

What Parents Need to Know About Literacy



Have you heard of the Virginia Literacy Act?

The [Virginia Literacy Act \(VLA\)](#) is a law passed in 2022 that goes into effect with the 2024-2025 school year. The purpose of the VLA is to help our students become better readers early in their education (K-3) and support older students as they continue to grow (4-8).

How does the VLA improve teaching literacy?

One of the most important parts of the VLA is about **how reading is taught**. This year, every student in kindergarten through grade 8 will be taught using the methods and materials that years of research tell us are the best ways to teach reading. Teachers of grades K-8 are receiving additional training on these methods, including our Special Education, English Language Learning, and Resource teachers – even our principals have been trained. Importantly, the VLA builds from what teachers and schools are doing and ensures they have access to these materials and training opportunities throughout the year.

How do you know the best way to teach my child how to read?

[The VLA requires all students in grades K-2 and certain students in grade 3 to take a test called a screener](#) known as the Virginia Language & Literacy Screener (VALLSS). The reading screener is used by teachers to identify reading difficulties on which a student needs support. VALLSS results can tell teachers the best ways to teach based on how your child performs. Parents can talk to their child's teacher about the screener results.

What is intervention?

Intervention is extra instruction and specific support to help students become better readers. The VLA ensures that students receive intervention and potentially a reading plan based on their test results.

What is a student reading plan?

Reading plans are currently required for students in grades K-3 who are identified as *high-risk* for developing reading difficulties. [The reading plan identifies the student's reading needs, goals for each need, and specifically how school staff will support the plan. Parents have an opportunity to collaborate with teachers to develop their child's reading plan.](#)

Is additional support available?

Yes. Teachers will share how to access resources to use at home for all students. If your child needs additional help, a school reading specialist will have suggestions for how to reinforce classroom lessons at home to meet reading goals. You can also find resources on the [Virginia Department of Education's Office of Parental Engagement webpage for Literacy](#).

What else should I know about literacy and the VLA?

In the 2025-2026 school year, students in grades 4-8 who need to strengthen their reading skills will have access to screeners and intervention plans and Spanish speaking students in grades K-3 will be allowed to take the screener in Spanish.

We know that literacy impacts students in every subject in school. [Please see these resources for how to strengthen reading by subject from home.](#)
