Mississippi’s Journey to Improving Literacy Outcomes

Implementing the Literacy-Based Promotion Act

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A Focus on Literacy

Step 1: Adopting K-3 Reading Policies
Improving Literacy Outcomes – Key Legislation

- The purpose of the Literacy-Based Promotion Act (LBPA) is to eliminate social promotion and to improve the reading skills of Kindergarten through 3rd grade public school students so that every student completing 3rd grade reads at or above grade level.

- The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Program authorizes the MDE to establish a common statewide Kindergarten readiness assessment to provide teachers, administrators, and parents baseline data on students at beginning of the Kindergarten year.

- The Early Learning Collaborative Act authorizes and directs the MDE to implement a prekindergarten program on a phased-in basis.

- A teacher candidate must earn a passing score on a rigorous test of scientifically research-based reading instruction and intervention and data-based decision making principles as approved by the State Board of Education.

- Dyslexia Therapy Scholarship for Students with Dyslexia Program (2012 & 2016)
  - The MS dyslexia therapy scholarship for students with dyslexia provides school choice for students in grades 1 through 12.
  - Each local school district shall adopt a policy to ensure that students will be screened with a dyslexia screener from a list approved by the State Board of Education in the Spring of kindergarten and the Fall of Grade 1.
“Within two years after Mississippi passed its Literacy-Based Promotion Act, the MDE responded to the specifications of the act with focused, purposeful actions and mechanisms that included research-based interventions to advance the teaching and learning of literacy.”

- The Southeast Comprehensive Center (SECC)
Literacy-Based Promotion Act Implementation Timeline

**Spring 2013**
*The Literacy-Based Promotion Act becomes law.*

**Summer 2013**
*Literacy coaches are deployed to the lowest performing schools based on 3rd grade data.*

**Spring 2014**
*Literacy coaches and the first cohort of educators attend LETRS training.*

**Winter 2014**
*The MDE procures a statewide pre-K-3 assessment system that includes: 1) K-Readiness Assessment, 2) universal screener, and 3) the 3rd grade assessment for promotion.*

**Spring 2015**
*The MDE establishes the offices of Early Childhood, Literacy (K-12), and Student Intervention Services (K-12).*

**Spring 2015**
*The LBPA promotion/retention requirement goes into effect for 3rd grade students.*

**Fall 2016**
*The LBPA is amended to require Individual Reading Plans for K-3 students with identified reading deficiencies and for 4th grade students promoted for good cause.*

**Ongoing supports** include: the development and distribution of parent resources; opportunities for regional professional development on best practices in literacy instruction; and, communication to stakeholders through the Strong Readers=Strong Leaders campaign.
The MDE Literacy Coaching Model

Step 2: Building Teacher Capacity – Setting the Stage for Teaching Reading
### Innovative Funding Practices ($15,000,000)

#### Mississippi Department of Education

**Literacy-Based Promotion Act**

**Projected Expenditures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Projects</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Literacy Coaching Supports:</strong> Educators-in-residence and contractual coaches providing support in target schools; coaches and literacy staff providing training across the state</td>
<td>61%</td>
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<td><strong>Professional Development:</strong> Statewide professional development for teachers and principals; literacy conferences for school coaches, interventionists, and principals</td>
<td>17%</td>
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<td><strong>Materials:</strong> Materials and resources for trainings and for coaches and teachers in literacy support schools; materials for statewide literacy conferences and communications</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<td><strong>Mississippi K-3 Assessment Support System:</strong> Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, K-3 universal screener, and 3rd Grade MAAP-ELA Retest</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>K-3 Literacy Supports Salaries:</strong> Employed personnel to provide supports to schools and districts around supporting students who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading, including but not limited to English Learners, students with dyslexia, etc.</td>
<td>3%</td>
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Educator in Residence (EIR) Model

• This model is designed to build reciprocal capacity across educational entities.

• EIRs work with MDE program offices for a specified period of time.

• EIRs remain employed by their school district or other educational entities – Institution of Higher Learning, Community / Junior College, etc.

• A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is signed by all parties (MDE, school district, EIR), if in agreement to proceed.

• The school district/other entity serves as the fiscal agent.
The Literacy Coaching Continuum

Collaborative Resource Management | Focused Classroom Visits | Study Groups | Peer Coaching

- Literacy Content Presentations
- Co-planning
- Demonstration Lessons
- Co-teaching

Focused Instructional Practices

1. School Literacy Plan
2. Alignment to MS College-and Career-Readiness Standards
3. Word Walls
4. Professional Learning Communities
5. Data Walls
6. Uninterrupted 90-minute Reading Block
7. Anchor Charts
8. Writing Connected to Text
Implementing a Statewide Professional Development Program

Step 3: Creating a Common Language for Best Practices in Reading Instruction
LETRS Modules

1. Challenges of Learning to Read
2. Speech Sounds of English – Phonetics, Phonology, and Phoneme Awareness
3. Spellography for Teachers
4. Building Vocabulary and Oral Language

LETRS Modules

5. Developing Fluency
6. Teaching Text Comprehension
7. Teaching Phonics, Word Study, and Alphabetic Principle
8. Teaching Beginning Spelling and Writing

LETRS Training has been provided to over 13,000 educators to date, including K-3 general education teachers, K-8 special education teachers, elementary principals, and Institutions of Higher Learning Reading Faculty. *LETRS Module 8, Assessment for Prevention and Early Intervention, was not included in our training.
MDE Statewide Literacy Trainings

- “Parents as Partners” LBPA Informational Meetings
- ABCs of Coaching (Curriculum Coordinators and Instructional Coaches)
- Regional Literacy Trainings for Teachers (Pre-K-3rd)
- Regional Literacy Trainings for Elementary Administrators
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support
- Rethink Literacy Trainings for Teachers (3rd-12th)
- Annual Early Childhood Conference
- Annual Literacy Coaching Symposium

MDE staff has provided regional trainings related to literacy, multi-tiered system of supports, differentiated instruction, writing, and coaching to over 25,000 educators to date, including Pre-K-12 general education and special education teachers and school- and district-level administrators through the Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA) Delivery Model.
MDE Office of Professional Development

On Demand Technical Assistance & PD
(ELA, Math, Science, & Special Education: Grades K-12)
Results: Educator & Student Outcomes
Overview

• In January 2014 the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) began providing statewide early literacy professional development to K-3 educators through online modules and face-to-face workshops and providing literacy coaches to target schools.

• This study examined changes in teacher knowledge of early literacy skills instruction, student engagement during early literacy skills instruction, and teaching competencies in Mississippi between winter 2014 and fall 2015.

• At the same time as the professional development, the department provided state literacy coaches to target schools who spend an average of 2-3 days per week in each school they served.
To measure teacher knowledge and classroom instruction, the MDE asked REL-SE to provide technical analytic assistance in the development of a teacher knowledge survey and a classroom observation tool.
Key Findings

1. Average educator knowledge increased from 48% to 59% on the Teacher Knowledge of Early Literacy Skills survey.

2. In target (literacy support) schools:
   • the average rating of quality of instruction increased from 31% to 58%;
   • the average rating of student engagement increased from 37% to 53%; and,
   • the average rating of teaching competencies increased from 30% to 44%.

Program Office Accomplishments

- Statewide, 93.2 percent of 3rd graders passed the 2018 MAAP assessment for promotion, rising from 92% in 2017, 87% in 2016, and 85% in 2015.

- Literacy Support Schools had a pass rate of 88.4% in 2018, up from 87.5% in 2017, 78% in 2016, and 73% in 2015.

- Mississippi’s average scale score on the NAEP in 4th grade reading increased significantly from 2013 to 2015 from 209 to 214 and continued to increase in 2017 to a scale score average of 215; Mississippi is now 2nd in the nation for gains in 4th grade reading on NAEP (from 2007-2017).
Florida and Mississippi are states that have embraced and faithfully implemented innovative, student-centered policies and, correspondingly, saw improvement in the 2017 NAEP results.

– Excellence in Education
Critical Factors to Successful Literacy Outcomes

- Supportive Administrators
- Professional Learning Communities
- Effective MTSS Process
- Low Teacher / Principal Turnover
- Receptiveness to Coaching Support

Strong Teacher Content Knowledge and Instructional Practices

Data-driven, Uninterrupted Whole-group & Small-group Reading Instruction
Next Steps
The LBPA was amended in 2016 to include the development of an Individual Reading Plan (IRP) for Kindergarten and 1st through 3rd grade students with a substantial reading deficiency and 4th grade students promoted for good cause.
Beginning in the **2018-2019** school year, a student must score above the **lowest two (2)** achievement levels in reading on the established state assessment for 3rd grade to be promoted to 4th grade.

![3rd Grade Assessment for Promotion](chart)

**Projected Pass Rates**

- **Spring 2017**
  - Level 2 or Higher (Current): 92%
  - Level 3 or Higher (Projection): 69.60%

- **Spring 2018**
  - Level 2 or Higher (Current): 93.20%
  - Level 3 or Higher (Projection): 73.80%
Continued Statewide Supports

- LETRS training for K-3 teachers, administrators, and IHL professors
- Statewide parent/stakeholder meetings
- Regional literacy professional development
- Literacy coaching support (select schools)
- Literacy resources for educators and parents
- Data coaching support (select schools)
- Statewide Communications Campaign (IRP, Cut Score Increase, Parent Tips)
Strategic Partners

- Regional Educational Laboratory – Southeast
- Barksdale Reading Institute
- MS Campaign for Grade-Level Reading
- Higher Education Literacy Council
Resources & Publications for Administrators

- Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care
  (Foster Care Guidance Document)
- Early Warning System
  (College and Career Readiness Data Guidance Document)
- Early Learning Collaborative Act
  Establish, Expand, Support, and Facilitate Early Childhood Education Services
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support
- English Learner Guide
- A Glimpse into Mississippi K-12 and CTE Classrooms
  (Transdisciplinary: Grades K-12)
- Early Learning Collaborative Act Pre-Kindergarten Application
  Ensuring a bright future for every child
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Resources & Publications for Parents

Parents’ Read-At-Home Plan
(Literacy-Based Promotion Act Parent Document)

Family Guides for Student Success
(Reading & Math: Grades PK-8)

Literacy-Based Promotion Act:
Parents As Partners

Parents As Partners: An Overview of the 3rd Grade Assessment and the LBPA
(Literacy-Based Promotion Act Parent Presentation K-3)
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