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Literacy Expert Teams to Improve Reading Instruction Across Maryland Approved
Literacy Experts Will Help Teachers and School Districts Prepare all 3rd Graders to Read Proficiently

The Maryland Accountability & Implementation Board (AIB) today approved a joint proposal with the Maryland State Board of Education to create teams of literacy experts to evaluate reading instruction in the state’s 24 school districts and work directly with districts to accelerate young children's reading development. The State board approved the plan on Nov. 9.

“This effort to improve early literacy instruction will improve the learning experiences of Maryland’s youngest students and prepare them for success at every step in their learning journey,” said Clarence C. Crawford, President of the Maryland State Board of Education.

“Reading is the essential skill for success in school and life. Research has documented that students who aren’t reading proficiently by 3rd grade struggle to catch up,” said AIB Chair Isiah “Ike” Leggett. “These experts will ensure that all Maryland’s school districts are using the best instructional practices and are preparing teachers who will ensure students are reading proficiently by 3rd grade to be on the path to college and career readiness.”

“Literacy is the foundation for all learning. The power of strong literacy practices yields an impact across core academic subject areas,” said Dr. Carey Wright, Interim State Superintendent of Schools. “Expert reviewers will help to ensure consistency within schools and districts, from classroom instruction to teacher training, firmly grounded in the Science of Reading.”

Working collaboratively with AIB, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) will hire literacy experts to conduct a comprehensive review of elementary literacy instruction in every Maryland school district to create a statewide culture of continuous improvement in reading instruction.

Literacy experts will work in groups of two to conduct thorough reviews of school districts' literacy plans and observe classroom instruction by:

- Observing teaching and learning in schools and evaluating whether instruction is consistent with the principles of the science of Reading;
- Assessing whether reading instruction is implemented consistently across school districts;
- Supporting teachers, literacy coaches, and district leaders to help them ensure that high-quality literacy instruction is available for every student; and
- Building school districts' capacity to offer high-quality literacy training to improve teachers' classroom effectiveness.

The experts will collaborate with district leaders, principals, and teachers to create strategies to improve their literacy plans. They also will provide recommendations to improve literacy instruction and student outcomes to districts, MSDE, and AIB. MSDE and AIB will support districts as they implement the recommendations.

The literacy experts will begin their work in early 2024 and complete it by the end of the 2023-24 school year.

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