

# SNAPSHOT

## Review of Literacy Success Act: First year implementation

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During its 2021 Special Session on Education, the Tennessee General Assembly passed the Tennessee Literacy Success Act (LSA), which seeks to ensure that students in early grades are on track to become proficient readers by the end of grade 3. In 2022, the General Assembly passed a law requiring the Comptroller's Office to annually review the implementation of the LSA and report its findings to the chairs of the Senate and House education committees and the State Board of Education (SBE) by November 1st of each year. This report is the first such review, and it also includes the second annual review of district and charter school foundational literacy skills plans required by the LSA.

*In summary, 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.*

### Implementation through August 2022

- TDOE has made a free universal reading screener available, and all districts and charter schools have reported student results for 2021-22.
- TDOE has developed free training courses for teachers, and almost 26,000 educators had completed at least one course as of August 2022.
- Although this was not a required submission year for Foundational Literacy Skills Plans, 65 districts and public charters have submitted revised plans since their initial 2021 submissions.
- TDOE has developed, and the State Board of Education has approved, new educator preparation provider (EPP) standards for instruction of K-3 teacher candidates and instructional leader candidates.
- Required reports have been completed and published, including analyses of preK-5 literacy skills instruction, EPP literacy instructional practices, and EPP affordability.
- All contracts and interagency agreements used to procure goods and services under the LSA were submitted as required to the General Assembly's Fiscal Review Committee and received the required review and approvals from Tennessee's Central Procurement Office and Comptroller's Office.

### Implementation steps continuing or remaining

- All active K-5 teachers must complete at least one foundational literacy skills course by August 2023.
- As of July 2022, TDOE was in the development process for a new Tennessee reading instruction test that will be provided at no cost to teacher and administrator candidates and EPPs.
- As of the fall 2022 semester, reading instruction at EPPs is required to have a primary focus on foundational literacy skills, and courses and clinical experiences should be aligned with the state's foundational literacy standards.
- The LSA requirement for all districts and charter schools to use state-approved textbooks and instructional materials will be assessed in a separate Comptroller review to be completed by May 2023.

Additional conclusions and related policy options address clarity about the use of universal reading screeners for preK students, required parent communications about Tennessee's revised 3rd grade retention law, and the lack of early grades reading reports compiled by TDOE.