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Comptroller's Office Releases First Review of Literacy Success Act

The Tennessee Comptroller's Office of Research and Education Accountability (OREA) has completed its first annual review of the implementation of the Tennessee Literacy Success Act (LSA).

Passed during the General Assembly's 2021 Special Session on Education, the LSA seeks to ensure that students in early grades are on track to become proficient readers by the end of 3rd grade. The Comptroller's Office has been tasked with reviewing the implementation of the LSA's provisions and reporting its findings to state education leaders.

The Comptroller's review found that overall, the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) and local districts and charter schools are implementing the major directives of the Literacy Success Act. A few items remain in progress. A small sample of districts and schools contacted by OREA suggested some improvements, but they were generally positive about implementation of the LSA's requirements.



Key requirements of the LSA include:

- State-approved universal reading screeners are to be administered to all K-3 students three times each year.

TDOE made a free reading screener available beginning in 2021-22 and all districts and charter schools reported students' screener results to TDOE using one of the state-approved screeners.

- All K-5 teachers are to complete one state-approved course in foundational literacy skills instruction by August 2023.

TDOE has developed multiple free courses in foundational literacy skills instruction and made them available to districts and schools. As of August 2022, almost 26,000 educators had completed one course and approximately 13,000 had completed two courses. Indications are that teachers are making good progress in meeting next year's deadline.

- Educator preparation programs (EPPs) were to begin providing reading instruction training to teacher candidates that focuses primarily on foundational literacy skills standards by August 2022 and to require candidates who plan to teach in early grades to pass a state-approved Tennessee reading instruction test or pass the same foundational skills instruction course that licensed teachers must pass.

TDOE developed, and the State Board of Education approved, new EPP standards for literacy instruction. EPPs were required to submit their plans for meeting those standards to TDOE.

As of July 2022, TDOE was in the development process for a new Tennessee reading instruction test.

- All districts and charter schools are to use state-approved English language arts textbooks and instructional materials by January 2023.

The Comptroller's Office is required to review implementation of this LSA provision in a separate report due by May 1, 2023.

To read the report, please visit the Comptroller's website at: tncot.cc/orea.

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