



SUFFOLK
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Virginia Literacy Act & Division Literacy Plan Overview

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Virginia Literacy Act



Act's Purpose

To improve literacy rates among Virginia students by providing resources and support to schools and families.

Student Support

Provides tutoring, intervention programs, and other support services for struggling readers.

Key Initiatives

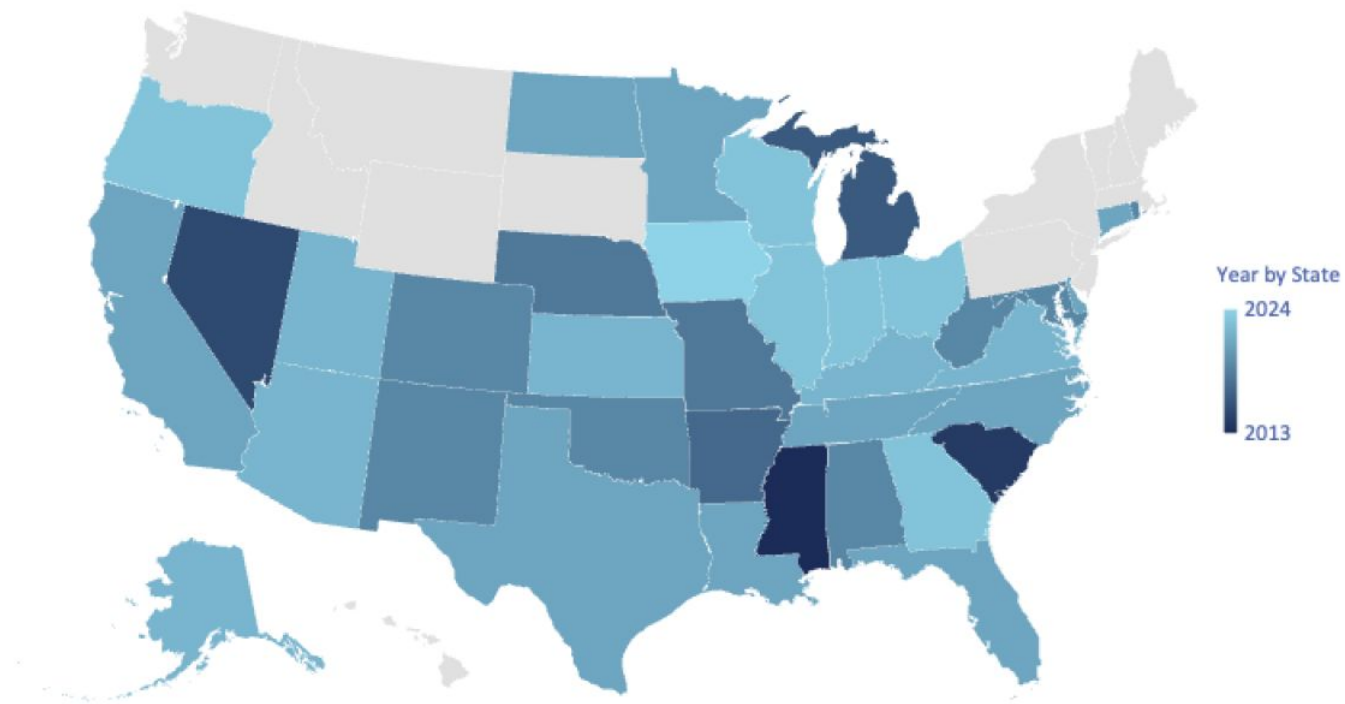
Includes early literacy screening, professional development for teachers, and family engagement programs.

Expected Outcomes

Aims to improve reading proficiency and graduation rates, ultimately leading to better opportunities for students.



This is Bigger Than Virginia



SBRR & Evidenced Based Instruction

K-5

Students will receive scientifically based reading research and evidence-based core literacy literacy instruction.

K-8

Students will receive scientifically based reading research and evidence-based supplemental and intervention literacy instruction.



Targeted Interventions



Small Group Instruction

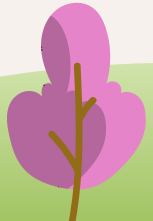
Tailored to the individual needs of struggling readers, small group instruction provides focused support and personalized guidance.

Phonics and Decoding

Explicit phonics instruction builds foundational reading skills, helping students decode words and improve fluency.

Comprehension Strategies

Teaching comprehension strategies empowers students to understand and interpret text, deepening their understanding of what they read.



Collaborative Approach: Engaging Families and Educators



1

Open communication between educators and families helps create a unified approach to supporting literacy development.

2

Families can be involved in the development of student reading plans, if their child is not meeting literacy benchmarks, and access to online resources to support literacy development at home.

3

Collaborative efforts ensure students receive consistent support both at school and at home, leading to more effective and lasting results.

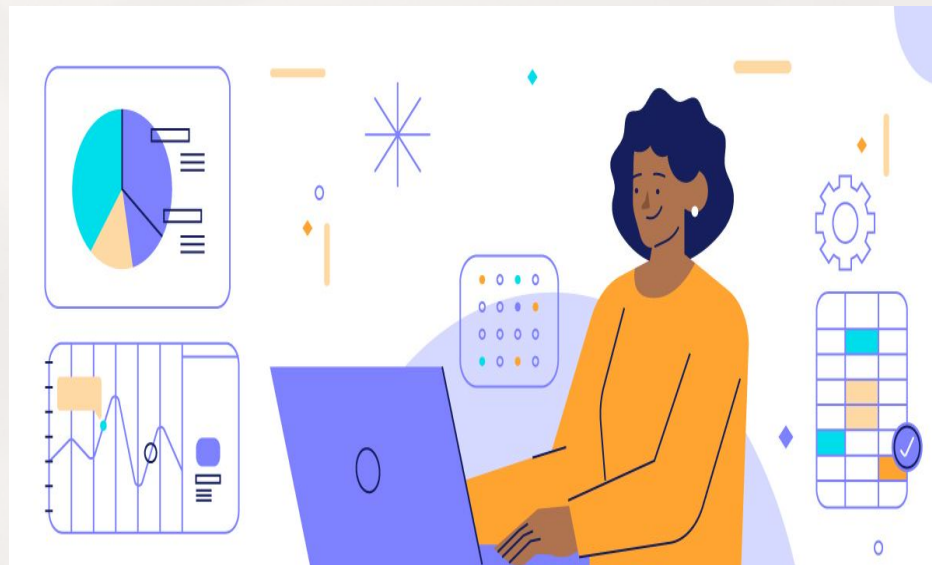
Data & Assessment

Universal Screening

Regular screening identifies students who may need additional support, allowing early intervention and preventing reading difficulties from escalating.

VALLSS K-3 -2024-2025

VALLSS 4-8- 2025-2026



Professional Development for Educators

Ongoing Training

Educators receive ongoing training to stay up-to-date on best practices in literacy instruction and the latest research.

Effective Strategies

Professional development focuses on implementing evidence-based strategies to address the needs of diverse learners and enhance literacy skills.



Division Literacy Plan



DIVISION LITERACY PLAN



DIVISION CONTACT INFORMATION

School Division: **Suffolk Public Schools**

Superintendent: **Dr. John B. Gordon III** | johnngordon@spsk12.net

Local School Board Chair: **Karen Jenkins** | karenjenkins@spsk12.net

Division VLA Lead: **Dr. Jonita Shabazz** | jonitashabazz@spsk12.net

Local Board Adoption Date for Division Comprehensive Plan: **5/9/2024**

SPS LITERACY VISION

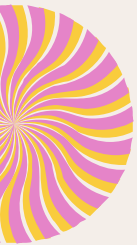
Suffolk Public Schools strives for excellence in education where every student is empowered to become confident, competent, and lifelong readers and writers. We are dedicated to fostering a community of students with strong literacy skills prepared to navigate and thrive in our ever-evolving world.



SPS LITERACY VISION

We prioritize:

- Delivering professional development on evidence-based literacy instruction and science-based reading research to the school community
- Use of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) throughout the entire literacy block
- Providing systematic, explicit, and evidence-based curriculum during reading and writing instruction
- Providing diverse and complex text to build students' background knowledge of the world and build critical thinking skills
- Data-driven decision-making to meet evolving needs
- Inclusive environments where every learner feels valued and supported
- Providing resources to families to support a literacy partnership



**What does this mean for
Suffolk Public Schools
students?**

Teacher & Student Support

Evidenced-based Instruction: Reading instruction is personalized based on the student's needs, as outlined in their IEP or Student Reading Plan; Students receive explicit, sequential, and cumulative instruction in phonics and language comprehension.



HIGH QUALITY INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Instructional materials aligned with science-based reading research reflect practices and skills are critical for learning to read.

Core Materials

- McGraw Hill, Wonders (K-5)

Supplemental Materials:

- Heggerty (K-1) - Phonological & Phonemic Awareness
- UFLI (University of Florida Institute)(K-2) - Phonics
- 95 Phonics Core Program- (3-5)-Phonics

Intervention Materials:

- Benchmark Phonics Intervention (K-5) - Phonological Awareness, Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency
- S.P.I.R.E (Specialized Program Individualizing Reading Excellence)(K-5) - Phonological Awareness, Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency
- Bridge the Gap (K-5) - Phonological Awareness & Phonemic Awareness

Teacher & Student Support

Targeted Intervention: Struggling readers receive small-group or one-on-one instruction tailored to their specific needs based on IEP or Student Reading Plans. Students also receive targeted skill support during flexible groups.

VLP Student Reading Plan



Teacher & Student Support

Specialized Staff: General education teachers, special education teachers, and literacy specialists work together to design and implement instruction.

Alignment with State Standards: Schools align curriculum and instruction with the Virginia English Standards of Learning (SOL).



Teacher & Student Support

Ongoing Training: Educators receive training on evidence-based reading instruction, focusing on phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Parent & Family Engagement: Schools provide families with strategies to support reading development at home; Schools inform parents about their child's reading progress and any needed interventions.



STUDENT ASSESSMENT & PROGRESS

Required Assessments:

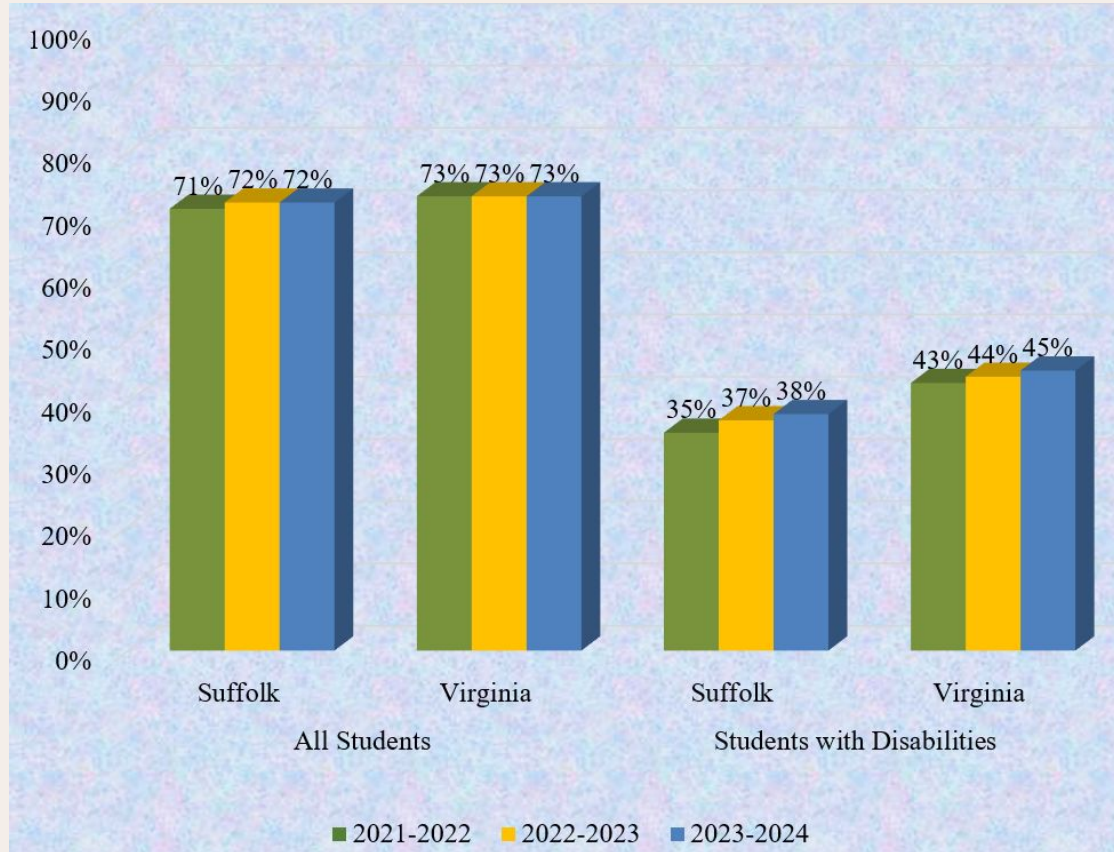
- Virginia Language and Literacy Screener (VALLS) (Pre-K-3), formerly PALS

Individualized Student Reading Plans (All Identified High-Risk Students)

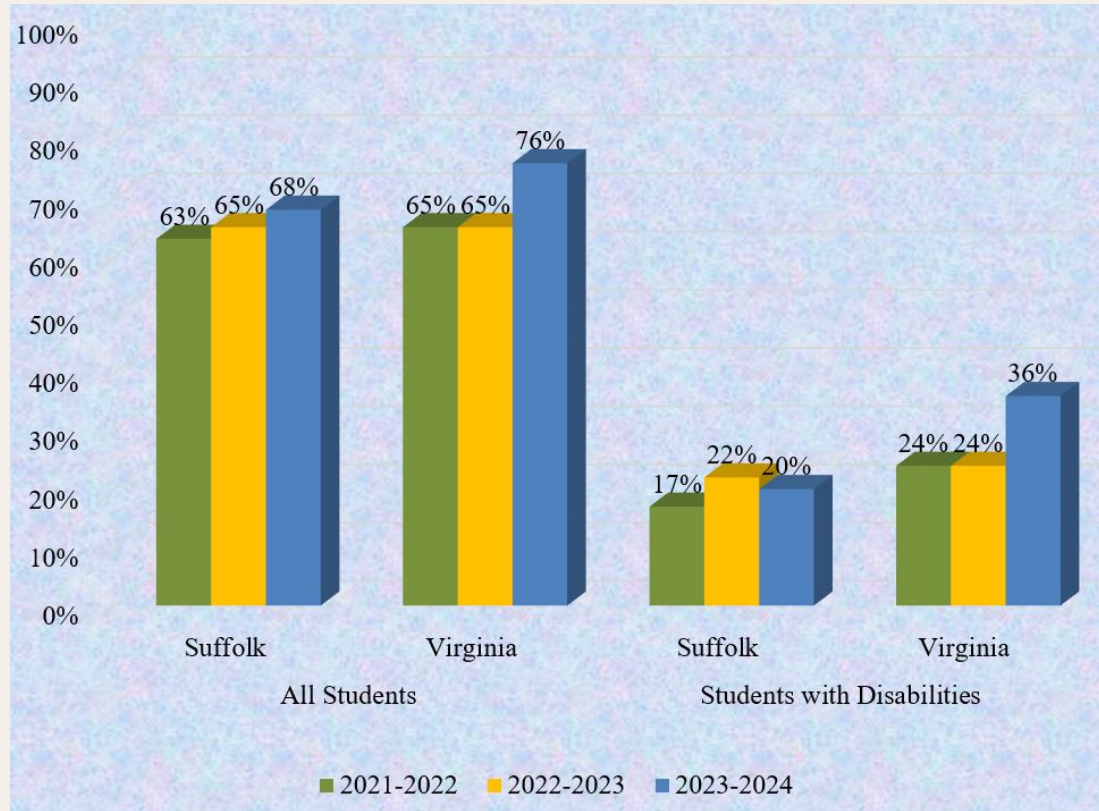
Additional Screeners and Progress Monitoring Tools:

- LETRS Screener (Grades 3-5)
- VDOE Growth Assessments (Grades 3-5)
- STAR Screener & Diagnostic Assessment (Grades K-5)
- Classroom Formative Assessments (K-5)
- District Common Assessments (2-5)

Reading SOL Results



Writing SOL Results





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At Home Supports for Building Literacy





The Building Blocks of Literacy

Fluency

Word Recognition

Print Awareness/Concepts

Phonological Awareness

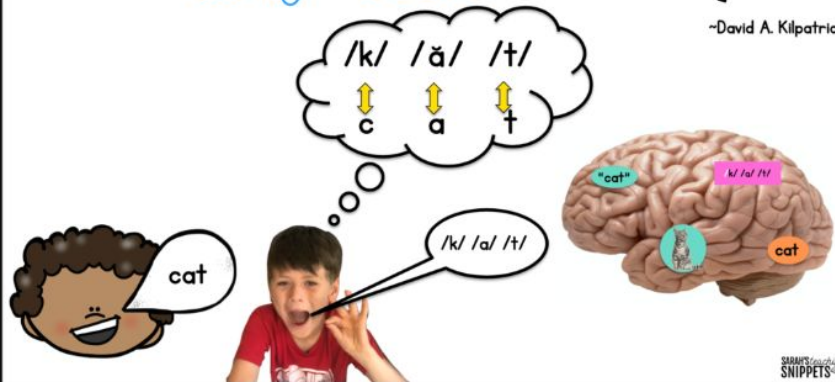
Oral Language



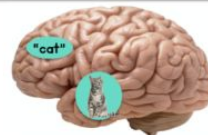
How the Brain Learns to Read

**“Orthographic Mapping
is the *process* we use
to permanently *store words*
into *long-term* memory.”**

~David A. Kilpatrick



Pronunciation and meaning of "cat" is already familiar to the child.



"cat"

We need to help that student pull apart the sounds in that word to identify the exact order of the individual sounds.



/k/ /ă/ /t/



Then, those sounds are connected to the correct symbols (letters). By examining the order of the letters and connecting to the sounds, they are beginning to map this word.



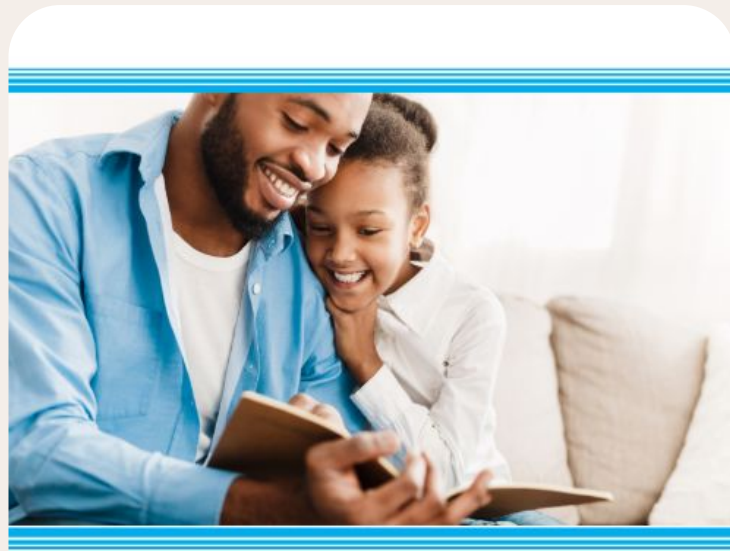
c a t

With orthographic mapping, the *pronunciation* of a word or word part is broken down into its *phoneme* (sound) parts, then LINKED to *strings* of *letters*. In other words, the **spelling** of *cat* becomes BONDED to the pronunciation of cat.



Decoding (Reading) Tips for Families

This guide provides families with support in help students with decoding.



Decoding Tips for Parents

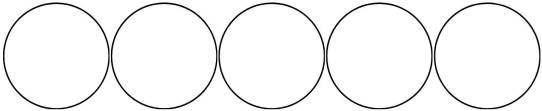
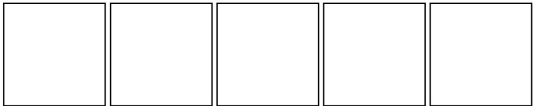


5 common word reading errors
and how to help





Encoding (Spelling) Tips for Families

PHONEME-GRAPHEME MAPPING

TAP IT AND MAP IT	
GRAPH IT (WRITE IT)	
READ IT	
WRITE IT	


Phoneme-Grapheme Mapping is a high-leverage practice that helps facilitate orthographic mapping needed for proficient reading.






Reading Comprehension

What is Comprehension

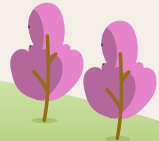
- Thinking driven by text.
 - A complex, invisible process
 - The interaction of the text, the reader, the activity, and sociocultural context
- 

Barriers to Comprehension

- Background Knowledge
 - Vocabulary
 - Text Structure (sentence level and whole text)
 - Author's Craft
 - Fluency
- 

The Three I's of Reading Aloud

Inspire
Instruct
Invest



What is Being Described?

The uppermost ring of the platform formed the base of the tower's top section, a vast cupola of crystal-glass petals, ribbed together with steel spars that curved up to form a finial mast at the apex high above. The entire structure creaked and slid, turning slightly one way then another as it responded phototropically to the blooms of light outside in the night. On one side of the platform, its back to the great windows, sat a golden throne. It was a massive object, a heavy plinth of three golden steps rising to a vast gilt chair with a high back and coiled arms.

Horus Rising, Dan Abnett

Ways to increase background knowledge:

- select nonfiction books at the library
- watch documentaries
- kids friendly online newspaper articles

Tips for Reading with your Student(s)



Resources

Virginia Literacy Partnerships-Resources for Families

Language and Literacy Screening in VA Brochure

VDOE Family Supports



Thank you!

