Arizona
Literacy Instruction
Plan

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State Literacy Leadership Team

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Introduction: Arizona's Literacy Instruction Plan

The purpose of Arizona's Literacy Instruction Plan is to create a cohesive, seamless roadmap for educators, professionals, policy makers, and community stakeholders and parents that outlines the stages of literacy development from birth through grade twelve and the effective evidence-based framework Arizona system partners have developed in support of all children learning to read.

The Arizona Literacy Instruction Plan is intended to provide guidance on the support required at all stages of growth to ensure that literacy development and learning is maximized. The State Literacy Instruction Plan includes an assessment of the needs of target populations, a snapshot of the intentional alignment of key state literacy initiatives and collaborative projects, Arizona's goals and the specific outcomes intended from activities implemented at scale, and monitored through a balanced assessment system that supports teachers having the data to inform instructional strategies to meet the needs of all students.

Important components in the 2024 State Literacy Instruction Plan include:
- Historical and current Arizona literacy legislation and policies
- Summary of the literacy landscape of Arizona and needs of target populations
- Alignment with Arizona's Early Literacy Initiative and other collaborative efforts
- Goals and targets
- A comprehensive language and literacy development continuum and key instructional components and strategies across specific age and grade spans
- Stages of implementation
- Continuous Improvement at the State Level

Since the plan's initial development, Arizona has continued to demonstrate its commitment to literacy and language skills for students.

Legislation strengthened phonics instruction in the primary grades, required mandatory retention for third graders who read significantly below grade level, and appropriated in excess of 45 million dollars annually to support these early literacy goals.

Arizona has formed a collaborative which focuses solely on birth through age 8 literacy and language acquisition, Read On Arizona, which has been recognized nationally for its work, and Arizona has set strong literacy and language achievement goals.

Additionally, in 2016 the Arizona English Language Arts standards were revised to include both reading and writing foundational skills at the primary grades as well as increasingly rigorous literacy expectations at higher grade levels. A statewide assessment completes the picture by assessing each student at every grade level, from third to eleventh, to monitor progress towards literacy expectations.

Arizona Literacy Legislation and Policies

For more than a decade, Arizona's Legislature has responded to the leading research on literacy development in the early grades. As the instructional focus shifted nationally, from a remediation model to a prevention model, Arizona established a landmark literacy policy known as *Move On When Reading*.

Move On When Reading

Arizona's Move On When Reading policy was first enacted in 2010 and implemented in 2013. The purpose of the legislation is to identify struggling readers as early as possible and to provide them with specific, targeted interventions so that they are reading at or above grade level by the end of third grade. It is a combination of state laws that help public and charter schools provide evidence-based, effective reading instruction for students in kindergarten through third grade and to identify and support students with reading challenges as early and effectively as possible. A student may not be promoted from the third grade if the student fails to demonstrate sufficient reading skills on the statewide assessment as determined by the Arizona State Board of Education. The Arizona State Legislature annually appropriates approximately $45 million for Move On When Reading to K-3 elementary schools for the purpose of supporting effective early reading instruction. This money must only be used for instructional purposes intended to improve reading proficiency of students in kindergarten through grade three with particular emphasis on early prevention in kindergarten and grades one and two. The funding provides an average of approximately $145 per K-3 student to schools and districts for staffing, instructional materials, assessments, and professional development; the majority of funding is spent on staffing, which may include salaries for K-3 teachers, reading coaches, and literacy specialists.

Arizona Revised Statute (A.R.S.) that make up the Move On When Reading policy program for Arizona include: **A.R.S. §15-701**, **A.R.S. §15-704**, and **A.R.S. §15-211** (as amended by **HB2026**).

The cornerstone of this policy is Arizona revised statute (A.R.S.) 15-704. This legislation holds districts and schools accountable for implementing a comprehensive K-3 assessment system, a research based reading curriculum, explicit instruction and intensive intervention to students reading below grade level. For several years the legislation appropriated one million dollars to support professional development for K-3 teachers of reading. In 2004 the State Board of Education extended the explanations in A.R.S. 15-704 by: 1) defining the selection and use of screening, diagnostic, motivation and progress monitoring assessments and 2) defining the provision of intensive instruction for each student not meeting the standard in third grade state assessment. These definitions and accompanying guidance documents continue to guide districts and schools in designing an effective early literacy program.

Additionally, Arizona Revised Statute (A.R.S.) 15-701 clearly defines the urgency and seriousness of ensuring all students are reading proficiently by the end of third grade. Students who are significantly below grade-level on the 3rd grade state reading assessment are at-risk to be retained and must be

provided intensive interventions both during the school day and in extended learning opportunities. While there are good cause exemptions, the expectation is that schools will establish an effective instructional program for literacy to minimize or avoid altogether the need to retain 3rd grade students.

ELA Standards and ESSA Plan

On the opposite end of the spectrum, Arizona has developed annual statewide assessments to track student progress towards literacy goals aligned to our academic standards. In fact, the State Board of Education, in December 2016, approved new and improved English Language Arts standards. These standards encompass a wide range of rigorous literacy expectations and require all of our graduates to obtain literacy skills to prepare them for their next steps. Additionally, the state's ESSA plan outlines specific long-term goals and measures of interim progress in literacy. These goals are in place for all students and are tracked by sub-group so that we can ensure that proficiency gaps are reduced and outcomes are improved for all Arizona students.

Since the implementation of Move On When Reading the legislature has expressed a continued commitment to literacy development for Arizona children. They appropriated an additional $8,000,000 for early literacy grants in low income schools. That has now grown to $12,000,000 and in FY24 critical funding for literacy coaches, dyslexia training, teaching exams, and a kindergarten entry assessment were transitioned from relief dollars to the state budget, bringing that early literacy additional supports up to $20,000,000.

Arizona is committed to closing the language gap with students identified as English Learners (ELs). Arizona Revised Statute (A.R.S.) 15-756 provides a prescriptive approach to language instruction for EL students while allowing flexibility. The goal is for EL students to become fluent English proficient in a period "not normally to exceed one year." Students receive four hours of intensive language intervention each day in the components of oral language (listening and speaking), reading, writing and grammar.

Dyslexia Legislation

Recent legislative actions brought additional changes to the literacy landscape in Arizona. These changes include requiring the screening of all kindergarten and 1st grade students for characteristics consistent with Dyslexia. These screening measures have been embedded within the universal literacy screening already taking place on each campus three times per school year. A list of approved tools has been published and is reviewed annually to make certain products continue to meet the requirements of the legislation.

Additionally, legislation requires each public-school campus that serves kindergarten through 3rd grade students to assign one kindergarten through 3rd grade teacher, or one K-3 Literacy Coach, or one K-3 Literacy Specialist as the Dyslexia Training Designee (DTD). The DTD is required to participate in training courses focused on reading instruction, intensifying reading instruction, and understanding and recognizing dyslexia from a list of approved trainings that meet the legislative criteria. The DTD needed

to be identified by each campus before July 1, 2022. Each year, schools will identify their DTD and provide training documentation as a part of their annual MOWR literacy plan submission.

Literacy Instruction: Educator Prep Programs & In-service Teachers
To further increase the foundational literacy knowledge of all educators who impact literacy growth in Arizona, recent legislation also requires that all current kindergarten through 5th grade teachers who teach literacy acquire the K-5 Literacy Endorsement by 2028. All pre- service teachers exiting teacher prep programs will also need this new endorsement by 2025. To meet the requirements of this endorsement, teachers will need to have completed 90 clock hours or two university courses (6 credits) along with passing the State Board adopted literacy assessment. Through an RFI process, vendors and educational organizations submitted training sessions that would meet the criteria.

Emphasis on Developing a Reader From the Early Years
Arizona has a history of understanding the importance of early care and education and that the early years are the building blocks to becoming a reader.

In November 2006, Arizona voters passed Proposition 203, a citizen's initiative that funds quality early childhood development and health. In state law specifically, Chapter 13 Title 8, under the title Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board, Arizona's newest state agency, First Things First (FTF) was established with the primary goal of helping young children be ready to enter kindergarten with the necessary skills. First Things First is responsible for ensuring that funds are directed to programs that have a proven track record in improving educational outcomes for young children. Regional FTF councils are responsible for administrating education and health programs that best address the needs of their communities with the end goal remaining consistent across the state – all children ready for school by the age of five.

In 2020, Arizona submitted a collaborative application process led by Read On Arizona and was awarded, for the first time, a Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) Grant of $20 million dollars over five years, spanning ages Birth through grade 12, to increase access to high quality literacy instruction to high need areas and those communities with the most struggling readers. Arizona also received a CLSD supplemental award of $2 million dollars to award sub-grants for high quality instructional materials and evidence-based programs and interventions.

In recent years that emphasis continued with the allocation of nearly $100 million in ARPA relief dollars from the Department of Economic Security, working with the Arizona Department of Education and Read On Arizona, to provide High Quality Early Learning grants to early childhood education sites across the state.

In December of 2022, Arizona was awarded a $42 million dollar Preschool Development (Birth to age 5) Renewal Grant, as part of a collaborative effort between ADE, Read On Arizona, First Things First, and Department of Economic Security- Division of Child Care.

Needs of Target Populations

Literacy Data Landscape of Arizona

Arizona's Literacy Instruction Plan is informed by a comprehensive state needs assessment and data analysis by Arizona's Literacy Leadership Team to identify gaps in early literacy proficiency, strategic opportunities for improvement, and areas with the highest need. It illustrates our commitment to providing a comprehensive and systemic approach to advancing literacy skills among disadvantaged children from birth through grade 12, including children living in poverty, English learners, children with disabilities, and those belonging to a subgroup that is otherwise underrepresented, (i.e., Native American, students reading well-below grade level).

Arizona is one of the fastest growing and most diverse states in the nation—8th in the nation for overall population growth from 2010 to 2019 (13.9% growth), and 2nd in the nation for population growth from 2019 to 2020 (1.8% growth). Arizona is expected to experience an additional growth of at least 30% by 2055.

Arizona serves approximately 1,115,160 students in 2,190 PK-12 school settings. More than half of Arizona's students (41%) are identified as being of low socioeconomic status; 13.3% as students with disabilities; 9.5% as English language learners; and 4.1% as American Indian/Alaskan Native, 5.8% Black/African American and 48% Hispanic/Latino.

Arizona's literacy challenges go hand-in-hand with the significant impact poverty has on our state's children. Currently, 39% of Arizona's children live below 200% of the federally-defined poverty level. Arizona also ranks high among states with children living in concentrated poverty (defined as census tracts with 30% of poverty or more): Arizona has the highest percentage of rural children living in concentrated poverty (39% vs. 11% nationally); Arizona is home to more than a quarter of the nation's Native American children living in high-poverty areas (56,000 children, or 28% of the national total); and 30% of Latino children in Arizona are living in concentrated poverty. The number of children living in foster care in Arizona increased nearly 40% in the past decade. Data shows that the negative impact of poverty on our children's developing literacy begins in the early childhood years and continues through high school. And nearly 25% of those without a high school diploma lived below the poverty line.

Arizona is also home to 165,248 preschool age children (ages 3-4), and there are notably fewer 3- and 4-year old children in Arizona enrolled in preschool (40%) than nationwide (48%). Only 27%, 44,578, of our 3- and 4-year-olds in preschool have access to a high-quality early learning setting.

Digging deeper into early childhood data, a recent (Fall 2022) Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG) sampling indicates a significant percentage of Arizona's young children are not meeting widely-held expectations for the key skills necessary for reading readiness: 54% of 4-year-olds did not achieve expectations in Language, and 58% of 4-year-olds did not meet expectations in Literacy.

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Arizona's most-disadvantaged children do not have equitable access to critical opportunities along the education continuum.

Significant literacy gaps continue up the age continuum.

Arizona's English Language Arts Academic Annual State Assessment (AASA)

Arizona Academic Standards Assessment (AASA) is aligned to Arizona's state learning standards which detail what students should be able to do at each grade level. The test is designed to measure student learning and progress towards readiness for college or career. AASA is the state assessment for English Language Arts and Mathematics in Grades 3 through 8. Students in Grades 3 through 8 take AASA in English Language Arts and Math at their grade level. The English Language Arts test includes a writing portion and a reading portion.

Students in high school take ACT Aspire is the statewide high school achievement test. While ACT Aspire has been discontinued at a national level, Arizona will continue to administer the ACT Aspire Early High School assessment to students in the 9th grade cohort for the life of ADE's contract. ACT is the statewide high school achievement test administered to students in Grade 11.

Arizona's Academic Standards Assessment (AASA) in English Language Arts is another measure of the dramatic need to improve literacy outcomes. Aggregating the performance of all students across grades, the majority (60%) scored below proficiency, with most (40%) falling in minimally proficient.

Figure 1 shows the percentage of students passing the AzM2 English Language Arts assessment by subgroup and the persistent gap between subgroups and all students.

Fig. 1: Percent Passing AASA English Language Arts, All Grades, 2015-2019 (ADE)

AzM2 English Language Arts	2015	2024
All Students	34%	40%
Income Eligibility 1 and 2*	23%	27%
American Indian/Alaska Native	13%	17%
Student with Disabilities	11%	11%
Limited English Proficient	2%	4%

*(NOTE: *ADE identifies students as disadvantaged according to their income eligibility for free-and-reduced lunch [FRL].)*

Although proficiency among all Arizona students (grades 3-12) has increased from 34% in 2015 to 40% in 2023, gaps in literacy achievement among high-need subgroups persists. The chart below shows trend line for all students from 2018 to 2023.
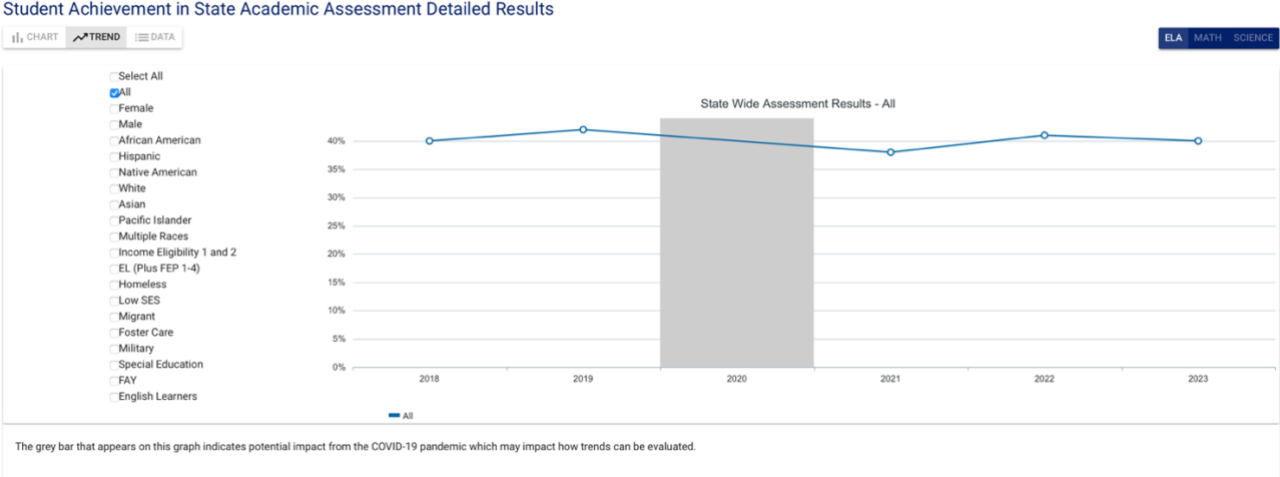
When the state-wide trend results from 2018 to 2023 are disaggregated, the lowest performing group of students consistently remains English Learners and those receiving special education services. English Language Learners demonstrate limited results, going from 3% in 2018 to 4% in 2023, but it is important to note these students are identified as second language learners still requiring intensive intervention to close the English language acquisition gap. Migrant students, while still one of the lowest performing sub-groups, have demonstrated improvement growing from 12% in 2018 to 18% in 2023. Native American students have seen a slight decrease in their results from 19% in 2018 to 17% in 2023. Special education student group results were 10% in 2018 and 11% in 2023. Homeless student group results decreased from 21% in 2018 to 17% in 2023. Foster care student group results demonstrate a slight improvement from 20% in 2021 to 21% in 2023. And Income eligibility 1 and 2 decreased from 30% in 2018 to 27% in 2023.

The following graphics capture trends by sub-group from 2018 to 2023.
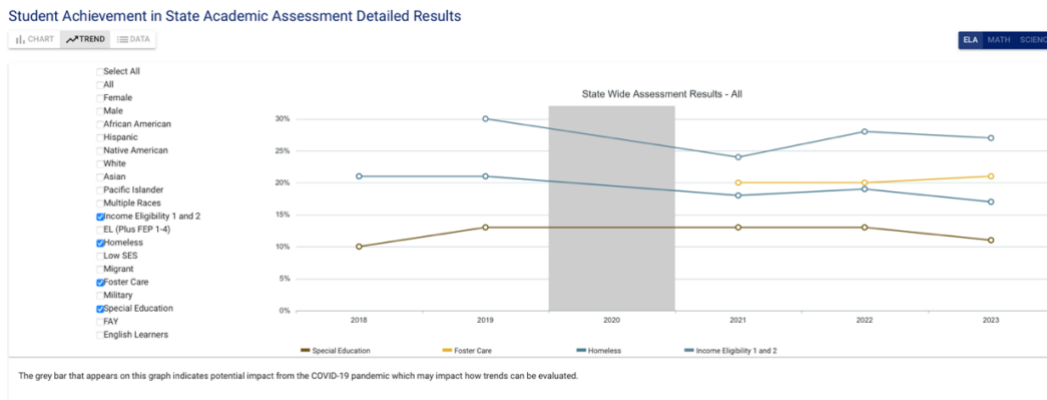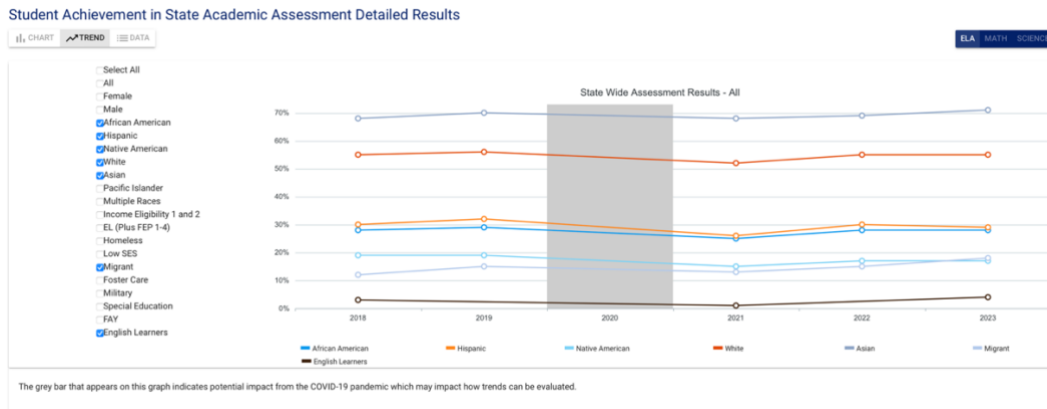
A more detailed breakdown by subgroups and proficiency categories is included in the graphs below.
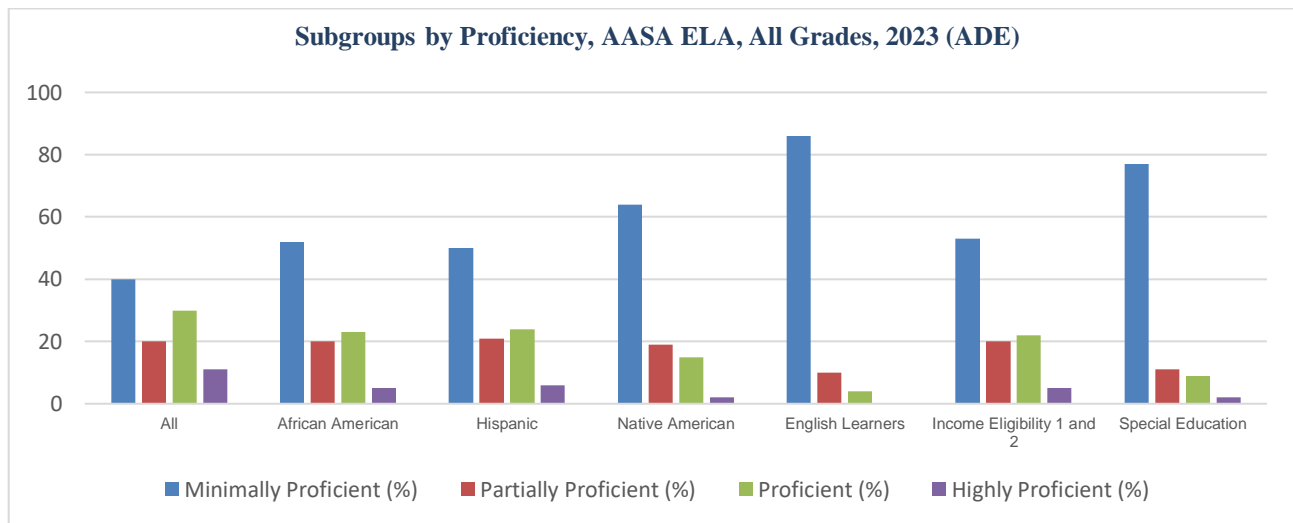
All subgroups, all grades, by proficiency category:

State Academic Assessment Scores
Arizona

Academic Assessments Scores ELA (English Language Arts) 2023
All Grades

A Gray Bar signifies either the absence of data or the redaction of data to safeguard student anonymity.
Data source: Arizona Department of Education
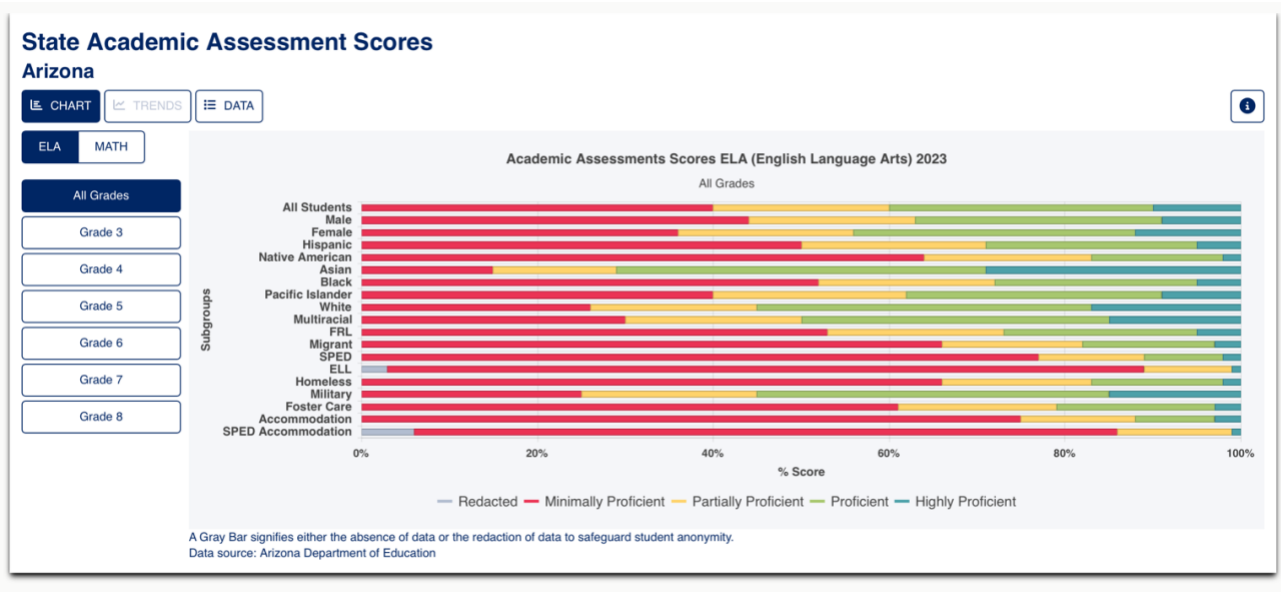
For 3rd grade, a critical milestone in literacy development, Arizona third grade students have made some progress after the pandemic but the passing rate stayed the same for 2023.

A significant trend is that the percentage students scoring minimally proficient is decreasing but remains 47% of Arizona third grade students, down from a high of 52% in 2021 at the height of the pandemic.

Arizona 3rd Grade AASA English Language Arts- All Students (2023)
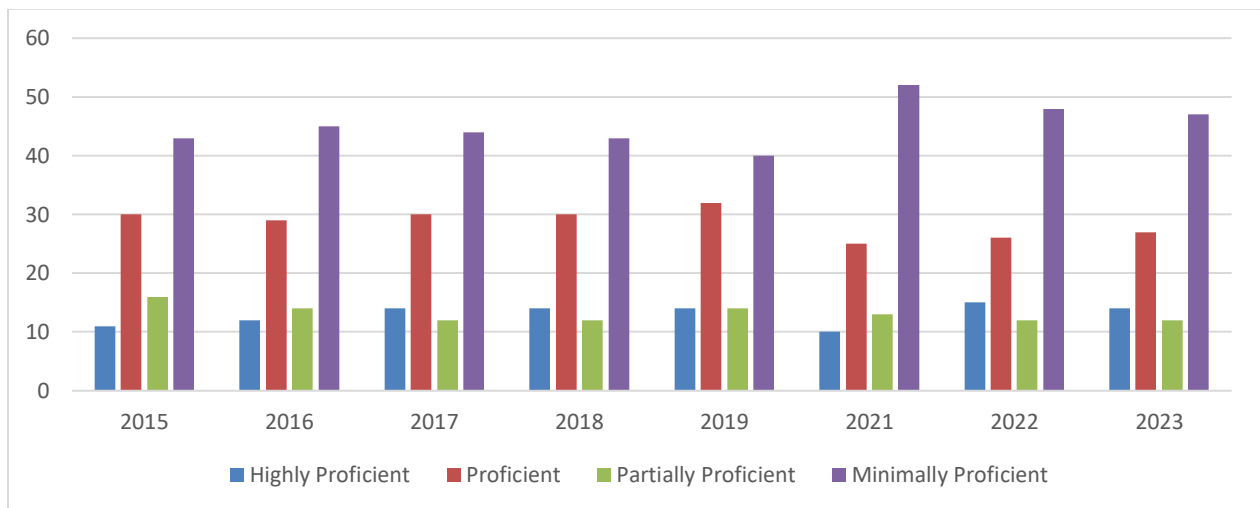
For current detailed results in student achievement in state academic assessments visit ADE's AZ School Report Cards site.

You can also explore current achievement data in context with other factors by using Arizona's MapLIT tool. Including a state summary report that includes census data, graduation rates, drop-out rates and other key factors at state, county, and local levels.
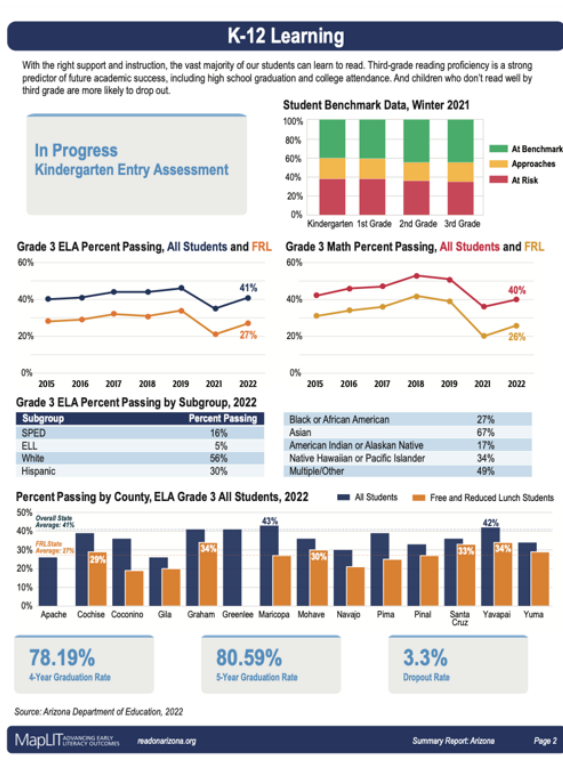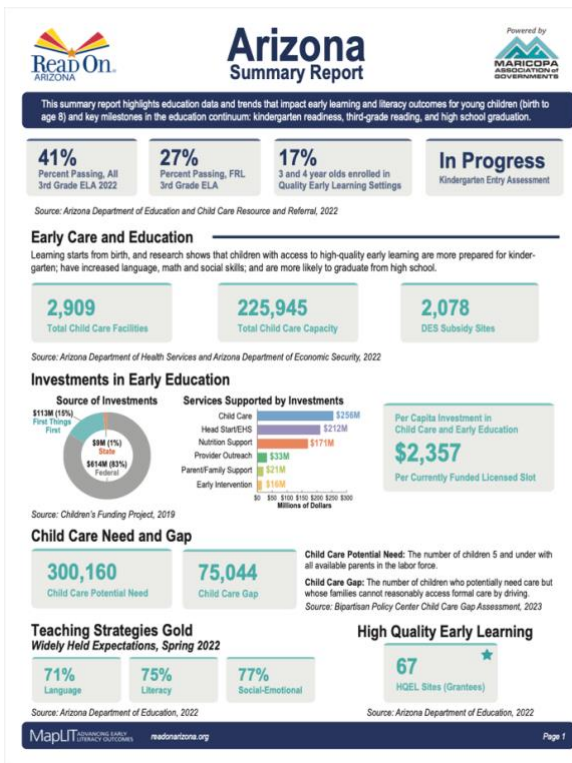
Arizona National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

Arizona ranks in the lower half among states on the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) and is below the national average in reading for both fourth and eighth grades.

In 2022, 39% of Arizona fourth graders and 32% of eighth graders fell below basic reading levels on NAEP. As with our statewide assessment, Arizona has made incremental gains in NAEP scores over the last several years, but with significant disparities between disadvantaged students: a 29-point gap between FRL vs. Non-FRL in fourth grade scores and a 24-point gap in eighth grade.

Progress on NAEP from 2013-2022 for All Students

Over the course of twenty years, reading scores for Arizona 4th grade students have improved on NAEP. Though the scores are slightly below the national average, Arizona has shown rapid growth in 4th grade reading scores over the past ten years. Even with the impacts of COVID over the past several years, there has not been a statistically significant difference in scores of Arizona's 4th graders.

NAEP- Average scale scores for grade 4 reading. Arizona students compared to students nationally.

The increase in scores on NAEP is comparative to growth in reading of ½ a grade level for 4th grade students in Arizona. And from 2013 to 2022, Arizona was one of only six states to make gains in fourth grade reading on NAEP. Arizona went from being 45th to 28th in the nation for all students, and from 47th to 28th for economically disadvantaged students.

Progress on NAEP from 2013-2022 for Economically Disadvantaged Students:

NAEP Scores: Grade 4, Reading
Score Point Change, 2013-2022
Economically Disadvantaged

State	Change
MS	+10
NV	+4
OR	+4
HI	+3
SC	+2
LA	+2
CA	+1
AZ	+0.4

-5 ———— National Average
0

NAEP Scores: Grade 4, Reading
Score Point Change, 2013-2022
Economically Disadvantaged

From 47th among all states **to 28th**

50   ★   0

Arizona Educator Data

One source of these longstanding, systemic disparities among disadvantaged children in Arizona is the lack of equitable access to highly-effective schools and teachers with knowledge and experience in the Science of Reading—reading instruction that is grounded in the converging scientific evidence about how reading develops, why many students have difficulties, and how we can prevent reading failure.

Figure 4 shows a disparity in the experience of teachers and school leaders between Title I schools (with large concentrations of low-income students) vs Non-Title I schools, while also highlighting that, overall, 1 in 5 Arizona teachers and school leaders are inexperienced. Out of the approximately 58,000 teachers across all age bands in Arizona, less than 50% of certified teachers are in Title I schools and only 34% of those educators with a reading endorsement can be found at a Title I school.

This problem is exacerbated by a persistent teacher shortage in Arizona, leaving roughly 1,800 public school classrooms without a permanent teacher. This means substitutes, student teachers and teachers with emergency certificates who are filling the void have less experience teaching reading and student access to an effective, experienced teacher is limited.

Arizona K-12 Teacher Experience (Title I vs. Non-Title I), 2023 (ADE)

Core Academic Teachers, Principals and School Leaders	Non-Title I Schools	Title I Schools	All Schools
Experienced ($\geq$ 3 years in position)	66%	79%	79%
Inexperienced (< 3 years in position)	34%	21%	21%

The Arizona Educator Dashboard snapshots on the following pages provide a snapshot of the most current educator related data for our state.

For more information visit: https://www.azed.gov/teach/ade-workforce-data-dashboard

Educator Dashboard: Teacher Degree and Experience
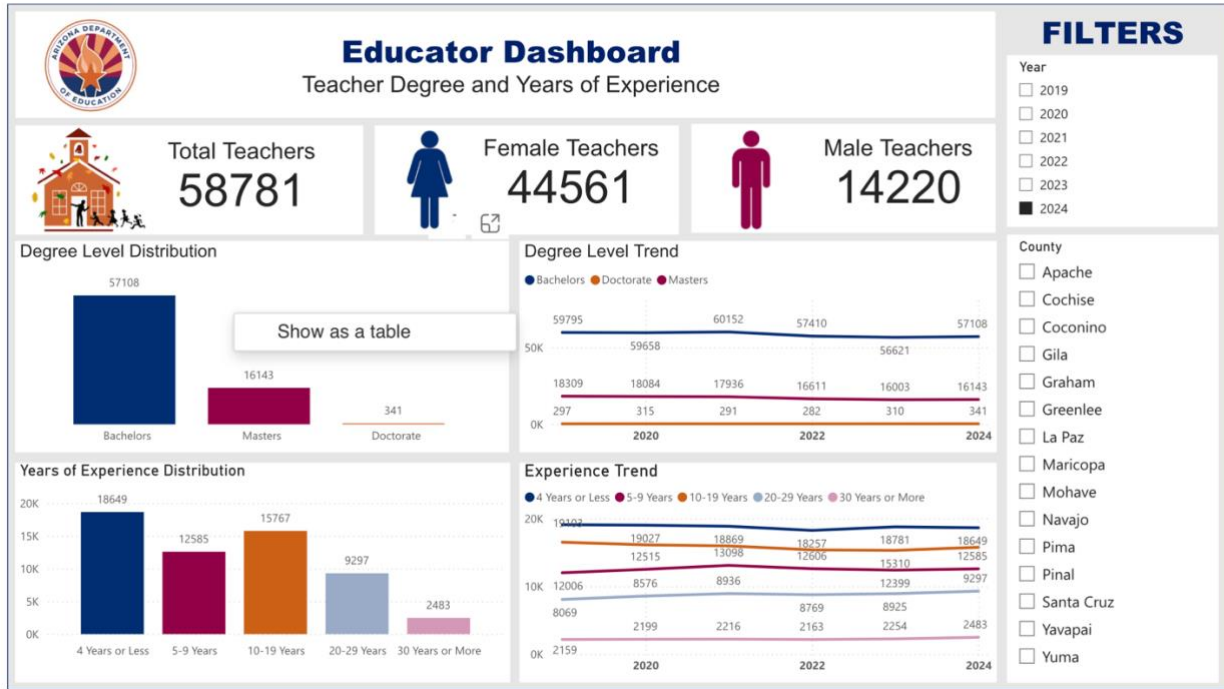
Educator Dashboard: Content and Grade Level
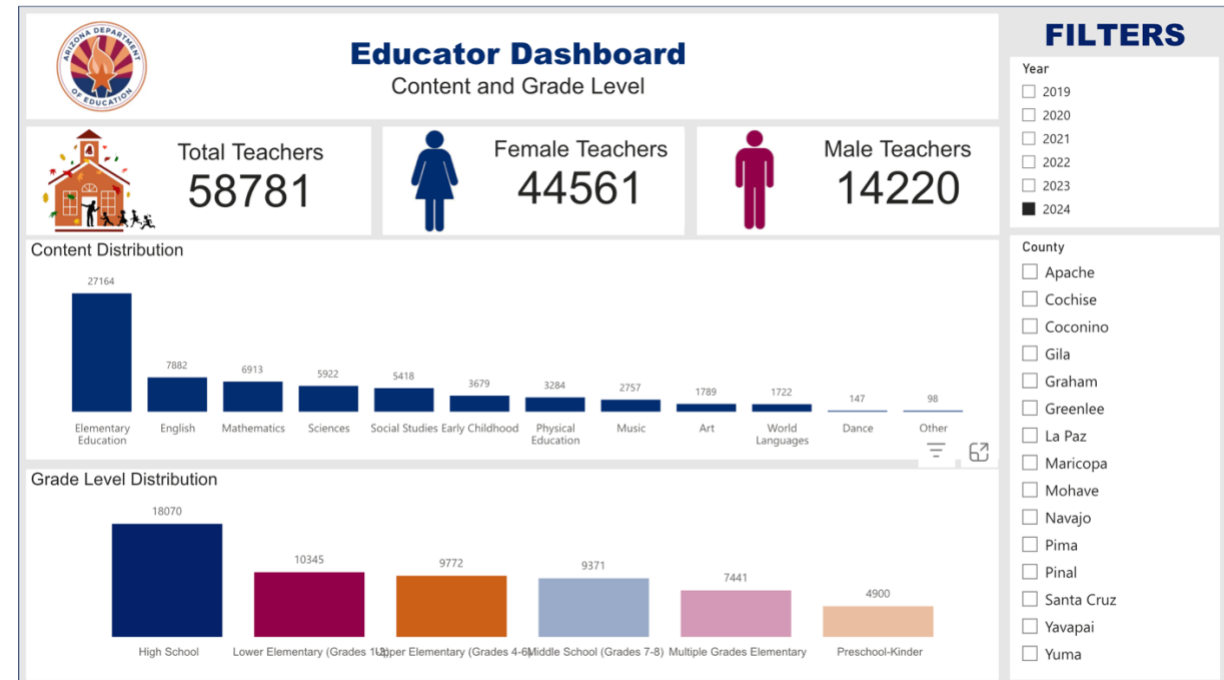
Educator Dashboard: Teacher Race and Gender
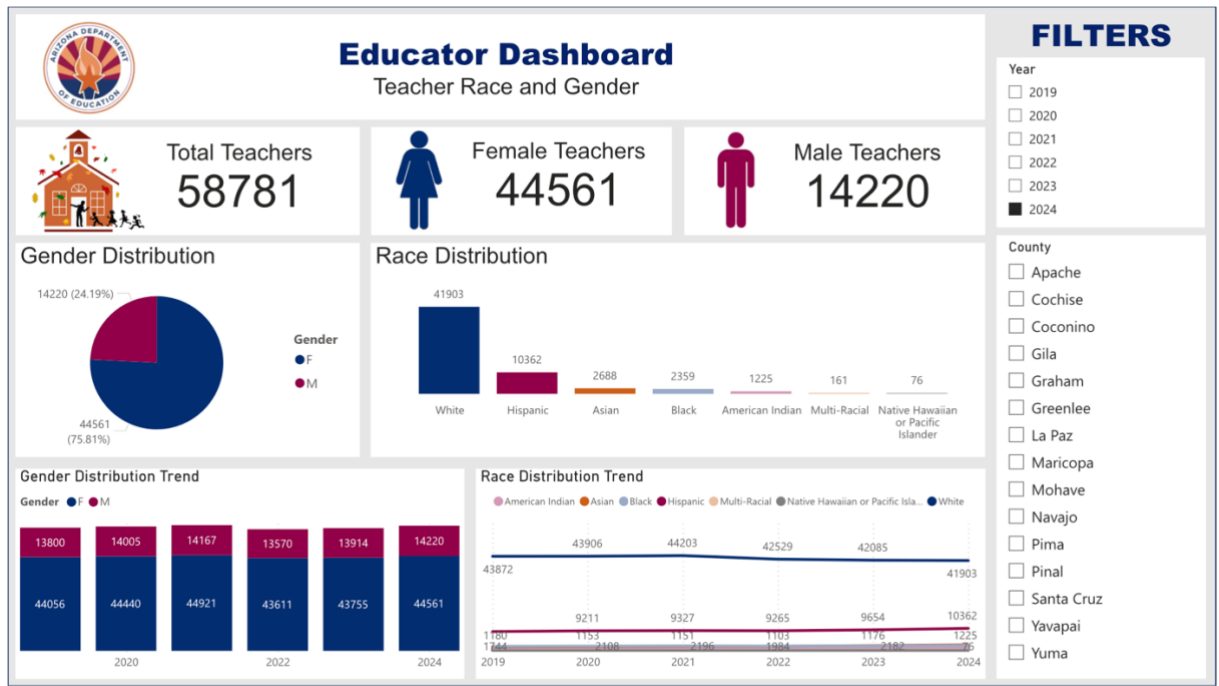
Many of Arizona's youngest children also lack access to early childhood educators with sufficient training or preparation to effectively foster early literacy development, particularly among disadvantaged children living in high-need areas where the availability of high-quality early learning programs is limited. The qualifications of early childhood teachers vary widely, despite the scientific evidence linking early childhood language and literacy development to later academic success.

A 2015 report from the National Research Council and Institute of Medicine stressed that lead educators working with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers require equivalent knowledge and specialized competencies as those working in early elementary grades.

The Arizona Early Childhood Professional Development Network and Workforce Registry—a centralized location that connects early childhood practitioners and others interested in the field with information and resources to advance their careers—currently includes 5,702 teachers, assistant teachers, and family child care providers who have submitted their educational diploma/transcript/credential. Of those, only 45% (2,582) have a credential, certificate, or degree including credits in early childhood education, and another 55% (3,120) have a high school diploma only. One thing is clear, Arizona's early childhood professionals lack specific training in effective, evidence-based approaches to fostering language and literacy development.

Alignment to State Early Literacy Initiative & Other Activities

Arizona's Early Literacy Initiative: Read On Arizona

Read On Arizona is our state's umbrella early literacy initiative. Launched in 2013, partners in Read On Arizona take a collaborative approach to improving language and literacy outcomes for Arizona's children from birth through age eight, with a strategic focus on school readiness and third grade reading proficiency.

The Read On Arizona collaboration provides leadership at the state level through an [advisory board](#) consisting of members from state agencies, philanthropic organizations, community stakeholders, and several other key entities. Founding partners of the initiative include the Arizona Department of Education, First Things First, Head Start State Collaboration Office, Arizona Community Foundation, Helios Education Foundation, and Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust. All these partners and hundreds more across the state work together in coordination and alignment, use data to identify effective strategies and maximize investments, and take the comprehensive, collective approach required to drive large-scale improvement in school readiness and early literacy outcomes for Arizona's children.

From 2013 to 2023 Read On Arizona's 10 Year Literacy Strategic Plan brought together coordinated activities centered on improving literacy outcomes and guided the efforts of partners across Arizona, including statewide, regional and local collaboration.

Arizona School Readiness and Early Literacy Shared Priorities

To accelerate progress in early literacy and third grade reading in our state, [Read On Arizona](#) partners, in 2024, identified four shared strategic priorities to focus collective efforts and maximize impact:

1. Building educator capacity in the science of reading
2. Scaling up evidence-based literacy solutions
3. Engaging families and communities to support school readiness and literacy
4. Expanding access to quality early learning opportunities

Data-Driven Decision-making Tools to help Meet the Needs of Educators and Students

Since its inception, the Read On Arizona literacy imitative has been data driven. In 2015 it created an innovative interactive tool that supports users in looking at needs, gaps and positive results across the state. Known as MapLIT, this tool allows users to look at multiple sets of data (census, education, health, community) to understand better how to serve the educational needs of children entering school ready to learn so they acquire the literacy skills necessary to succeed along the education pathway and graduate.

MapLIT and the data analysis of the AZ data integration task force has informed the needs assessment work by identifying local education agencies that have demonstrated the most success in serving

struggling readers, and those student subgroups where significant gaps still remain. Use of this tool has been successful in bringing millions of external dollars to Arizona in support of early literacy.

Launch Tool: MapLIT Interactive Tool for school readiness and early literacy outcomes

Decoding What Works: Success Analytics Project

The Read On Arizona *Decoding What Works Case Studies* series highlights bright spots across Arizona where there are demonstrated results in improving early literacy. And the interactive tool and reports that are available also help inform the needs assessment of where supports and resources should be focused.

The case studies are designed to highlight schools that have demonstrated significant improvement in the percentage of students who pass the 3rd grade statewide English Language Arts exam. It also spotlights schools that have had the most success in reducing the number of students who score in the Minimally Proficient range on the same exam. The case studies built during the project highlight strategies that Arizona schools are using that are resulting in significant growth in 3rd grade reading proficiency.

The first four schools were identified and interviewed during the 2018-2019 school year. The case studies for these four schools were published and made publicly available on the MOWR and Read On Arizona websites in March 2020. Additionally, the leaders and educator representatives from the campuses were recognized at a State Board of Education Meeting in February 2020 and the recognition event is available on the AZSBE YouTube Channel

- Legacy Traditional School, Queen Creek
- Lincoln Elementary School, Nogales Unified School District
- Roosevelt School, Yuma Elementary School District
- Wildflower School, Avondale School District

This ongoing project was on hold in 2021 and 2022 due to the impacts of COVID. Read On and the MOWR team have relaunched this project. This most recent case study spotlights the amazing work and efforts taking place at two schools in the Tanque Verde Unified School District:
- Agua Caliente Elementary School
- Tanque Verde Elementary School

Both schools showed significant increases regarding student achievement in early literacy. The Tanque Verde Case Study can be found here: https://readonarizona.org/case-studies/TVUSD/ The goal is to continue to share the great progress in literacy occurring around the state. There are three more case studies currently underway to identify the proven key strategies being deployed that lead to gains in third grade reading proficiency in Arizona schools.

Read On Arizona's State Literacy Hub

Read On Arizona is developing a literacy resources clearinghouse for AZ communities, families, schools, and educators to support effective literacy solutions, strategies building on evidence-based resources such as Read On's Continuum of Effective Literacy Practices.

The LitHub will be a "one-stop" shop clearinghouse of evidence-based literacy practices for children birth through grade 12. This site will be easy to navigate and searchable by age, skills, and topic.

A searchable tool for High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) will make it easy for users to find ESSA evidence-base materials relevant to age, grade, foundational skills.

ROA's original Continuum of Effective Literacy Practices (Birth through Grade 3) is updated to include current research and effective practices. The Continuum of Effective Literacy Practices has been expanded to cover grades 4-12.

Resources for children birth through grade 12 will include:
- Resources for administrators and educators
- Resources for community partners and stakeholders
- Resources for families
- Resources for vulnerable populations such as English language learners, students with dyslexia, and economically disadvantaged students.

Read On Arizona provides these backbone functions and resources in support of Arizona's comprehensive set of literacy policies and to ensure strong implementation that meets the needs of the students and the administrator and educators that serve them.

Path Forward AZ Team

Arizona was selected in 2020 to be one of six states in the first Path Forward Cohort of states. Read On Arizona coordinates the AZ Path Forward Team Activities. The Path Forward: Teacher Preparation and Licensure in Early Literacy initiative (a partnership of the Hunt Institute, the Belk Foundation, and the Barksdale Reading Institute) utilizes a cohort model to support states in their efforts to transform teacher preparation and teacher licensure programs to include the science of reading. Through virtual convenings and targeted coaching support, state teams establish an understanding of their current state context and work towards the development of a comprehensive action plan to embed the science of reading in teacher preparation. A National Advisory Group, a cadre of experts in reading, policy, and teacher preparation, serve as partners in the work by presenting to teams at convenings, providing resources, and offering feedback on state action plans.

In additional, as part of the AZ Path Forward work, Read On Arizona was invited to join a Native American PLC focused on learning how we are preparing educators to teach structured literacy to K-3 Native American students.

Kindergarten as a Sturdy Bridge Professional Learning Community

Read On Arizona coordinates, in partnership with ADE, the Arizona state and local teams that are a part of the *Kindergarten Sturdy Bridge Learning Community* which facilitates state and local improvement efforts to strengthen the enabling factors for success and implementation of effective strategies that improve the kindergarten experience for every child by offering opportunities to participate in peer learning to improve the kindergarten year.

The communities of practice focus on participants' needs, strengths, and priorities. Participants share promising practices, exemplars, and bright spots, explore new innovations, and strengthen and build new collaborative networks to intentionally center kindergarten as distinct from, but aligned with, practices in the early grades, and identify supports that systems need to effectively implement evidence-based, developmentally informed practices in kindergarten.

Other ADE Literacy Partnerships

The State Literacy Instruction Plan guides the Arizona Department of Education as it oversees the implementation of MOWR and supports local education agencies with their K-3 Literacy Instruction Plans which include key components such as core reading and intervention programs, assessment and progress monitoring tools, professional development and communication with families of struggling readers who may be at risk for retention.

In addition to being a founding partner of our state's school readiness and early literacy initiative, Read On Arizona, ADE works with a number of groups and organizations in support of implementation of the State Literacy Instruction Plan:

Arizona Chapter of the International Dyslexia Association
- The Dyslexia and Intervention Specialist of the MOWR team as well as one of the K-5 Literacy & Dyslexia Specialists participates as a non-voting board member for the AZ IDA. The Foundational Literacy Coach Coordinator and the Director of K-12 ELA & MOWR are also IDA members. They represent MOWR and ADE, while providing information and gaining insights from the field and this group.

ADE Dyslexia Advisory Committee
- This committee, led by the Dyslexia and Intervention Specialist of the MOWR team, brings together representatives from all sections in the ADE that lead literacy initiatives: MOWR, Academic Standards, Unique Populations, Special Education, and Early Childhood. Members of this interagency committee built the dyslexia resources and the [Dyslexia Handbook](#) that can be found on the MOWR webpage. This committee also provided guidance on the implementation of recent legislative mandates.

Arizona English Teachers Association (AETA)

- The Secondary ELA Specialist serves as a non-voting board member for the AETA. She represents the interests of MOWR at these meetings, presents on the program, presents on literacy, and gains valuable feedback from the field. Members of the MOWR team also present at the annual AETA conference.

Conference on English Leadership
- This organization, a committee of the National Council of Teachers of English, consists of English content leaders from states across the country. It builds and shares resources and serves in an advisory capacity on national issues involving the teaching of language arts.

ExcelinEd National Literacy Network
- A national group of literacy professionals that meets quarterly to discuss current research in literacy practices, kindergarten through 3rd grade literacy legislation around the nation, and to combine resources for guidance to the field. The Dyslexia & Intervention Specialist, the Foundational Literacy Coach Coordinator, the Director of K-12 ELA & MOWR and Read On Arizona are also members of this network.

Regional Education Laboratory West (REL West)
- The MOWR team is supported by the REL West at WestEd team to learn and understand the requirements of ESSA and how to evaluate related research. This learning allows the MOWR team to vet core reading and reading intervention programs to determine ESSA evidence-level requirements are met. Additionally, the collaboration has led to targeted trainings for schools and districts across the state and nation.

ADE tools that support the field related to literacy activities in the state:

- AZ School Report Card
- ADE Educator Recruitment & Retention Repository

Goals and Targets

The primary goal of the State Literacy Instruction Plan is to ensure that all students graduate from high school with strong effective literacy skills that prepare them to be successful in college and their future careers.

A second goal of the State Literacy Instruction Plan is to ensure that all essential stakeholders have a clear understanding of the process of developing language and literacy skills and recognize the part they must play in this process.

The Implementation of the Plan ensures that the goals and targets will be met by:

- Building on the foundation of sound research and evidence
- Fully aligning to the language and literacy continuum
- Fully implementing Arizona's Early Childhood Standards and Arizona's English Language Arts Standards
- Fully acknowledging that intentional learning, data-driven instruction and purposeful assessments are at the heart of student achievement
- Addressing state statues and State Board of Education policy
- Mobilizing families, community members, business and philanthropic leaders to effectively partner with educational leaders to ensure all children and youth are fully supported from cradle to career in developing necessary literacy skills

In April 2017, a group of internal and external stakeholders was convened by ADE to meet and discuss target goals under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) for all grades for ELA and give input on setting the goals. There were a number of district, charter, advocacy and education experts in the room.

The group engaged in a robust conversation as they were presented with models from other states and the work of both Read On Arizona's work around its 3rd grade target goal and the 8th grade math goal setting for the progress meter by Expect More Arizona.

The work group looked at two states (Ohio and Washington) and how they approached the ESSA long-term goal setting along with guidance information from national organizations like Ed Trust and WestEd.

At the Arizona State Board of Education Meeting on April 24, 2017, the work group proposed to cut the proficiency gap by 50% by 2027 and to cut the gap by 100% in 2039 to get to a 90% or better proficiency rate for all students as an end destination. These target goals align to the intention behind our comprehensive set of literacy policies and focus on eliminating the literacy gaps for Arizona's most vulnerable students.

The ELA goal for 3rd grade by 2030 would be 72% for both full academic year students and non-full academic year students.

The work group also recommended setting interim goals every three years and at those points, reviewing the goals to see if adjustments need to be made.

The data contained in the table below shows the 3rd Grade ELA Target Goals.

3rd Grade ELA Target Goals 2016-2039

Legend:
- FAY/non-FAY
- FAY only
- Black/AA
- Hispanic or Latino
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- Multiple races
- White (non-Hispanic)
- Asian
- ELL (Plus FEP 1-40
- Economically Disadvantaged
- SPED
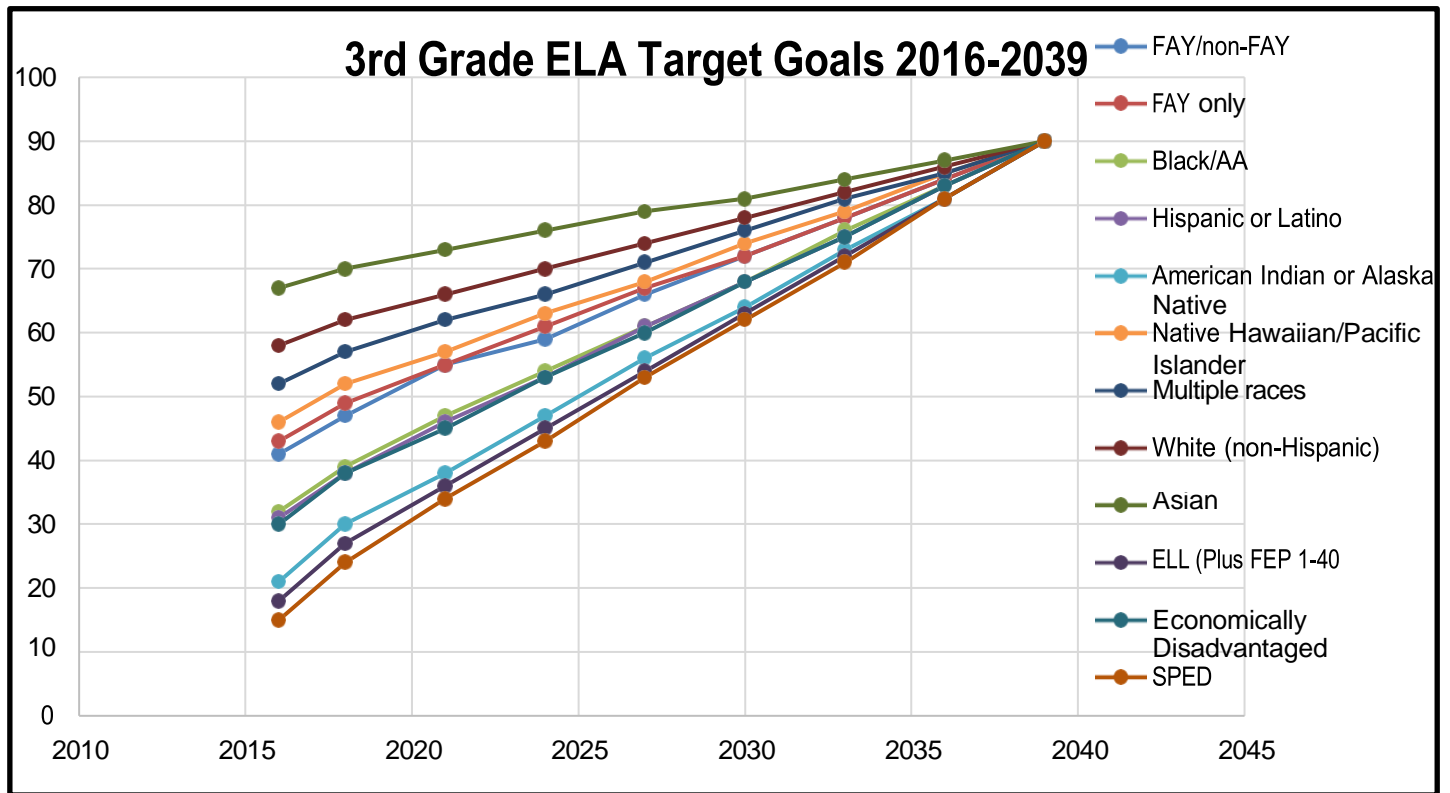
Effective Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction Framework

Language and Literacy Development

Arizona is committed to closing the gap between what we know from research to be best practice in literacy instruction and what we do in our classrooms every day. To be effective, teachers of reading must know how language develops, how the English language is organized, and how reading is acquired. They must understand the reciprocal relationship between reading and writing and how to develop academic language, the language of instruction and text. Effective teachers must also know how to implement a comprehensive literacy program, know why some students struggle in learning to read, how to identify the students who are at risk for learning to read, know how to prevent reading failure, and know how to intervene effectively. Teachers must know how language, writing and reading are intertwined and how to make this transparent to their students. The following serves to develop a common understanding regarding the development of language and the acquisition of literacy. This lays the foundation for the Arizona Literacy Instruction Plan.

The convergence of research evidence over the last 30 years serves to shape our understanding of language acquisition and provides direction in framing the most effective instructional support systems from the earliest stages of literacy development to the advanced levels necessary to be prepared for college, the workforce, and/or the military. This document outlines many factors influencing the acquisition of literacy skills across the stages and phases of development and guides teachers and practitioners in the use of effective instructional practices, matching what we do to what the student or child is telling us they need. Detailed information on assessment, use of data, instructional components and strategies, along with information for intervention and teaching at-risk learners, can be found in this document. The Arizona Literacy Instruction Plan is intended to be a living document, responsive to the latest research and evidence based findings so as to provide all stakeholders with a meaningful plan of action to meet our state's goal: highly literate high school graduates.

Oral Language

"Literacy is an achievement that rests on all levels of linguistic processing, from the elemental sounds to the most overarching structures of text." (Moats, L. 2000, p. 1)

The Arizona Literacy Instruction Plan recognizes that learning starts at birth and that the child's oral language proficiencies lay the foundation for further literacy development. A child's language develops naturally through his or her interaction with others. Numerous factors influence our language facility, including our unique neurological make up and the social environment in which we interact. Research studies have examined and analyzed language development and the environment of young children to inform our understanding of the necessary and optimal conditions for language learning to occur. From

the earliest coos and babblings of an infant, to the one word and two word stages of toddlers, to the sentence levels, language builds upon language. Ample and rich interactive language experiences impact the language and vocabulary development of a child and has far reaching consequences. The Birth through age 5 section of the Arizona State Literacy Instruction Plan outlines some of the developmental milestones of this age span and the necessary conditions for learning and instruction. This important period of development cannot be over emphasized, as it is critical for further cognitive development and learning. It is during this brief period of time that language learning lays the foundation for literacy acquisition.

The richer the vocabulary, background knowledge and linguistic skills a student brings to the literacy experience, the better prepared he or she will be to learn to read and to absorb information he/she hears. Distinguishing and manipulating sounds, forming meaningful words, arranging thoughts within the confines of grammar and structure, and using language to express thoughts and interact with others all have a significant relationship to understanding the printed word and our written language system.

Students throughout the pre-K to 5th grade span must be immersed in purposeful, engaging oral language instruction that provides plenty of opportunity to develop their listening and speaking skills. This continues to be essential foundational learning for the necessary mastery of written language.

	Receptive Language	Expressive Language
Oral Language	Listening	Speaking
Written Language	Reading Decoding and Comprehension	Writing Handwriting, Spelling, Written

Receptive language is language that is heard, processed and understood. Expressive language is language that is generated and produced by an individual. In general, receptive abilities develop first and as we become familiar with the pronunciation and meaning of a word, our ability to use it purposefully improves.

During the early instructional years, a student's listening comprehension develops through structured and intentional discussions and instruction that has rich vocabulary, language and writing opportunities. The instructional components of listening and speaking are critical to literacy development because these experiences provide a familiarity with different types of text structures and provide a solid foundation for comprehending the text they will read. With exposure to rich literature, complex informational and sophisticated vocabulary, students are hearing and acquiring language.

Arizona's English Language Arts Standards require opportunities for classroom interactions and discussions that are well designed in order to develop language. Experiencing opportunities for verbal reasoning and expression through discussions, questioning, and structured writing all contribute to this language knowledge. Through thoughtful lesson planning and learning experiences, students have

opportunities to speak in complex ways about what they are learning. They can use complex oral and written sentence structures, answer higher-level questions, and write expressively in response to these experiences. Students rely heavily on their background knowledge, vocabulary and oral language, both for what they bring to the classroom and what the teacher intentionally builds, to make sense of text as they hear it or read it.

Older students continue to develop more sophisticated language skills and in turn apply what they know about language to the cognitive demands of reading and writing more complex text. Building on the language skills mastered in the primary grades, students in grades 4 and 5 are expected to engage effectively in collaborative discussions, to build on others' ideas, and to express their own ideas clearly. They are expected to, draw conclusions, to summarize and to explain how a claim is supported by reasons and evidence. These tasks illustrate the increasingly complex demands of oral language, which are building over the course of the elementary career.

As illustrated in the Arizona English Language Arts Standards, middle and High School students continue to practice and develop their oral language skills. Through purposeful and extended academic discussions where they express their ideas clearly and persuasively around common texts, subjects and in collaboration with peers, students build their vocabulary knowledge and become "competent, independent word learners" (Graves, M. F. 2006, p. 91).

Academic Vocabulary

This acquisition and use of academic language, or the more formal language of text and instruction, begins early and continues throughout a student's school career. Teachers who are cognizant of the differences between conversational and academic language prepare students to be successful by making the two transparent and by using academic language effectively in instruction while requiring students to practice in kind.

E.D. Hirsch (2009) discusses the importance of knowledge when he states, "Specific, subject-matter knowledge over a broad range of domains is the key to language comprehension--and as a result, to a broad ability to learn new things, [which is]... the cornerstone of competence and adaptability in the modern world." (American Educator, Winter, 2009-2010, p. 8). The level of language and knowledge a student brings to the literacy learning environment impacts literacy in profound ways. Background knowledge and depth and breadth of vocabulary increasingly impact comprehension. As the differences between natural and academic language grow, students experience increasingly complex and different language structures across all content areas. At the earliest grade levels, teachers need to intentionally build deep vocabulary and concept knowledge, enabling students to effectively use academic language to make connections and inferences both orally and in writing.

Student comprehension of advancing text complexity includes the challenge of embedded linguistic structures. The vocabulary and linguistic structures of oral language and communication are quite different

from what we see in text and hear in formal discussion about text and learning. The research of Barbara Foorman (2011) from the Florida Center for Reading Research, illustrates how breakdowns in reading comprehension can occur. Foorman (2011) cited syntax, vocabulary and decontextualization as factors that may jeopardize the integration of information across pages of text. She stressed that academic language could impact comprehension for all students even those who do not struggle with oral language. The problem is compounded for those students who aren't familiar with specific vocabulary or terms used in text and/or the language of instruction encountered daily in the classroom. The opposite is true as well, as students who are strong readers acquire larger vocabularies. In fact, "once children start reading, more new vocabulary is learned through reading, not from being taught. So, vocabulary supports reading comprehension, and reading (with good comprehension) supports vocabulary development, meaning that there is reciprocity between the development of these competencies" (Oakhill, Cain and Elbro 2015).

Language Comprehension

The work of Hollis Scarborough (2001) deepens our understanding of the complexities involved in learning to read. His research assists in the understanding that language has multiple and simultaneous processes that are developing gradually over years of instruction and practice. Effective readers use these components concurrently to rapidly and automatically recognize the alphabetic code to comprehend the text they are reading. The illustration provided here depicts and 'pulls apart' the component pieces and emphasizes where possible breakdowns in the process may occur. This enables teachers and interventionists to effectively determine areas of need for struggling readers. When any single element is deficient, a breakdown in comprehension can occur (Scarborough, 2001).
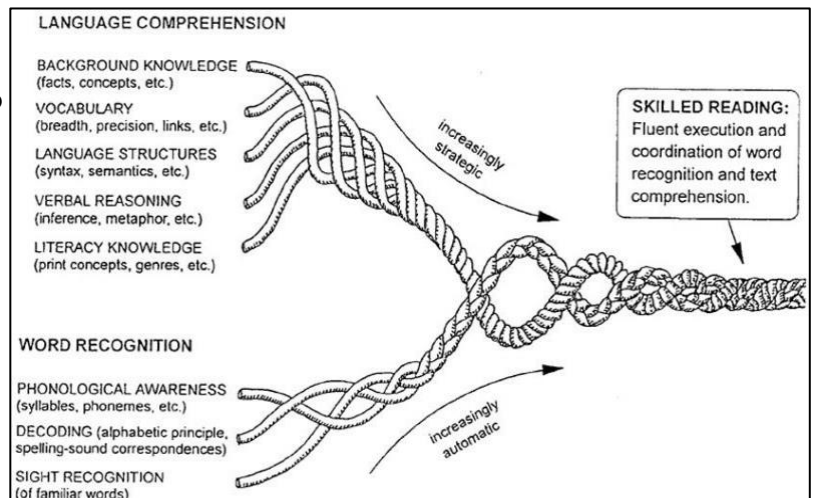
Background knowledge, vocabulary, language structures, verbal reasoning and literacy knowledge are all critical pieces in the development of comprehension skills and have implications for instruction. Based on research and illustrated within Scarborough's rope model (Scarborough, 2001), comprehension is multi-faceted. Life experiences (knowledge of the world), language experiences (events, activities and meaningful conversation), mental models (visual images, metacognitive recall of relevant knowledge) culture, family values, and geographical location all contribute to the background knowledge that a reader brings to the text.

The more a student knows about the topics they are reading, the more the student will learn through reading. One must know something to learn something. "Many of the cognitive skills we want our

students to develop — especially reading with understanding and successfully analyzing problems — are intimately intertwined with knowledge of content. Background knowledge is absolutely integral to effectively deploying important cognitive processes" (Willingham, 2009)

The depth and breadth of an individual's vocabulary (oral and print, listening and speaking, reading and writing, and receptive and expressive) and word knowledge impacts their understanding or comprehension. There are multiple ways to know a word and this has implications for instruction. How a word is pronounced, spelled, the part of speech it plays, its morphological features, whether it is informal or academic language, its synonyms and antonyms, related concepts, and the multiple meanings of the word are just a few of the ways to know a word (Nation,1990; Nagy & Scott, 2000; Beck, McKeown & Kucan, 2002).

For our youngest (pre K and younger children) it is through extended, responsive conversations and wide reading for different purposes that they acquire most of the new vocabulary they learn. For school age students, however, word learning is both intentional as well as incidental. Because vocabulary instruction is so important for comprehension, experts in reading recommend some form of vocabulary instruction.

According to Graves (2000), there are four components of an effective vocabulary program:

- Wide or extensive reading (listening or independent),
- Instruction in specific words to enhance comprehension of text,
- Instruction in independent word-learning strategies, and
- Word consciousness and word-play activities

In addition to vocabulary knowledge, the knowledge of **language structure** impacts comprehension as the text itself increases in complexity. Helping students understand meaning at the phrase and sentence levels, idiomatic expressions and how to construct and deconstruct more complicated (compound/complex) sentences is critical for comprehension for all students, including English language learners. Students need to learn meaning across sentences (example: understanding referents) and across paragraphs and texts.

Explicitly teaching text structure supports student understanding of text demands. Reading (decoding) and writing (encoding) are mutually supportive and focus on grammar, syntax and semantics should be embedded during both reading and writing instruction. Sentence combining is one way to increase students' development of both oral and written language. Attention to the linguistic structures of language in instruction will help demystify the complexity of text and help students see meaningful connections which will support their understanding.

Teachers must also explicitly explain the difference between surface level meaning and the deeper intended meaning of the author. In order to comprehend as we read, we use verbal reasoning, analyzing and synthesizing information we read, using inference skills, and connecting ideas across paragraphs and texts. This expectation that students use verbal reasoning is found in Arizona's English Language Arts

Standards, where a student in 7th grade is expected to 'trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claim'.

Literacy knowledge includes knowledge of print concepts, simple to complex. Beginning at letter recognition and moving to the more complex print concept of discourse structure and all those in between; students need to understand that in English we read from left to right and that literary texts and informational texts are organized differently. Knowledge about text structure and genre develop early and continue to develop over time through explicit instruction and learning experiences with a wide variety of texts. It is particularly important that content teachers understand and teach the discipline specific literacy skills for thinking, reading and responding (verbally and in writing) in their subject areas. In Arizona, content area teachers are expected to embed the English Language Arts standards for Reading Informational Text, Writing, and Speaking and Listening into their instruction to help support literacy in their disciplines.

The more experienced/skilled reader who reads and comprehends text uses written language to learn and build new knowledge. Arizona's English Language Arts Standards call for students to "read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; [to] cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text." More detailed information on instructional components and strategies for reading and writing are found in the grade level strands of this Arizona State Literacy Instruction Plan and in Arizona's English Language Arts Standards.

Metacognition

The process of finding and making meaning must be made transparent with think-alouds to students to ensure they develop the skills and strategies necessary to read and comprehend (increasingly sophisticated text) automatically, strategically, and independently. Students learn to use comprehension strategies to understand what they are reading and monitor their thinking about their thinking as they are reading (metacognition). Through monitoring of their understanding as they read, students ask themselves if it makes sense, then reread for clarification when they realize they don't understand, connect what they read to what they already know, and develop an awareness of knowing what it is they don't know. Helping students learn to monitor and reflect on their comprehension as they are reading is critical in their development of literacy.

"Learning to read is a complex task that requires teaching different reading skills in an integrated fashion. While the development of phonemic awareness and decoding skills are essential for proficient reading, they, in and of themselves, are not sufficient for reading comprehension. Understanding what is read requires the ability to read text accurately and fluently, knowledge of vocabulary relevant to what is read, and the ability to employ multiple cognitive strategies to reinforce understanding." (Reid Lyon, personal communication May 13, 2011).

When students are equipped with strategies to monitor their own comprehension, they become more independent and proficient readers. For many students, "[a] failure to understand a text adequately can arise for many different reasons…comprehenders may lack relevant knowledge; they may not know the meanings of crucial words that are central to the main ideas; they may have poor knowledge of linguistic devices that indicate the causal sequence of events; or they may lack relevant background knowledge to provide a framework for the ideas presented in the text. If comprehenders are able to monitor for sense, there is an opportunity to fix any errors in understanding, provided they have the strategic knowledge" (Oakhill, Cain, and Elbro 2015).

While students are steadily developing deep vocabulary knowledge, knowledge of increasingly complex language structures, listening comprehension skills, critical thinking skills, and comprehension monitoring strategies, automaticity and fluency in reading words, phrases, sentences and passages must also continue to be developed.

Word Recognition

While a child who comes to school with an enriched oral language foundation is at an advantage for learning to read and write, he/she may not understand the alphabetic principal, that the alphabet letter or combination of letters (grapheme) are used to represent segmented speech sounds (phonemes) in the English language. Gaining an understanding of both phonological awareness and orthography is critical for early reading success.
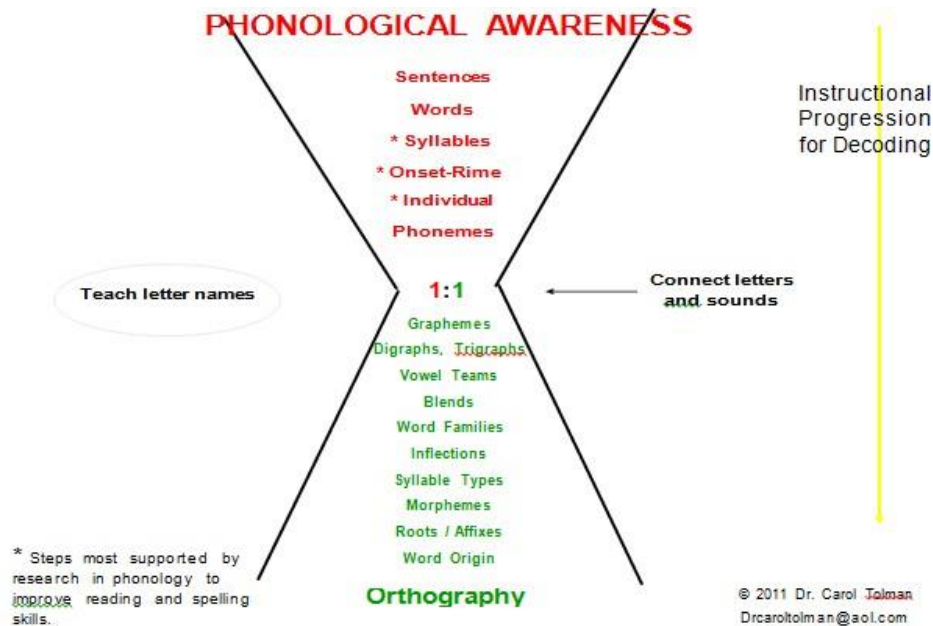
The Progression of Mapping Speech to Print Used with permission by Dr. Carol Tolman

Phonological awareness is "a global awareness of large chunks of speech, such as syllables, onset and

rime, and the phoneme level, which includes the ability to manipulate (blend and segment) at different levels of speech-sound system" (Hougen and Smartt 2012). Phonological awareness contributes to our ability to recognize words, hear discrete differences between words (specific/pacific), spell words, and develop vocabulary. Research has shown that most students who struggle with learning to read have difficulty with phonological skill development. (Shankweiler, D., Crain, S., Katz,L., Fowler, A. M., Liberman, A. M. Brady, S. A., 1995). Some of the skills developed through phonological awareness include the ability to hear/discriminate the larger chunks of sound in a word (syllables and rhyme) and the ability to discern the smallest units of sound in a word, the phonemes. While students are developing their phonological and phonemic awareness skills, they identify and manipulate spoken language and use this knowledge of the sounds to decode the written language (alphabetic principle).

As students develop **decoding skills** (applying the alphabetic principle to read and spell) they are learning to unlock the orthographic system, the written system of English language. Beginning readers and spellers need to learn the relationship between the 40+ speech sounds (phonemes) and the more than 100 spellings (graphemes) used to represent them. They need phonics instruction that teaches skills for quick, automatic word reading (high frequency words and irregular words), as well as explicit and systematic phonics instruction that shows the relationship between letters and sounds. As they move into more advanced phonics and morphology, students will develop skills to recognize and apply letter patterns to further increase automaticity. Reaching the level of automaticity is critical (Morris et al. 1998; NICHD, 2000; Stahl, 2004; Wolf, M. et al., 2003) and these skills must be mastered.

Information on the sequence of skill development of phonological and phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, orthographic knowledge, high frequency word reading comprehension strategies, benchmarks for fluency, and instructional strategies can be found in the age and grade spans of this State Literacy Instruction Plan and in the Foundations section and glossary of Arizona's English Language Arts Standards.

As students progress through the grades, they learn about increasingly complex structures of words. Orthographic knowledge of syllable types (spelling patterns); morphological knowledge, or knowledge of meaningful word parts (prefixes, suffixes and roots); and word origins (Latin, Greek) all support the students with spelling, writing, vocabulary acquisition, and comprehension. Students who possess foundational language skills have the keys to unlock the challenges of twenty first century literacy. Therefore, teachers must possess the research-based knowledge to instruct with the rigor and relevance that is required by Arizona's English Language Arts Standards.

Age and Grade Span

Birth to age 5

The Arizona Literacy Instruction Plan has been developed to provide a framework for the planning of quality literacy experiences for all children birth to age five, regardless of the environment where a child spends their first years of life. Arizona's youngest children are developing early literacy skill at home with families, in licensed early care and education facilities, with family child care providers, in libraries, museums and other areas of the community. The recommendations outlined in this plan cover a broad range of skill development and provide useful strategies for all children from diverse backgrounds and diverse abilities. This framework is intended for use by all who touch the lives of young children in urban, suburban, rural, and tribal communities.

The portion of the Arizona Literacy Instruction Plan that focuses on birth through five years of age is based on the findings from Developing early literacy: Report of the national early literacy panel (NELP, 2008), the guidance from the National Association for the Education of Young Children, evidenced-based research reflected in the Arizona Early Learning Standards (2013) and the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework (2011). The National Early Learning Panel was convened to address the literacy gap discussed in the Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read (NICHD, 2000). This report illustrates how early instructional practices implemented by encouraging adults could better support emerging literacy skills of children from birth to age five. In order to eliminate learning gaps, adults must understand child development and strategies to encourage optimal growth. The Arizona Literacy Instruction Plan intends to eliminate this gap and establish a trajectory of literacy success for all children beginning at birth.

Young children need many opportunities and thoughtfully orchestrated experiences to practice their escalating language skills in all areas: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This is best achieved by capitalizing on a child's natural approaches to learning such as initiative and curiosity, persistence and attentiveness, creativity, confidence and problem solving. The most effective instructional strategy for young children is play. All areas of development and literacy can be supported through varied, engaging, and active play.

As children get closer to formalized school experience there is a shift towards more intentional instruction that will lead to school readiness. Although not all of Arizona's children attend early care and education programs, for those that do, a high quality early education program recognizes and understands how children's goals for learning are framed within the context of learning standards and aligns planning of activities and design of environment to stimulate children's learning across content and domain areas (social-emotional, language and literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, physical development and health and fine arts). Literacy development in the early years, such as listening and speaking, lays the foundation for later success in reading and writing.

Young Infants (Birth - 8 months):
Babies use sounds, facial expressions and movements to communicate their needs and feelings. They develop different types of cries to express different needs (Wolfe & Nevills, 2004). They show particular interest in the people around them. They like to look, listen and follow the mother's or father's voice. They look intently at light and dark contours of their environment. Around the first two months of life, infants mature enough to begin cooing, then babbling, then later making sounds that imitate the tones and rhythms of adult talk. During this stage, babies begin to participate in 'conversation turn-taking' i.e. the child vocalizes as the adult listens and in turn the adult responds back to the child using facial expressions, replicating the sounds of the child, or other babbling sounds.

A critical part of infant development is the creation of connections in the brain. Connections are made when a child has interactions and experiences with adults in a caring environment. When an infant has expressed needs, then an adult must meet their needs in order for optimal development to occur.
Although some brain development occurs naturally; stimulation, nurturing, and strong relationships must be present.

Language and literacy development begins for a child during these first months of life by listening to the sounds of words being spoken by the adults around them. Oral language development is a foundation for reading, writing, and spelling. According to the National Institute for Literacy, oral language is the "engine of learning and thinking" (Learning to Talk and Listen, NIL, 2009). "Long before infants can focus their eyes on the pictures, turn the pages, and understand the words you are saying they can begin to associate books with the pleasant feelings they have when you hold them on your lap and share a book" (Dodge, Rudick, & Berke, 2006).
Strategies: According to ZERO TO THREE: National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families (2011), adults foster the social relationship and communication development through their continuous interactions with infants and toddlers in a safe, caring environment. While the children may not understand initially, they are developing the brain structures necessary for later language literacy. For young babies, hearing language means learning language.

Older Infants (6 months to 18 months):
The mobile baby learns about their world through exploration of their environment and interactions with adults. The brain continues periods of rapid growth during this stage of life. Mobile infants imitate expressions, sounds and words. They mimic what they see and experience such as holding a comb to a doll's head after they had their hair combed. During this period of development, infants create mental images of how things work and the sequences of adult behaviors. It is during this time that infants move from using gestures and vocalizations to using deliberate actions to convey meaning. They are both practicing independence and exploring ways to stay connected to those they love and trust. Eye contact, vocalizing and gestures take on added importance as tools for maintaining connection. They begin to understand the meaning of words in their environment (et al., hot, no, dad, mommy, bath, book).

According to the NELP (2008), oral language development includes skills that help children to communicate and to understand the meaning of words and concepts that they hear or read. Children obtain new information about things they want to learn about and express their own ideas and thoughts using specific language. A significant focus throughout the Arizona Literacy Instruction Plan is the importance of developing oral language skills (receptive and expressive language -including vocabulary). Receptive language is the ability to understand what is spoken while Expressive language is the ability to use word approximations, words and gestures to convey meaning. According to The Program for Infant Toddler Care (PITC) (2001), infants have a receptive vocabulary of 60 to 150 words. At 18 months a child will typically have about a 25 spoken word vocabulary. As children progress through this developmental phase, it is expected that children will begin to string multiple words together. Example: child may say "go bye-bye" or "all gone".

During this stage of growth, the beginning of writing development is occurring in tandem with language development. (Please see appendix for writing stages). Even the youngest child can develop writing skills. For these young children, this includes the physical development of their motor skills. Children should have

opportunities to handle writing instruments such as crayons, washable markers and should have access to large pieces of paper on which to experiment with paint and other media.

Toddlers (15 months- 36 months):
Toddlers are egocentric and frequently test barriers. They are learning how to be safe, how to use peers and adults as resources, they are learning the speech sounds of new words, how to use words and how to act appropriately in different situations. Adults must intentionally assist toddlers in becoming aware of print and how a book is read. Adults must also foster a joy of reading. Adults should expect to reread a favorite story multiple times. After numerous readings of a story, children may spontaneously imitate book reading.

The toddler years are a window of opportunity for language and vocabulary development. The toddler's receptive vocabulary grows even more rapidly. They continue to combine words into phrases and sentences (Hart & Risley, 2003). During this time of development, vocabulary rapidly increases from around 25 words at 18 months to approximately 900 words by the time a child is three years old (PITC, 2001). During this stage toddlers can follow 2-3 phrase commands, imitate the actions of adults and playmates and articulate a wide range of emotions although they may not have the vocabulary to verbally express themselves.

Children should continue to have opportunities to handle writing instruments such as crayons, pencils, washable markers and should have access to large pieces of paper to experiment with paint and other media. Adults must continue to support writing development for this age group by providing intentional opportunities and encouraging the physical development.

Preschooler (3 years – 5 years):
The preschoolers' increased language capacity enhances their ability to think, reason and problem-solve which are critical to code focused instruction as well as literacy comprehension. According to NELP (2008), some crucial literacy skills that will prepare children for later reading are:
- **Alphabet knowledge** (AK): knowledge of the names and sounds associated with printed letters
- **Phonological awareness** (PA): the ability to detect, manipulate, or analyze the auditory aspects of spoken language (including the ability to distinguish or segment words, syllables, or phonemes), independent of meaning
- **Concepts of print and book-handling skills**: knowledge of print conventions (e.g., left-right, front-back) and concepts (book cover, author, text)
- **Print knowledge:** a combination of elements of AK, concepts about print, and early decoding
- **Oral language:** the ability to produce or comprehend spoken language, including vocabulary and grammar
- **Early writing:** for example, the ability to write one's own name using letter-like forms

As children become preschoolers, there is a refining of their motor development. Some still need gross motor skills practice, but many children are gaining the control of their fine motor skills that allows them to scribble, approximate letters, and write their name.

Children should have increasing opportunities to handle writing instruments such as crayons, pencils, washable markers and should have access to varying types and sizes of unlined paper on which to write. Again, as children move closer to formalized education, they must have intentional writing experiences. Instructional strategies that support writing development should include adult dictation, modeled writing, shared writing, interactive writing, and independent writing.

Grades K through 5

Introduction

The elements of the Arizona Literacy Instruction Plan highlight the parameters for a consistent, common understanding and language with which to address literacy challenges. This foundation focuses on instruction and supports throughout all content areas. The elements include:

- The integration of reading instruction in all content areas (science, social studies, music, art, physical education, technology, etc.) including the use of the reading informational text, writing, and speaking and listening standards as found in Arizona's English Language Arts Standards.

- Early learning experiences that support literacy development in young children.

- Research-based instructional approaches for fostering communication skills, including oral and written language.

- Access to evidence-based curriculum and equitable opportunities for academic achievement.

In 1997, at the request of the U.S. Congress, the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) assembled the National Reading Panel (2000) to assess the effectiveness of differentiated approaches for instructing reading. The panel's report, titled "Teaching Children to Read" (2000), identified five essential components of reading instruction: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Reading Fluency, Vocabulary, and Reading Comprehension. The research indicates that students show the most gains in letter knowledge, phonological awareness, alphabetic principle (phonics), and reading success when skills are taught in an integrated manner.

Instructional Components
- **Phonemic Awareness:** The ability to hear, identify and manipulate the individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words. Phonemic awareness is the understanding that words are made up of individual sounds.
- **Phonics:** The understanding that there is a predictable relationship between phonemes, the sounds of the language, and graphemes, the letters and spellings that represent those sounds in written language.
- **Vocabulary:** The development of stored information about the meanings and pronunciation of

words necessary for communication including listening, speaking, reading and writing vocabulary.

- **Fluency:** The ability to read text accurately, smoothly and quickly. It provides a bridge between word recognition and comprehension as readers recognize words and comprehend them at the same time.
- **Comprehension:** The strategies readers use to understand, remember, and communicate with others about what has been read; they are active sets of steps readers use to make sense of text.

In addition to the five essential components of reading instruction, other elements critical to a comprehensive literacy program include writing and oral language development.

Writing

The skills, processes and knowledge of reading and writing are interwoven (Fitzgerald and Shanahan, 2000). Reading exposes students to text organization and a wide range of vocabulary, which in turn is used in writing. A literacy-rich environment helps students create and understand the connection between reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Reading and writing have a direct connection that supports all students' ability to learn and achieve. Teachers recognize that student writing proficiency mirrors student reading proficiency in all content areas and in all grade levels. According to Salus and Flood (2003), as students interact with written and spoken languages, they begin to improve their vocabulary, decoding and encoding skills, while also developing their reading comprehension and writing strategies.

Teaching spelling helps students make connections between letters and sounds and makes it easier for them to remember words in text (Ehri & Wilce, 1987; Moats, 2005/2006). Instruction in spelling patterns and practice in writing can promote the development of both reading and writing (Adams, 2001). Spelling instruction promotes using letter sound knowledge, phonological awareness, knowledge of word parts, and spelling conventions (Report of the National Reading Panel, 2000, US Department of Health and Human Services). Using what they learn about sounds, letters, and spelling patterns, students strengthen their skills in reading and writing.

Spelling and reading are interconnected. Fluent reading is more accessible if you know the spellings of words since both require or rely upon a mental image of a word (Snow, Griffin, & Burns, 2005). To build a foundation, students must gain control over many conventions of standard English grammar, usage, and mechanics, as well as learn other ways to use language to convey meaning effectively.

They must also be able to determine or clarify the meaning of grade appropriate academic words encountered through listening, reading, and media use; come to appreciate that words have non-literal meanings, shades of meaning, and relationships to other words; and expand their vocabulary in the course of studying content. Therefore, to establish a strong link between reading and writing, children need opportunities to write for a variety of audiences and purposes integrated across the school day (Arizona's

English Language Arts Standards).

Oral Language
Children's comprehension of written language depends in large part upon their effective use and understanding of oral language. First, language develops at the oral level, through listening and speaking. Children then move to acquisition of reading and writing at the text level. Language instruction that focuses on listening, speaking, and understanding includes the following: discussions on a variety of topics; songs, chants, and poems that are fun to sing and say, concept development and vocabulary-building lessons; and games and activities that involve talking, listening, and following directions (Texas Education Agency, 2000). "Using words expressively requires a deeper level of word knowledge… and the ability to use a word in speaking or writing demonstrates true ownership of the word" (Moats, 2009, p. 7) Academic achievement is greatly impacted by a student's ability to communicate in both oral and written forms and students benefit from classroom experiences designed to explicitly develop their vocabulary and language skills. Students must have ample opportunities to take part in a variety of rich, structured academic conversations—as part of a whole class, in small groups and with a partner. Being productive members of these academic conversations requires that students contribute accurate, relevant information; respond to and develop what others have said; make comparisons and contrasts; and analyze and synthesize a multitude of ideas in various domains. New technologies have broadened and expanded the role that speaking and listening play in acquiring and sharing knowledge and have tightened their link to other forms of communication (Arizona's English Language Arts Standards).

Rigorous Instruction
Rigorous instruction is challenging and complex. Learning goals are relevant and differentiated for all students and rigor is foundational to the Arizona Literacy Instruction Plan and goals. Supported by the Arizona English Language Arts Standards, it is expected that students demonstrate depth of knowledge and content mastery, as well as critical thinking and applied skills. Rigor is expected from students and educators at all levels throughout the state.

Direct Explicit Systematic Instruction

Systematic instruction is instruction that follows a carefully designed plan of instructional steps. It is planned, purposeful, and sequenced. Systematic instruction provides students with extensive teacher support during the early stages of learning. Adults working with children birth to five often refer to this as "intentional teaching".

Explicit instruction is instruction that is concrete and visible. The teacher explains new concepts and strategies in clear and concise language. Explicit instruction involves modeling and explaining concepts and skills using many examples. Teachers provide a high level of support as students practice and apply newly learned concepts and skills. Teachers of young children (birth through kindergarten) must also be explicit in creating their learning environment to reflect quality best practices.

Scaffolding refers to instructional techniques that support students' learning. Scaffolding can be provided through teachers' use of language, instructional materials, tasks, and grouping formats. The goal of scaffolding is to adjust and extend instruction so students are able to develop new concepts and skills. As students become more proficient, support is gradually withdrawn.

Maximizing student engagement refers to designing instruction so all students participate in learning activities that have academic value. It involves increasing every student's opportunity to interact and respond to instruction (e.g., response boards, choral responses). Maximizing student engagement also minimizes activities that do not reinforce and extend student learning. For early learning programs (including kindergarten) the use of learning centers is essential in maximizing student engagement.

How is systematic and explicit instruction delivered?
Systematic and explicit instruction supports student learning by presenting new material in small steps, with ample practice opportunities. This type of instruction requires careful attention to lesson design and instructional delivery. For early learning programs (birth through kindergarten) this includes environmental considerations.

Systematic and explicit lessons include the following phases: orientation/review, presentation, guided practice, and independent practice. Early learning programs (birth through kindergarten) will also provide practice through the use of intentionally planned learning centers.

Orientation/Review:
- During the orientation/review phase of the lesson, teachers state the learning objectives in clear and understandable language. This phase involves:
- Explaining procedures.
- Activating students' prior knowledge and helping students make connections to information they have already learned.
- Regularly reviewing previously taught concepts and skills.
- Re-teaching when necessary.
- Ensuring students have the prerequisite (required) knowledge and skills to learn new concepts and skills presented in a lesson.

Presentation:
During the presentation phase of the lesson, teachers explain the targeted concept and/or skill and provide scaffolded instruction. Key features of this phase include:

- Presenting material in small steps so students can learn each step one at a time.
- Modeling with explanation.
- Giving many examples and non-examples, when appropriate, of the concept, skill, or strategy the students are learning.
- Staying focused on the objective.
- Pacing instruction to maximize student engagement in the learning process.
- Monitoring students' understanding and clarifying important steps or ideas.
- Leading students through each step, providing corrective feedback and reinforcement.

Guided Practice
During guided practice, teachers closely monitor as students practice new concepts and/or skills on their own. Teachers continue to provide immediate positive reinforcement and corrective feedback. Corrective feedback prompts students to find and correct errors early in the learning process. Guided practice should occur immediately after new concepts and skills are presented. It needs to continue frequently until students achieve 85 to 90% accuracy. Struggling learners generally require many practice opportunities to achieve 85 to 90% accuracy with a new concept or skill.

Research indicates that more frequent intense, highly engaging practice opportunities are more effective than fewer, longer practice sessions. For example, 5- to 10-minute practice sessions distributed or interspersed over a series of days are more effective than long 30-to-40 minute sessions.

Children participating in early learning programs will often have guided practice opportunities in smaller groups and on an individual basis during the time that students are utilizing their learning centers. Utilization of learning centers allows early educators to model, scaffold, and observe skills while students are participating in child centered learning time.

Independent Practice
When students achieve accuracy during guided practice, they are ready to independently practice and apply newly learned concepts and skills during reading and writing. During independent practice, teachers continue to provide support and help students integrate new knowledge and skills with previous learning. Teachers also monitor students' progress during this phase. Progress monitoring helps teachers determine if students are maintaining new concepts and skills. Independent practice sessions promote automaticity and generalization of knowledge and skills to different contexts. For example, students learn to apply reading and writing skills in social studies, science, and math. Children participating in early learning programs will often have independent practice opportunities within learning centers. Utilization of learning centers allows early educators to observe skills and progress monitor while students are participating in child centered learning time.

Motivation to Read and Relevance of Reading
Children develop the motivation to learn to read when reading is relevant to everyday life and enjoyable. Motivation is linked to achievement, having a positive effect on comprehension, vocabulary, and general success in school (Miller & Meece, 1999). When children experience early success in reading activities, they become motivated learners and avid independent readers of written material. Modeling, through oral and shared reading, can motivate students to want to read themselves (Texas Education Agency, 2000).

An important aspect of reading motivation is acquired through books that are read aloud to students. Reading aloud provides opportunities to expose students to vocabulary, concepts, ideas, and text structures that are beyond their personal reading ability. Books that are read aloud demonstrate the relevance of reading. Arnold and Whitehurst (1994) stated, "…reading aloud to children has been found to facilitate the growth of vocabulary in preschool-age children and elementary-age students. Reading aloud has been shown to promote children's understanding of academic language of text, which differs significantly from oral language. This practice also introduces novel concepts of text structure and story grammar and provides an important avenue for learning about the world" (Arnold, David S., and Whitehurst, Grover J. 1994).

Text Complexity
The Reading standards place equal emphasis on the sophistication of what students read and the skill with which they read. Whatever they are reading, students must also show a steadily growing ability to discern more from and make fuller use of text, including making an increasing number of connections among ideas and between texts, considering a wider range of textual evidence, and becoming more sensitive to inconsistencies, ambiguities, and poor reasoning in texts. This close reading of text is emphasized in Arizona's English Language Arts Standards, beginning with Standard 1. Standard 10 in both the Reading Literature and Reading Informational Texts strands of Arizona's English Language Arts Standards emphasize the need for students to "independently and proficiently" read increasingly complex texts both within and across grade levels (Arizona's English Language Arts Standards).

The Standards acknowledge the fact that whereas some writing skills, such as the ability to plan, revise, edit, and publish, are applicable to many types of writing, other skills are more properly defined in terms of specific writing types: argument, informative/explanatory text, and narrative. The standards stress the importance of the writing-reading connection by requiring students to draw upon and write about evidence from literary and informational texts. In grades 4-12, Writing standard 9 calls for students to "[d]raw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research" (Arizona's English Language Arts Standards). The evidence that the students draw upon, as stated later in the same standard, comes from the literary and informational texts they read in the Reading strands of the standards. Because of the centrality of writing to most forms of inquiry, research standards are prominently included are infused in student learning (Arizona's English Language Arts Standards).

One of the key requirements of Arizona's English Language Arts Standards for Reading is that all students must be able to comprehend texts of steadily increasing complexity as they progress through school. By the time they complete 12th grade, students must be able to read and comprehend independently and proficiently the kinds of complex texts commonly found in adult life. In brief, while reading demands in college, workforce training programs, and life in general have held steady or increased over the last half century, K–12 texts have actually declined in sophistication, and relatively little attention has been paid to students' ability to read complex texts independently. These conditions have left a serious gap between many high school seniors' reading ability and the reading requirements they will face after graduation.

Why Text Complexity Matters
In 2006, ACT, Inc., released a report called Reading Between the Lines that showed which skills differentiated those students who equaled or exceeded the benchmark score (21 out of 36) in the reading section of the ACT college admissions test from those who did not. Prior ACT research had shown that students achieving the benchmark score or better in reading—which only about half (51 percent) of the roughly half million test takers in the 2004–2005 academic year had done—had a high probability (75 percent chance) of earning a C or better in an introductory, credit-bearing course in U.S. history or psychology (two common reading-intensive courses taken by first-year college students) and a 50 percent chance of earning a B or better in such a course.

Surprisingly, what chiefly distinguished the performance of those students who had earned the benchmark score or better from those who had not was not their relative ability in making inferences while reading or answering questions related to particular cognitive processes, such as determining main ideas or determining the meaning of words and phrases in context. Instead, the clearest differentiator was students' ability to answer questions associated with complex texts.

Students scoring below benchmark performed no better than chance (25 percent correct) on four-option multiple-choice questions pertaining to passages rated as "complex" on a three-point qualitative rubric described in the report. These findings held for male and female students, students from all racial/ethnic groups, and students from families with widely varying incomes. The most important implication of this study was that pedagogy focused only on "higher-order" or "critical" thinking was insufficient to ensure that students were ready for college, the workforce, and/or the military: what students could read, in terms of its complexity, was at least as important as what they could do with what they read. The ACT report is one part of an extensive body of research attesting to the importance of text complexity in reading achievement.

The Standards' Grade-Specific Text Complexity Demands
As illustrated in figure 4, text complexity in the Arizona English Language Arts Standards is defined at each grade level in standards RL.10 and RI.10. These standards call for students to independently and proficiently read texts in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to each grade level. These standards reinforce the expectation that students are reading increasingly complex texts within and across grade levels.

Figure 4: The Progression of Reading Standard 10 (RL.10 and RI.10)

Grade(s)	Reading Literature and Reading Informational Text Standard 10
K	RL.10 - With prompting and support, actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding. RI.10 - With prompting and support, actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.
1	RL.10 - With prompting and support, read stories, drama, and poetry of appropriate complexity for grade 1. RI.10 - With prompting and support, read informational texts, including functional texts, history/social studies, science, and technical texts, appropriately complex for
2	RL.10 - By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 2. RI.10 - By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 2.
3	RL.10 - By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 3. RI.10 - By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures
4	RL.10 - By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 4. RI.10 - By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 4.

5	RL.10 - By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 5. RI.10 - By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend informational text, including history/social studies, science and technological texts, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 5.
6	RL.10 - By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 6. RI.10 - By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend informational texts and nonfiction in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 6.
7	RL.10 - By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 7. RI.10 - By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend informational texts and nonfiction in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 7.
8	RL.10 - By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas and poetry, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 8. RI.10 - By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend informational texts and nonfiction in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 8.
9-10	RL.10 - By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend literature, including stories, drama, and poetry, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 9. RL.10 - By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend literature, including stories, drama, and poetry, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 10.
11-12	RL.10 - By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 11. RL.10 - By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 12.

Implementation and Continuous Improvement at the Local Level

Implementation of Common Structural Components

Leadership

Strong instructional leadership at the superintendent, director, principal, coach and literacy leadership team level provides a structure for the implementation of Arizona's State Literacy Instruction Plan. The State Literacy Instruction Plan is a clear set of blueprints for supporting successful language and literacy acquisition for all of Arizona's children and youth. Instructional leaders rely on the unshakeable foundation of evidence based literacy and brain research, instructional methods, and strategies to guide instructional decisions and practice. The improvement of student learning and literacy achievement for all students, including English learners and students with special and diverse learning needs, requires data driven decision making and is the shared responsibility of building leadership and a strong literacy leadership team. Shared leadership promotes collaboration as adults engage in discussions related to instruction and learning and model the importance of setting goals for learners.

To become an instructional leader, priorities must be shifted from day to day operations to effective teaching and learning in classrooms. Although managerial and political roles will always constitute an important part of an administrator's daily routine, improving student outcomes must become the number one priority. A deep knowledge of curricula, assessment, data analysis, and a strong sense of urgency enable leadership to feel more comfortable visiting classrooms, observing standards based instruction, focusing on students and their learning, providing coaching feedback, and participating in data based decision making. Such decision making drives grouping, instructional planning, the delivery of targeted instruction and intervention to address students' instructional needs and monitoring the progress toward grade level standards and benchmarks (Leithwood, Seashore-Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom, 2004).

Direct Explicit Systematic Instruction

Systematic instruction is instruction that follows a carefully designed plan of instructional steps. It is planned, purposeful, and sequenced. Systematic instruction provides students with extensive teacher support during the early stages of learning. Adults working with children birth to five often refer to this as "intentional teaching". Explicit instruction is instruction that is concrete and visible. The teacher explains new concepts and strategies in clear and concise language. Explicit instruction involves modeling and explaining concepts and skills using many examples. Teachers provide a high level of support as students practice and apply newly learned concepts and skills. Teachers of young children (birth through kindergarten) must also be explicit in creating their learning environment to reflect quality best practices.

Scaffolding refers to instructional techniques that support students' learning. Scaffolding can be provided through teachers' use of language, instructional materials, tasks, and grouping formats. The goal of scaffolding is to adjust and extend instruction so students are able to develop new concepts and

skills. As students become more proficient, support is gradually withdrawn.

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Systematic and explicit instruction supports student learning by presenting new material in small steps, with ample practice opportunities. This type of instruction requires careful attention to lesson design and instructional delivery. For early learning programs (birth through kindergarten) this includes environmental considerations.

Systematic and explicit lessons include the following phases: orientation/review, presentation, guided practice, and independent practice. Early learning programs (birth through kindergarten) will also provide practice through the use of intentionally planned learning centers.

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During the orientation/review phase of the lesson, teachers state the learning objectives in clear and understandable language. This phase involves:
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- Monitoring students' understanding and clarifying important steps or ideas.
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Children participating in early learning programs will often have guided practice opportunities in smaller groups and on an individual basis during the time that students are utilizing their learning centers. Utilization of learning centers allows early educators to model, scaffold, and observe skills while students are participating in child centered learning time.

Independent Practice

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Children participating in early learning programs will often have independent practice opportunities within learning centers. Utilization of learning centers allows early educators to observe skills and progress monitor while students are participating in child centered learning time.

System Models by Age and Grade Span

A Look at Early Childhood

All Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs have an opportunity to complete a needs assessment as outlined in the State Literacy Instruction Plan. In these assessments, ECE programs closely examine and analyze early childhood environments, student achievement data, and the systems in place for full implementation of the State Literacy Instruction Plan. (The systems include assessment, planning, collaboration, communication, professional development, instruction and intervention). Following classroom observations of literacy instruction and using the program data, the school's literacy leadership team designs an implementation plan unique to the school and students' needs.

Preschool Programs and Local Education Agencies

Implementation of the State Literacy Instruction Plan requires early childhood education leadership. It is expected that early childhood programs coordinate and align with the Arizona Early Learning Standards and connect with the local education agency within their boundaries. Literacy activities are based on the needs of students as indicated by data collected. High-quality Early Childhood programs require the participation of teachers, they leverage resources to support program wide implementation of the Literacy Instruction Plan and provide technical assistance as needed. Early Childhood programs regularly monitor, track impact and support the implementation process.

Quality Instruction for Young Learners

Arizona's State Literacy Instruction Plan recommends all early childhood programs 1) adopt a research based core curriculum and 2) have in place Teaching Strategies Gold as an assessment to identify at-risk learners/inform instruction, utilize the summative assessment that will be chosen and 3) implement the Arizona Early Learning Standards using effective instructional strategies for young learners such as intentional play based learning and 4) develop a kindergarten transition plan that builds a collaborative relationship with the local education agency.

Tier1 instruction is explicit, intentional and systematic. Learning goals are communicated to children and to parents. Modeling by the teacher, step by step instruction, and guided and independent practice are routine in literacy lessons. Multiple, multisensory and varied practice opportunities exist for students. Teachers monitor child learning throughout the lesson and provide explicit feedback on their developing skills. Teachers check for understanding to make instructional decisions. Flexible groupings are used to deliver differentiated instruction to children as needed.

Implementation of the Core program

The implementation of the core program as a tool for instruction is one of the first steps a school engages in examining, to ensure all components (including assessment) are utilized effectively and student learning is measured. Pre-writing instruction is aligned with pre-reading instruction. Oral Language development, both informal and academic language, is a standard component of the literacy lesson.

High-Quality Early Childhood Environment

Classrooms are arranged to provide space for learning centers, small group work, individual and partner work as well as whole group instruction. Each participating program will reflect high quality, literacy enriched environments as outlined in the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) tool. For example, student generated words and books should be evidenced, a library center, books in each learning center, examples of teacher writing. A variety of engaging reading materials, both fiction and nonfiction, are available and classrooms incorporate elements (posters, signs, word walls) that support and/or are incorporated in instruction. Teachers prominently display current student work. Teachers also engage in meaningful, turn-taking conversations with students.

Assessment Data and Systems

Systems for administering, scoring, reporting, sharing and analyzing assessment (including universal screenings) are in place. Students who have been identified as 'at-risk' receive more frequent assessments which are used for grouping and planning instruction. The data system is used to monitor student progress and effectiveness of instruction. Teachers use assessment data to determine flexible/differentiated groups and deliver differentiated instruction as needed. Long and short term program wide literacy goals are established for benchmark and progress monitoring. Teachers discuss literacy assessment data twice a month at meetings to monitor progress toward benchmark goals. Collaborative planning time is embedded in the master schedule. Please see the additional sections in the State Literacy Instruction Plan for explanations and information on Assessment and Data based decision making.

Summative Assessment:

Significant gains in oral language skills for three to five year old children are expected. A single pre/post assessment tool will help determine this progress. Oral Language is a key to the success of Arizona's youngest children. The State Literacy Instruction Plan recognizes that oral language development is the foundation for reading, writing, and spelling. According to the National Institute for Literacy, oral language is the "engine of learning and thinking" (Learning to Talk and Listen, NIFL, 2009). Oral language development includes skills that allow children to communicate, understand the meaning of a large number of words and concepts, obtain new information and express their own ideas.

Formative Assessment

In 2010 the State Board of Education approved a new on-going progress monitoring assessment tool to be utilized by early childhood programs birth through kindergarten. This assessment tool, Teaching Strategies Gold, is a comprehensive tool meant to look at the whole child including specific elements of literacy that will be directly addressed and documented. This form of assessment is utilized to identify needs of individual students and groups of students to influence classroom instruction and interventions.

Intervention

Intervention is based on ongoing data, and its purpose is to provide effective direct and explicit instruction with increased intensity to accelerate learning and is provided in addition to the regular literacy instruction. Intervention is provided in small groups (3-5 students) and grouping is flexible. Tier II intervention occurs daily during free choice time. Tier III is additional minutes per day. Intervention is delivered by trained personnel to groups of 3 or fewer. Intervention materials and programs are used as an extension of the core literacy program in literacy intervention settings. Ideally, each school has (at least) one interventionist and can be filled in combination with a literacy coach position. Please see the State Literacy Instruction Plan for explanation and information on Arizona RTI and the Alterable Variables for Intervention.

Arizona Department of Education provides numerous professional development opportunities. Please visit the ADE website (https://ems.azed.gov) for current offerings.

K-12 System Models

Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement is a process that unfolds progressively and is sustained over time. It encompasses the general belief that improvement doesn't start and stop. It requires an organizational and professional commitment to an ongoing process of learning, self-reflection, adaptation, and growth. For example, when a school is continuously improving, a variety of changes occur in ways that cumulatively affect multiple dimensions of a school or school system.

The concept of continuous improvement also recognizes that improving school effectiveness is not only highly complex, but it entails unforeseen challenges and complications that require a sustained commitment to ongoing improvements.

Major components of continuous school improvement encompass creating, reviewing or revising the school vision; gathering and analyzing data related to that vision; planning the school's work to align with the vision, select interventions, implementing the strategies and action steps; and gather data to measure the impact of the intervention/s.

Sustainable continuous improvement requires schools to have the knowledge, skills, and expertise needed to improve educational results and sustain improvement over time. Continuous improvement must build leader and staff capacity. The improvement cycle includes ongoing data collection that helps educators monitor progress and adjust in real time.

Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA)

A needs assessment is a systematic set of procedures that are used to determine needs, examine their nature and causes, and set priorities for future action. A needs assessment leads to action that will improve systems, services, processes and operations.

The "need" refers to the gap or discrepancy between a present state (what is) and a desired state (what should be). The "need" is neither the present nor the future state; it is the gap between them.

A needs assessment process:
- Focuses on the ends (i.e. desired outcomes) to be attained, rather than the means (i.e., process). For example, reading achievement is an outcome whereas reading instruction is a means toward that end
- Requires gathering and analyzing data; Page 3
- Informs priorities and criteria for solutions, so sound decision decisions can be made.
- Provides direction for programs, projects, and activities
- Guides staff to determine priorities and allocate resources, money, people, facilities, time, to activities that will have the greatest impact
- Creates cohesion through the alignment of vision, desired outcomes strategies, action steps and professional development

- Assists continuous improvement process by helping staff identify, which interventions are working, and the strategies associated with the greatest success

The CNA is a reflection of the school's current state. Acknowledging that state honestly and transparently, based on evidence, allows a school to determine its best next steps. It is not about a comparison among schools. It is about identifying strengths, needs and next steps specific to individual schools. The CNA will allow the school to identify the greatest needs, root causes, and possible solutions and track progress over time. A limited number of well-defined desired outcomes are a common feature of successful school and LEA improvement plans. These desired outcomes with goals, strategies and actions steps help focus a school's work by setting a target for student learning and achievement or systems, processes and programs that will impact achievement. By choosing strategies and action steps that leverage strengths and focus on connections and coherence, student learning and achievement is increased.

A team is a critical part of a comprehensive needs assessment. A Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) team should include stakeholders representing all parts of the system; principals, teachers, paraprofessionals, school office staff, parents, families, community members, and students. The CNA team should:
- Establish group norms and develop timelines
- Understand the members' roles and responsibilities
- Know the purpose of diving into the data
- Have access to ALL data
- Review the data for accuracy and consistency
- Decide on the current state through consensus

Assessment and Data Based Decisions

Assessment and Data Based Decisions from Birth-5
The ADE Early Childhood Education Unit has adapted the National Association for the Education of Young Children's definition of on-going progress assessment. Assessment is the process of gathering information about children from several forms of evidence, then organizing and interpreting that information (McAfee, Leong, & Bodrova, 2004). Effective child assessment is not based on a single measure or incident. In more formalized Early Childhood Education Programs, a Comprehensive Assessment System for Young Children Birth to Five is being implemented in Arizona. Assessing students' early literacy development is key to ensuring increased school readiness and alignment with Kindergarten.

In educational programs throughout the state, assessment is used to monitor a child's development and learning, guide planning and decision making, identify children who might benefit from special services or additional assistance, and report to and communicate with others.

In Arizona, a formative assessment system is used to give the adult information about each child or a group of children. Through the various assessments in the system, a teacher is able to get to know the strengths and needs of each child in the classroom and/or group and is able to utilize the information to guide their instruction and the decision making process. Children benefit from use of the formative assessment process because adults use what they learn from assessment to adapt instruction, experiences, and activities.

The Arizona Board of Education approved a single assessment instrument for early childhood ongoing progress monitoring (Teaching Strategies Gold) to assess students Birth through Kindergarten who participate in more formalized preschool experiences. It is the intention of Arizona to use this single assessment to unify the field of early childhood in a single common assessment that can be used in a variety of settings. The early childhood assessment system is designed for all Arizona's children including English learners, children with special needs, and children from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Families, care givers, and teachers are collecting information about children every day through a variety of methods. A variety of assessments may be used throughout the life of a child for varied purposes. As part of the Early Childhood Assessment System, family, caregiver and teacher observations and anecdotal notes are a seminal piece of formalizing and documenting the data about a student. Formative assessment data will be collected during instruction time and summative assessment data will be collected periodically throughout the year. Both levels of data will be analyzed and used as a matter of best practice. Data will be collected and analyzed on a more frequent basis during the implementation of interventions to monitor progress and inform instruction. As part of a quality assessment system, the Arizona Literacy Instruction Plan recognizes the importance of parent observation and input as a critical piece of assessment and data collection.

Assessment & Data-based Decisions K-12
The purpose of assessment is to inform instruction and monitor student learning and progress. Assessment measures and supports students' attainment of the Arizona Standards by providing data to inform improvement at all levels of the educational system. Educators and other stakeholders need multiple types of assessment to serve their decision-making needs. Educators in particular need a range of assessment methods and practices to monitor their students' progress toward grade level learning goals (Arizona Department of Education Assessment Framework, 2017).

Evidence-based research studies in education continue to acknowledge the value of frequently assessing students' reading progress to prevent the downward spiral of reading failure. The probability of remaining a poor reader at the end of fourth grade, given a child was a poor reader at the end of first grade, is 88% (Juel, 1988). Therefore, valid and reliable assessment data is the key to providing early identification for intervention and to plan for meeting the needs of all students identified at various levels of performance.

Arizona's Move On When Reading legislation (A.R.S. 15-701, A.R.S.15-701, and A.R.S. 15-211)

requires all students with K-3 students to assess those students using universal screeners, progress monitoring tools, benchmark assessments, and summative assessments to identify students who are at risk of reading below grade level as early as possible. Once these students have been identified, schools are required to use their literacy assessment data to provide specific, targeted intervention to help support the students' literacy needs. Third grade students who fail to meet the MOWR cut score on the reading portion of the state assessment may not be promoted to the fourth grade and must continue to receive targeted intervention as defined by the legislation (www.azed.gov/MOWR).

Assessment serves many purposes and a variety of assessments help to continually inform and improve instruction for all students. Assessment provides the necessary information to make decisions regarding effectiveness of instruction as well as allocation of resources to support student learning. Assessment can take many forms; including a survey of all students to determine who is at risk; or a diagnostic assessment to determine specific individual needs of a particular student.

Each district must establish a system of assessment and monitoring, utilizing valid and reliable assessments. Data gathered from multiple sources will identify at-risk students, including English learners and Special Education students, as early as possible.
The assessment system must be made up of the following four types of assessment, as defined by the AZ State Board of Education (please see Supporting Documents at the end of the State Literacy Instruction Plan):

A. Universal Screening	B. Diagnostic	C. Progress Monitoring	D. Benchmark	E. Summative Assessment
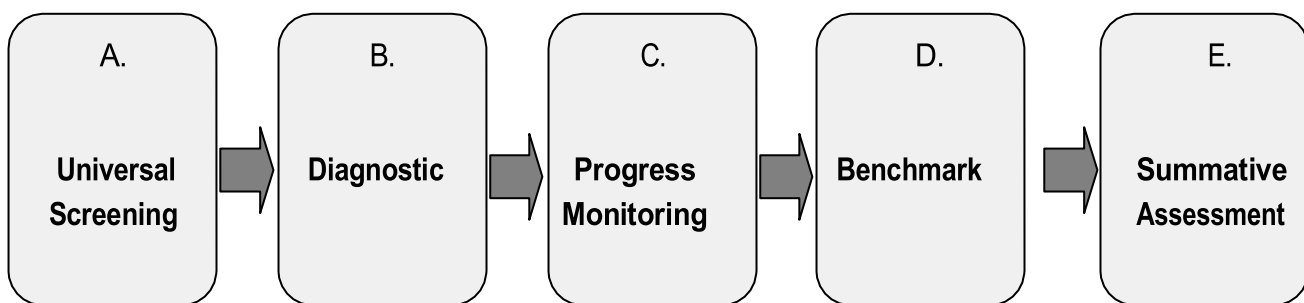
Universal Screening: Brief assessments that focus on critical reading skills strongly predictive of future reading growth and development, which must be conducted with all children at the beginning of the school year (within the first four weeks of the school year). This is necessary to identify children likely to need extra or alternative forms of instruction. These assessments are conducted at the student's designated grade level. At the elementary level, students should be screened at least three times a year. At the secondary level, screening may refer to a review of existing student data, such as performance on state assessments, oral reading fluency probes, maze, or other brief assessments designed to indicate overall literacy level. As the name implies, screening is to sift students to accurately identify those students who are at risk for being unsuccessful. Examples of universal screening or benchmark assessments would be PSF (phonemic segmentation fluency), NWF (nonsense word fluency), ORF (oral reading fluency), MAZE/DAZE (cloze procedure fluency).

Diagnostic assessment: An assessment that is given to help pinpoint instructional needs. They are conducted at any time during the school year when in-depth analysis of students' reading skills, strengths and weaknesses is needed and is indicated by student performance. Diagnostic information is gained through formal or informal measures for the purpose of determining specific deficiencies, and for the planning of specific targeted instruction. Examples of diagnostic assessments would include phonological awareness screeners, phonics screeners, a spelling inventory, or an assessment of oral reading fluency (when error analysis is performed).

Progress monitoring assessment: A type of formative assessment conducted on an ongoing basis (i.e. weekly, monthly or quarterly) to: (a) estimate rates of reading improvement (b) identify children who are not demonstrating adequate progress and therefore require additional or different instructional practices, and/or (c) compare the efficacy of different instructional practices to design more effective, individualized instruction for at-risk learners. One important aspect of these assessments is that they are conducted at the student's "skill level" and not at their grade level. Progress monitoring assessments are for learning and have a significant and direct connection to classroom instruction. "Improvement in their use has significant potential to increase the effectiveness of teaching and learning in adolescent literacy" (Black & William, 1998). Students who have been identified as at-risk and who are receiving additional support through an intervention should be progress monitored and the data frequently reviewed to be sure the student is making adequate progress. It is recommended that students receiving an additional intervention (Tier II) be monitored every two to three weeks. Students who receive an intensive intervention (Tier III) should be monitored every week. (Please see the RTI and Intervention section of this plan for further information on tiered instruction).

Summative assessment: This is another name for "high-stakes" or end-of-year or end-of-course accountability tests. These assessments usually measure reading achievement with silent passage reading and multiple choice vocabulary and comprehension questions. Summative assessments yield information at the individual, classroom, grade, school and district levels. Examples of outcome assessments are AASA, Arizona English Language Learner Assessment (AZELLA), and ACT.

Assessment involves feedback to students at the elementary, middle and high school levels because as learners they can take charge of their own knowledge and skill acquisition, set learning goals and monitor their own learning. At all levels, students are involved in their own reflection of learning as they monitor their progress and set learning goals through viewing, evaluating and discussing individual assessment data. The chart below serves as a graphic representation of the Assessment process.

RTI and Intervention

Response to Intervention (RTI) provides a process through which all students have an opportunity to achieve success. The RTI framework is a multi-tiered system of support that identifies struggling students early and provides differentiated, effective instruction that is both explicit and systematic. Students are then measured on how well they are learning (progressing towards goals) and finally, adjustments are made when needed to help accelerate the learning.

Academic & Behavioral System of Support
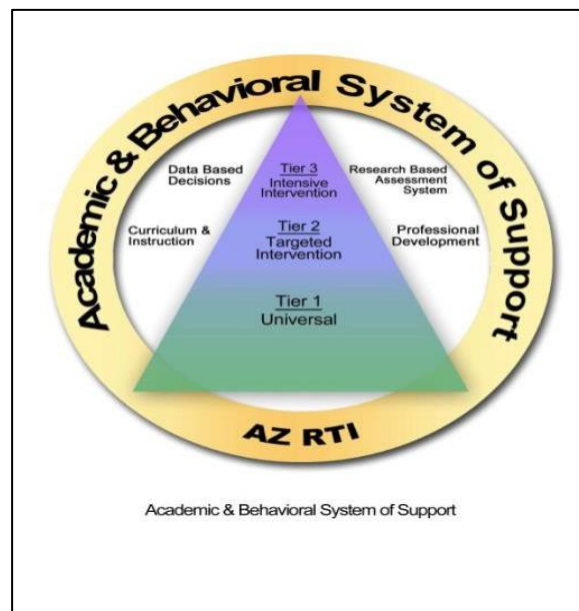
Five percent of students who enter school will be successful regardless of socio-economic levels and the instruction or lack of instruction received. These students come prepared with the background knowledge and understanding of our language structures for literacy success. Another 20-35% will find the acquisition of reading skills to be relatively easy to learn. They will just need more opportunity to practice. The remaining 60% - 75% of students are potentially at risk and require explicit instruction. Half of that 60% will face extreme challenges with learning to read. This 30% will require targeted, explicit instruction that extends beyond regular instruction and into intensive interventions.

RTI is a framework that uses data to identify specific needs of "at-risk" students and provides high quality instruction and intervention matched to student needs, including English Language Learners, Special Education, and other special populations. The dual challenge of teaching struggling readers is to improve reading proficiency while meeting the demands of content learning. The goal of literacy intervention for these students is to accelerate their reading growth. The interventions then must be targeted and effective enough to substantially increase a student's rate of growth in reading and close student's achievement gaps.

While core instruction should be aligned with Arizona's English Language Arts Standards, intervention instruction may need to address earlier language and reading skill deficit to meet individual student needs. Intervention instruction needs to be on a continuum (easiest to more challenging) moving from what a student knows toward what they need to know (scaffolding instruction).

Knowledge & Skills
"scaffolding"
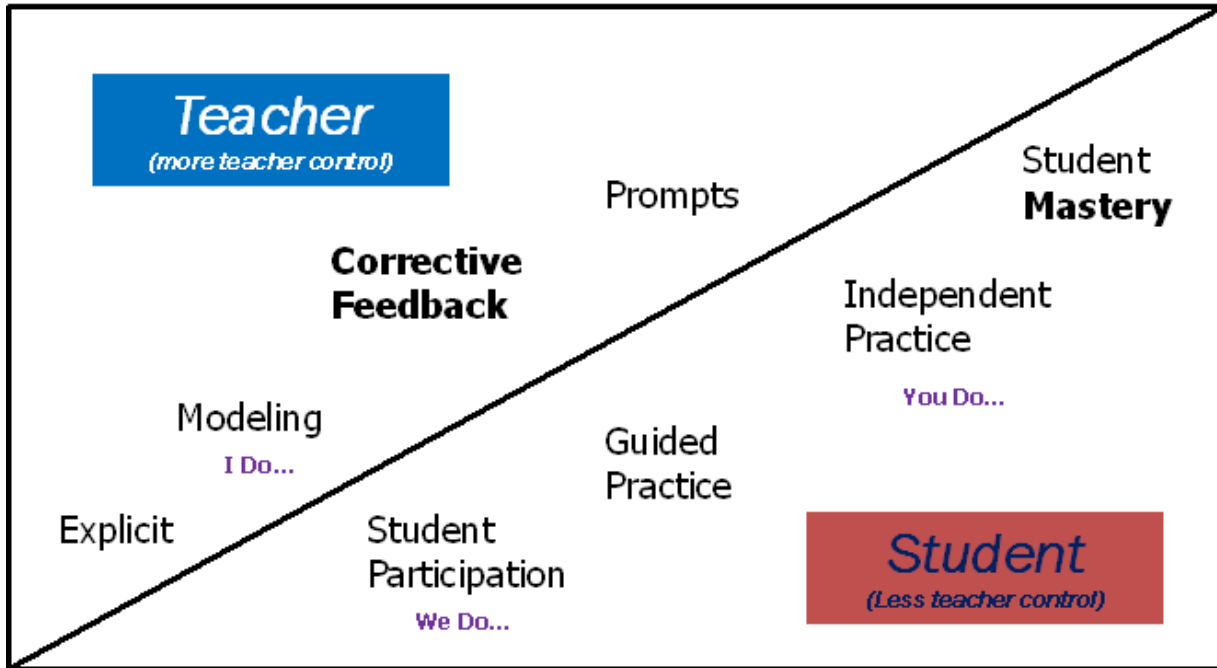
The RTI framework provides a system that incorporates instruction, assessment and interventions to assist schools in identify struggling students early, provide appropriate instruction and interventions while increasing the likelihood of success. Through the focus on alignment of general classroom instruction, progress monitoring, and evidence-based interventions, RTI can help schools work more efficiently and effectively in addressing the needs of all learners. Rate of progress over time is used to make important educational decisions, including possible determination of eligibility for specific learning disability (SLD). Although the instruction and interventions encompassed within the RTI framework may involve many different levels of intensity and individualization, they are usually considered to fall within three broad supports or tiers:

Tier 1 (Universal instruction) – is comprised of three elements: 1) an evidence-based core reading program or curriculum, 2) screening and benchmark testing at least three times a year to ensure that solid progress continues, and 3) ongoing, job-embedded, evidence-based professional development to provide teachers with the necessary tools to ensure every student receives quality reading instruction. Tier I instruction for secondary student should include content literacy strategies that assist struggling students in accessing challenging texts.

Tier 2 (Targeted Instruction) - includes Tier 1 instruction and an additional small group intervention to accelerate the progress and ensure that no one slips further behind. This small group intervention should: a) target the student's specific area of struggle with literacy as revealed by data, b) be implementable with a group of 6 or fewer students, three to five times each week for approximately 20– 40 minutes, c) build skills gradually with high student-teacher interaction, frequent opportunities to practice the specific skill and opportunities to receive feedback, and d) include on-going progress monitoring and diagnostic assessments that will provide information on the student's performance.

Tier 2 targeted instruction should be direct and explicit, using intervention strategies that are proven to be effective. Instruction may or may not take place in the Reading, Language Arts or English classroom and may continue for one quarter, a semester or as long as there is a learning gap.

Tier 3 (Intensive Instruction) - consists of specific intensive intervention and explicit instruction. This may or may not be Special Education services. The instruction and remediation needed to support students at this level must increase in intensity and duration to substantially affect student's rate of growth in reading. Some students may need Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 instruction to make sufficient progress. Students at this level should a) have an individual education plan that has set goals/targets, receive intensive direct, explicit systematic instruction, c) monitoring and evaluating progress towards goals weekly, and d) adjusting instruction when progress is unsatisfactory.

The charts on the following pages have been adapted from the Washington State Literacy Instruction Plan, 1999 and have several features that distinguish the various tiers such as:

- Size of the instructional group
- Frequency of progress monitoring
- Duration of the intervention
- Frequency with which the intervention is delivered
- Teacher or specialist delivering the instruction
- Focus on content or skill

Three Tier Instructional Plan			
Primary Level K-3	Tier 1 Reading Class	Tier 2 Targeted Instruction	Tier 3 Intensive Intervention
Learners	ALL students	Generally 20%-30% of students, who need additional structured support (eventually, with correct instruction, 15%).	Generally 5%-10% of students, who have marked difficulties learning to read and have not sufficiently responded to instruction provided at Tiers I & II.
Instructional leader	Regular classroom Teacher	Highly qualified reading teacher, special education teacher, or specifically trained, supervised para professional working under the guidance of the reading specialist.	Certified reading specialist, special education teacher trained in reading, or specifically trained, supervised para professional working under the guidance of the reading specialist.
Time allocation	90 minutes daily minimum of grade level standards aligned reading instruction (time for grammar, writing, and intervention instruction is additional).	15 - 30 minutes of targeted reading instruction daily, to reinforce skills taught by the classroom teacher and in addition to the core reading program.	At least 30 minutes of more intensive, more explicit instruction designed to close the student skill gap.
Instructional components	Essential Components: phonemic awareness phonics fluency vocabulary comprehension	Essential Components: phonemic awareness phonics fluency vocabulary comprehension	Essential Components: phonemic awareness phonics fluency vocabulary comprehension
Grouping structure	Flexible (whole group, small group, partners).	Small flexible homogeneous groups of three-six students per teacher (optimal).	Small homogeneous groups of three or fewer students per teacher (optimal).
Instructional program	Arizona Standards-based grade level instruction using evidence- based program materials with proven effectiveness. All instructional decisions are	Explicit instruction to strengthen specific skills identified in the benchmark and diagnostic assessments, using evidence- based program materials and	Explicit instruction at student's performance level using evidence- based program materials and teaching strategies with proven effectiveness in teaching at-risk or reading disabled students
Align Materials with state standards	Evaluate and align current materials and instruction with the grade-level expectations.	Evaluate intervention materials for explicit, systematic instruction of the 5 essential reading components.	Evaluate intervention materials for the explicit, systematic instruction of the 5 essential components of reading.

Three-Tier Instructional Plan			
Primary Level K-3	**Tier 1 Reading**	**Tier 2 Targeted Instruction**	**Tier 3 Intensive Intervention**
Adopt/adapt augment instructional materials	Select an evidence-based program that supports the grade level expectations, and includes critical elements of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension text structures	Select an evidence-based intervention program according to components needed: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension with proven effectiveness for use with at-risk readers.	Select a research-based intensive intervention program, either comprehensive or by components needed: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension with proven effectiveness for use with at-risk and disabled readers.
Provide professional development	Provide professional development for effective use of assessments, instructional materials, and strategies for explicit and differentiated instruction, etc.	Provide professional development before and during the implementation of the program to help teachers provide effective targeted instruction.	Provide professional development before and during the implementation of the program to help teachers provide effective intervention instruction.
Assess students	Screening assessments (minimum 3x year) Diagnostic assessments Progress Monitoring assessments Outcome assessments	Screening assessments (minimum 3x year) Diagnostic assessments Progress Monitoring assessments (every two weeks)	Screening assessments (minimum 3x year) Diagnostic assessments Progress Monitoring assessments (weekly) Outcome assessments
Implement the program	Provide ongoing support to staff including time for planning and collaboration. Provide effective coaching to teachers.	Provide ongoing support to staff including time for planning and collaboration. Provide effective coaching to teachers.	Provide ongoing support to staff including time for planning and collaboration. Provide effective coaching to teachers, perhaps with an instructional facilitator.
Adjust instruction	Adjust instruction and student placement based acquisition of Arizona's standards, data analyzed 3x per year, and all formative data.	Adjust instruction and student placement based on bi-weekly progress monitoring assessment and student growth toward accomplishing their goals.	Adjust instruction and student placement based on weekly progress monitoring assessment and student growth toward accomplishing their goals.

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[3] **Independent reading** for Tier I only. Daily 15 minutes minimum using a variety of high interest materials that student can read with at least 95% accuracy to apply and practice reading skills being taught during core reading lessons. (revised from Washington State Literacy Instruction Plan, 1999)

Three-Tier Instructional Plan				
Intermediate Level 4-6	**Tier 1**		**Tier 2 Targeted Instruction**	**Tier 3 Intensive Intervention**
	English Language Arts	**Content Literacy Strategies**		
Learners	ALL students	ALL students	Students who need additional structured support.	Students who have marked difficulties learning to read and have not sufficiently responded to instruction provided at Tiers I & II.
Instructional leader	English/Language Arts/Reading teachers	Content teacher	Highly qualified reading teacher, special education teacher, or specifically trained, supervised para professional working under the guidance of the reading specialist.	Certified reading specialist, special education teacher trained in reading, or specifically trained, supervised para professional working under the guidance of the reading specialist.
Time allocation	Daily 60 minutes minimum or one instructional period of explicit reading instruction. (time for grammar, and writing instruction additional)	Provided within scheduled content-area classes	30 minutes of targeted reading instruction daily to reinforce skills taught in Tier 1 instruction, build foundational skills and close the achievement gap as spelled out in the student's plan.	30 additional minutes of intensive, explicit instruction designed to meet individual needs, guided by data.
Instructional components	Advanced decoding skills (including word analysis) fluency, vocabulary (including word/root origins) comprehension text structures	Focus on: comprehension text structures (appropriate for reading and understanding informational text) vocabulary	Focus on: phonics fluency vocabulary comprehension (skill deficits identified by screening and diagnostic)	Focus on: Phonemic awareness phonics fluency vocabulary comprehension (skill deficits identified by screening and diagnostic)
Grouping structure	Flexible (whole group, small group, partners).	Flexible (whole group, small group, partners).	Homogeneous groups of 3-6 students (optimal).	As recommended by intervention publisher or groups of one to three students.

Three-Tier Instructional Plan				
Intermediate Level 4-6	**Tier 1**		**Tier 2** Targeted Instruction	**Tier 3 Intensive Intervention**
	English Language Arts	**Content Literacy Strategies**		
Instructional program	Arizona Standards-based, grade level instruction using evidence-based program materials and teaching strategies, with proven effectiveness. Instructional decisions are based on formal and informal assessment data	Arizona Standards- based grade level instruction using explicit instruction and other evidence-based validated strategies	Explicit instruction to strengthen specific skills identified in the benchmark and diagnostic assessments, using evidence-based program materials and effective teaching strategies	Explicit instruction at student's performance level using evidence-based program materials and teaching strategies with proven effectiveness in teaching at-risk or reading disabled students (intensity and duration) to close their achievement gap
Align materials with Arizona state standards	Evaluate and align current materials and instruction with grade-level expectations	Evaluate and align current materials and instruction with the Arizona content standards	Evaluate materials for the explicit, systematic instruction of the 5 essential reading components	Evaluate intervention materials for the explicit, systematic instruction of the 5 essential components of reading
Adopt/adapt/ Augment Instructional Materials	Select evidence-based program materials that best supports the state grade-level expectations and includes the essential elements of literacy instruction (advanced word study, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension	Select content materials that support content literacy with good informational/ expository text	Select evidence-based supplemental program materials that provide instruction in the essential reading components with proven effectiveness with at-risk readers	Select evidence-based intervention program materials that provide instruction in the essential reading components with proven effectiveness with at-risk readers
Provide Professional development	Provide professional development for effective use of assessments, instructional materials, and strategies for explicit and differentiated instruction, etc.	Provide professional development to help teachers with literacy strategies to help students access and learn the required curriculum.	Provide professional development before and during the implementation of the program to help teachers provide effective targeted instruction.	Provide professional development before and during the implementation of the program to help teachers provide effective intervention instruction.
Assess students	Screening assessment(3x) • Diagnostic assessments • Progress Monitoring assessments • Standards based outcome assessments	Monitor progress (informal assessments, unit tests, daily performance)	Diagnostic assessments Progress Monitoring assessments (every two weeks)	Diagnostic assessments Progress Monitoring assessments (every week)

Three-Tier Instructional Plan				
Intermediate Level 4-6	**Tier 1**		**Tier 2** **Targeted Instruction**	**Tier 3 Intensive** **Intervention**
	English Language Arts	**Content Literacy Strategies**		
Implement the program	Provide ongoing support to staff with common preparation time within grades to facilitate collaboration. Provide effective coaching to teachers.	Provide emphasis on developing vocabulary, note taking, comprehension, and background knowledge.	Provide ongoing support to staff with planning and collaboration time. Provide effective coaching to teachers.	Provide ongoing support to staff with planning and collaboration time. Provide effective coaching to teachers.
Adjust Instruction	Adjust instruction and student placement based on progress monitoring assessment data analyzed 3x per year, formative assessment data and student acquisition of standards.	Adjust instructional program based on formative assessment data and student acquisition of standards.	Adjust instruction and student placement based on progress monitoring data and individual student growth toward their goals. Progress monitor.	Adjust instruction and student placement based on progress monitoring data and individual student growth toward their goals.

Three-Tier Instructional Plan				
Secondary Level 7-12	**Tier 1**		**Tier 2** **Targeted Instruction**	**Tier 3 Intensive Intervention**
	English Language Arts	**Content Literacy Strategies**		
Learners	All Students	All Students	Tier 1 students who need additional support to succeed, as evidenced by assessment data	Students who read more than two years below grade level and who need focused instruction in fundamental reading skills as evidenced by assessment data.
Instructional Leader	English/Language Arts Teacher	Content Teacher	Certified reading specialist or para-professional working with a reading specialist.	Certified reading specialist or para- professional working with a reading specialist.
Time allocation	60 minutes or one instructional period of explicit English/Language Arts instruction based on the Arizona ELA standards	Provided within the scheduled content-area classes	60 minutes or one period of targeted reading instruction daily based upon students' needs and addressing the goals in the student's plan.	Intensive, explicit instruction specifically designed to meet individual needs and guided by data (an acceleration program).
Instructional Components	Instruction based upon the Arizona English Language Arts Standards for 9-12.	Instruction based upon the Arizona English Language Arts Standards for 9-12 using content literacy strategies in the areas of vocabulary, organization.	Phonemic awareness, phonics/spelling, fluency, vocabulary, or comprehension based upon the needs and goals identified in the student's individual plan.	Phonemic awareness, phonics/spelling, fluency, vocabulary, or comprehension based upon the needs and goals identified in the student's individual plan.
Grouping Structure	Flexible (whole class, small group, partners)	Flexible (whole class, small group, partners)	Fluid homogeneous groups of 3-6	As recommended by intervention publisher or less than 16 students per teacher
Instructional program	Arizona Standards- based, grade level instruction using evidence-based program materials and teaching strategies,	Arizona Standards- based grade level instruction using explicit instruction and other evidence-based validated strategies.	Explicit instruction to strengthen specific skills identified in the benchmark and diagnostic assessments, using	Explicit instruction at student's performance level using evidence- based

Three-Tier Instructional Plan				
Secondary Level 7-12	**Tier 1**		**Tier 2 Targeted Instruction**	**Tier 3 Intensive Intervention**
	English Language Arts	Content Literacy Strategies		
Align materials with Arizona state standards	Evaluate and align current materials and instruction with grade-level expectations.	Evaluate and align current materials and instruction with the Arizona ELA Standards.	Evaluate intervention materials for the explicit, systematic instruction of the 5 essential reading components.	Evaluate intervention materials for the explicit, systematic instruction of the 5 essential components of reading.
Adopt/adapt/ Augment Instructional materials	Select a scientifically research-based program that best supports the state grade level expectations and includes narrative and expository text.	Select content materials that are well-formatted and that promote good informational reading practices.	Select a research-based intervention program that provides appropriate instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.	Select a research- based intervention program that provides appropriate instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.
Provide Professional development	Provide professional development for effective use of assessments, instructional materials, and strategies for explicit and differentiated instruction.	Provide professional development for research-validated comprehension strategies and vocabulary instruction.	Provide professional development before and during the implementation of the strategic intervention	Provide professional development before and during the implementation of the intervention program.
Assess students	Screening assessments (minimum 3x year) Diagnostic assessments Progress Monitoring assessments Standards based Outcome assessments	Monitor progress toward acquisition of Arizona standards (in-program assessments, unit tests, daily performance)	Diagnostic assessments Progress Monitoring assessments (every two weeks)	Diagnostic assessments Progress Monitoring assessments (every week)
Implement the program	Provide ongoing support to staff with planning and collaboration time. Provide effective coaching to teachers	Provide instructional emphasis on vocabulary, note taking, text structure, comprehension and background knowledge before reading	Provide ongoing support to staff with planning and collaboration time. Provide effective coaching to teachers	Provide ongoing support to staff with planning and collaboration time. Provide effective coaching to teachers
Adjust Instruction	Adjust instructional program and student placement based on data	Adjust instructional program based on formative assessment data	Adjust instructional program and student placement based on biweekly data and student's progress toward their goals.	Adjust instructional program and student placement based on weekly data and student's progress toward their goals.

Independent reading for Tier I only. Daily 15-20 minutes minimum. Independent reading at this level should be with text that the student can read with at least 95% accuracy. This will increase the volume of texts read and wide-range reading. Provide access to reading materials that include informational text and narrative text. Determine a school-wide policy regarding the amount of independent reading required.

At Risk Learners: English Learners and Special Education

English Learners (EL)

EL Program Purpose and Goals
Arizona has a structured and comprehensive program of English language development for students K-12 who are identified as English learners (ELs). The purpose is to provide a structured program, utilizing state English language proficiency standards with highly qualified teachers to meet the language needs of second language learners. The goal is to accelerate language acquisition, so that students are able to access rigorous mainstream curriculum. Although this program is generally provided in specialized structured English immersion classrooms, mainstream teachers also play a role in assuring that ELs and former ELs (FEPs-Fluent English Proficient) have access to content instruction.

EL Program Structure
Federal and Arizona laws require that students identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP), be provided with programs that will ensure they can gain access to the same rigorous academic content made available to all students. The Home Language Survey (HLS) was designed to identify which students need to be tested for English proficiency. The English proficient pupil has sufficient knowledge of the language needed for success within the grade level, mainstreamed classroom.

After the students are identified by the HLS, the Arizona English Language Learner Assessment (AZELLA) is administered to identify English proficiency. These proficiency levels range from minimal language proficiency to proficient. The levels, in increasing order of achievement are Pre-Emergent, Emergent, Basic, Intermediate and Proficient. The AZELLA is administered annually to all continuing EL students. If a student scores below the proficient level, that student must receive specialized instruction in English Language Development (ELD). The program for ELL students in Arizona is determined by the Structured English Immersion (SEI) Program Models. Once a student achieves a score of proficient on the AZELLA, the student is excited to the mainstream classroom. As required by law, these students are monitored for two years to follow their progress in language and academic achievement.

The SEI Models structure includes multiple elements:

- SEI classroom content – English language development
- Program entry and exit protocol
- Student Language Ability grouping
- Class size standards
- Scheduling and time allocations
- Teacher qualification requirements

These structural elements are detailed in the Structured English Immersion SEI Models5. The Structured English Immersion (SEI) classroom utilizes English language development (ELD) strategies and the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELP) Standards to promote second language acquisition for ELs. These students receive all classroom instruction in English. The curriculum and presentation are designed for students who are learning the language. ELD instruction focuses on Phonology (pronunciation, the sound system of the language), Morphology (the internal structure and forms of words), Syntax (English word order rules), Lexicon (vocabulary), and Semantics and Pragmatics (meaning and how to use English in different situations and contexts).

All teachers in SEI classrooms must have a valid Arizona teaching certificate (charter schools are exempt), must be appropriately endorsed, and Highly Qualified as defined in the SEI Models. The Arizona English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards drive ELD instruction. These standards provide a framework for the instruction and assessment of ELs. Discrete sections of ELD are based on specific categories of language instruction driven by the skills identified in the ELP Standards. See the following link for the English Language Proficiency Standards: http://www.azed.gov/oelas/elps/. The ELP Standards consist of the domains of Listening/Speaking, Reading and Writing. The language strand represents the standards for grammar and vocabulary. This language strand and all other domains are aligned to Arizona's English Language Arts Standards. The language strand is designed to be taught explicitly during a portion of ELD and also applied during the instruction of Listening/Speaking, Reading, and Writing. The standards are grouped by the following grade level spans: Kindergarten; Grades 1-2; Grades 3-5; Grades 6-8; Grades 9-12. The ELP standards are designed to be comprehensive and include all prerequisite skills for each grade span.

Class textbooks, materials, and assessments used in an SEI classroom must be aligned to the Arizona (ELP) Standards. Classroom materials used in an ELD class may reflect content from a variety of academic disciplines. Classroom materials must be appropriate for the students' levels of English language proficiency. Selection of content materials must be based on the materials' effectiveness for facilitating and promoting the specific English language objective(s) of the class. Such materials must predominantly feature specific language constructions that align with the English language objectives based on the ELP Standards.

Program Delivery for Students in an SEI Classroom
Students will be provided with the full structure of ELD in a self-contained SEI Classroom for four hours per day (or less, once they have tested as Intermediate on the AZELLA). However, EL students may also be in mainstream classrooms outside of their required ELD instruction, during which time the skills provided through the SEI endorsement, will inform the structure for literacy development. The language proficiency skills of EL students may be below grade level standards. Structured methods for language support are required for students to have an opportunity to participate in classroom learning and have access to grade level content materials.

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5 For additional information, please visit http://www.azed.gov/oelas/structured-english-immersion-models/.

Program Delivery for Students on an Individual Language Learner Plan (ILLP)

Schools with twenty or fewer ELs within a three-grade span (including Kindergarten), may provide instruction through the development of Individual Language Learner Plans (ILLPs) created for each EL Student. Although the preferred method for the delivery of ELD occurs in an SEI classroom by a Highly Qualified teacher, the ILLP model allows provisions for low-incidence schools to deliver the ELD instruction in various ways both in and outside of a traditional SEI classroom. In this model, the ILLP is written to provide the required language and literacy support. Mainstream teachers deliver language instruction necessary for the student to access the grade-level curriculum and develop full academic literacy. Depending on the student's proficiency level, up to four hours of ELD are required and based on specific ELP Standards. Mainstream teachers should utilize strategies for ELD instruction when working with English learners.

Students who have Exited the SEI Program (FEP students)

Former ELs who are now in mainstream classrooms are still developing their language skills and may not be at grade level. FEP (Fluent English Proficient) student proficiency status information must be provided to mainstream teachers. AZELLA student reports should be available to determine language strengths and needs. Progress monitoring (2-year monitoring) is required to ensure that effective language and academic content development continues. Per Arizona Administrative Code R7-2-615:

A Provisional or full Structured English Immersion (SEI) endorsement, or an English as a Second Language or Bilingual endorsement, shall be required of a teacher who is instructing students in a sheltered English immersion or Structured English immersion model.

The purpose of the SEI endorsement is to ensure that all educators statewide have the skills needed to assist EL and FEP students in English language acquisition regardless of their instructional program. These skills are critical for teachers of FEP students because these students are no longer receiving English language instruction in an SEI classroom. It is important to identify any former EL students who are struggling so that appropriate interventions and strategies can be employed as needed. The Language Strand in Arizona's English Language Arts Standards provides an excellent tool for teaching academic and functional language-specific skills to be applied in all content areas and the AZRTI framework provides the structure for intervention.

The Arizona Department of Education/ Office of English Language Acquisition Services offers resource and training support at www.ade.az.gov/OELAS.

Birth-5 English Language Learners

Literacy is essential to success in today's economy, now more than ever. Family literacy harnesses the strength of adult-child bonds to help those who are most at risk of failing economically, emotionally and socially. Early family literacy experiences build success by strengthening a young child's confidence, increasing their ability and broadening their outlook. Family literacy ensures the cycle of learning and

progress passes from generation to generation.

High-quality early learning experiences, environments, and effective instructional practices for young children support English Language Learners. Children participating in high-quality preschool programs should have access to increasing levels of the English language.

Family literacy programs delivered to parents, who speak a language other than English, have been recognized as a way to help children become successful while assisting parents who speak another language to become full partners in the educational development of their children. Family literacy experiences birth to five can bridge the communication development needs of parents so that when the child begins school, the essential foundation is built to meet that child's educational needs. Strategies for adults to use, mentioned previously in this plan under the Birth to 5 sections are designed to meet the needs of diverse learners. As a child enters the formalized instructional years (preschool age 3-5), additional specific English Language acquisition strategies may be required for those who have previously experienced limited or no access to the English language. Implicit, direct and enriched language experiences should be developed to meet the needs of these children. Engaging the families during this critical stage is imperative.

Reading Instruction for Students with Disabilities

Infant/Toddlers

From birth (and even before birth), the brain is creating connections that will establish the foundation for later literacy and reading development. Infant and toddler children will typically develop oral language, participate in turn-taking communication, and establish relationships that will support their development. Even infant and toddler aged children have expected benchmarks for development.

Through screening, doctor visits, and parent support efforts, families may become aware of benchmarks that their children are not achieving. A more formal evaluation may be necessary to identify children who would benefit from additional supports or services through the Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP). These supports and services occur within the context of the family and child's daily routines. It is critical that children in need of support, interventions or services are identified and linked with the proper program to meet their needs. For further information, please see: https://www.azdes.gov/azeip/ and resources to educate parents, public education agencies, state agencies, and professional organizations to develop and implement effective policy, procedures and practices for identifying,

locating, and evaluating children with disabilities aged birth to twenty-one may be found on the Department of Education website at http://www.azed.gov/specialeducation/az-find/.

Preschool Ages 3-5
Preschool Children identified with a disability who receive services within a preschool classroom should have a high-quality, developmentally appropriate preschool experience. Preschool Special Education services are provided by the Local Education Agency (LEA) and the level of services are determined by the Individual Education Program (IEP) team. These services may be provided in the home, on an itinerant basis, in a special needs preschool classroom or in a regular education preschool environment as deemed appropriate by the Individual Education Program (IEP) team. Tier I services involve a quality preschool environment that is experientially based. High-quality preschool programming includes the use of a curriculum that is aligned with the Arizona Early Learning Standards and utilizes the formative assessment process to inform instructional decisions. As with any grade level, a 3-tiered instructional model based on developmentally appropriate practices and intentional instruction allows more time and support for students that require it. Early childhood educators should use data from the Arizona State Board of Education approved tool to provide more intensive interventions for students who may need continued, intentional instruction as well as time to practice skills through play.

Pre-literacy involves helping the young child develop skills in understanding and expressing oral language along with social skills, teaching children to recognize letters and play with sounds to develop phonological awareness, and pre-writing skills (from scribbles to letters). These skills are developed in the context of a quality preschool classroom environment and routines. At this critical age of intensive brain development, it is important to focus on all five essential domains of learning (social and emotional; language and literacy; cognitive; physical health & development; approaches to learning). Each area of development supports development of the others.

Kindergarten through Grade 12
Arizona's English Language Arts Standards are rigorous grade-level expectations that identify the knowledge and skills students need in order to be successful in college or careers. All students, regardless of disability, must be challenged to excel within the general curriculum and be prepared for a successful future, including college and/or career. Arizona legislation, ARS 15-763 - Plan for providing special education definition states: "Each child shall be ensured access to the general curriculum and an opportunity to meet the state's academic standards."

Students with disabilities are a heterogeneous group with one common characteristic: the presence of disabling conditions that significantly hinder their ability to access the general education curriculum (IDEA 34 CFR §300.39, 2004). Therefore, how the standards are taught and assessed is important in reaching this diverse group of students. The instruction must incorporate modifications and accommodations, including:
- Supports and related services designed to meet the unique needs of these students and to

- enable their access to the general education curriculum with differentiated instruction.
- An Individualized Education Program (IEP) which includes annual goals aligned to facilitate their achievement of grade-level academic goals.
- Student goals should be designed to close any achievement gaps and weekly assessments should progress monitor the student for growth toward the goals.
- Teachers and specialized instructional support personnel who are prepared and qualified to deliver high-quality, evidence based, individualized instruction and support services.

For students with a disability to be successful in the general curriculum, they may need additional supports and services, such as:
- Diagnostic evaluations to identify skill gaps.
- Information presented in multiple ways and allowing for diverse avenues of action and expression (multisensory) to facilitate effective student engagement
- Explicit and systematic instruction with intensity and/or acceleration to increase learning and access to the general education curriculum
- Changes in materials, instruction or procedures; extended time, frequent practice and repetition, and/or flexible groups
- Devices (assisted technology) and services to ensure access to the general education curriculum and ELA Standards.

Some students with significant disabilities will require substantial modifications and accommodations to have meaningful access to certain standards in both instruction and assessment, based on their communication and academic needs. These modifications and accommodations should ensure that students receive access to multiple modalities of learning and opportunities to demonstrate knowledge but retain the rigor and high expectations of Arizona's English Language Arts Standards.

Students with disabilities who continue to struggle in accessing the general curriculum would benefit from additional supplemental interventions in addition to any specialized instruction the student is receiving as part of the IEP. As such, these interventions would not be included on the student's IEP. Supplemental intervention would not be considered a substitute for special education services. However, any supplemental intervention delivered to eligible students with disabilities must be consistent with the students' IEPs.

Implementation and Continuous Improvement at the State Level

AZ Literacy Plan: Theory of Action

Need	Subset of Needs
Despite strong success in isolated reform efforts, we have not achieved statewide literacy achievement for all students	Responding with urgency to meet the increased expectations and rigor in teaching and learning to prepare students for the 21st century global economy

Goals

To produce graduates who are **highly literate**, college and career ready and prepared to embrace the challenges of the 21st century

Objective

Build a systemic approach to literacy instruction that aligns and unifies the state's efforts to improve literacy.

Inputs

- Federal and state legislation and policy
- Federal and state funds
- Requirements for at-risk students
- State ELA Standards
- State and local assessments
- Research
- AZ RTI Framework
- First Things First
- Human Capital

Actions

- Disseminate and communicate plan
- Provide professional development
- Provide online resources
- Provide technical assistance
- Collect ongoing data
- Maintain a state literacy team
- Identify and showcase what works
- Link to additional reform efforts
- Introduce legislation
- Develop statewide partnerships and networks

Outputs

- Website
- Presentations to stakeholders
- Multiple PD opportunities
- Resources: documents, guides, manuals, toolkits, etc.
- Increased technical assistance based on data
- Regularly scheduled literacy team meetings to monitor results; adjust as needed

Outcomes

Short Term
- Strengthen educator knowledge of effective practice
- Raised awareness of communities
- Engage stakeholders in literacy reform efforts

Intermediate
- Changes in practice (district, school, classroom level)
- Increased and aligned partnerships

Long Term
- By 2015, students will demonstrate significant growth in literacy achievement
- Reform efforts proven to be effective have been sustained

Stages of Implementation

Implementation can be defined by as a specified set of activities designed to put into practice an activity or program of known components (Fixsen, Naoom, Blasé, Friedman & Wallace, 2005). In order to understand implementation (1) the activity or program must be well-specified so we know what we are trying to do; and (2) the activities are designed to provide practice to get the best results from the program. The following 6 stages of implementation were developed at the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) (Fixen et al., 2005). The stages are not linear but impact each other in complex ways that take 2-4 years to reach sustainability.

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation	Sustainability	Innovation

Exploration & Adoption	Program Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation	Innovation	Sustainability
• Identify need for change • Learn about possible solutions • Learn about what it takes to implement effectively • Develop stakeholders • Decide to proceed	• Prepare for use of the innovation • Establish the resources needed to use and implement the innovation with fidelity and good outcomes for students	• Actively engage in learning how to do and support the *doing* of the innovation • Initial use of practices by newly trained staff	• Actively work to make full use of the innovation as part of the organization's typical functioning • Skillful use of an innovation well-integrated into the repertoire of staff • Routinely support and monitor implementation	• Advances in knowledge and skill that come from evaluated changes in how teachers and others make use of a science-based intervention • Refine and expand both implementation practices and programs	• Persistent and skillful support for teachers and staff who are using an innovation effectively • Consistently achieve • Long term survival and continued effectiveness of the implementation

Integrated Action Plan (IAP)

The transition to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) provided the opportunity for the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) to transform how it supports schools and Local Education Agencies (LEAs), through creating a state plan that reflects a shared statewide vision for Arizona's students and schools. Through the state plan, the ADE proposed a framework to support schools and LEAs with the goals of:

- Reducing unnecessary burden and regulations
- Fostering a comprehensive, holistic systems-thinking approach to school and LEA strategic planning
- Providing expanded flexibility by eliminating 'siloed' planning and funding models
- Unleashing local creativity to focus on the unique local needs of students, teachers and school communities

The ADE recognizes that local control resides with LEAs through locally elected school boards, as well as charter holders for charter schools. The Comprehensive Needs Assessment and Integrated Action Plan process will be guided by each LEA's locally defined strategic plan, mission and vision.

IAPs should be developed in concert with all applicable stakeholders, with opportunities for meaningful

input and feedback from parents and community members, to ensure the plan is reflective of local context and needs.

The school-level IAP (SIAP) will provide the opportunity for a school to address areas of need as identified by a school's CNA, and satisfy the majority of the programmatic requirements of included state and federal grants received by the school in one comprehensive plan. This process will serve to streamline and replace the multiple plans currently required across grant programs to access state and federal grant resources.

The LEA-level IAP (LIAP) will be designed to support the system areas of focus as identified and informed by an LEA's analysis of school CNAs and school IAPs. This provides the opportunity for the LEA to address and satisfy the majority of the programmatic requirements including state and federal grants received at the LEA level in one plan.

Both the SIAP and LIAP include:
- Desired outcomes (SMART Goals, if required)
- Strategies
- Action Steps (use appropriate tags for required, funded and non-funded activities)
- Implementation Activities
- Monitoring of Implementation
  - Activities
  - Measures
- Success Criteria and Evidence
- Evaluation of Implementation
  - Activities
  - Measures
  - Success Criteria and Evidence
- Optional Tasks o Breakdown Action Steps into manageable tasks, as locally determined

Arizona Balanced Assessment Framework

Assessment measures and supports students' attainment of the Arizona Standards by providing data to inform improvement at all levels of the educational system. Educators and other stakeholders need multiple types of assessment to serve their decision-making needs. Educators in particular need a range of assessment methods and practices to monitor their students' progress toward grade level learning goals. This assessment framework is intended to inform and guide Arizona educators as they work to improve and enhance their continuum of assessment practices. Through this framework, educators will be able to learn how to utilize the appropriate assessment practice for each purpose as well as how to use the data obtained from each type of assessment to ultimately improve student achievement.

It is suggested that Arizona educators use the framework in the following ways:
1. To learn about different types of assessments and determine the appropriate uses for each type.
2. To analyze their current assessment practices to determine areas of strengths and areas of deficiencies. Used in conjunction with assessment inventory, districts and schools will be able to determine where gaps exist in current assessment practices and plan methods for filling the gaps.
3. To embark upon a self-reflective journey – determining whether certain assessments might be over-utilized, under-utilized, or enhanced to provide teachers with data that can be used to make decisions that positively impact the success of students.

Arizona educators should not interpret this framework as an exhaustive checklist to be accomplished. Rather, examples are intended to illustrate different types of assessments that occur at multiple points of time during teaching and learning. This framework contains six broad categories of assessments; other examples of assessments may fit within different categories contained within this framework.

The goal of an assessment is improved student learning. As a result, it is important to remember that any assessment has an associated educational purpose. For example, formative assessments are intended to guide instructional decisions, while summative assessments are intended to guide programmatic decisions. At any level, valuable assessment is strongly aligned to learning goals and content standards, allowing the educator and/or the educational system to make decisions which positively impact teaching and student learning.

As educators move through the framework, they should ask themselves the following questions:
- Do I use this type of assessment?
- Do I understand the types of information that can be gained from each type of assessment?
- How often do I use this type of assessment? Does this frequency match the suggested frequency outlined in the framework?
- Do I use each type of assessment in one or more ways suggested by the framework? Are there any methods that I can add to inform and enhance my instructional and programmatic decisions?
- Are there any types of assessments missing from my assessment practice? If so, how do I integrate these into my assessment schedule?
- Are there any types of assessments that are overrepresented in my assessment practice? If so, how do I eliminate these without losing the data provided by them?

Future Updates to the State Literacy Instruction Plan

In alignment with the recommendation from the work group that set the original ELA goals for the ESSA plan, the State Leadership Team recommends that updates to the State Literacy Instruction Plan should be undertaken every three years to see where progress has been made, where there are remaining gaps, and if adjustments in activities are necessary. Under that schedule, the next update to the State Literacy Instruction Plan would be targeted for 2027.

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