



[www.maine.gov/doe/literacy-for-me](http://www.maine.gov/doe/literacy-for-me)

## What is *Literacy for ME*?

*Literacy for ME* is an initiative developed by leaders throughout the state to help all Maine citizens develop strong literacy skills. It consists of several interconnected parts:

- ◆ A unifying vision for literacy from birth to adulthood
- ◆ A call to action for state, school, and community partners to prepare all learners effectively for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- ◆ An interconnected set of principles and guidelines that help local communities develop plans to improve literacy
- ◆ A collection of resources to support comprehensive literacy plan development and implementation
- ◆ A guiding document that outlines six critical components for building literacy capacity
  - Strong, effective leadership to coordinate literacy efforts
  - System-wide commitment to collaborative partnerships across communities
  - Standards and aligned curriculum for literacy learning in and out of schools
  - Explicit, systematic, and engaging instruction at all levels
  - Ongoing assessment of literacy development
  - Ongoing professional learning to improve literacy instruction

## Why is *Literacy for ME* critical?

Ensuring that all Mainers have the opportunity to develop high levels of literacy is a shared responsibility of community members across the birth-to-adult spectrum. This effort is critical to Maine for several reasons:

- ◆ A child's level of language and early literacy skill development in the first five years of life are indicative of future success in school and the workforce.
- ◆ Some 24,769 Maine learners across grades 3-8 are not able to read well enough to meet grade level standards. That is enough learners to fill the Cumberland County Civic Center nearly four times!
- ◆ When individuals are highly literate, they are better able to interact as citizens, consumers, employees, and parents. At the same time, adults with limited literacy skills are more likely to live in poverty and receive government assistance (NAAL, 2003).
- ◆ Robust literacy skills are the foundation of strong communities. Building these skills ensures an educated workforce, an asset that benefits all citizens of Maine.

## What are the *Literacy for ME* goals?

The overarching goal of *Literacy for ME* is to help Maine's children and adults meet the literacy demands of post-secondary education, careers, and civic life. To support this, more immediate goals for *Literacy for ME* are to:

- ◆ Establish a statewide system of support for evidence-based literacy learning practices across the birth-to-adult span;
- ◆ Inform state-level literacy education efforts;
- ◆ Provide guidance to local learning communities for developing and implementing comprehensive local literacy plans; and
- ◆ Foster cross-agency collaborations that strengthen literacy across the birth-to-adult span.

## What does *Literacy for ME* look like?

An effective literacy initiative requires the collective effort of a variety of stakeholders. At the local and state level, *Literacy for ME* can take a variety of forms:

<b><i>In communities</i></b>	<b><i>In schools</i></b>	<b><i>At the state level</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Community leaders actively seek opportunities to collaborate with multiple partners to build literacy skills.</li><li>◆ Businesses and institutions seek programs, grants, and state support to develop partnerships with schools and family organizations.</li><li>◆ Stakeholder groups investigate successful community literacy initiatives and use that information in their planning.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Community leaders actively seek opportunities to collaborate with multiple partners to build literacy skills.</li><li>◆ Businesses and institutions seek programs, grants, and state support to develop partnerships with schools and family organizations.</li><li>◆ Stakeholder groups investigate successful community literacy initiatives and use that information in their planning.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Teams and staff members support schools and communities to develop a shared vision of data use, plan effectively, provide professional development, and connect with multiple stakeholders.</li><li>◆ State-developed guidelines for data use help schools and communities use information to improve literacy skills across the birth to adult span.</li><li>◆ An extensive collection of resources around each of the six components of the literacy plan provides strategies and tools to help schools and communities implement the plan.</li></ul>

For additional information visit [www.maine.gov/doe/literacy-for-me](http://www.maine.gov/doe/literacy-for-me) or contact:

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