



Maine State Literacy Action Plan

Improving Literacy through Evidence-Based Reading Instruction ***Maine Department of Education***

Introduction

Literacy is the foundation of opportunity. It fuels academic achievement, civic participation, and lifelong learning. Yet, across Maine and the nation, too many students are not reading proficiently by the end of third grade. To change this trajectory, the Maine Department of Education (DOE) is launching a coordinated effort through the Maine State Literacy Action Plan to strengthen literacy instruction across the state. Grounded in learning science and guided by a belief that every child can become a confident reader, this plan outlines strategic priorities to elevate literacy learning from early childhood through secondary education.

Vision

Every child in Maine becomes a confident, capable reader through high-quality, evidence-based literacy instruction delivered by well-prepared educators, supported by families and communities, and aligned with statewide goals.

Guiding Principles

- Literacy is a fundamental right and the cornerstone of all learning.
- All educators should be trained and supported to deliver evidence-based literacy instruction.
- Literacy learning begins at birth and must be supported at home, in school, and in communities.
- Families and caregivers are critical partners in fostering literacy development.
- Effective literacy instruction must be grounded in the science of learning and responsive to student needs.

Strategic Focus Areas and Implementation Priorities

Strategic Focus Area	Implementation Priorities
Equip Future Teachers with Research-Based Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a state team with educator preparation programs to align literacy/reading courses with evidence-based practices. • Ensure teacher candidates complete a dedicated reading methods course within required credits. • Prioritize direct instruction in phonics, decoding, and foundational reading skills in teacher preparation programs.
Empower Educators with High-Impact, Ongoing Professional Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand access to professional learning through modules, workshops, and virtual coaching. • Provide targeted training to help educators address reading difficulties, including dyslexia. • Establish regional Literacy Hubs for lesson study cycles and coaching. • Launch the Maine Literacy Summer Institute for interdisciplinary learning. • Support school-based literacy leadership teams to mentor peers and drive instructional shifts.
Launch the Maine Evidence-Based Literacy Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a unified statewide vision for pre-K–grade 5 evidence-based literacy instruction. • Create and publish a State Literacy Playbook with tiered strategies and material guidance. • Convene a Literacy Educator Leadership Council to elevate promising practices. • Launch a dashboard and recognition system to spotlight local school literacy gains. • Align literacy with early learning, multilingual supports, and workforce preparation efforts.
Expand Access to Books and Literacy Support at Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the Rising Tide initiative to increase family literacy awareness and supports. • Leverage the Maine State Library and

	<p>257 public libraries to form a statewide literacy support network.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute Read-at-Home Literacy Toolkits with strategies, conversation guides, checklists, and multilingual supports. • Promote campaigns spotlighting early literacy and reading readiness, including resources for parents and caregivers.
Focus on Interdisciplinary and Real-World Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate literacy across all disciplines (science, social studies, arts, technology). • Develop cross-disciplinary modules and resources for authentic project-based literacy learning. • Position literacy as essential for civic engagement and workforce preparation.
Promote Diverse and Flexible Literacy Pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage project-based and community-embedded literacy approaches. • Pilot innovative literacy pathways that reflect student interests and career goals. • Support alternative course models that embed literacy in Career and Technical Education and real-world contexts.
Build Instructional Leadership and Systems Coherence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide district and school leaders with tools to align schedules and resources with effective literacy instruction. • Support sustainability of initiatives launched under the Maine Evidence-Based Literacy Initiative. • Embed literacy improvement in district and school improvement planning processes.
Encourage Literacy Confidence for All Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide interdisciplinary professional learning so that all teachers see themselves as literacy educators. • Develop resources that give non-English Language Arts teachers the language and strategies to support literacy in their classrooms. • Elevate a shared statewide vision that literacy development is the responsibility of all educators.

Call to Action

The Maine DOE invites all educators, school leaders, families, and community partners to join us in cultivating a culture of literacy in Maine. By working together across grade levels, communities, and roles, we can ensure that every learner develops the reading, writing, and language skills essential for lifelong learning, personal growth, and full participation in our society.

Thank You

This plan has been informed by the collective work, experience, and leadership of educators and partners across Maine. It draws on insights gained through professional learning, statewide initiatives, classroom practice, and ongoing conversations about how best to support literacy development for all learners. The Maine DOE is deeply grateful to all who have shaped the conditions, questions, and momentum that made this plan possible.

The Maine State Literacy Action Plan is a living document. It is subject to change, as the Maine DOE continues to collaborate with educators statewide to gain feedback and insight.