration leadership, and teaming with families and communities.

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Must Read

CCSSO partnered with ETS to publish *Retooling Literacy Education for the 21st Century; Key Findings of the Reading for Understanding Initiative and Their Implications*.

This report shares lessons learned, future challenges, and policy and practice recommendations to enhance reading achievement from pre-K through high school graduation.

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Tools & Resources



In this blog, Education Commission of the States highlights proactive approaches to supporting students in becoming proficient readers, including early interventions, summer reading courses, family engagement, and professional development opportunities for teachers.

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This policy update from NASBE, *Expanding And Aligning World Language Teaching*, highlights how state boards can bridge the divide between English and non-English speakers by promoting policies to increase the world language workforce capacity and better align language programs to communities and national need.

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With research showing that students who don't read proficiently by the end of third grade are four times more likely to not finish high school, third grade marks an important milestone when students shift from learning to read to reading to learn.

In this brief, *A Look At Third-Grade Reading Retention Policies*, NCSL takes a deep dive into state and federal actions to improve literacy at this early stage in a student's education.

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We want to hear from you!

Send your state's stories or organization's resources to communications@ccsso.org



The States Leading campaign celebrates the progress states are making toward providing equitable education for all students through the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and innovative policies in other key areas of education, such as early childhood education, teacher preparation, and career readiness, among others.

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