

VIRGINIA LITERACY UPDATES

AUGUST 2024



MESSAGE FROM DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Educators,

It has been a pleasure seeing your teams attending the professional learning opportunities this summer. Your educators have been such models of having a growth mindset as they dig deeply into the shifts in literacy.

As you plan for teachers starting back at school,

- consider grounding your team in *why* we are making these comprehensive instructional changes, so there are clear connections to *what* we are doing and *how* we are doing it.
- review the [Virginia Literacy Act Implementation Playbook](#) as you plan for implementation of teacher collaboration time where meaningful lesson preparation focuses on unpacking units and lessons, addressing the needs of diverse learners, and using student data to drive instructional decisions.

This month's update includes the critical areas below for superintendents to share with key division leaders and school principals.

1. [Instructional Materials](#)
2. [Use of VALLSS and Student Reading Plans](#)
3. [Professional Development](#)
4. [Planning](#)
5. [Frequently Asked Questions from the Field](#)

I am so proud of the work your teams have been doing and look forward to celebrating your success. My team stands ready to support you and your schools.

Em Cooper

Em.Cooper@doe.virginia.gov

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

K-5 ELA Core Instructional Materials

Please share this section with division-level ELA leaders and building level leaders to ensure planning for professional learning experiences and implementation of the K-5 ELA Core Instructional Materials is on track prior to the beginning of school.

Pursuant to the VLA, “Each division-wide literacy plan shall follow such template and address how the local school board will align (a) literacy professional development; (b) core reading and literacy curriculum for students in kindergarten through grade five; and (c) screening, supplemental instruction, and interventions for students in kindergarten through grade eight with evidence-based literacy instruction practices aligned with science-based reading research and how the school board will support parents to support the literacy development of their children. When developing such division-wide literacy plan, each local school board shall use programs from the lists developed by the Department pursuant to subsection C of § 22.1-253.13:5 and subdivision H 2 of § 22.1-253.13:1 or seek approval from the Department for the use of alternative programs that consist of evidence-based literacy instruction and align with science-based reading research.”

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 exploring professional development opportunities for educators to delve into their HQIM to support successful implementation.
- Division and school leaders should consider schedules for 2024-2025 to support the Literacy Planning Cycle of Core Instructional Materials from page 37 of the [Playbook](#).

K-5 Supplemental and Intervention Materials

Please share this section with division-level ELA leaders and building level leaders to ensure access to the approved supplemental and intervention materials lists as divisions consider selections for adoption for this school year.

Supplemental programs provide additional evidence-based literacy instruction and/or practice on a specific literacy skill (i.e., phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, writing) aligned to science-based reading research.

Teachers can use supplemental programs:

- To provide extra support and practice for students which supplements the core instructional program.
- To use as additional support to meet student needs.
- To make deeper connections to the core instructional program or to give students additional opportunities to practice specific literacy skills with different text materials.

The Virginia Board of Education approved the [Supplemental Instructional Program Guide K-5](#) at the April 25, 2024 meeting.

Intervention programs provide systematic, explicit, evidence-based literacy instruction (EBLI) aligned to science-based reading research (SBRR).

Teachers may use intervention programs:

- To remediate gaps for students who persistently struggle to master literacy skills as demonstrated by student data, including VALLSS assessment and progress monitoring data as identified in student reading plans
- To facilitate EIRI services (for students in K-3) in the areas of phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

The Virginia Board of Education approved the [Intervention Instructional Program Guide K-5](#) at the April 25, 2024 meeting.

A [K-5 Supplemental and Intervention webpage](#) has been created for divisions to access the guides, approved programs, and rubrics.

- Divisions should follow local policies and procedures to determine which Supplemental and Intervention programs will be selected.
- Final division selections must be submitted in revised Division Literacy Plans **by December 6, 2024**.
- [Procurement and Pricing for Virginia Literacy Act K-5 Intervention and Supplemental Programs Approved by the Board of Education, April 2024](#)

6-8 Supplemental and Intervention Materials

Please share with division-level ELA leaders who will be lead the review of 6-8 Supplemental and Intervention materials once the Virginia Board of Education approves them.

VDOE has contracted with the University of Virginia to review literacy intervention and supplemental programs for grades K-8. In grades 6-8, supplemental and intervention programs will be reviewed using an updated rubric that captures what quality instruction should look like in these grades.

- Upon final Board approval of grades 6-8 Supplemental and Intervention Programs, divisions will follow local policies and procedures to determine which programs will be used.
- Divisions will include grades 6-8 Supplemental and Intervention Programs in the updated Division Literacy Plans (DLPs) beginning with the biennial plan submitted to VDOE in the 2025-2026 school year.

Virginia Curriculum Review Process

Cycle 3, Grades K-5 Supplemental and Intervention Programs

- Recommended additional K-5 Supplemental and Intervention Guides presentation: July 2024 VBOE meeting
- Anticipated vote to approve additional K-5 Supplemental and Intervention Guides: September 2024 VBOE meeting

Cycle 3, Grades 6-8 Supplemental and Intervention Programs

- August 16, 2024: Scoring Rubrics will be published to the VLA website
- August 28 – September 13: Provider window to submit applications for program review
- December 2024: Anticipated First Review by the Board of Education
- Early 2025: Anticipated Final Review by the Board of Education

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* The Virginia Board of Education approved the updated screener guidelines at the July 25, 2024 meeting and the [2024-2025 VALLSS: Grades K-3 Assessment Calendar](#) has been 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 are required to complete the mid-year screener to progress monitor the Student Reading Plan. The mid-year screener is much shorter than the beginning-of-the-year screener, only screening the decoding subtests. Questions regarding VALLSS administration, student reading plans, or the Early Intervention Reading Initiative (EIRI) requirements may be sent to [Ellen Frackleton](#), Elementary PK-5 Reading/Literacy Coordinator.

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 | Optional Progress Monitoring Window for Students with Moderate Risk and Low Risk All Students scoring high risk must be screened. | All Students take the Reading SOL Assessment. Screening encouraged for students who were high or moderate risk at Fall and/or Mid-Year. |

- The mid-year screener is required for K-2 students and Grade 3 students who scored at high risk.
- RAN is required for Grades 1-3 in Fall. For Kindergarten, RAN is required at Mid-Year.
- Mid-Year is a shorter assessment including only code-based subtests (K-3) and RAN in Kindergarten.

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 third 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.

In order 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.

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](#)).

VDOE has contracted with the University of Virginia to develop:

- [Student Reading Plan Template](#)
- [Practitioner Student Reading Plan Guidance](#)
- [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 Virginia Board of Education approved the Student Reading Plan Template at the April 25, 2024, meeting.

VALLSS will provide 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.

| High Risk | Moderate Risk | Low Risk |
|--|---|---|
| Students are the most likely to have ongoing reading difficulties. | Requires additional explicit instruction for identified students. | Students are at the lowest risk for reading difficulties. |

| High Risk | Moderate Risk | Low Risk |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Students qualify for Early Reading Intervention Services (EIRI).</p> <p>Students must have a student reading plan in place.</p> | <p>Supplemental instruction is highly recommended based on student need.</p> | <p>Cumulative review of student progress is needed.</p> |

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 and receive EIRI intervention for the remainder of the academic year. At mid-year, students newly scoring into the High-Risk band will receive a Student Reading Plan and EIRI intervention for the remainder of the academic year.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

NEW* Science-based Literacy Training Options

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.

Superintendent’s Memo 003-24

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

In 2022, the General Assembly passed the [Virginia Literacy Act](#) (VLA) to improve literacy outcomes for students in the Commonwealth. As part of the VLA, K-8 educators are required to receive training in evidence-based literacy instruction aligned to science-based reading research. As announced in the June Literacy Update, the Board of Education updated the options that K-8 educators have for completing the required VLA training by the end of the 2024-2025 school year:

- UVA-developed Canvas Courses
- LETRS Volume 1 and UVA Canvas Course
- LETRS Volumes 1 and 2 (2019 version) and UVA Capstone Course
- Orton-Gillingham courses that meet the below criteria and UVA Capstone Course:
 - 25 hours of training
 - Includes content on encoding/decoding, phonemic awareness for K-3, fluency, dyslexia, comprehension, complex text, and data literacy

To assist divisions in implementing the Board update, the following supports are now offered:

- Educators now have until the beginning of the 2025-2026 school year to complete the training. Additional extensions can be applied for on a case-by-case basis.
- An additional Canvas course has been created for those educators who completed only LETRS Volume 1. The K-5 module will be available in July. The 6-8 module will be offered in Fall.
- Beginning July 10, Literacy Office Hours will be held for division instructional leaders to ask questions about the VLA implementation and give feedback on implementation. Literacy

Office Hours will be weekly on Wednesdays from 9:30-10:00 a.m. through August 28 and move to bi-weekly on September 11 from 9:30-10:00 a.m. Details are outlined further below.

Professional Educator Training Requirements

The chart on the following page 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. At this time, divisions are asked to prioritize educators enrolled in the courses according to the chart. Administrators should not enroll in these courses, as they should attend 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 | Required to complete 6-8 ELA Teachers Canvas Course | September 2024 | 9 | 2-3 hours per module |
| 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 | TBD | TBD |
| 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 | September 2024 | N/A | 1-2 hours |

*K-3 Reading Specialists who attended Reading Institute in 2023 should be finishing Canvas courses by summer 2024. Reading Specialists for grades 4-8 and new K-3 Reading Specialists will be trained at Reading Institutes in fall 2024 and enrolled in Canvas courses specific to the age they serve (K-5 or 6-8).

| Other Educator Groups | Professional Development |
|---|---|
| 9-12 Reading Specialists | All reading specialists should be trained, 9-12 Reading Specialists should 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 districts 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> |

Teacher Professional Development: Canvas Enrollment

Please share with division-level ELA leaders, principal supervisors, and principals to ensure accurate enrollment in the Canvas courses to support required VLA training by August 7.

Updated* 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. VDOE contracted with the University of Virginia to design, develop, and facilitate a statewide knowledge-based professional development training at no cost for Virginia educators. As part of this training, Canvas courses designed for different audiences are being offered beginning July 2024. The courses are self-paced and recommended to be taken one per month. All Canvas modules for an educator group will be released at the same time. See the chart below for the Canvas Course offerings for each group of educators, the anticipated release date, the number of modules, and approximate completion time.

There are several training options for individuals not covered in the VLA: (1) free (non-Canvas) public course to be released in September at <https://literacy.virginia.edu>; (2) [K-3 VALUE series](#); (3) [4-8 VALUE series](#).

In response to feedback from the field, [this NEW spreadsheet](#) has been created for division leaders to identify the teachers and reading specialists who need to enroll in VLP Canvas Courses. In the new spreadsheet, divisions are only required to complete columns A-D which contains the information necessary for VLP to register teachers for Canvas. This spreadsheet will be submitted to the University of Virginia via SWSS Dropbox. Once processed, participants will receive instructions for account set-up and course self-enrollment. If this template is sent to others at the school or division level to complete, the ELA supervisor (or designee) should compile all the information on one Excel file and submit by August 7. Divisions may submit spreadsheets prior to August 7. After this initial submission, school divisions may submit additional individuals on new spreadsheets during the first week (1st – 7th) of each month as new employees are hired. Questions should be directed to literacy@virginia.edu.

Please select the following name under the University of Virginia in the SSWS Dropbox application:
Kimberly Bavis – Senior Instructional Technology Specialist.

Participants will receive an account creation notice email from notifications@instructure.com with directions on how to set up their password. Not completing this step will result in a delay in accessing their account and course. Next, an email from literacy@virginia.edu will follow the account creation which will allow teachers to complete a self-selection survey for enrollment in the appropriate science-based literacy Canvas course. Participants may begin the course immediately or an announcement will be emailed to them when the course officially opens according to the [chart above](#). Please ensure this information is shared with teachers who are required to complete the training. More specific directions about how to complete the template are on the first tab of the spreadsheet.

- Divisions should identify educators who need Canvas courses and submit names through the spreadsheet provided above.
- Divisions will outline a training plan in section three of the DLP and are responsible for monitoring completion of the training requirements by the end of the 2024-2025 school year.

As part of our ongoing efforts to support school divisions with the Virginia Literacy Act, below is additional support and instructions for the process of adding educator data to the enrollment spreadsheet for UVA. Division ELA supervisors (or designees) should share this information with data teams, principals, and teachers who are enrolling in VLA required science-based literacy training Canvas courses.

1. **Connect Literacy and Data Teams:**

- The ELA supervisor or designee should collaborate closely with the school division’s technology or data team who are familiar with reporting teacher and staff data to complete Columns A-D of in [the designated spreadsheet](#).
- When extracting data for the enrollment spreadsheet include only active teachers as indicated in the Professional Development Section: “Science-based Literacy Training Options” of the July Literacy Update. See the [chart above](#).
- This will ensure accurate and meaningful data collection to identify the teachers and reading specialists who need to enroll in Canvas courses.
- If additional assistance is required with pulling teacher and staff data from the school division’s database, the technology or data team can reach out to the student information system vendor directly.

2. **Data Validation at the Local School Level:**

- After collecting the necessary data, send the data to local school principals for validation of teachers who require enrollment in a Canvas course. This step is imperative for data accuracy and consistency.
- Principals should be aware of the Professional Development Section: “Science-based Literacy Training Options” of the July Literacy Update.
- See the [chart above](#) to ensure teachers and reading specialists self-selection of the correct Canvas course that best aligns with their role and previous literacy training.

3. **Submission of Spreadsheet and Course Enrollment:**

- Once columns A-D are validated by each school’s principal, submit the data in the designated spreadsheet in a SWSS Dropbox, under the University of Virginia, select “Kimberly Bavis – Senior Instructional Technology Specialist” as the recipient.
- Participants will receive an account creation notice email from notifications@instructure.com with directions on how to set up their password. Click on the link for the [Directions for Registering for a VLP Canvas Connect account](#). Not completing this step will result in a delay in accessing their account and course.
- Teachers will receive a confirmation email from literacy@virginia.edu with a course self-selection survey for enrollment into the appropriate science-based literacy Canvas Course hosted by UVACanvas Connect. See the [chart above](#).

- A course enrollment email from notifications@instructure.com will follow. Once teachers are enrolled, they can begin the course, or an announcement will be emailed to them when the course officially opens.

Support Contacts:

If you encounter challenges with the spreadsheet beyond technical issues, contact UVA at literacy@virginia.edu.

Principal Professional Development

Please share with division-level ELA and professional learning leaders, principal supervisors, and principals to ensure attendance this summer at professional development.

Most elementary and middle school principals attended the required literacy professional development for school leaders in evidence-based literacy instruction this June. If you were not able to attend training this summer due to capacity or individual schedules, fall dates and locations will be available. New principals/assistant principals will also be able to attend fall trainings. Once fall dates and locations have been determined, VLP will share that information and provide a new registration form. Divisions will be responsible for travel arrangements and expenses.

Grades 4-8 Reading Specialists and New K-3 Reading Specialists

Please share with division-level ELA leaders, principal supervisors, and principals to ensure attendance of reading specialists at training.

VDOE has contracted with UVA to conduct training for grades 4-8 reading specialists and new K-3 reading specialists for the 2024-2025 school year. This will include a two-day, in-person institute to be held in the fall and required virtual training through Canvas during the school year. Reading specialists may access the Canvas course prior to the fall in-person training.

- Divisions should begin identifying reading specialists who will need to attend this training.
- Once fall dates and locations have been determined, VLP will share that information and provide a registration form. Divisions will be responsible for travel arrangements and expenses.
- Divisions will outline a training plan in section three of the DLP.

Reading Specialist Provisional Microcredential

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

Over 800 educators are currently enrolled in the Microcredential course. Divisions should consider the following requirements when determining local needs for employing reading specialists for the 2024-2025 school year. The reading specialist microcredential for provisional endorsement meets the requirements below.

- [Chapter 1.137 B. 7. h.](#) “Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection G of § 22.1-253.13:2 of the Code of Virginia, each local school board shall employ a reading specialist for each 550 students in kindergarten through grade three. To provide flexibility, school boards may employ other staff

such as reading coaches or other instructional staff who are working towards obtaining the training and licensure requirements necessary to fulfill the staffing standards that become effective at the start of the 2024-2025 school year. School divisions are encouraged to deploy these positions to assist in reading instruction and intervention to students in kindergarten through sixth grade.”

- [125 B. 7. h.](#) “Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection G of § 22.1-253.13:2 of the Code of Virginia, school boards may employ other staff such as reading coaches or other instructional staff who are working towards obtaining the training and licensure requirements necessary to fulfill the reading specialist staffing standards.”

VDOE is offering a Reading Specialist microcredential that will support divisions in implementing this requirement.

To obtain the microcredential, educators will complete a Virginia Department of Education Canvas course (different from the UVA Canvas courses) that will provide a provisional reading specialist endorsement valid for five years upon successful completion for individuals who currently hold a Valid Virginia license and wish to serve in the capacity as a reading specialist in a Virginia school. This course is offered at no cost. Participants will explore evidence-based literacy instruction and science-based reading research as well as the identification of the appropriate interventions, accommodations, and teaching techniques. Participants will complete seven modules that are self-paced and offer checks for understanding. Two modules will offer a Summative Performance Task that participants must pass in order to receive a certificate of completion. It is estimated to take 45 hours to complete the course. The Reading Specialist Microcredential certificate can be submitted with an application for an Add-On Provisional Reading Specialist endorsement to the licensure department at VDOE.

Enrollment in a university program is not required for the provisional endorsement as a reading specialist. Beyond the provisional endorsement for reading specialist, an individual may wish to complete the regulatory requirements to obtain a full reading specialist endorsement in Virginia.

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

The intent of the microcredential program is to provide a provisional reading specialist endorsement upon successful completion for individuals who currently hold a Valid Virginia license and wish to serve in the capacity as a reading specialist in a Virginia school. Upon successful completion of the microcredential, participants will receive a certificate that can be used to apply for an add-on reading specialist endorsement. Questions regarding licensure can be answered by contacting licensure@doe.virginia.gov. The microcredential does not substitute for the required reading specialist training and VLP provided Canvas course.

NEW! Literacy and Mathematics Symposium Update

Please share with division-level ELA leaders to ensure a division-level train-the-trainer team attends the professional development this summer.

The first round of Literacy and Mathematics Symposiums took place over the last two weeks of June 2024, with over 730 educators receiving this training. Symposiums are designed for participants to train other teachers in their divisions with a focus on transitioning to high-quality instructional materials to

support the implementation of the Virginia Literacy Act, the 2024 English *Standards of Learning* and the 2023 Mathematics *Standards of Learning*. Participants were given the opportunity to network and discuss instruction and implementation in grade bands of K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12. Resources were shared and participants left with materials to support their divisions in upcoming instructional implementation.

Thank you to all division teams who participated in the June sessions. We also look forward to seeing division teams who are planning to attend an August session.

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Attended June Symposiums</p> | <p>Albemarle, Alexandria, Alleghany Highlands, Amelia, Amherst, Appomattox, Arlington, Augusta, Bedford, Botetourt, Brunswick, Buckingham, Buena Vista, Campbell, Caroline, Carroll, Charlottesville, Clarke, Culpeper, Cumberland, Danville, Dickenson, Dinwiddie, Essex, Fairfax County, Falls Church, Fauquier, Floyd, Fluvanna, Richmond City, Franklin County, Frederick, Galax, Giles, Grayson, Greene, Greenville, Halifax, Harrisonburg, Henry, Lee, Lexington, Loudoun, Louisa, Lunenburg, Lynchburg, Madison, Manassas, Martinsville, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Nelson, Newport News, Northampton, Nottoway, Orange, Page, Patrick, Petersburg, Pittsylvania, Prince Edward, Prince William, Pulaski, Rappahannock, Richmond City, Roanoke City, Roanoke County, Petersburg, Rockingham, Russell, Salem, Tazewell, Scott, Shenandoah, Smyth, Spotsylvania, Staunton, Warren, Washington, Waynesboro, Winchester, Wise, Wythe</p> |
| <p>Registered for August Symposiums</p> | <p>Accomack, Charles City, Chesapeake, Chesterfield, Colonial Beach, Dinwiddie, Gloucester, Goochland, Hampton, Hanover, Henrico, Isle of Wight, King and Queen, King George, King William, Mathews, Middlesex, Newport News, Norfolk, Northampton, Northumberland, Petersburg, Portsmouth, Powhatan, Prince George, Richmond, Southampton, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, Westmoreland, Williamsburg-James City, York</p> |

- Divisions that attended the symposiums in the June sessions will be invited to access training materials through Canvas.
- Division teams should plan on how this information will be shared with grade bands in English and Mathematics for 2024-2025 implementation.

PLANNING

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.

As released on June 27, 2024, in [Superintendent’s Memo 003-24](#), beginning July 10, Literacy Office Hours will be held for division instructional leaders to ask questions about the VLA implementation and give feedback on implementation. Office hours will be jointly hosted by VDOE and VLP staff. Literacy Office Hours will be offered on the following schedule.

- Weekly on Wednesdays, July 10 – August 28, 9:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
- Bi-weekly on Wednesdays, Beginning September 11, 9:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Zoom links have been sent to division instructional leaders who have been designated as such in SSWS to register for the Office Hours being held in July – August. Once registered, you may attend any of the sessions without re-registering. Another Zoom link will be sent on September 3, 2024 with the fall bi-weekly office hour sessions. Division leaders will need to register to attend those sessions once that link is available.

Planning for VLA Implementation Using the Playbook

Please share with division-level ELA leaders and building level leaders to ensure they are incorporating in their instructional structures for next school year.

Launching development and support structures for HQIM implementation. Please refer to the Virginia Literacy Act 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](#).

Division Literacy Plan

Please share with division-level ELA leaders as they prepare for updates to submit by December 6.

Divisions can expect feedback from the Department in August 2024. School divisions may submit updates to their DLP by December 6, 2024.

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.

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
- 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, VALLSS is required 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

- Can divisions modify the Student Reading Plan Template?
 - Divisions may use the Student Reading Plan Template and modify it to include the school or division logo or other school-specific information. Divisions must use all of the components of the student reading plan template if choosing to use an electronic platform.
- Are there Canvas courses for Administrators?
 - Administrators should attend the in-person trainings offered by VLP.
- What if a division misses the first deadline to submit the spreadsheet for enrollment in Canvas courses?
 - Divisions can submit spreadsheets through SSWS at the beginning of each month during the 1st – 7th as needed. Divisions may choose to submit certain teacher groups on the first round of registration and another round of teacher groups during the next month's registration timeframe.
- Do teachers who have completed LETRS Volume 1 need to be enrolled in both the Language and Comprehension Course and the Capstone Modules?
 - No, teachers who have completed LETRS Volume 1 only need to be enrolled in the UVA Language and Comprehension Course. That course includes the information from the Capstone. They only need to take one course.
- Are all rising 3rd graders who were identified on PALS at the end of second grade required to have a Student Reading Plan? If they are given VALLSS and are not within the high-risk band, will they still need a Student Reading Plan?
 - If rising 3rd graders are not retested in the fall, then the Student Reading Plan requirements would be based on their spring 2024 screening results (those who took PALS and were below-benchmark would require a plan, those who took VALLSS and were high-risk would require a plan). For students who are retested in the fall of 2024, only student who are high-risk on VALLSS require a Student Reading Plan.