



#236-22

**Commonwealth of Virginia
Virginia Department of Education
Superintendent's Memo #236-22**

DATE: October 4, 2022
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: Jillian Balow, Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **Application for Reviewers for Virginia Literacy Act Instructional Materials
Reviews**

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) is seeking applications from educators to serve on Program Review Teams that will conduct reviews of K-3 core literacy programs. Reviewers will be trained and supported to conduct curricular reviews of K-3 core literacy programs using rubrics that align with the [Virginia Literacy Act](#) (VLA). Teachers, reading specialists, instructional coaches, administrators, division leaders as well as educators who speak a language other than English are encouraged to apply.

The VLA, which was signed into law in 2022, focuses on improving K-3 literacy outcomes for all students in the Commonwealth. The VLA requires the VDOE to recommend K-3 instructional programs - including core, supplemental, and intervention materials - for approval by the Virginia Board of Education (VBOE). The VDOE has partnered with the Virginia Literacy Partnerships (VLP) in the School of Education and Human Development at University of Virginia to conduct at least two rounds of reviews of instructional materials.

This initial round will focus exclusively on core instructional materials and is modeled on the best practices developed in other states. Additional review processes will be conducted for supplemental and intervention materials at a later date.

Reviewers, working in small teams, will support two phases in the initial round:

- 1) Initial Review for alignment to features of evidence-based core instructional reading programs, as required by the VLA.
- 2) In-depth Program Review for detailed alignment to evidence-based literacy instructional practices for teaching essential early literacy skills, by grade level, as required by the VLA.

Teams will submit recommendations to the VDOE which will, in turn, finalize and submit to the VBOE for approval.

The Program Review Teams will:

- Conduct reviews from October through March;
- Complete work independently and then meet with Review Teams virtually;
- Be asked to commit up to 25 hours but note that time will vary by person and by team, as well as by the number of applications received;
- Be required to attend a training webinar on how to use the Phase I and Phase II rubrics to evaluate core instructional programs according to criteria set forth in the VLA; and
- Will receive a small stipend in recognition of their efforts.

Program Review Teams will be composed of educators and experts in early literacy.

Reviewers are expected to reflect the diversity of Virginia's early public education system and the organizations that work to support early literacy for all learners.

Applications may be submitted by completing the attached reviewer application. Please send the completed form to VLP-VLA@virginia.edu.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and potential reviewers are encouraged to apply as soon as possible; the final date for submission is **Friday, October 28, 2022**.

Note that potential reviewers may also apply for the VLA Advisory Work Group. For more information, see [Superintendent's Memo 226-22](#).

For more information

Questions regarding the Virginia Literacy Partnership's Program Review Teams may be emailed to VLP-VLA@virginia.edu.

JB/JC/lh

- A. Attachment: [Virginia Literacy Act Application for Program Review Teams](#) (PDF)