

THE VIRGINIA LITERACY ACT

Overview for VASS – October 31, 2022

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OBJECTIVE AND AGENDA

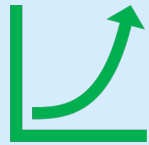
Today's presentation will provide an overview of the Virginia Literacy Act (VLA), what to expect when and how to get involved.

- Overview of the VLA
- Big Picture: What Success Looks Like
- High Level Timeline: What to Expect When
- Opportunities for Engagement

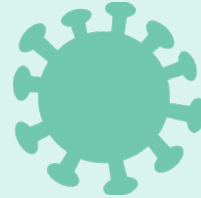
Overview of the VLA

WHY WE NEED THE VLA

To reverse the trend in literacy levels



To address learning loss from the pandemic



To ensure all children read at benchmark in K-3



To provide support for increasing numbers of at-risk readers



To provide teachers with evidence-based instructional strategies and curricula



WHAT IS THE VIRGINIA LITERACY ACT?

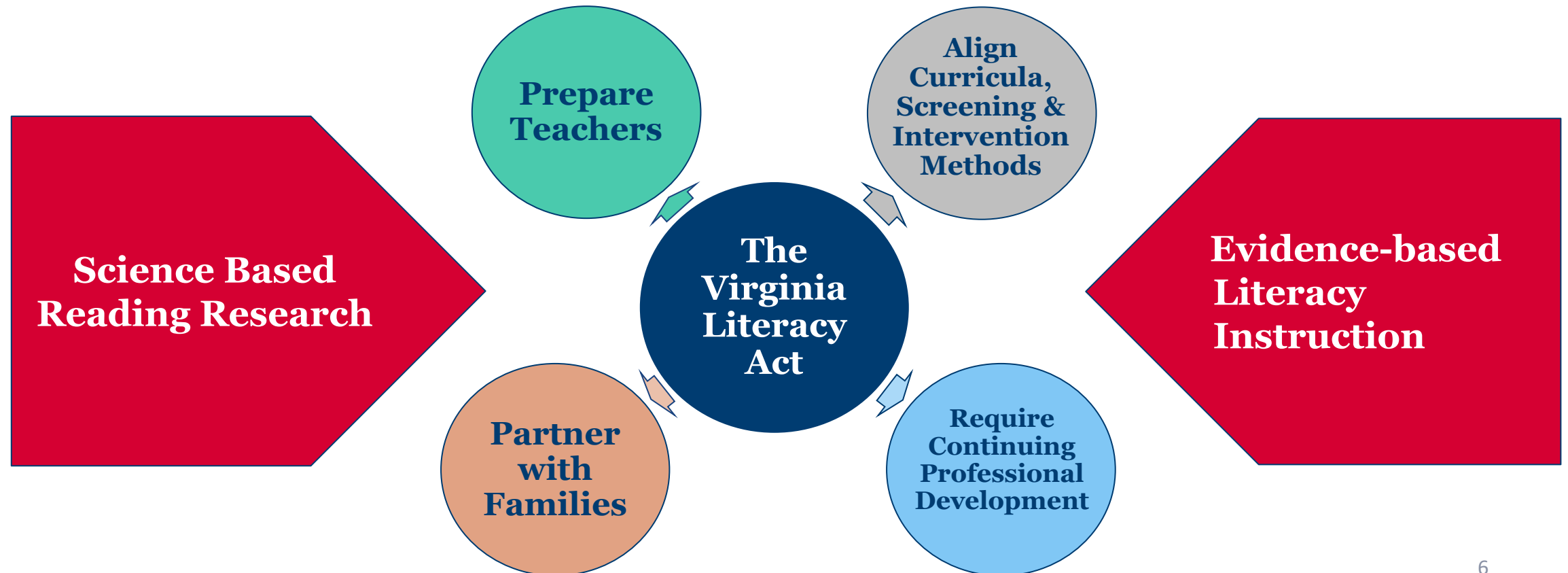
The Virginia Literacy Act (VLA) is a comprehensive, multi-pronged approach for ensuring evidence-based literacy instruction is implemented in all K-3 classrooms.

- House Bill 319 (Coyner) and Senate Bill 616 (Lucas), both known as the Virginia Literacy Act, passed unanimously out of the 2022 General Assembly.
- There is state funding to address the costs of these new initiatives.
- VLA provisions become effective beginning with the 2024-2025 school year.*
- Delegate Delaney's HB418 and HB419 are both complements to the Act and address the allowable uses of Early Intervention Reading Initiative funds as well as the audit and approval of educator preparation programs.

**Staffing ratios for reading specialists go into effect for 2023-2024, with funding to support this goal and flexibility in who can meet this requirement.*

HOW THE VLA WILL IMPROVE LITERACY

Virginia is taking the lead nationwide to reverse these trends and improve early literacy outcomes for the Commonwealth's youngest learners.



KEY COMPONENTS OF THE VLA (1 OF 2)

Defines Key Terms

- Establishes the definition of evidence-based literacy instruction and science-based reading instruction.

Aligns Curricula, Screening and Intervention Methods

- Requires both the instructional and intervention programs in grades K-3 be aligned with science-based reading research, as set out in a division-wide literacy plan.
- Maintains the current screening model to identify students in need of intervention, and requires the development of reading plans for students below the benchmark.
- Adds a division-wide staffing ratio of one reading specialist per 550 students in K-3.

Requires Continuing Professional Development and Training

- Requires principals and certain teachers be provided with professional development in science-based reading research and evidence-based literacy instruction.

KEY COMPONENTS OF THE VLA (2 OF 2)

Partners with Families

- Ensures parents are engaged in the development of student reading plans and have access to resources to support literacy development at home.

Aligns Educator Preparation and Licensure

- Requires certain educator preparation programs to ensure candidates have a program of coursework and demonstrate mastery in science-based reading research and evidence-based literacy instruction.
- Stipulates that the literacy assessment for licensure or alternate route to licensure with certain endorsements include a test of science-based reading research and evidence-based literacy instruction.
- Requires every person seeking initial licensure with certain endorsements complete study in science-based reading research and evidence-based literacy instruction.
- Establishes a microcredential program for earning an add-on reading specialist endorsement (when needed).

Big Picture: What Success Looks Like

WHO WILL BENEFIT?



K-3 STUDENTS, FAMILIES AND TEACHERS



Every **student** in kindergarten to grade 3:

- ✓ Receives core literacy instruction from an evidence-based literacy curriculum¹ for the entire literacy block
- ✓ Receives additional evidence-based instruction and intervention, as outlined in a student reading plan, if they do not meet literacy benchmarks



Every **family** of a student in kindergarten to grade 3:

- ✓ Has access to free online evidence-based literacy instruction resources to support their child's literacy development at home
- ✓ Can participate in the development of their child's student reading plan, if they do not meet literacy benchmarks



Every **teacher** of students in kindergarten to grade 3:

- ✓ Uses evidence-based literacy curriculum for the entire literacy block
- ✓ Assesses student learning using approved literacy screeners routinely throughout the year
- ✓ Uses student-level data to inform both whole group instruction and individualized instruction and intervention
- ✓ Provided with pre-service preparation and/or in-service training in evidence-based literacy instruction

SCHOOL DIVISIONS AND EDUCATOR PREP



Every reading specialist working with students kindergarten to grade 3:

- ✓ Coordinates and implements intervention services for students not meeting literacy benchmarks
- ✓ Develops, oversees implementation of, and monitors student progress on student reading plans, in collaboration with teachers and families



Every division:

- ✓ Develops a division-wide literacy plan
- ✓ Ensures all kindergarten through grade 3 teachers have and use evidence-based literacy curriculum
- ✓ Staffs at least one reading specialist for every 550 students in kindergarten through grade 3
- ✓ Provides professional development² in evidence-based literacy instruction to teachers, reading specialists and principals
- ✓ Receives coaching and support from regional literacy coaches



Every educator preparation program:

- ✓ Requires aspiring teachers and reading specialists to complete coursework in and demonstrate a mastery of evidence-based literacy instruction

VLA = COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORTS FOR ALL

Working together we can improve literacy for all students in Virginia.



- ✔ **Policymakers**
- ✔ **Partners**
- ✔ **Division Leaders**
- ✔ **Reading Specialists**
- ✔ **Teachers**
- ✔ **Families**
- ✔ **Students**
- ✔ **Higher Education**

Timeline: What to Expect When

KEY ACTIVITIES FOR THE VDOE IN 22-23

In 2022-2023, the VDOE will support divisions to prepare for VLA implementation by:

- Building and running a process to identify best-in-class literacy instructional materials and professional development providers.
- Developing guidelines and tools for supporting students who have not yet met reading benchmarks using a student-specific reading plan.
- Providing statewide training for reading specialists, beginning in Summer 2023.
- Developing guidance and tools for divisions to build literacy plans.

KEY ACTIVITIES FOR DIVISIONS IN 22-23

In 2022-2023, school divisions can prepare by:

- Reviewing approved K-3 curriculum and instructional materials and choose the best option(s) based on individual school division needs.
- Evaluating which students are not yet meeting reading benchmarks, introduce the concept of using student specific reading plans and begin planning for implementation of reading plans.
- Calculating reading specialist ratios and adding staff if needed.
- Ensuring that appropriate staff can participate in statewide training beginning in Summer 2023.
- Beginning to build literacy plans.

HIGH LEVEL TIMELINE FOR 2023-2024

In 2023-2024:

- There will be a second process to identify best-in-class literacy instructional materials focused on supplemental and intervention materials.
- VDOE will release a calendar of annual VLA data collection and reporting, along with sample templates and divisions will begin submitting data.
- Statewide training options in evidence-based literacy instruction and science based reading research will be available for teachers and principals, beginning Summer 2024.
- Educator preparation programs will begin to institute these shifts and provide additional information and technical support.

Overview of Instructional Materials Process

OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

- The VDOE has to recommend 3 types of K-3 instructional programs for VBOE approval:
 1. Core curriculum
 2. Supplemental materials
 3. Intervention materials
- VDOE will start with core ELA curriculum to ensure comprehensiveness and coherence and be responsive to field concerns on time needed for implementation.

First Round (Launches October 2022)

- Core curriculum only

Second Round (Launches in 2023)

- Supplemental and intervention materials
- Core curriculum that has not yet been reviewed

- The Virginia Literacy Partnerships (VLP) will establish and conduct the first two rounds of reviews of instructional materials.
- Process must align with textbook process.

DETAIL ON THE PROCESS

- Virginia's process is modeled on the processes developed in other states who have undertaken similar work in recent years (CO, AR, RI).
- VLP, in partnership with VDOE, aims to develop a comprehensive and transparent process.
- Review teams will be made of 3-4 educational stakeholders from Virginia who have expertise in early literacy, represent the diversity of Virginia's schools and understand the Virginia context.
- All review teams will have a VLP team facilitator and reviewers will be trained on process and rubric(s) and monitored for consistency and accuracy.
- Review process will include two phases within each round.
- VLP review teams will make recommendations to the VDOE which, in turn, will make recommendations to the VBOE.

Opportunities for Engagement

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT

Implementing the VLA successfully will require building partnerships, securing buy-in and ensuring the perspectives of leaders, educators, experts and families are fully included.

- Watch for meetings of the Virginia Literacy Act Advisory Work Group.
- Ensure your curriculum and other instructional materials are reviewed.
- Support staff who are reviewers or participate in the Advisory Work Group.
- Participate in Virginia's New Literacy Screener Pilot. Reach out to literacy@virginia.edu.
- Be prepared for additional information and guidance to be provided via Superintendent Memos, newsletters, in-person meetings and webinars. Additional updates will be shared on the [Virginia Literacy Act webpage](#).

Questions?