



VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

AGENDA ITEM

Agenda Item: G

Date: January 25, 2024

Title: Final Review of the Virginia Literacy Act Division Literacy Plan Template

Presenter: Dr. Marcey Sorensen, Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning

Purpose of Presentation

Action required by state law.

Executive Summary

The Virginia Literacy Act (VLA), passed by the Virginia Legislature in 2022 and expanded in 2023, focuses on improving literacy outcomes for all students in the Commonwealth. The Code of Virginia and VLA require, in part, that “each local school board shall adopt a comprehensive, unified, long-range plan The division wide comprehensive plan shall also include a divisionwide literacy plan for pre-kindergarten through grade eight. The Board shall issue guidance on the contents of such plans. The Department shall develop a template for such plans. Each divisionwide literacy plan shall follow such template and address how the local school board will align (i) literacy professional development, (ii) core reading and literacy curriculum, and (iii) screening, supplemental instruction, and interventions 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 divisionwide 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.”

This item aligns with Priority 1 of the Board’s *Comprehensive Plan 2024–2029*: to set and help every learner meet high expectations.

Action Requested

Final review. Action requested at this meeting.

Superintendent's Recommendation

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education approve the content of the division literacy plan to comply with the VLA.

Previous Review or Action

None.

Background Information and Statutory Authority

Subsection B of § [22.1-253.13:6](#) states, in part, that “[t]he divisionwide comprehensive plan shall also include a divisionwide literacy plan for pre-kindergarten through grade eight. The Board shall issue guidance on the contents of such plans. The Department shall develop a template for such plans. Each divisionwide literacy plan shall follow such template and address how the local school board will align (i) literacy professional development, (ii) core reading and literacy curriculum, and (iii) screening, supplemental instruction, and interventions 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 divisionwide 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. Each such divisionwide literacy plan shall be submitted to the Department and shall identify which core literacy curricula, supplemental instructional practices and programs, and intervention programs from the list developed by the Department pursuant to subdivision H 2 of § [22.1-253.13:1](#) or alternative programs approved by the Department that consist of evidence-based literacy instruction and align with science-based reading research will be used in each grade level, kindergarten through 12, at each of the schools within such school division. Each local school board shall post, maintain, and update as necessary on such school board's website a copy of its divisionwide 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 divisionwide literacy plan on its website.”

Stakeholder Engagement

As part of the Division Literacy Plan revision process, numerous opportunities for stakeholder input and feedback were provided. Stakeholder input and feedback was received via email and engagement sessions and analyzed for necessary updates to the template. The Department sought feedback from the Virginia Association of School Superintendents, division level English

Language Arts Supervisors, the Virginia Literacy Act Work group, and through the VLA email inbox. The following requests and comments were collected:

- Change the submission date to allow for more school and community engagement;
- Include a box for school divisions to highlight current engagement in the work (e.g., lessons learned);
- In Section Three, change the word, "Attendees" to "Target Audience" and add Date/Year where the date is required to allow for showing the progress of different cohorts/waves;
- In Section Four, add a column to include who is responsible for administering the assessment and add more rows;
- In Section Six, expand to address parents and caregivers;
- Request for a mockup plan to use a guide;
- Document is straightforward and clear;
- Appreciate addressing EL, SPED, and Gifted populations;
- Timeline is tight/challenging;
- Not enough information on middle school yet to include this group in the plan;
- Concern around posting DLP on VDOE site-might send the wrong message to families and communities because of comparisons among divisions;
- Why is high school not included in this plan?

As a result of this feedback, the following revisions were applied:

- New submission date: Monday, June 3, 2024 to address tight turnaround concern;
- Updated Section Three to include "Target Audience" and added Date/Year to allow progress;
- Expanded Section Four to include a variety of assessments;
- Expanded Section Six to be more inclusive of caregivers and community.

Implementation and Communication

Following the Board of Education's acceptance of the proposed Division Literacy Plan template on January 25, 2024, the Board's instructions on the content of the divisionwide literacy plans and template will be shared with school divisions. Additionally, the Department will provide instructions and support for the completion of the divisionwide literacy plan, host technical assistance, VLA implementation support, and networking sessions in all eight Superintendent's Regions for divisions to collaborate over Spring 2024 and allow the opportunity for divisions to make changes prior to transitioning to the two-year submission schedule. The Department will provide divisions with ongoing feedback and support on their plans.

Impact on Fiscal and Human Resources

None.