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## MESSAGE FROM DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Educators,

Last week, we released statewide assessment results that showed Virginia is beginning to recover from the pandemic and students have been positively impacted by the spring implementation of ALL In. This \$418M multi-year effort focused on attendance, literacy, and accelerating learning.

- For reading, this included high intensity tutoring through divisions hiring tutors, paying teachers stipends, adding tutoring during school and outside of normal school hours, and using Lexia and Ignite as supplements that complement tutoring.
- School divisions also accelerated the Virginia Literacy Act implementation by using high quality instructional materials and training educators in evidence-based literacy instruction and science-based reading research.
- Prioritizing attendance and executing strategies to reduce absenteeism meant students were in school more often which resulted in more learning.

These efforts have started to pay off, and those who implemented strong ALL In plans saw it pay off the most.

- 70% of school divisions showed improvement in grades 3-8 reading.
- Students scoring high proficient/advanced increased 2.3%, and failing scores decreased 2.7% in grades 3-8 reading.
- Student groups that have historically underperformed showed faster growth than their peers including English learners' growth being six times the rate of all students.
- Chronic absenteeism fell 16% statewide with more than 40,000 students attending school more regularly.
- Students who attended school 90% or more of the school year performed 19 percentage points higher than those chronically absent.

We still have a lot of work to do. Thank you for your strong commitment in being ALL In for our kids; it is working, and this year will show even greater success for our students.

Em Cooper

[Em.Cooper@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Em.Cooper@doe.virginia.gov)

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# INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Please share this section with division-level ELA leaders and building level leaders to ensure compliance with core, supplemental, and intervention 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:** Public Comment Open- Supplemental & Intervention Materials

Cycle 3 supplemental and intervention programs submitted for review by the Virginia Department of Education and under consideration for Board approval are available for public inspection utilizing the following links. The Board of Education will reconvene on September 25, 2024. The public is invited to review and to submit written comments through [this survey](#) or by emailing [VLA@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:VLA@doe.virginia.gov).

- [Public Review Access](#)

## 6-8 Supplemental and Intervention Materials

**\*NEW:** The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) is seeking applications from providers of:

- Grades 6-8 literacy supplemental instructional programs
- Grades 6-8 literacy intervention instructional programs

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 (EBLI) aligned with science-based reading research (SBRR) for approval by the Virginia Board of Education (VBOE). In partnership with Virginia Literacy Partnerships (VLP) at the University of Virginia, the VDOE is opening a review cycle for grades 6-8 supplemental and intervention programs. The application window will open on **August 28, 2024** and will close on **September 13, 2024 at noon EST**.

All 6-8 supplemental and intervention programs that wish to be considered for the VDOE approval list **must** submit an application during this cycle, **regardless of whether or not that program has previously submitted an application**. The rubrics for grades 6-8 supplemental and intervention programs have been updated to best fit the needs of this age range; for this purpose, all 6-8 programs must submit an application using this updated rubric.

Rubrics are [available for viewing](#) in advance of the program submission window opening on August 28. Interested curriculum providers and/or divisions should submit applications for review by noon on September 13. Please note that submission of materials either in hard copy or via email will not be accepted.

Division superintendents and literacy leaders are asked to ensure that supplemental and intervention literacy resources currently used in 6-8 classrooms are submitted. Please inform any applicable providers to submit resources for review.

Questions can be emailed to [VLP-VLA@virginia.edu](mailto:VLP-VLA@virginia.edu)

## 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.**

**\*IMPORTANT:** 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 (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 Frackleton](#), Elementary PK-5 Reading/Literacy Coordinator. Questions regarding VALLSS administration may be directed to [VLP](#).

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

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

- School divisions **must** screen 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

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. 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

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 for the 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.

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

## **\*NEW:** Guidance for EIRI and IEP/504 Plans and English Language Development (ELD) Service and Programs

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. This can be met with many different approaches and a combination of school personnel and resources. 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

### 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 Course
- 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 <b>K-5 Teachers</b> Canvas Course                                                      | July 2024                          | 9                                                              | 2-3 hours per module        |
| K-5 Teachers who have completed LETRS Volumes 1 & 2 <b>OR</b> Orton-Gillingham courses that meet the specified criteria (Classroom, Special Educators, EL Teachers)         | Required to complete <b>K-5 Teachers Capstone</b> 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 <b>K-5 Teachers Language &amp; Comprehension</b> Canvas Course                         | July 2024                          | 7                                                              | 2-3 hours per module        |
| K-8 Principals                                                                                                                                                              | Required to attend Reading Institutes (Summer/Fall 2024)                                                    | N/A                                | No Canvas modules are planned for K-8 principals at this time. | N/A                         |
| 6-8 Reading Specialists                                                                                                                                                     | Required to attend Reading Institutes (Fall 2024) and complete <b>6-8 Reading Specialists</b> 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 <b>6-8 ELA Teachers</b> Canvas Course                                                  | September 2024                     | 9                                                              | 2-3 hours per module        |
| 6-8 ELA Teachers who have completed LETRS Volumes 1 & 2 <b>OR</b> Orton-Gillingham courses that meet the specified criteria (ELA Classroom, Special Educators, EL Teachers) | Required to complete <b>6-8 Teachers Capstone</b> 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 <b>6-8 Teachers Language &amp; Comprehension</b> Canvas Course                         | September 2024                     | 6                                                              | 2-3 hours per module        |
| 6-8 Content Area Teachers (Content Classroom, Special Educators)                                                                                                            | Required to complete <b>6-8 Content Teachers</b> 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 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"> <li>9-12 ELA &amp; Content Area Teachers</li> <li>Central Office Administration</li> <li>Instructional Specialists</li> <li>ITRTs</li> <li>K-12 Resource Teachers</li> <li>Long-term Substitutes</li> <li>Pre-School Teachers</li> <li>Speech &amp; Language Pathologists</li> </ul> | <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 <a href="#">VLP public website</a>.</p> |

\* Divisions should prioritize training for 9-12 teachers who may be assigned to serve K-8 students.

## **\*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 now and will be available for 6-8 courses in September.

## 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.**

**\*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 to 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 all modules within each course will open simultaneously.

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 should be submitted to the University of Virginia via SWSS Dropbox.

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.
  - School and division level administrators should not be included at this time.
- Divisions should confirm email addresses before submitting to ensure their teachers will receive the one time generated “Confirm Registration: Canvas” email. This cannot be sent again and will have to be manually fixed for each user.
- For each submission, please use a fresh template to ensure duplicate accounts do not get created.

- 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.

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. After this initial enrollment period, divisions may continue to submit additional individuals on new spreadsheets during the first week (1st – 7th) of each month as new employees are hired.

When submitting, 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](mailto:literacy@virginia.edu).

Once processed, participants will receive instructions for account set-up and course self-enrollment. Participants will receive an account creation notice email from [notifications@instructure.com](mailto:notifications@instructure.com) with the subject “Confirm Registration: Canvas,” 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](mailto: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.

VLP has provided a step-by-step guide for this process which can be shared with teachers and can be found [here](#).

Once enrolled, K-5 participants may begin the courses immediately and 6-8 teachers can begin their courses in Fall 2024.

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: [literacy.virginia.edu](http://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](#)

Administrators and division-level personnel can also now access infographics and overview documents for each K-5 course. Information around the 6-8 Canvas courses will be forthcoming. The overview documents provide module topic details as well as guiding questions that can be used to facilitate thinking and discussion. These can be accessed these by clicking on this link and scrolling down to the Canvas Course Information section: <https://literacy.virginia.edu/reading-specialists-administrators>

## Principal Professional Development

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

Most elementary and middle school principals attended the VLA required literacy professional development for school leaders in evidence-based literacy instruction this June. If principals were not

able to attend training this summer due to capacity or individual schedules, fall dates and locations are available. Divisions will be responsible for travel arrangements and related expenses. Registration information will be sent from VDOE through email to division literacy contacts listed in SSWS.

| Date              | Location                 | Address                                            |
|-------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| October 8, 2024   | Charlottesville          | Research Park Boulevard, Charlottesville, VA 22911 |
| October 16, 2024  | Richmond                 | 1712 Bellevue Ave, Richmond, VA 23227              |
| October 22, 2024  | Newport News             | 980 Omni Blvd, Newport News, VA 23606              |
| November 12, 2024 | Fairfax (Tyson’s Corner) | 7801 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22043         |
| November 21, 2024 | Roanoke                  | 110 Shenandoah Ave NE, Roanoke, VA 24016           |

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.**

Reading specialists in grades 4-8 and new K-3 reading specialists who did not attend training in 2023-2024 will need to attend one of the training sessions below. This is a two-day training. Breakfast and lunch will be included. Divisions will be responsible for travel arrangements, hotels, and other related expenses. Registration information will be sent from VDOE through email to division literacy contacts listed in SSWS.

| Date                 | Location                 | Address                                            |
|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| October 9-10, 2024   | Charlottesville          | Research Park Boulevard, Charlottesville, VA 22911 |
| October 16-17, 2024  | Richmond                 | 1712 Bellevue Ave, Richmond, VA 23227              |
| October 22-23, 2024  | Newport News             | 980 Omni Blvd, Newport News, VA 23606              |
| November 12-13, 2024 | Fairfax (Tyson’s Corner) | 7801 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22043         |
| November 21-22, 2024 | Roanoke                  | 110 Shenandoah Ave NE, Roanoke, VA 24016           |

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.

**Staffing Flexibility for 2024-2025:** In accordance with the FY 2024 Caboose Budget (Chapter 1) and the 2024-2026 Budget (Chapter 2), notwithstanding Standards of Quality Section [§ 22.1-253.13:2.G](#) on Reading Specialist staffing standards, school divisions have flexibility in the 2024-2025 school year with the implementation of Reading Specialist positions as follows:

- [Chapter 1 Budget, Item 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**.
- [Chapter 2 Budget, Item 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.

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 outlined above. 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 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](mailto:licensure@doe.virginia.gov). The microcredential does not substitute for the required reading specialist training and VLP provided Canvas course.

- 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.

## Literacy and Mathematics Symposium Update

**Please share with the division-level train-the-trainer team that attended the Symposiums this summer.**

The first round of Literacy and Mathematics Symposiums took place in June and August, with over 1000 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.

- Divisions that attended the symposiums in the June and August 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.
- Participants will need to complete the Symposium survey in order to receive certificates for participation.

Questions regarding the symposiums can be directed to [Jill.Nogueras@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Jill.Nogueras@doe.virginia.gov) or [Anne.Petersen@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Anne.Petersen@doe.virginia.gov).

## 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.**

**\*REMINDER:** 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.

Division literacy leaders can reach out to [vla@doe.virginia.gov](mailto: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 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 are implementing DLP components and preparing for updates to submit by December 6.**

Divisions received feedback from VDOE as of August 1, 2024. Feedback was sent to the division literacy lead listed in SSWS. Divisions did not receive full plan approval and have revisions to make must submit those revised DLPs to [vla@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:vla@doe.virginia.gov) by September 6, 2024.

All divisions should be reviewing comments provided on the feedback form to make necessary changes by December 6, 2024. As supplemental and intervention programs are determined by local school divisions, this should be included in the updated plan for 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. VDOE plans to post the links to division literacy plans by September 15, 2024.

- Divisions which have required revisions to the initial DLP should resubmit plans by September 6, 2024 to [vla@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:vla@doe.virginia.gov).
- Divisions should maintain an accurate website link which contains the DLP, 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
- 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                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Student Reading Plans</b>                                                                                   | 2024 - 2025 | 2024-2025 | 2024 - 2025 | 2024-2025                                        | 2025-2026                                        | 2025-2026                                        | 2025-2026                                        | 2025-2026                                        | 2025-2026                                        |
| <b>VALLSS</b>                                                                                                  | 2024-2025   | 2024-2025 | 2024-2025   | 2024-2025<br>(required for specified students *) | 2025-2026<br>(required for specified students *) | 2025-2026<br>(required for specified students *) | 2025-2026<br>(required for specified students *) | 2025-2026<br>(required for specified students *) | 2025-2026<br>(required for specified students *) |
| <b>VALLSS Español</b>                                                                                          | 2025-2026   | 2025-2026 | 2025-2026   | 2025-2026                                        |                                                  |                                                  |                                                  |                                                  |                                                  |
| <b>Completion of training on evidence-based literacy instruction aligned to science-based reading research</b> | 2024-2025   | 2024-2025 | 2024-2025   | 2024-2025                                        | 2024-2025                                        | 2024-2025                                        | 2024-2025                                        | 2024-2025                                        | 2024-2025                                        |
| <b>Instruction using the 2024 English Standards of Learning (Per VLA)</b>                                      | 2024-2025   | 2024-2025 | 2024-2025   | 2024-2025                                        | 2024-2025                                        | 2024-2025                                        | 2024-2025                                        | 2024-2025                                        | 2024-2025                                        |
| <b>Division Literacy Plan</b>                                                                                  | 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

- **An intervention and/or supplemental instructional program we use was only approved in *some* components. Can we still use this program?**
  - This means that the intervention and/or supplemental program met expectations for some of the components for which they applied, but not all. These programs are not approved for use in instruction *outside* of the recommended components for which the program met expectations. This means that you may continue to use this program in schools but only for the specific components that meet the expectations of the review process.
- **Why can't we use Teachers Pay Teachers, Pinterest, other crowd-sourced resources, or other individually-created online resources?**
  - All materials in the approved instructional program guides – including core, supplemental, and intervention – went through a rigorous review process to ensure they align with evidence-based literacy instruction (EBLI) and science-based reading research (SBRR). These reviews were conducted by teams of Virginia educators and facilitated by Virginia Literacy Partnerships at UVA. Materials found on crowd-sourced websites like TPT have not gone through similarly rigorous processes to ensure alignment to EBLI and SBRR and it cannot be determined whether they meet the standards set by the Virginia Literacy Act. The VLA requires school divisions to develop a Division Literacy Plan that ensures all core, supplemental, and intervention materials are founded in evidence-based literacy instruction practices and align with science-based reading research.

- **Who can be hired as a reading specialist?**

- 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. In order 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.

- **Staffing Flexibility for 2024-2025:**

- In accordance with the FY 2024 Caboose Budget (Chapter 1) and the 2024-2026 Budget (Chapter 2), notwithstanding Standards of Quality Section [§ 22.1-253.13:2.G](#) on Reading Specialist staffing standards, school divisions have flexibility in the 2024-2025 school year with the implementation of Reading Specialist positions as follows:
  - [Chapter 1 Budget, Item 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**.
  - [Chapter 2 Budget, Item 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.