

VIRGINIA LITERACY UPDATES

NOVEMBER 2024



MESSAGE FROM DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Educators,

Two can't-miss opportunities have been recently released: the School Performance and Support Resource Hub and the 2024-2024 Literacy Grant.

On November 8, the Governor held a media briefing to unveil the [School Performance and Support Hub](#) which provides a one-stop-shop on [the Framework](#), [data toolkit](#), and robust [educator](#) and [family supports](#). Included in the Hub are four different roadmaps: [Superintendent's Roadmap to Readiness](#), [Principal's Roadmap to Readiness](#), [Teacher's Roadmap to Readiness](#), and [Parent's Roadmap to Readiness](#). Each of the Roadmaps help different stakeholders connect the data and the review of the data to determine which resources would be most effective in planning. I encourage you to begin with the principal or teacher roadmap which will lead you through unpacking your data, identifying strengths and opportunities, how to prioritize needs, and selecting [supports for improvement](#). These supports are designed for schools to use alongside data and action planning discussions as they select strategies aligned to the needs of teachers and students. In addition, these resources provide the tools for educators to aid families in reinforcing learning at home through simple activities and tips to implement with their child.

The VDOE released an application for [literacy grants](#) (more details below) to support high-need schools with family engagement, English learners, and students with disabilities. The application period closes on December 2. These grants will offer multi-year cohorts for school and division leadership teams, covering high-quality instructional materials, instructional walkthroughs and teacher feedback, technical assistance and coaching calls, and the creation and execution of a data-driven improvement plan.

Thank you for your continued literacy leadership in service of all students.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Em Cooper", enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Em Cooper

Em.Cooper@doe.virginia.gov

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INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Please share this section with division-level instructional leaders to ensure the survey is forwarded to teachers for completion and to ensure information is communicated about instructional materials.

K-5 ELA Core Instructional Materials

The Virginia Literacy Act requires divisions to use approved core instructional materials in K-5 by the 2024-2025 school year. The Virginia Board of Education (VBOE) approved the K-5 [Core Instructional Program Guide](#) in June 2023 and an updated version in December 2023.

- Divisions should be implementing professional development opportunities for educators to support HQIM implementation for 2024-2025.
- Division and school leaders should utilize the Literacy Planning Cycle of Core Instructional Materials from page 37 of the [Playbook](#) to support teachers as they plan for instruction using HQIM.

K-5 Supplemental and Intervention Materials

***NEW: Supplemental & Intervention Materials**

- The VBOE approved Cycle 3 supplemental and intervention materials at the September 26, 2024 business meeting. The guides below are updated to reflect the comprehensive list of instructional programs and pricing lists included in all review cycles.
 - [Supplemental Instructional Program Guide](#) - **UPDATED** - A supplemental program provides additional evidence-based literacy instruction and practice on a specific literacy skill (i.e., phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, writing) aligned to science-based reading research. The supplemental program is used to enhance a core instructional program during whole class or small group instruction with additional instruction or practice opportunities.
 - [Intervention Instructional Program Guide](#) - **UPDATED** - Intervention programs provide systematic, explicit evidence-based instruction aligned to science-based reading research (SBRR) to students who persistently struggle to master literacy skills including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.
 - [Supplemental and Intervention Programs - Price Information](#) - **NEW** – Pricing information for the approved supplemental and intervention programs.

6-8 Supplemental and Intervention Materials

The Virginia Literacy Act requires the VDOE to recommend literacy instructional programs – including core (K-5), supplemental (K-8), and intervention (K-8) materials – that provide evidence-based literacy instruction aligned with science-based reading research (SBRR) for approval by the VBOE. The Virginia Literacy Partnerships (VLP) at UVA opened a review cycle for grades 6-8 supplemental and intervention programs.

Reviews are being conducted by teams of educators in the Commonwealth. The review teams are led by content experts. Reviewers represent all eight geographical regions and include teachers, reading specialists, and administrators. The Recommended Supplemental and Intervention Instructional Program Guides for grades 6-8 will be presented to the Board mid-winter.

Questions can be emailed to VLP-VLA@virginia.edu.

***NEW:** Purchasing Materials

VDOE has secured pricing for all approved core, supplemental, and intervention programs. Divisions may use the pricing structures below.

- [Approved Core Instructional Programs for Grades K-5 | Virginia Department of Education](#)
- [Intervention Instructional Program Guide & Supplemental Instructional Program Guide | Virginia Department of Education](#)

Cycle 4 Curriculum Review: **Call to Providers**

***NEW:** Application window: **January 13-28, 2025**

The VDOE is seeking applications from providers of:

- K-5 core literacy programs
- K-8 supplemental literacy programs
- K-8 intervention literacy programs

The VLA requires the VDOE to recommend literacy instructional programs – including core (K-5), supplemental (K-8), and intervention (K-8) materials – that provide evidence-based literacy instruction aligned with science-based reading research (SBRR) for approval by the VBOE. In partnership with VLP, the VDOE is opening a fourth cycle. The application window will open on **January 13, 2025** and will close on **January 28, 2025 at noon EST**.

Providers who have not yet submitted programs for review in Virginia, and providers who have published updated editions of previously reviewed programs are eligible to apply.

Interested curriculum providers and/or divisions should submit applications for review by noon on Tuesday, January 28, 2025. Please [click on this link](#) for more details. Please note that submission of materials either in hard copy or via email will not be accepted.

School divisions that seek to have locally created instructional materials reviewed are invited to complete the application process using the above steps. Additionally, please email VLP-VLA@virginia.edu by January 13, 2025 stating your intent to apply.

Superintendents are asked to ensure that all literacy resources intended for use in K-8 classrooms are submitted for Cycle 4 (if they have not already been reviewed).

- Division leaders should inform any applicable providers to submit resources in Cycle 4.

English Grades 6-12 Textbook and Instructional Materials

Please share with division-level ELA leaders, secondary teachers, and educators who are involved in the selection process for instructional materials.

On [October 24, 2024](#), the Virginia Board of Education received for initial review lists of recommended [textbooks and instructional materials for 6-12 English](#) for use in public schools.

Beginning October 25, 2024, the recommended English textbooks became available for a [30-day public review](#) and comment period via the VDOE website. Public comment closes on Friday, November 22, 2024. It is anticipated that the Board of Education will take final action on the recommended lists of 6-12 English textbooks at its December 2024 meeting.

Additional information is available on the [2024 English Textbook Review Process](#) page.

- Division and school leaders should consider the need to adopt textbooks and instructional materials from the Board approved list for Grade 6-12 English as aligned to the [2024 English Standards of Learning](#).
- Divisions should follow local textbook adoption processes and policies for the adoption of Grade 6-12 English textbooks and instructional materials.

USE OF VALLSS AND STUDENT READING PLANS

Kindergarten through Grade 3

Please share with division-level ELA and assessment leaders, principal supervisors, elementary principals, and reading specialists who are responsible for the administration of VALLSS and EIRI services to ensure that all students K-3 are assessed according to the updated VALLSS assessment calendar.

***NEW:** Virginia Literacy Partnerships has created a resource sharing the [VALLSS subtest Description and Examples](#). Divisions should consider sharing this information with families and caregivers, so that they are aware of the areas of literacy development that are measured in VALLSS.

***IMPORTANT:** The VBOE approved the updated screener guidelines at the July 25, 2024 meeting, and the [2024-2025 VALLSS: Grades K-3 Assessment Calendar](#) was updated to reflect the requirements of students taking the mid-year screener. The mid-year screener is required for all K-2 students and students in grade 3 who score in the high-risk band (or who were identified by PALS and were not screened with VALLSS in Fall 2024) to progress monitor the Student Reading Plan. The mid-year screener is much shorter than the beginning-of-the-year screener, screening only the decoding subtests (and RAN in Kindergarten). Questions regarding the Early Intervention Reading Initiative (EIRI) requirements and student reading plans may be sent to [Ellen Frackelton](#), Elementary PK-5 Reading/Literacy Coordinator. Questions regarding VALLSS administration may be directed to literacy@virginia.edu.

Students should be screened according to the following guidelines:

	Fall	Mid-Year	Spring
Kindergarten and Grade 1	All Students Screened	Required	All Students Screened
Grade 2	All Students Screened	Required	Students at Moderate or High Risk are Screened
Grade 3	Students new to VA public schools & students who received summer intervention services	<p>Optional Progress Monitoring Window for Students with Moderate Risk and Low Risk</p> <p>All Students at high risk in Fall must be screened.</p>	<p>All Students take the Reading SOL Assessment.</p> <p>Screening encouraged for students who were high or moderate risk at Fall and/or Mid-Year.</p>

The following Fall 2024 requirements regarding VALLSS Screening and Student Reading Plans pertain specifically to Grade 3:

- School divisions **must** screen 3rd graders new to Virginia or if they are a student who received summer reading intervention, according to EIRI. If students score in the High-Risk band in Fall 2024, they are required to have a Student Reading Plan and to receive EIRI intervention.
- School divisions **may choose** to screen any other 3rd graders with VALLSS. If a student scores in the High-Risk band in Fall 2024, they are required to have a Student Reading Plan and to receive EIRI intervention.
- If 3rd grade students were not retested in Fall 2024 and were Identified by PALS or were High Risk on VALLSS in second grade Spring 2024, they are required to have a Student Reading Plan and to receive EIRI intervention.

In addition to providing an overall *Band of Risk*, VALLSS: Grades K-3 *Instructional Indicators* supply information at the subtest level to indicate specific skills in which students would benefit from additional explicit instruction to move them towards the Low-Risk band.

For educators to learn how to administer VALLSS, Virginia Literacy Partnerships (VLP) produced the **VALLSS: Grades K-3 Certification Tutorial** that is now available behind the [Legacy PALS website](#) login.

- Divisions should work with teachers who administer VALLSS to ensure they have access to this tutorial prior to the Fall 2024 administration window. Educators must have an assigned class or a division or school role.
- ***NEW:** Division and school personnel can view a report of teachers who have completed the training on their Reports tab located on the [Legacy PALS website](#).

Student Reading Plans

Please share with division-level ELA leaders, principal supervisors, elementary principals, and reading specialists who are responsible for the development, monitoring, and implementation of student reading plans to ensure students identified as high-risk on VALLSS are served as required by the VLA.

The VLA requires that “each local school board shall provide reading intervention services to students in kindergarten through grade eight who demonstrate substantial deficiencies based on their performance on the Standards of Learning reading assessment or a literacy screener provided or approved by the Department. Such reading intervention services shall consist of evidence-based literacy instruction, align with science-based reading research, and be documented for each student in a written student reading plan... ([§ 22.1-253.13:1G](#)).”

For the 2024-2025 school year, student reading plans are required *only* in grades K-3 due to the current pilot for the VALLSS 4-8 and to the ongoing 6-8 supplemental and intervention materials review.

VLP, in collaboration with VDOE, has developed:

- [Student Reading Plan Template](#)
- [Division Student Reading Plan Guidance](#)
- [Family Invitation to Participate Letter](#)
- [Family Invitation to Participate Letter – Spanish](#)
- [Student Reading Plan Family Explanation Letter](#)
- [Student Reading Plan Family Explanation Letter - Spanish](#)

The VBOE approved the Student Reading Plan Template at the April 25, 2024 meeting. Divisions may complete [Student Reading Plans](#) in other formats/platforms as long as these meet the minimum requirements to satisfy the VLA.

Student Reading Plans must include the following sections:

- Student Information
- Area(s) of Identified Need
- Targeted Reading Goal(s)
 - Goal Statement(s)
 - Objectives
- Progress Monitoring Plan
- Target Intervention Details
- Narrative for Student Progress and Next Steps
- Additional Considerations for Reading Intervention Services
- Family Resources

***NEW: Student Reading Plan Samples, Practitioner Guidance, and Frequently Asked Questions**

VLP, in collaboration with VDOE, has developed *sample* Student Reading Plans. The sample Student Reading Plans show a variety of ways divisions could write goals and objectives for students based on the student’s VALLSS data. Student goals should be ambitious and achievable outcomes for student growth based on the individual. The information in the Student Reading Plans will be dependent on the

school and division’s resources and should reflect the division’s selected Core, Supplemental, and Intervention materials. Student Reading Plans can be updated at any time based on new student data, teacher and family input, and student progress monitoring.

- [Maggie Sample Kindergarten](#)
- [Laura Sample Grade Two](#)
- [Joseph Sample Grade Three](#)
- [Practitioner Guidance Document for Student Reading Plans](#)
- [Student Reading Plan Frequently Asked Questions](#)

VALLSS provides Bands of Risk (High, Moderate, and Low) for students on the Fall, Mid-Year, and Spring assessments. In Fall 2024, **all students in the High-Risk band on VALLSS: Grades K-3 will be required to have a Student Reading Plan for the entire 2024-2025** academic year. Grade 3 students who were identified on PALS and are not assessed with VALLSS in Fall 2024 are required to have a Student Reading Plan for the entire 2024-2025 academic year.

High Risk	Moderate Risk	Low Risk
Students are the most likely to have ongoing reading difficulties.	Requires additional explicit instruction in skills with instructional indicators for designated students.	Students are at the lowest risk for reading difficulties.
Students qualify for Early Reading Intervention Services (EIRI).	Supplemental instruction is highly recommended based on student need.	Cumulative review of student progress is needed.
Students must have a student reading plan in place.		

Students who scored in the High-Risk band in Fall 2024 and score in Moderate-Risk or Low-Risk bands at mid-year will continue to work from their Student Reading Plan for the remainder of the academic year. If students no longer have a designation in the High-Risk band at mid-year, they no longer require EIRI services. Schools may decide to continue providing services for students if they feel it is appropriate for the student’s progress. It is the division’s and school’s responsibility to closely monitor students who exit EIRI mid-year to ensure their continued progress. If students newly score into the High-Risk band at mid-year, they will receive a Student Reading Plan and EIRI intervention for the remainder of the academic year.

Supporting Students using Early Intervention Reading Initiative (EIRI)

The VLA and EIRI require an additional 2.5 hours of literacy instruction for students that are designated in the high-risk band on VALLSS. Intervention “(iv) may include the following services for the student: instruction from a reading specialist, trained aide, computer-based reading tutorial program, or classroom teacher with support from an aide, extended instructional time in the school day or school year, or, for students in grades six through eight, a literacy course, in addition to the course required by the Standards of Learning in English, that provides the specific evidence-based literacy instruction identified in the student's reading plan. In accordance with § 22.1-215.2, the parent of each student shall receive notice before services begin and a copy of the student reading plan.”

How schools meet the additional instruction for students designated in the high-risk band is a local division decision and will depend on the master schedule, resources available, and individual student’s

needs. School divisions have flexibility and can use a combination of any of the above options to ensure that students receive 2.5 hours of additional literacy instruction a week.

Below are some examples of how a school division may choose to meet the EIRI requirements using an intervention, including uses of computer-based tutoring programs as available on the list of [Virginia-approved Intervention Programs](#).

- A first-grade student receives additional small group instruction during an intervention block in the school's master schedule from a reading specialist for 30 minutes, five days a week.
- A second-grade student meets with a part-time reading interventionist for 30 minutes in small group five days a week.
- A third-grade student works on an approved computer-based reading tutoring program for an additional 30 minutes a day, five days a week.
- A kindergarten student receives additional small group instruction during an intervention block in the school's master schedule from the classroom teacher three days a week for 20 minutes, works with a trained classroom interventionist two days a week for 20 minutes, and uses a computer-based reading tutoring program for 50 minutes during the week. The classroom teacher works with the school's reading specialist to ensure instruction aligns with the goals in the SRP.
- A second-grade student, who has a phonics goal in their IEP and SRP, meets with a special education teacher outside of core ELA instruction for 30 minutes two times a week where the focus of instruction is on the phonics goal, and the student meets with a classroom interventionist for 30 minutes three times a week focusing on the phonics goal. The student may meet with the special education teacher other times during the school week, where the focus of instruction is NOT related to the SRP goals. That instruction would not count toward the EIRI requirements.

All students, including students with an IEP or 504 Plan and students who qualify for English language services, who take VALLSS: Grades K-3 and score in the High-Risk band will be required to have a Student Reading Plan and qualify for EIRI services. EIRI requires 2.5 hours of additional reading support weekly. Divisions should consult with families, teachers, administrators, special educators, English language teachers, and reading specialists to determine student learning needs and ways to address them. VDOE and VLP have worked collaboratively to create guidance documents for students who have an IEP/504 Plan and students who qualify for English language support services.

- [EIRI IEP Guidance](#)
- [EIRI ELD Guidance](#)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Please share with division-level ELA leaders, principal supervisors, and principals to ensure that all teachers are trained according to the requirements of the VLA. This information includes Board-approved training options, an updated timeline for completion, and supports for division implementation.

Science-based Literacy Training Options

Superintendent’s Memo 003-24

[Virginia Literacy Act: Science-Based Literacy Instruction Training](#)

Professional Educator Training Requirements

The chart below outlines the professional learning requirements for Virginia educators according to the VLA. Details in the chart include information around the release date for each course, the number of modules in each course, and the anticipated length of time it will take to complete each course. Divisions should prioritize educators enrolled in the courses according to the chart. Administrators should not enroll in these courses, as they attended the in-person trainings offered through VLP.

Educator Group	VLA Requirements	Anticipated Canvas Modules Release	Number of Canvas Modules	Approximate Completion Time
K-5 Reading Specialists	Required to attend Reading Institutes (Summer/Fall 2023 or Fall 2024) and complete Canvas modules*	September 2024	9	3-4 hours per module
K-5 Teachers with no LETRS or Orton-Gillingham courses that meet the specified criteria (Classroom, Special Educators, EL Teachers)	Required to complete K-5 Teachers Canvas Course	July 2024	9	2-3 hours per module
K-5 Teachers who have completed LETRS Volumes 1 & 2 OR Orton-Gillingham courses that meet the specified criteria (Classroom, Special Educators, EL Teachers)	Required to complete K-5 Teachers Capstone Canvas Course	July 2024	3	1-1.5 hours per module
K-5 Teachers who have completed ONLY LETRS Volume 1 (Classroom, Special Educators, EL Teachers)	Required to complete K-5 Teachers Language & Comprehension Canvas Course	July 2024	7	2-3 hours per module
K-8 Principals	Required to attend Reading Institutes (Summer/Fall 2024)	N/A	<i>No Canvas modules are planned for K-8 principals at this time.</i>	N/A
6-8 Reading Specialists	Required to attend Reading Institutes (Fall 2024) and complete 6-8 Reading Specialists Canvas Course	September 2024	9	3-4 hours per module
6-8 ELA Teachers with no LETRS or Orton-Gillingham courses that meet the specified criteria (ELA	Required to complete 6-8 ELA Teachers Canvas Course	September 2024	9	2-3 hours per module

Educator Group	VLA Requirements	Anticipated Canvas Modules Release	Number of Canvas Modules	Approximate Completion Time
Classroom, Special Educators, EL Teachers)				
6-8 ELA Teachers who have completed LETRS Volumes 1 & 2 OR Orton-Gillingham courses that meet the specified criteria (ELA Classroom, Special Educators, EL Teachers)	Required to complete 6-8 Teachers Capstone Canvas Course	September 2024	3	1-1.5 hours per module
6-8 ELA Teachers who have completed ONLY LETRS Volume 1 (ELA Classroom, Special Educators, EL Teachers)	Required to complete 6-8 Teachers Language & Comprehension Canvas Course	September 2024	6	2-3 hours per module
6-8 Content Area Teachers (Content Classroom, Special Educators)	Required to complete 6-8 Content Teachers Canvas Course	September 2024	3	1-2 hours per module
K-8 Specialty and Resource Teachers (e.g., art, music, PE, CTE, resource)	Optional non-Canvas module and will be available on the public UVA website	Coming Late Fall	N/A	1-2 hours

Other Educator Groups	Professional Development
9-12 Reading Specialists	All reading specialists should be trained, 9-12 Reading Specialists may opt to enroll in the 6-8 Reading Specialists Canvas Course.
9-12 SPED & EL Teachers*	VLP has not developed content specifically for 9-12 SPED and EL teachers, but divisions can opt to enroll them in the 6-8 ELA course.
Blind and Hearing-Impaired	Blind and hearing-impaired teachers should enroll in whichever course is best aligned with their role: K-5 Teachers (depending on their level of OG or LETRS training) or 6-8 ELA (depending on their level of OG or LETRS training).
ELA coordinators	VLP offered ELA coordinators training in the 2023-2024 school year.
Other educators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9-12 ELA & Content Area Teachers • Central Office Administration • Instructional Specialists • ITRTs • K-12 Resource Teachers • Long-term Substitutes • Pre-School Teachers • Speech & Language Pathologists 	<p>Current licensing limits the number of participants who can take the courses, as prioritized by the law. Other educator groups may participate in the optional non-Canvas module that will be released on the VLP public website in September.</p> <p>If divisions would like to recommend these educator groups receive further information on VLA/EBLI/SBRR, VLP recommends that they take the VALUE Series professional learning module which can be found on the Educator Resource Center on the VLP public website.</p>

***NEW:** Resources to Support Division and School Administrators

Please share with division-level ELA leaders, principal supervisors, and principals to support teachers who are completing Canvas courses to support required VLA training in 2024-2025.

In response to the field, VLP has produced resources for division- and school-level literacy leadership to support educators as they work through Canvas modules. Infographics with information on the anticipated timeline for completion, audience, and focus of the Canvas modules have been created for each course and can be found on the [VLP Website for Reading Specialists and Administrators](#). The course overviews include the module title, module topics, and guiding discussion questions for each module within the respective Canvas courses. Use of these materials is **optional**. These materials can support meaningful discussions around learning objectives and provide support for grade-level or school-based trainings. These are available for K-5 courses and 6-8 courses.

Teacher Professional Development: Canvas Enrollment

Please share with division-level ELA leaders, principal supervisors, and principals to ensure accurate enrollment in the Canvas courses monthly.

As part of the VLA, K-8 educators are required to receive training in evidence-based literacy instruction aligned to science-based reading research. In 2023, the VLA was expanded from the original requirements of training for elementary school teachers, elementary school principals, reading specialists, and special education teachers to include training for ESL teachers, middle school teachers, and middle school principals. The University of Virginia was contracted to design, develop, and facilitate a statewide knowledge-based professional development training at no cost to Virginia educators. As part of this training, Canvas courses designed for different audiences have been offered since July 2024. The courses are self-paced, and all modules within each course will open simultaneously.

In response to feedback from the field, [this spreadsheet](#) has been created for division leaders to identify the teachers and reading specialists who need to enroll in VLP Canvas Courses. In the spreadsheet, divisions are only required to complete columns A-D which contains the information necessary for VLP to register teachers for Canvas. This spreadsheet should be submitted to the University of Virginia via SWSS Dropbox.

***NEW: Note:** To ensure a smooth and efficient process, it is requested that divisions submit a single file containing **only new accounts** using the provided template **during the first seven days of each month**. Please adhere to the naming conventions to ensure your file is easily identifiable. Adhering to these guidelines will help VLP maintain accuracy and efficiency in processing submissions for the Canvas courses.

File naming convention: **Full Division Name - MMDDYY**

*Please include underscore with Division Name (see example) and the date of submission.

Example: Albemarle County's file name would be Albermarle_County - 070124

Please refer to the [August Virginia Literacy Act Update Vol. 2](#) for complete information on how to register for the Canvas courses.

When submitting the spreadsheet, please select the following name under the University of Virginia in the SSWS Dropbox application: **Kimberly Bavis** – Senior Instructional Technology Specialist. If you encounter challenges with the spreadsheet beyond technical issues, contact UVA at literacy@virginia.edu.

For administrators, division-level leadership, and other educators not required to take Canvas courses, VLP has developed open-access training materials which can be found on their website:

<https://literacy.virginia.edu>. Resources found here address K-3 learners, 4-8 learners, administrators, coaching support, and many other topics. Helpful resources can be found using the links below:

- [VLP Homepage](#)
- [K-3 VALUE series](#)
- [4-8 VALUE series](#)

***NEW:** VLP Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction Canvas Course Reports

VLP has developed a reporting method to allow each division to see which teachers are enrolled in the canvas courses, as well as their progression through the modules within the course. Each quarter, your SWSS division contact (the person who submits the files to VLP) will receive a file in SWSS from Beth Williams or Kimberly Bavis with your division's course reports. **The next course report will be provided in February 2025.**

If other division or school leaders require this information, please disseminate it to them.

Within the report, there is helpful information on the first tab of the spreadsheet "Helpful Information," followed by a tab for each of the nine courses. Your teachers will be listed on the tab of the course they are enrolled in as of the date of the report.

Reading Specialist Provisional Microcredential

Please share with division-level ELA leaders, human resource directors, principal supervisors, and principals who need to enroll educators in a reading specialist position in the microcredential course to meet the requirements of VLA.

School divisions may employ **certified reading specialists or educators with the provisional microcredential**. Staffing standards go into effect at the start of the 2024-2025 school year. To meet these standards, a school board may employ educators as reading specialists who are currently in the process of completing the role requirements.

Standards of Quality Section [§ 22.1-253.13:2.G](#): In addition to the full-time equivalent positions required elsewhere in this section, each local school board shall employ one reading specialist for each 550 students in kindergarten through grade five and one reading specialist for each 1,100 students in grades six through eight.

Please refer to the [August Virginia Literacy Act Update Vol. 2](#) for more information on staffing flexibility for 2024-2025.

Over 800 educators are currently enrolled in the Microcredential course. VDOE will be sending human resource directors and literacy leads a list of currently enrolled division staff. Divisions are asked to review the list carefully and provide supports to teachers who are enrolled in courses. Course completers will qualify for a five-year provisional reading specialist license that can help divisions fill gaps until full licensure can be obtained by individuals.

Teachers interested in enrolling in the Reading Specialist Microcredential Course must [complete the pre-registration form](#).

- Divisions should work with educators interested in becoming a reading specialist to sign-up for the reading microcredential and to enroll in a reading specialist degree program.
- Division literacy leads, in partnership with human resource team members, should work to monitor and support educators who are completing the self-paced Reading Specialist Microcredential modules.
- Division human resources directors should work with successful microcredential completers to apply for the add-on endorsement through VDOE.

***NEW:** Webinars to support Gifted and English Learner Instruction

The VDOE in partnership with VLP hosted webinars focusing on VLA implementation with English learners and gifted learners. The webinar recordings and slides are available on the Virginia Literacy Act [webpage](#) of the VDOE.

- [The Virginia Literacy Act and English Learners](#)
- [The Virginia Literacy Act and Gifted Learners](#)

PLANNING

2024-2025 Literacy Grant Available to Divisions

Please share with division-level ELA leaders, grant writers, and principals to review the grant requirements and apply for funding to support literacy efforts in schools.

The VDOE has released a [literacy grant](#) opportunity that will provide additional support and funding to ensure schools have the structures, tools, capacity, and resources to increase literacy growth and achievement for all students.

With declines in reading most notable in students with disabilities and English learners, coupled with rapidly changing enrollment, divisions have requested professional learning and technical assistance for schools to support educators of these student groups. In response to division feedback, VDOE is prioritizing three opportunities for this school year: the English Learner Literacy Network, the Students with Disabilities Literacy Network, and family engagement resources.

A division may submit one application on behalf of their schools. For this grant cycle, all [applications](#) are to be submitted **no later than Monday, December 2, 2024**. Divisions with high needs will be prioritized for this grant award.

Literacy Office Hours

Please share with division-level ELA leaders to ensure they are connected to the communication and support offered this year for literacy.

***REMINDER:** As released on June 27, 2024, in [Superintendent's Memo 003-24](#), beginning July 10, Literacy Office Hours have been held for division instructional leaders to ask questions about the VLA implementation and give feedback on implementation. Office hours are jointly hosted by VDOE and VLP staff. Literacy Office Hours are offered bi-weekly on Wednesdays from 9:30-10:30 am.

Zoom links have been sent to division instructional leaders who have been designated as such in SSWS to register for the Office Hours. Once registered, you may attend any of the sessions without re-registering. Division literacy leaders can reach out to vla@doe.virginia.gov for more information on registration. New division literacy leaders need to contact the school division Educational Registry Application (ERA) manager for the Single Sign-on for Web Systems (SSWS) platform to update the literacy contact information.

Planning for VLA Implementation Using the Playbook

Please share with division-level ELA leaders and building level leaders to ensure they are incorporating best practices into their instructional structures for 2024-2025.

Please refer to the [VLA Implementation Playbook](#) for helpful tips and guidance for initial HQIM rollout. Now that school divisions have selected their core HQIM materials, here are several next steps for consideration:

- Divisions should review their master schedules to ensure that it is structured to support student and staff/reading specialist availability for core instruction and intervention opportunities as necessary.
- Divisions should consider a calendar/schedule for regular monitoring and support provided to schools implementing the VLA using the Literacy Planning Cycle from the Virginia Literacy Act Playbook.
- Divisions should review the Recommended HQIM Development Structures & Practices table in Chapter Seven of the [VLA Implementation Playbook](#).
- Divisions should put into place regular lesson preparation cycles to support teachers as HQIM is being implemented according to the needs of the school division.

LITERACY PLANNING CYCLE

Lesson Planning Meeting

Teachers and specialists (including, reading specialists, special education teachers, reading interventionists, and others) plan for daily lesson delivery of approved high-quality instructional materials (HQIM)

Lesson Feedback

School leadership and specialists attend lesson feedback sessions to support teachers, discussing what worked well and what is needed for better implementation of HQIM in future lessons



Lesson Delivery

Teachers deliver lessons grounded in HQIM; School leaders and specialists walk through lesson delivery regularly

Lesson Walk Throughs

School leadership, reading specialists, and other literacy team members conduct non-evaluative lesson walk throughs to support teachers on lesson delivery of HQIM grounded lessons followed by lesson feedback sessions

Planning for Successful HQIM Implementation

- Establish a regular process for school leadership and specialists to ensure each teacher is supported in the planning and delivery of lessons grounded in HQIM.
- School leaders may not walk through each classroom daily; however a plan should allow for frequent walk throughs to support teachers.
- Superintendents, chief academic officers, and other division leaders (i.e. special education, literacy supervisors) should support implementation of HQIM lessons through the lesson planning and walk through cycle.
- Division literacy leaders can model ELA lessons as a support for teachers.

Division Literacy Plan

Please ensure that division reading specialists and dyslexia specialist contact information is posted on your division website.

Per the Virginia Literacy Act, each local school board shall post, maintain, and update as necessary on each school board's website a copy of its division-wide literacy plan and the job description and contact information for any reading specialist employed by such school division pursuant to subsection G of [§ 22.1-253.13:2](#) and for any dyslexia specialist employed by such school division. The Department shall post each division-wide literacy plan on its website. VDOE has posted the links to division literacy plans on the [Division Literacy Plan](#) webpage.

- Divisions should maintain an accurate website link which contains the DLP and job descriptions and contact information for reading specialists and dyslexia specialists employed by the division.
- Divisions should share the DLP with stakeholders, including teachers who are implementing the plan, parents, and the community.

Timeline for Completion of the DLP

- SY 2024-2025: Baseline Data Collection
 - Divisions submitted first DLP – July 1, 2024
 - Approval of DLPs from VDOE - August 1, 2024
 - Divisions submit updates to the DLP – December 6, 2024

- The December resubmission is not required if there are no changes. If a division is not planning to resubmit, please send an email to vla@doe.virginia.gov indicating this.
 - If a division did not identify selected supplemental and intervention materials during the July 2024 submission window, then the DLP should be resubmitted to indicate the division’s selections. Additionally, any recommendations provided by the VDOE may be included in the updated DLP. Divisions can also review the posted VDOE [webinar](#) for additional considerations.
- SY 2025-2026: Year 1 of the Biennial DLPs
 - SY 2026-2027: Year 2 of the Biennial DLPs

IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING CHART: Use this chart as a quick reference guide for implementation dates of the components and grade levels of the Virginia Literacy Act.

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Student Reading Plans	2024 - 2025	2024-2025	2024 - 2025	2024-2025	2025-2026	2025-2026	2025-2026	2025-2026	2025-2026
VALLSS	2024-2025	2024-2025	2024-2025	2024-2025 (required for specified students*)	2025-2026 (required for specified students*)	2025-2026 (required for specified students*)	2025-2026 (required for specified students*)	2025-2026 (required for specified students*)	2025-2026 (required for specified students*)
VALLSS Español	2025-2026	2025-2026	2025-2026	2025-2026					
Completion of training on evidence-based literacy instruction aligned to science-based reading research	2024-2025	2024-2025	2024-2025	2024-2025	2024-2025	2024-2025	2024-2025	2024-2025	2024-2025
Instruction using the 2024 English Standards of Learning (Per VLA)	2024-2025	2024-2025	2024-2025	2024-2025	2024-2025	2024-2025	2024-2025	2024-2025	2024-2025
Division Literacy Plan	2024-2025	2024-2025	2024-2025	2024-2025	2024-2025	2024-2025	2025-2026	2025-2026	2025-2026

*VALLSS is required for all K-2 students. For third grade students, VALLSS is required in Fall 2024 for any student new to Virginia or for any student who received summer remediation or intervention. During 2024-2025, VALLSS 4-8 will be piloted in selected divisions. Data from this pilot will determine screener requirement usage.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM THE FIELD

For a list of additional FAQs, please see [this document](#).