

# Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan FAQ



## What is the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan? Is it a mandate?

The Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan, mandated by [Public Act 103-0402](#), required ISBE to produce such a plan and make it available to districts by January 31, 2024. The plan serves as a guidance document for districts, created through an extensive stakeholder engagement process.

While it is an important resource, there is no legislative mandate for districts to adopt or align their practices to the plan.



## How can districts get started with the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan?

We are excited for stakeholders to begin this important work within their local context. We recommend the following steps.

### ACCESS THE PLAN

- Download the plan and resources, including the Getting Started Toolkit, from the [ISBE Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan webpage](#).
- [Sign up for updates](#) to stay informed on the latest guidance and attend office hours to ask questions.

### ASSEMBLE A LITERACY TEAM

- Form a dedicated and diverse team of key stakeholders focused on literacy with a range of expertise, including instruction, curriculum development, assessment, and intervention strategies.

### COLLECT AND ANALYZE DATA

- Gather and review state and local assessment data, classroom grades, and other relevant metrics.
- Conduct a resource audit to identify strengths and gaps.



## What timeline is there for districts to implement and be in alignment with the Plan?

There is no legislative timeline or mandate for districts to implement the plan. Districts are encouraged to adopt components of the plan at their own pace, based on local needs and priorities.



## Do districts need to submit local literacy plans to ISBE?

No, there is no requirement for districts to submit local literacy plans to ISBE.



## How are educator preparation programs incorporating the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan?

ISBE is working to meet the July 1, 2026, legislative deadline under [Public Act 103-0402](#) by:

- **Developing a Transition Plan:** Updating the elementary education content test to include a valid language and literacy subscore.
- **Establishing Passing Standards:** Setting rules and cut-scores for the literacy subscore.
- **Ensuring Data Transparency:** Publishing data on candidates taking and passing the literacy portion of the test.

To accomplish these goals, ISBE is collaborating with a community of practice composed of representatives from Illinois Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs). This partnership is instrumental in designing a rubric for evaluating preparation programs, aligning them with the literacy plan, and ensuring they are ready to meet the legislative requirements.



### **What guidance is available for selecting new literacy curricula?**

The ISBE Standards and Instruction Department provides the [Curriculum Evaluation Tool](#), developed for for statewide use in the 2021-22 school year. The [Literacy Specific Addendum to the Curriculum Evaluation Tool](#) was released to further support districts in evaluating literacy curricula effectively. These tools are accessible on the [ISBE Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan webpage](#).



### **Will ISBE provide a list of approved or aligned curricula?**

No, ISBE does not endorse or require specific curricula. Instead, districts are encouraged to use the [Curriculum Evaluation Tool](#) and the [Literacy Specific Addendum](#) to evaluate and select materials that align with their local goals and evidence-based practices.



### **Are there resources for high school literacy?**

Yes, the plan includes guidance in Section 1 on content and disciplinary literacy for high school students, as well as strategies tailored to the needs of diverse learners at all levels.



### **What resources are available to support districts?**

The [Getting Started Toolkit](#) and other resources can be found on the [ISBE Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan webpage](#). These include a local literacy plan template, guidance documents, and links to professional learning opportunities.



### **What professional learning opportunities are available?**

ISBE regularly offers professional learning opportunities and shares recordings of past sessions. Visit the [ISBE Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan webpage](#) for the most current information.



### **Why doesn't the plan use the term "science of reading"?**

The plan avoids labels like "science of reading" or "balanced literacy" to maintain focus on evidence-based practices and current understandings of literacy development. This approach ensures inclusivity while addressing the complexities of literacy instruction without political or ideological bias. (See page 14 of the [Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan](#) for more details.)



### **Who can be hired as a Title I Reading teacher?**

Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), educators in Title I programs must meet state certification requirements. In Illinois, this means holding a Professional Educator License with a reading teacher or reading specialist endorsement.



### **Will the Curriculum Evaluation Tool change in response to the literacy plan?**

The [Literacy Specific Addendum](#), released in June 2024, was developed to enhance the [Curriculum Evaluation Tool](#) and align it with the literacy plan's goals.



### **Will there be evaluation tools for supplemental materials?**

The [Curriculum Evaluation Tool](#) and the [Literacy Specific Addendum](#) are primarily designed for reviewing core instructional materials. Districts are encouraged to develop their own criteria for evaluating supplemental materials.