




# The Alabama Campaign for Grade-Level Reading

*ALL OF ALABAMA'S THIRD GRADERS WILL BE PROFICIENT READERS BY 2022.*



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**The  
Alabama  
Campaign  
for Grade-  
Level  
Reading**

Only 35 percent of Alabama's third graders are proficient, grade-level readers.

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After third grade, students shift from learning to read to reading to learn. Most students who fail to reach this milestone by age eight falter in the later grades.

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To increase academic achievement, raise the high school graduation rate, and ensure that Alabama is training a world-class workforce, Governor Ivey launched the Alabama Grade-Level Reading Campaign to the Pre through Three component of her “Strong Start, Strong Finish” initiative.

Goal: All of Alabama’s third graders will be proficient readers by 2022.

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The Alabama Grade-Level Reading Campaign will focus on five areas: enhancing school readiness, preventing chronic absenteeism, modernizing the Alabama Reading Initiative, increasing summer learning opportunities for P-3 students, and improving childhood health.

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Stronger  
Families=A  
Stronger  
Start  
(School  
Readiness)

61 percent of  
children  
growing up in  
poverty have  
no children's  
books at  
home.

By age three, children who grow up in poverty hear as many as 30 million fewer words than children who do not contend with poverty.

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Governor Ivey created the Strong Families = A Strong Start campaign to encourage family engagement in early childhood education.


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Strong Families = A Strong Start promotes the research-based home visiting programs that are proven to help parents become better "first teachers" for their children. Home visiting also reduces childhood mortality.

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Governor Ivey encourages parents to read and talk to their children to promote the development of "reading-ready minds."

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## Attendance Works for Alabama (Chronic Absenteeism)

Student chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 15 or more days of school, whether excused or unexcused, in one year.

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17 percent of Alabama's students were chronically absent during the 2015-2016 school year.

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Kindergarteners who miss 10 percent or more of school are more likely to not reach grade-level reading proficiency by third grade.

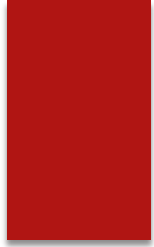
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To reduce chronic absenteeism, Governor Ivey launched the Attendance Works for Alabama initiative to create a menu of best practices for LEAs to reduce teacher and student chronic absenteeism and to encourage student engagement.

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Students who are engaged are less likely to be chronically absent, are more likely to progress academically, and are less likely to engage in violent or risky behaviors.

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Governor Ivey and the State Department of Education requested a \$5 million budget increase for ARI in FY 2019 Education Trust Fund Budget. The Legislature provided a \$4 million increase.

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The increase will be used to focus ARI around a 4-point plan:

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1) Create incentives for schools showing the greatest growth in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading;

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2) Fund regional reading coaches who will reinforce ARI at struggling schools;

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3) Implement the Alabama Summer Achievement Program

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4) Modify the reading coach funding formula so that struggling schools have the most regional reading coaches.

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## Improving the Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI)

# The Summer Learning Slide

Without access to the enriching activities available to more affluent peers, research shows that children from low-income families lose as much as three months of reading comprehension skills over the summer.

Summer learning programs can produce statistically significant gains in reading performance.

To prevent the summer slide and to ensure that children who are reading below grade level have a chance to catch-up, Governor Ivey will establish the "Alabama Summer Achievement Program" (ASAP).

The program is designed to prevent summer learning loss and to build growth towards reading proficiency. Students are provided rigorous, data-driven reading instruction.

The ASAP began as a pilot in Montgomery County Schools during the summer of 2018 serving 960 P-4 students. The pilot includes four consolidated sites at Fitzpatrick, Johnson, Highland Avenue, and Dannelly Elementary Schools.

The ASAP will be peer-reviewed and studied by PARCA and UAB. The program will be scaled if it is determined to be efficacious.

## The Health Determinants of Educational Outcomes for Early Learners

- The Alabama Campaign for Grade-Level Reading is also focused on enhancing the health and wellness of our children.
- The campaign is focused particularly on reducing the influence of poverty on learning and health outcomes for children.
- The following best practices must be made universal so that the comorbidities associated with poverty do not prevent kids from being proficient readers at the end of the third grade:
  - ✓ Prenatal Care supports early brain development
  - ✓ Social development builds curiosity and supports learning
  - ✓ Screenings help catch developmental and hearing issues before they interfere with learning
  - ✓ Regular dental care prevents lost learning time
  - ✓ Breakfast at school improves attendance and learning
  - ✓ Managing asthma helps reduce absences
  - ✓ Physical activity helps children learn
  - ✓ Summer food programs keep kids healthy when school is out



## Structure of the Alabama Campaign for Grade-Level Reading

1. The ACGLR will function as a confederation of local campaigns for grade-level reading, founded at the school district or city level.
  - ▶ The local campaigns will be supervised by 11 regional advisory councils, which were designed to mimic the geographic boundaries of the 11 regional in-service centers, and the regional advisory councils will be supervised by the Executive Team.
  - ▶ Executive Team—The ACGLR Executive Team will serve as the governing body of the statewide campaign. The ACGLR Executive Team shall be responsible for ensuring that the spirit of the ACGLR is carried out to fidelity across the state.
  - ▶ Governor Ivey is inducting the Alabama Campaign for Grade Level Reading Executive Team on June 21.

## Structure of the Alabama Campaign for Grade-Level Reading (Continued)

- Regional Advisory Councils—The regional advisory councils will set goals and policies for their region and will coordinate financial and human resources to maximize the effectiveness of local campaigns.
- Local Campaigns—will incorporate best practices developed by the ACGLR and will coordinate local financial and human resources to increase school readiness, reduce absenteeism, provide rigorous reading instruction, provide high-quality summer experiences for children, and will minimize the influence of poverty on children's health and education outcomes.