



Minnesota Local Literacy Plan Template Instructions

These instructions support the use of Minnesota’s Local Literacy Plan Template. The guidance presented here reflects analysis of required state and local plans related to literacy and summarizes the processes, goals, and plan content necessary to meet the literacy requirements of all plans. If a local educational agency’s Local Literacy Plan meets the requirements summarized in this document, then the local plan will meet the literacy requirements of all of the following pieces of legislation:

- ✓ WBWF: World’s Best Workforce (Minn. Stat. § 120B.11)
- ✓ RWBTG: Reading Well by Third Grade (Minn. Stat. § 120B.12)
- ✓ ESSA/SRCL: Every Student Succeeds Act’s Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy grant (Public Law No. 114-95, § 1177)

Note: this document is *not* intended to identify all requirements necessary to meet the requirements of World’s Best Workforce, only the literacy-related content.

Additional Resources:

- Access the [Local Literacy Plan Checklist](#) of requirements under Reading Well by Third Grade and access additional information and resources on the [Reading Proficiency](#) pages.
- Access the [World’s Best Workforce page](#) of MDE’s website for more information.

The Purpose of Local Literacy Plans

Early Learning

Research shows the positive, lasting impact that high quality early childhood education has on children, including those who may struggle with literacy skill development in school. The need for strong early experiences is recognized in the first goal of the WBWF, all children meeting school readiness goals. Using the Local Literacy Plan to integrate critical literacy and language experiences into the early learning program day benefits children’s knowledge and skill acquisition as well ensures a smoother transition into kindergarten.

Career and College Readiness

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) expects state and local education agencies to set “high expectations for all children and subgroups of children.” This is part of a call to ensure students are career and college ready. State law also sets the expectation that career and college readiness is the general outcome of Minnesota’s education system as articulated through the development of Minnesota’s rigorous academic standards.

Instructional Goal-Setting

Local Literacy Plans are developed to provide common understanding of the processes and shared goals of the educational system for improving student outcomes. To accomplish achievement and equitable opportunity for all students, processes and products of continuous improvement in literacy must focus on improving instruction as the driver of change in student performance.

Local Literacy Plans must:

- Develop processes for reviewing literacy curriculum, instruction, and student achievement
- Address the following areas of *World's Best Workforce* in relationship to literacy:
 - Meet school readiness goals.
 - Have all third-grade students achieve grade-level literacy.
 - Close the academic achievement gap among all racial and ethnic groups of students and between students living in poverty and student not living in poverty.
 - Have all students attain career and college readiness before graduating high school.
 - Have all students graduate from high school.
- Develop feasible, clear district and site goals and benchmarks with high probabilities of success for instruction and student achievement for all student subgroups.

Use of Data

Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA)

At least annually, the organization must **conduct a comprehensive needs assessment** of literacy to inform continuous improvement efforts. The CNA must include at least:

1. District and sites' **student literacy proficiency outcome data** (from both the MCA-Reading and locally adopted, developmentally appropriate, and culturally responsive assessments) and **career and college readiness** (data may include standards-aligned assessments in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and media literacy; developmental course taking; college persistence).

Data analysis should explore at least the following student groups:

- All students
- Major racial and ethnic groups and their counter groups, including:
 - American Indian
 - Asian
 - Black
 - Hispanic
 - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
 - White
 - Two or more races
- Students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch

- English learners
- Students receiving special education services

2. **Student literacy achievement gaps** (on MCA-Reading and locally adopted literacy assessments)

Opportunity and achievement gaps should be explored in the following areas:

- Proficiency
- Rigorous course taking
- Enrichment experiences
- Students' progress toward meeting state and local academic standards

Data analysis should explore at least the following student groups:

- Major racial and ethnic groups and their counter groups, including:
 - American Indian
 - Asian
 - Black
 - Hispanic
 - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
 - White
 - Two or more races
- Students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch
- English learners
- Students receiving special education services

Assessment Plan

The assessment plan defines the assessment measures/tools being used in the organization and provides guidance for administering, collecting, analyzing, and using those measures for making decisions. This should include descriptions of what is considered “proficient” and what is considered “at risk” for specific times of administration. It will also articulate how data is used to trigger intervention or acceleration; adjust content, rate, or contexts of instruction; refer learners for further testing or additional services, etc.

The assessment plan must:

- Identify students who are not reading at grade level and their areas of academic need related to literacy (minimally Kindergarten through grade two are required).
- Include a method to identify students in grade three or higher who demonstrate a reading difficulty to a classroom teacher.
- Use assessments that are developmentally appropriate, culturally responsive, and, where practicable, in students' native languages.
- Identify students' areas of need related to literacy.
- Identify students with characteristics of dyslexia and convergence insufficiency.
- Monitor student progress in response to intervention.

Action Planning for Continuous Improvement

While it may seem intuitive to simply include the Local Literacy Plan developed in response to RWBTG as the third grade reading component of WBWF plans, it is important to note that this is insufficient. RWBTG is a reading intervention law. While intervention is a critical component of a system for ensuring student success, intervention cannot be the only approach to meeting student outcome goals. Minnesota's proficiency on MCA-Reading assessments in recent years indicates approximately 60 percent of students read on grade level. This means that there are improvements to be made in the "universal" or "core instruction" that all students receive. If core instruction alone is not meeting the needs of 80 percent or more of students, the resources available in educational systems will not be sufficient to "intervene" itself out of inadequate instruction. It is for this reason that Minnesota has chosen to target SRCL grant funding at improving core instruction.

World's Best Workforce promotes ongoing district processes for reviewing and improving instruction, curriculum, and assessment in all areas. As such, Local Literacy Plans should attend to both core instruction and intervention services if they are to achieve the goal of all students being career and college ready upon graduation. This includes attending to the instructional goals required by federal and state law.

Teams and Meetings

Local Literacy Plans should not be developed by individual representatives of an organization. Local Literacy Plans are intended to be living documents of continuous improvement that provide a shared and coherent vision and mission for literacy development. A team-based approach to continuous improvement ensures that all stakeholders have the opportunity to improve the system, raise concerns, and collaborate with others for decision-making.

The WBWF law requires specific processes for the development of WBWF plans. These established teams and processes can be leveraged or incorporated into the development of literacy plans. A summary of WBWF requirements to consider when approaching development of Local Literacy Plans includes:

- Each school board shall establish an advisory committee to ensure active community participation in all phases of planning and improving the instruction and curriculum affecting state and district academic standards.
- A school must establish a site team to develop and implement strategies and education effectiveness practices to improve instruction, curriculum, and cultural competencies, including cultural awareness and cross-cultural communication, and student achievement at the school site.
- The school board shall hold an annual public meeting to review, and revise where appropriate, student achievement goals, local assessment outcomes, plans, strategies, and practices for improving curriculum and instruction and cultural competency, and efforts to equitably distribute diverse, effective, experienced, and in-field teachers, and to review district success in realizing the previously adopted student achievement goals and related benchmarks and the improvement plans leading to the world's best workforce.

Strategic Planning

The comprehensive, long-term strategic plan to support and improve teaching and learning that is aligned with creating the world's best workforce must include:

- Clearly defined district and school site goals and benchmarks for instruction and student achievement for all student subgroups.
- A process to assess and evaluate each student's progress toward meeting state and local academic standards.
- A process to assess and identify students to participate in gifted and talented programs and accelerate their instruction.
- A process to adopt early-admission procedures.
- A process to identify the strengths and weaknesses of instruction in pursuit of student and school success and curriculum affecting students' progress and growth toward career and college readiness and leading to world's best workforce.
- A process to periodically review and evaluate the effectiveness of all instruction and curriculum, taking into account:
 - strategies and best practices
 - student outcomes
 - school principal evaluations
 - students' access to effective teachers who are members of populations underrepresented among the licensed teachers in the district or school and who reflect the diversity of enrolled students
 - teacher evaluations
- Strategies for improving instruction, curriculum, and student achievement (including English and native languages of ELs)
- A process to examine the equitable distribution of teachers and strategies to ensure low-income and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, ineffective, or out-of-field teachers

Action Planning

The result of needs assessment and strategic planning should be an articulated action plan that specifies approaches to improvement.

The action plan should include all of the following:

- The key goals of the plan.
- The key activities to be undertaken and the rationale for how the activities support the key goals.
- A realistic timeframe, including key milestones for implementing each key activity.
- The party or parties responsible for implementing each activity and other key personnel assigned to each activity.
- Performance measures to be used to evaluate goals and monitor progress.
- Appropriate financial resources to support successful implementation of the plan.

The action plan must:

- Be specific, measurable and aligned with the time period of the plan.
- Be informed by a comprehensive needs assessment.
- Provide professional development to support implementation of instructional practices.
- Apply practices that are supported by moderate evidence or strong evidence, where evidence is applicable and available.

Evidence-Based Interventions

Local Literacy Plans must include interventions, a necessary supplement to core instruction. Minnesota encourages and supports the development of a Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) for academics. For additional information on MTSS programs, visit the [Multi-tiered System of Supports page](#) of MDE's website.

Reading Well by Third Grade requires that students who are identified as not reading proficiently must be provided intervention supported by moderate or strong evidence to accelerate student growth and reach the goal of reading at or above grade level proficiency by the end of the current school year (K-3).

If a student does not read at or above grade level by the end of grade three, the district must continue to provide reading intervention until the student reads at grade level.

The plan must also provide reading instruction appropriate to the specific needs of English learners.

Parent and Community Engagement

The Local Literacy Plan should articulate ways in which parents and community groups and individuals will be engaged to support education.

World's Best Workforce requires each school board to establish an advisory committee to ensure active community participation in all phases of planning and improving the instruction and curriculum affecting state and district academic standards.

A district advisory committee to the extent possible shall:

- Reflect the diversity of the district and its school sites, include teachers, parents, support staff, students and other community residents, and provide translation to the extent appropriate and practicable.
- Pursue community support to accelerate the academic and native literacy and achievement of English learners with varied needs, from young children to adults.
- Whenever possible, parents and other community residents shall comprise at least two-thirds of advisory committee members.

Sites teams, if formed, must include at least one parent.

Reading Well by Third Grade requires the following:

- Selected interventions should encourage family engagement and collaboration with school and community programs where possible.
- At least annually the district must provide the following to the parents of any child identified through its local assessment plan as not reading at or above grade level:
 - Strategies that the parents can use at home to help their child succeed in becoming grade-level proficient in English and their native language.

Communication Plan

Reporting to Stakeholders

The Local Literacy Plan should include a communication plan that ensures the sharing of data and communication across linked teams providing leadership and support. In addition, districts are required to share the following with external stakeholders:

WBWF requires that the school board communicate results to stakeholders:

- Publish a report in the local newspaper with the largest circulation in the district, by mail, or by electronic means on the district Web site.
- Transmit an electronic summary of its report to the commissioner which includes the results of the periodic survey of affected constituencies.

RWBTC requires that districts annually report the following to the commissioner:

- Summary reading assessment results
- Summary of efforts to screen and identify students with dyslexia or convergence insufficiency.
- Copy of the Local Literacy Plan

The district must also post the Local Literacy Plan to the district website.

Reporting to Parents/Guardians

RWBTC also requires that the district must at least annually provide the following information to parents of any child identified through its local assessment plan as not reading at or above grade level:

- The student reading proficiency as measured by locally adopted assessment(s).
- The reading-related services being provided to the student and the student's progress.

Professional Development

The Local Literacy Plan should articulate the needs identified for staff to ensure that plans, processes, and practices are implemented well. This may include:

- A plan for providing training support.

- A plan for providing ongoing coaching support.
- Provision and monitoring of fidelity tools to inform continuous improvement and future needs for professional development.

WBWF's comprehensive long-term strategic plan to support and improve teaching and learning must include education effectiveness practices that integrate high-quality instruction, rigorous curriculum, technology, and a collaborative professional culture that develops and supports teacher quality, performance, and effectiveness.

The staff development section of the Read Well law requires the district to meet staff needs as identified through reading data to ensure the following:

- Elementary teachers are able to implement comprehensive, scientifically based reading instruction, including instruction in: oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and other literacy-related areas, including writing.
- Elementary teachers have sufficient training to provide instruction that meets students' developmental, linguistic, and literacy needs using intervention methods or programs selected by the district for identified students.
- Licensed teachers have regular opportunities to improve reading and writing instruction.
- Licensed teachers recognize students' diverse needs in cross-cultural settings and can meet the oral language and linguistic needs of students who are English learners, by maximizing strengths in their native languages to cultivate English language development (including oral academic language) and build academic literacy.
- Licensed teachers are well trained in culturally responsive pedagogy that enables students to master content, develop skills to access content, and build relationships.