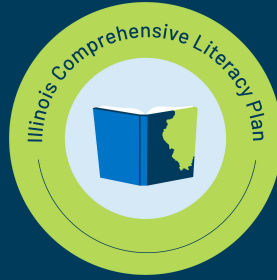


READER'S GUIDE

2024 Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan



STATE LEADERS



Reader's Guide: State Leaders



This guide is designed as a companion to the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan to support state leaders in adopting of the plan and implementing evidence-based literacy practices. Tailored for individuals in state-level educational leadership, it includes targeted strategies, recommends readings appropriate for their roles, and provides workbook pages for implementation. This resource aims to empower state leaders to advance literacy instruction and encourage equitable learning environments across the state, facilitating literacy success for all students.

Guide Audience

State-level decision-makers with authority over literacy policies and resources include the Illinois State Board of Education, state education agencies, higher education institutions, the governor, legislators, and education policy stakeholders. They are responsible for shaping literacy development and instruction at both state and local levels of the education system.

Overview of the Plan

The Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan establishes a guiding framework to enhance literacy instruction statewide. The plan targets all educational levels, emphasizing equity and inclusiveness while adhering to evidence-based practices. Central to the plan is the commitment to address and rectify persistent literacy disparities. It aims to unify efforts across various educational systems to ensure every student develops proficient literacy skills.

The plan focuses on three main goals:

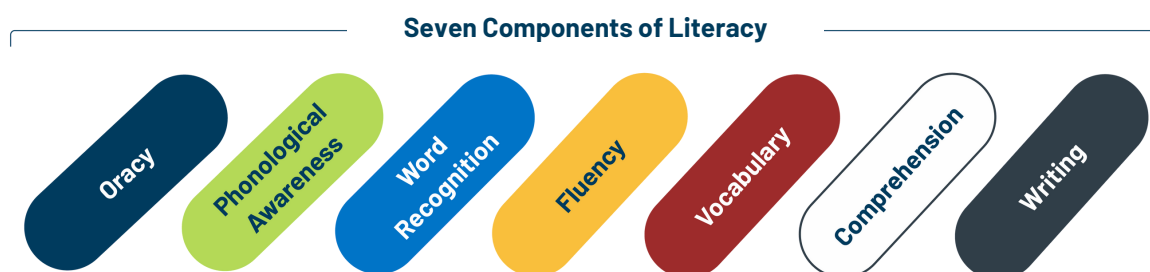
GOAL 1: Every **student** receives high-quality, evidence-based literacy instruction.

GOAL 2: Every **educator** is prepared and continuously supported to deliver high-quality, evidence-based literacy instruction.

GOAL 3: Every **leader** is equipped to create, maintain, and sustain equitable conditions for high-quality, evidence-based literacy instruction.

The Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan encourages local decision-making and adaptability, urging districts to customize their approaches based on specific needs and data within the local context. It's focus is on core, Tier 1 instruction, supplemented by discussions on interventions and differentiation strategies, targeting the literacy needs of Illinois students and working to close educational gaps.

The plan identifies Seven Components of Literacy at the core of every effective literacy program.



The plan contains six sections that guide readers through the careful consideration of creating and implementing a comprehensive literacy program that is systematically aligned.

The **Introduction** articulates the need based on data for a state literacy plan and outlines the vision, purpose, and objectives, serving as the foundational overview of the plan.

Section 2: Educator Professional Learning and Development details the continuous development and support of educators to ensure the delivery of high-quality literacy instruction, emphasizing educator preparation programs alignment with the plan.

Section 4: Support and Implementation Considerations highlights critical strategies for developing and implementing the literacy plan, through a workbook style format.



Section 1: Framework for Effective Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction establishes the core strategies for delivering impactful literacy instruction based on evidence-based practices, across the **Seven Components of Literacy**.

Section 3: Effective Literacy Leadership focuses on the role of leaders in driving high-quality, evidence-based literacy instruction, while advocating for collaboration, culturally responsive instruction, and data-informed decision-making.

Section 5: Tools and Resources provides a list of resources and tools to aid districts, teachers, and families in implementing the literacy plan.

Engaging with the Plan

Below are general tips for engaging with the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan as a state leader:

- **Provide Guidance and Resources:** Offer robust guidance and accessible resources to support the implementation of the literacy plan at local and regional levels.
- **Foster Statewide Collaboration:** Encourage collaboration among districts, regions, and various educational stakeholders to share best practices, challenges, and successes in literacy instruction.
- **Monitor and Support Policy Implementation:** Regularly monitor the implementation of literacy policies and initiatives across the state.
- **Invest in Professional Development:** Allocate funds and resources for ongoing professional development focused on literacy.
- **Promote Equity and Accessibility:** Ensure that literacy initiatives and policies prioritize equity, aiming to close the achievement gap and provide equal opportunities for literacy development to all students, particularly those in underserved communities.
- **Leverage Data for Decision Making:** Utilize data-driven approaches to inform policy decisions, allocate resources, and assess the impact of literacy initiatives.
- **Evaluate and Adjust Strategies:** Continuously evaluate the impact of literacy policies and programs. Be willing to adjust strategies based on feedback, research findings, and educational trends to ensure ongoing improvement in literacy instruction and student achievement.

Sample Roadmap through the Plan

The Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan incorporates various stakeholder roles that exist in education that each uniquely support literacy. Understanding your role offers insights into effective implementation and collaboration for positive student outcomes. The plan is designed to support varied uses and can easily be read by section and in varying order.

One sample roadmap to the Plan specifically for state leaders is:

Introduction.....8-21

- **Why is This Plan Necessary?** on pages 10 and 11
 - Identify existing statewide data related to literacy.
- **Illinois' Guiding Values for Literacy** on pages 12 and 13
 - Examine statewide literacy initiatives for evidence of these values.

Section 1: Framework for Effective Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction.....22-102

- **Seven Components of Literacy** on pages 33 through 61
 - Align professional learning opportunities to each component.
- **Goal 1 Workbook: State Leaders** on pages 88 through 89
 - Reflect and review implementation considerations, next steps, and reflection questions.

Section 2: Educator Professional Learning and Development.....103-129

- **Educator Preparation and Training** on pages 105 through 109
 - Analyze how your role supports the preparation and training of educators.
- **Professional Learning for In-Service Educators** on pages 109 through 112
 - Evaluate existing professional learning with the criteria outlined in this section and identify ways to strengthen.
- **Goal 2 Workbook: State Leaders** on pages 125 through 126
 - Reflect and review implementation considerations, next steps, and reflection questions.

Section 3: Effective Literacy Leadership.....130-151

- **Attending to Equity** on pages 130 through 131
 - Reflect on how your role can support the [Key Actions](#) described here.
- **Foundations and Responsibilities of Effective Literacy Leadership** on pages 131 and 132
 - Align your role with the important responsibilities outlined.
- **Strategic Leadership in Literacy** on page 132
 - Reflect on how state leadership actions align with information described here.
- **Leadership Levers to Promote Literacy Success** on pages 133 through 134
 - Consider the levers described and how they apply to your role.
- **Goal 3 Workbook: State Leaders** on pages 147 through 148
 - Reflect and review implementation considerations, next steps, and reflection questions.

Section 5: Tools and Resources.....174-192

Workbook

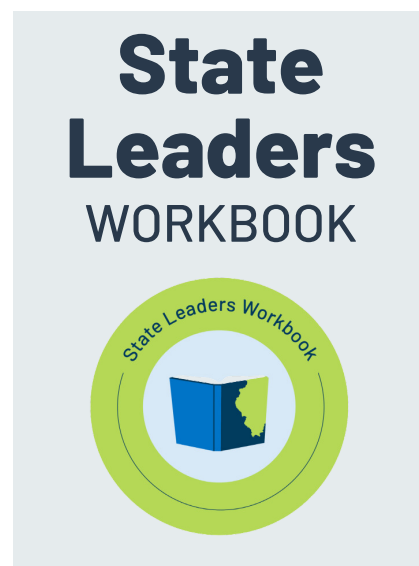
The **Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan** includes workbook pages at the end of its sections, offering a hands-on approach to apply the concepts presented in the narrative. These workbooks combine reflection tools and action planning to enhance user engagement.

Designed to cater to varied audiences, the first three sections include practical implementation tips, reflective questions, and suggested next steps tailored to address the specific challenges and viewpoints of each audience group. The series is rounded off with **Section 4: Support and Implementation Considerations**, which provides essential guidance on preparing for literacy initiatives. Section 4 is most impactful when completed as a team with other local stakeholders engaged in the work of improving literacy instruction. **All workbook pages are included next in this guide.**

The overarching goal of these workbook pages is to promote a unified and informed literacy approach, encouraging users to align educational insights, evaluate strengths and weaknesses, confront biases, and prepare for future literacy efforts.

The following tips are ways state leaders can maximize the benefits of these pages:

- **Align Workbook Insights with Statewide Goals:** Review the workbook pages with a lens toward aligning the insights and strategies presented with your existing literacy goals. Consider how the concepts can inform or enhance your current plans, ensuring that literacy initiatives are cohesive and strategically integrated across the state.
- **Foster Interagency Collaboration:** Literacy development spans beyond the K-12 education system, touching early childhood, adult education, and even workforce development. Use the workbook as a tool to foster collaboration among various state agencies, including those focused on early childhood education, higher education, and labor.
- **Incorporate Data and Research into Policy Decisions:** Leverage data and research to inform the development of literacy policies and the allocation of resources. Use the action plans and reflection tools within the workbook to identify key areas of need and to set measurable goals for literacy improvement.
- **Engage Stakeholders in the Literacy Conversation:** Create opportunities for stakeholders at all levels, including educators, administrators, parents, community organizations, and lawmakers, to engage with the content of the workbook and contribute to the state literacy plan.



GOAL 1

Every **student** receives high-quality, evidence-based literacy instruction.

Implementation Considerations

- ✓ Literacy should be a focus for all students, grades, and content areas.
- ✓ Curriculum and access to resources must be equitable across the state.
- ✓ Localized contexts must be considered. Differing support may be needed across regions.
- ✓ Ongoing research continues to change the literacy landscape.
- ✓ Students in most need of literacy support will benefit from prioritizing the commitment to equity.

Next Steps

- Communicate the comprehensive literacy plan to all stakeholders and provide aligned resources and training.
- Provide an evaluation tool for selecting high-quality materials to support the implementation of the literacy plan and prioritize the selection of materials that meet the diverse needs of all students.
- Monitor state trends in student data and provide timely, actionable data to educators to inform instruction and intervention.
- Identify areas of need and target resources to support students in high-poverty areas or those facing other systemic barriers to literacy development.
- Require professional learning opportunities to be aligned to the latest research and evidence-based practices.

NOTES

Reflection Questions

1. How will state leaders ensure a comprehensive, inclusive, and equitable perspective is used to attend to student learning?
2. How can state leaders meet the diverse needs of all students, including English learners, students with disabilities, and students from marginalized and disenfranchised communities?
3. How can state leaders ensure that assessments provide timely, actionable data to inform instruction and intervention?
4. How can state leaders ensure that all schools have equitable access to literacy resources and opportunities, particularly in areas with high rates of poverty or other systemic barriers to literacy development?
5. What other obstacles exist in meeting this goal?

GOAL 2

Every **educator** is prepared and continuously supported to deliver high-quality, evidence-based literacy instruction.

Implementation Considerations

- ✓ Shifting instructional practices require significant investments at many levels.
- ✓ Professional learning must consider the sociodemographic needs of teachers and learners.
- ✓ State leaders must be proactive in addressing obstacles related to funding and resources.
- ✓ Clear communication of state-level literacy initiatives is necessary.
- ✓ State level monitoring and evaluation of literacy outcomes is essential to statewide progress.
- ✓ The state should lead the work in collaborating with educational stakeholders to refine and improve literacy initiatives.

Next Steps

- Provide guidance on professional learning that can be leveraged in alignment with the Comprehensive Literacy Plan.
- Establish and fund accessible, relevant, ongoing, high-quality professional learning.
- Promote professional learning opportunities through established networks.
- Provide support to schools in focusing their efforts on the most effective literacy strategies and initiatives, such as through targeted professional development and coaching.
- Establish a centralized literacy resource center for districts and regions.

NOTES

Reflection Questions

1. What statewide data can be collected and analyzed to assess literacy outcomes?
2. How can state leaders ensure that all educators have access to the latest research and evidence-based practices related to literacy instruction and assessment?
3. How can state leaders support educators in applying evidence-based practices to meet the diverse needs of all learners, including Multilingual Learners, Advanced Learners, Learners with Specialized Needs, and students from marginalized and disenfranchised communities?
4. How can state leaders create a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement around literacy instruction and assessment among educators at all levels of the education system?
5. As best practices and evidence-based research continues to evolve, how will ISBE ensure the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan considers longitudinal and current best practices?
6. What obstacles exist that prevent us from achieving this goal?

GOAL 3

Every **leader** is equipped to create, maintain, and sustain equitable conditions for high-quality, evidence-based literacy instruction.

Implementation Considerations

- ✓ Varying levels of understanding and acceptance of the Comprehensive Literacy Plan.
- ✓ ROE/ISC office staff are integral in supporting the implementation of the literacy plan as an intermediary between ISBE and local districts.
- ✓ State leaders provide the overarching vision and guidance for literacy education statewide.
- ✓ Aligning state policies, standards, and assessments with literacy goals is fundamental.
- ✓ State leaders are instrumental in driving systemic change for literacy success.

Next Steps

- Collaborate with teacher preparation programs to ensure they are aligning longitudinal and current evidenced-based practices when providing literacy instruction to preservice teachers.
- Provide opportunities for educators to work together, share best practices, and provide feedback on each other's instructional and assessment practices.
- Establish clear criteria and standards for evaluating literacy initiatives and programs to ensure they align with state priorities and goals for literacy development.
- Develop and communicate statewide literacy standards and guidelines.
- Invest in research to identify and promote effective literacy programs.
- Collaborate with educators, researchers, and policymakers to create a cohesive statewide literacy strategy.

NOTES

Reflection Questions

1. How can state leaders ensure that all literacy initiatives and programs align with the state's goals and priorities for literacy development?
2. How can state leaders support schools and districts in prioritizing and focusing their efforts on the most effective literacy strategies and initiatives?
3. How can state leaders create a system for assessing the effectiveness of literacy initiatives and programs, and making data-driven decisions about whether to continue or modify them?
4. What obstacles exist that prevent us from achieving this goal?
5. How can I engage with other states to learn from their successful literacy programs?

SECTION 4:

Support and Implementation Considerations

These workbook pages provide guidance in the form of suggestions for reflections and discussion at different levels to ensure that every system is aligned to promote literacy success by streamlining and focusing initiatives on literacy. These pages were designed with local literacy teams in mind, and are perhaps most dynamic when completed with a varied group of stakeholders in preparation to developing or revising a local literacy plan.

Additionally, consider the following suggestions:

- **Establish Clear Objectives and Roles:** Ensure that every participant understands the overarching goals of the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan and how it relates to your local context. Assign clear roles and responsibilities to group members based on their expertise, interests, and stakeholder perspectives.
- **Foster Open Communication and Collaboration:** Encourage an environment where all participants feel valued and empowered to share their perspectives. Emphasize the importance of constructive feedback and collaborative problem-solving. The diverse backgrounds of community members, families, and educators can offer a wealth of insights into practical, culturally relevant applications of the literacy plan.
- **Utilize the Workbook as a Guided Tool, Not a Checklist:** Approach the workbook as a framework for discussion and planning rather than a mere checklist to be completed. Engage deeply with each section, encouraging the group to discuss how the principles and strategies of the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan can be adapted and implemented in your local context. This involves critical thinking about the unique needs of your community and how the plan can address them.
- **Incorporate Data and Research:** Make informed decisions by incorporating local literacy data, research findings, and best practices into your discussions and planning. This can involve reviewing local literacy rates, school performance metrics, and community feedback. Use this data to identify priorities and tailor the literacy plan to address specific challenges and opportunities within your community.
- **Plan for Implementation and Monitoring:** Develop a clear action plan for implementing the literacy strategies discussed. This plan should include specific steps, timelines, responsible parties, and metrics for evaluating progress. Engaging varied stakeholders in this ongoing process ensures continued relevance and responsiveness to the community's needs.

The effectiveness of the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan in your local context depends on how well it is adapted to meet the unique needs of your community. By approaching the workbook with a mindset of collaboration, inclusivity, and evidence-based planning, your group can develop a comprehensive and effective local literacy plan.

**Assessing Your Current
Literacy Landscape**

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Reflection: What are the **strengths** of the school or district? Consider what school/district/state data suggests and challenges faced by current literacy programs.

Guiding Questions:

1. How can **strengths** be built upon and challenges addressed?
2. What **evidence-based instructional strategies** need to be incorporated?
3. What programs does the school/district have in place to support the needs of various **learners**, including learners who are from varying cultural backgrounds, multilingual learners, high-incidence special needs learners, advanced learners, and learners from the range of ages and grade levels?

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Reflection: What patterns or trends can be observed through **student performance data** (examining a range of years/school level/district/state)? Close attention should be paid to the lowest performing sub-groups of students, as their performance may reflect most clearly on the strength of the school/district's literacy instruction. Disaggregation of assessment data should be completed by, but not limited to, the following categories:

- Grade levels and cohorts, as appropriate.
- Student demographic identifiers: race/ethnicity, low income, homelessness, migrant status.
- Special programming enrollment: Individualized Education Program/504 Plan students, English learner designations, Title 1 service identification, and identification for advanced learner programs.

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Guiding Questions:

1. How can this data inform **literacy improvement** efforts?
2. How do assessment tools align across grade levels to **build** a coherent system?
3. What type of **data** is being collected at each grade level?
4. How can this data **inform** literacy improvement efforts?
5. Does the data **align** with what we know about literacy development?
6. Are benchmark assessments evaluating **key literacy components** for each grade level?
7. Are these assessments identifying students in need or evaluating **student growth** in literacy components?

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Reflection: Who are the key **stakeholders** in the literacy initiative of the school or district?

Guiding Questions:

1. How can the school/district involve these stakeholders in **shaping** the local literacy plan?

2. How can the school/district communicate the process of instructional shifts in **teaching** literacy and what considerations will be made for the building towards buy-in of the local literacy plan?

Setting Clear Goals
**Defining Your Vision
and Mission**

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Reflection: What is envisioned for literacy experiences in the school/district and how will these lead to improved **student outcomes**?

Guiding Question:

1. How can a clear **vision and mission** guide the local literacy plan?

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Reflection: What specific **literacy goals** are most critical for students in your school/district?

Guiding Question:

1. How will progress be measured toward the **achievement** of these goals?

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Reflection: Who should be included on the literacy **leadership team**?

Guiding Questions:

1. How can **diverse expertise** benefit literacy efforts in your school/district?

2. How will outside expertise/experience be identified/used to augment/support the literacy **leadership team** in its work?

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Reflection: How well does the current curriculum **align** with state standards?

Guiding Questions:

1. What changes or enhancements are needed for **alignment**?
2. How will the alignment provide insight into necessary professional learning tied to **improved outcomes** for students?

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Reflection: Are there evidence-based instructional **strategies** that can be incorporated?

Guiding Question:

1. How can teachers use these strategies to **engage students** in order to build upon student assets and interests?

Aligned Supports
**Assessment and Progress
Monitoring**

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Reflection: What assessment tools will help track **student growth**?

Guiding Question:

1. How, when, and in what form can assessment **data** guide instructional adjustments?

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Reflection: How can **local resources** (e.g., considerations for time, money, or space) be allocated strategically for maximum impact?

Guiding Question:

1. What **resources** are essential for successful implementation of a local literacy plan?

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Reflection: What **professional learning** opportunities do local educators need in order to deliver high-quality evidence-based literacy instruction? How can these opportunities be built over time?

Guiding Questions:

1. How will ongoing training **support** the local literacy plan?
2. What is the cadence for **training**?
3. How might the school/district differentiate **training** based upon staff need, expertise, or topic?

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Reflection: How will the school/district ensure transparent and **effective communication** and easy access to providing feedback?

Guiding Question:

1. What channels and **methods** will be most effective to ensure that all who wish to share perspective are able to do so?

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Reflection: How will local/district/state data be utilized to inform **decisions** throughout the implementation of the local literacy plan? What is the cadence in which data will be considered?

Guiding Question:

1. What processes need to be in place to ensure **data-driven decision-making** to guide the implementation of the local literacy plan?

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Reflection: How often will the effectiveness of the plan be **evaluated**?

Guiding Questions:

1. What **indicators** will be used to measure success?
2. How will these **indicators** be identified?
3. How do the **metrics** tie to the purpose of the local literacy plan?

Print me!

Reflection: How will the local plan be **adapted** and refined as needed?

Guiding Question:

1. How can flexibility contribute to **long-term success**?

Continuous Improvement
**End Considerations for the
Local Literacy Plan**

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Reflection: What **key elements** must be included in the final plan?

Guiding Question:

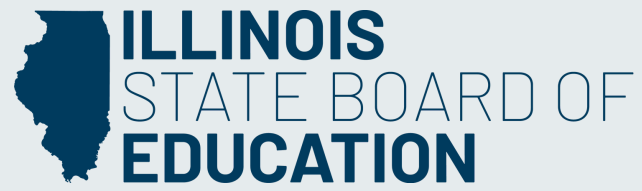
1. How can schools/districts ensure the plan is **comprehensive**?

Print me!

Reflection: What is a realistic timeline for **executing** the plan?

Guiding Questions:

1. How will you **prioritize** tasks to meet the goals?
2. What smaller timeline **goals** are necessary for executing the plan?
3. How will the school/district continually support individuals who join the district throughout the implementation timeline to ensure they are adequately equipped with the necessary resources, training, and mentorship to seamlessly integrate into the educational environment and contribute to the district's **goals and objectives**?



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