



VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

AGENDA ITEM

Agenda Item: I

Date: November 15, 2023

Title: First Review of Updated Virginia Literacy Act Core Instructional Program Guide K-5

Presenter: Dr. Emily Solari, Edmund H. Henderson Professor of Education at the University of Virginia School of Education

Purpose of Presentation:
Action required by state law.

Executive Summary:

The Virginia Literacy Act (“VLA”), passed by the Virginia General Assembly in 2022 and expanded in 2023, focuses on improving literacy outcomes for all students in the Commonwealth. The VLA requires that “each local school board shall provide a program of literacy instruction that is aligned with science-based reading research and provides evidenced-based literacy instruction to students in kindergarten through grade eight.” § [22.1-253.13:1\(G\)](#). To support school divisions to comply with this requirement, the VLA requires the Virginia Department of Education (“VDOE”) to develop a list of instructional programs in literacy—including core, supplemental, and intervention—that consist of evidence-based literacy instruction (“EBLI”) and align with science-based reading research (“SBRR”). Recommended resources must also be aligned with the Virginia Standards of Learning (“SOL”).

In June 2023, the first version of the Core Instructional Program Guide covering core instructional programs for grades K-3 was approved by the VBOE. The first version included eight core curriculum resources. Since then, VDOE, in partnership with the Virginia Literacy Partnerships (“VLP”) at the University of Virginia, has conducted a second cycle of reviews, which expanded to core instructional programs for grades K-5.

The Core Instructional Review Process is unique to Virginia and consists of two phases, each with discrete rubrics for each grade level. Initial rubric drafts were developed by VLP and reviewed by national experts, Virginia higher education partners and Virginia educators. Final

rubrics were posted online. The review process was designed to align with Virginia’s textbook adoption process. Reviews were conducted by Virginia educators comprised of competitively-selected teams of administrators, reading specialists, division representatives, and teachers from all eight regions. Teams were led by literacy experts facilitating the process. Reviewers conducted independent reviews using comprehensive rubrics. Facilitators met with review teams weekly for discussion of norming and building consensus. Facilitators compiled final rubric results, consulting as a facilitator team for consistency across all program submissions. The review process resulted in the recommended, updated Core Instructional Program Guide K-5 being submitted to the Board for review. As additional rounds of review are completed, additions to this guide will be brought to the VBOE for approval.

As a result of the second cycle of submission and reviews, the updated Core Instructional Program Guide K-5 expands to include seven programs for grades 4-5, one program for grades K-5, and one program for grades K-2. If approved, the updated Core Instructional Program Guide K-5 would encompass ten total programs.

Provider	Product Title	Publishing Date	Approved in June 2023	Recommended for approval in December 2023
Amplify Education	CKLA	2022	K-3	4-5
Benchmark Education Company	Benchmark Advance	2022	K-3	4-5
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company	Into Reading	2020	K-3	4-5
Imagine Learning LLC	Imagine Learning EL Education, 2nd edition	2019	K-3	4-5
McGraw Hill LLC	Open Court Reading, 1st edition	2016	K-3	4-5

McGraw Hill LLC	Wonders, 1st edition	2023	K-2	4-5
Open Up Resources	Bookworms K-5 Reading & Writing, 1st edition	2022	K-3	4-5
Open Up Resources	EL Education Language Arts Curriculum, 1st edition	2017	K-2	
Savvas Learning Co	myView Literacy	2020		K-5
Zaner-Bloser	Superkids Reading Program	2020		K-2

The Program Guide enables school divisions to begin the following:

- Select and implement evidence-based literacy instruction during core instructional programming as defined in the VLA;
- Understand the strengths and challenges of each approved core curriculum to guide purchasing decision and implementation, especially when considering supplemental resources;
- Select the option that best meets the needs of their students, educators and communities; and
- Ensure compliance with the VLA by the 2024-2025 school year as required by the law.

Action Requested:

First review. Action requested at next meeting.

Superintendent’s Recommendation:

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education receive for first review the recommendation for Core Instructional Programs to comply with the VLA.

Previous Review or Action:

The Board voted on the first version of the Core Instructional Program Guide on June 15, 2023, after having a first review on May 11, 2023.

The Board has received briefings and updates on the VLA at the following meetings: March 16, 2022; November 16, 2022; March 22, 2023; and October 18, 2023.

Background Information and Statutory Authority:

Subsection H 2 of § [22.1-253.13:1](#) state that “[t]he Department shall develop a list of core literacy curricula, supplemental instruction practices and programs, and intervention programs that consist of evidence-based literacy instruction aligned with science-based reading research. The list shall be approved by the Board.”

Timetable for Further Review/Action:

After first review, VDOE staff will post a general notice on Town Hall requesting public comment, in accordance with § [22.1-17.5](#) of the Code of Virginia, and will post material on the VDOE website for inspection by the public. Public comment will go to vla@doe.virginia.gov.

Final review of the updated Core Instructional Program Guide will take place on December 12, 2023. VDOE is currently conducting a review cycle for supplemental (K-8) and intervention (K-8) programming. Additional recommendations for a Supplemental Program Guide and Intervention Program Guide are slated to be submitted to the Board no later than the first quarter of 2024.

Impact on Fiscal and Human Resources:

The VDOE receives state general funds to conduct the instructional materials process and produce resources to school divisions to support curriculum and resource implementation. The state is providing additional funding for reading specialists and statewide training for reading specialists, teachers and principals that will support educators to implement quality curriculum and other instructional resources.