



NORTH CAROLINA
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction

Report to the North Carolina General Assembly

Read to Achieve – Early Literacy Program
SL 2021-8 (SB 387)

Date Due: September 15, 2022
DPI Chronological Schedule, 2021-2022

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§ 115C-83.4B. Early Literacy Program.

(a) There is established the Early Literacy Program within the Department of Public Instruction. The Department of Public Instruction, in consultation with the Department of Health and Human Services, shall use the Early Literacy Program to build strong foundational early literacy skills utilizing the Science of Reading for children in the North Carolina Prekindergarten (NC Pre-K) program.

(b) As part of the Early Literacy Program, the Department of Public Instruction shall focus on at least the following components:

- (1) Provide a training program to educators and administrators working with children in the NC Pre-K program to ensure developmentally appropriate instruction grounded in the Science of Reading and outcomes promoting reading achievement in students. The Department of Public Instruction shall utilize a third-party independent teacher training program to deliver professional development that demonstrates evidence-based success with educators and administrators in establishing deep knowledge of literacy instruction.
- (2) Provide integration of age-appropriate resources, including digital and technological resources, in the NC Pre-K program for children to meet reading achievement goals.
- (3) Ensure administration of a formative assessment to children at the conclusion of their participation in the NC Pre-K program to determine their kindergarten readiness and the alignment of their literacy instruction with the Science of Reading. The Department shall also ensure that the results of each child's formative assessment are shared with the child's kindergarten teacher at the beginning of the next school year. (2021-8, s. 3(a).)

SECTION 3.(d) No later than September 15, 2022, the Department of Public Instruction shall report on the establishment of the Early Literacy Program to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee. The report shall include information on the required components of the Program, including at least the following:

- (1) Participation rates of NC Pre-K educators and administrators in the third-party independent teacher training program.
- (2) Examples of age-appropriate resources integrated into the NC Pre-K program.
- (3) The formative assessment provided to children at the end of their participation in the NC Pre-K program, including the number and percentage of (i) students who demonstrate kindergarten readiness and (ii) students who do not demonstrate kindergarten readiness.

Participation rates of NC Pre-K educators and administrators in the third-party independent teacher training program.

The following tables reflect the number of NC Pre-K lead teachers as reported by DHHS on July 19, 2022. The tables provide the number and percentage of Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 NC Pre-K teachers and administrators who participated in the LETRS for Early Childhood Educators training during the 2021-2022 school year. Cohort 3 teachers and administrators will be rostered and begin their training in Fall 2022 and thus are not included. It is important to note that some teachers were hired late in the school year and will not begin the training until the 2022-2023 school year. Additionally, several teachers retired or left the NC Pre-K classroom during the 2021-2022 school year and did not receive the training. These teachers are reflected in the number of teachers who were not enrolled in the training.

Cohort 1	
# of NC Pre-K lead teachers*	497
# of NC Pre-K lead teachers with verified enrollment in the LETRS for Early Childhood Educators course	470 (94%)
# of NC Pre-K lead teachers who have completed the course**	356
# of NC Pre-K lead teachers who will be enrolled in the LETRS for Early Childhood Educators course in Fall 2022	3
# of NC Pre-K lead teachers who were not enrolled in the course***	24
# of NC Pre-K administrators*	154
# of NC Pre-K administrators with verified enrollment in the LETRS for Administrators course	143 (93%)
# of NC Pre-K administrators who have completed the course	88

* Based on data provided by the NC Department of Health and Human Services on July 19, 2022.

** Cohort 1 teachers and administrators have until October 31, 2022, to complete the course.

*** This includes resignations and teachers who moved to teach in kindergarten. NC Pre-K teachers who were hired after the midpoint of cohort training will be trained as a separate group in Fall 2022.

Cohort 2	
# of NC Pre-K lead teachers*	513
# of NC Pre-K lead teachers with verified enrollment in the LETRS for Early Childhood Educators course	381 (74%)
# of NC Pre-K lead teachers who will be enrolled in the LETRS for Early Childhood Educators course in Fall 2022	111 (22%)
# of NC Pre-K lead teachers who have completed the course**	183
# of NC Pre-K lead teachers who were not enrolled in the training ***	21
# of NC Pre-K administrators*	207
# of NC Pre-K administrators with verified enrollment in the LETRS for Administrators course	199 (96%)
# of NC Pre-K administrators who have completed the course	88

* Based on data provided by the NC Department of Health and Human Services on July 19, 2022.

** Cohort 2 teachers and administrators have until January 31, 2023, to complete the course.

*** This includes resignations and teachers who moved to teach in kindergarten. NC Pre-K teachers who were hired after the midpoint of cohort training will be enrolled as a separate group in Fall 2022.

Examples of age-appropriate resources integrated into the NC Pre-K program.

The Office of Early Learning has worked with its partners to develop early literacy resources for early childhood leaders, teachers, and families of preschool children to support children's literacy development. The following table contains a list of these resources with a description and web link for each one. These resources are located on the [NCDPI website](#).

Resources for Leaders	Description
LETRS® Early Childhood Conversations and Classroom Connections (PLC)	<i>LETRS® for Little Learners: Conversations and Classroom Connections</i> is a guide for leaders in Early Childhood who are supporting implementation of LETRS professional development. Sessions include reflective conversations based on knowledge gained through LETRS coursework, application of LETRS coursework to classroom practice, and leveraging documentation and data to inform classroom instruction.
LETRS® Early Childhood Conversations and Classroom Connections (PLC) LETRS® for Little Learners Webinar Part 1 LETRS® for Little Learners Webinar Part 2	<i>LETRS® for Little Learners: Conversations and Classroom Connections</i> is a guide for leaders in Early Childhood who are supporting implementation of LETRS professional development. Sessions include reflective conversations based on knowledge gained through LETRS coursework, application of LETRS coursework to classroom practice, and leveraging documentation and data to inform classroom instruction. Part 1 Notecatcher and Slide Deck Part 2 Notecatcher and Slide Deck
Resources for Teachers	Description
NC Pre-K Crosswalk Document	The crosswalk shows alignment among skilled reading strands from Scarborough's Rope, NC Foundations for Early Learning and Development, Teaching Strategies GOLD® objectives and dimensions, and Kindergarten standards that are supported with early literacy instruction.
PlaytoRead: Activities for Literacy Development in the Pre-K Classroom	This resource is intended to support teachers as they intentionally support children's development of literacy concepts and skills that are aligned to the Science of Reading. Similar activities should occur throughout the learning environment, providing multiple opportunities for children to authentically practice literacy skills.
PlaytoRead: Activities for Literacy Development with a Caregiver	This resource is intended to support caregivers as they support literacy development while engaging with young children. Teachers are encouraged to share the resource with caregivers and then highlight activities as the skills align to classroom activities. Teachers are invited to create more activities based on needs/interests in their classroom.
Read-Aloud Support for Pre-K	Intentional planning for read-aloud is essential. Templates and completed examples below demonstrate how each reading of a book focuses on specific literacy skills. In-Depth Interactive Read Aloud Guide (template) Read Aloud Example (Fiction) Read Aloud Example (Nonfiction) Abbreviated Interactive Read Aloud Guide and Planner (template)
In the Classroom: Foundations Unpacking	This resource unpacks NC Foundations for Early Learning and Development indicators for Language Development and Communication.

Guides for Language Development and Communication	Unpacking Guides are available for three subdomains: Learning to Communicate , Foundations for Reading , and Foundations for Writing .
Early Childhood Education and the Science of Reading: Recipes to Last a Lifetime	This blog post by Lucy Hart Paulson, author of LETRS for Early Childhood Educators, describes recipes for learning to read, oral language development, optimal learning, and learning through play.
Resources for Families	Description
Literacy at Home: Digital Children's Reading Initiative	This digital resource provides literacy activities at each grade level, pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. Families and communities may access this resource for activities that specifically target the literacy skills of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and oral language. When children grow in each of these foundational areas, they are well on their way to becoming proficient readers.

The formative assessment provided to children at the end of their participation in the NC Pre-K program, including the number and percentage of:

- (i) students who demonstrate kindergarten readiness and**
- (ii) students who do not demonstrate kindergarten readiness**

Teaching Strategies *GOLD*® is an authentic formative assessment system designed and validated to help teachers understand the developmental and learning status of children they serve. The information the measure provides helps teachers identify each child's strengths and areas where more support is needed, and plan instruction accordingly. Teachers collect evidence of child development, growth, and learning across the academic year. These evidences emerge from regular classroom activities. Teachers analyze these evidences and make placements on developmental progressions that include specific behavioral anchors that are tied to state learning standards. The progressions are organized by the following domains of development: Social-Emotional, Physical, Language, Cognitive, Literacy, and Mathematics. The information from the progressions within each domain can be combined to indicate whether each child is below, meeting, or exceeding Widely Held Expectations for child growth, development, and learning for their age group. Children served by the NC Pre-K program are assessed using this system throughout the academic year. Scores are computed three times each year (fall, winter, and spring). The information in the table below reports the results for the spring of 2022. A total of 24,557 children were enrolled in the NC Pre-K program in May 2022 and were served in classrooms for 4-year-old children. The table below includes information for only those children who were assessed by their teachers on enough of the progressions to yield a score. The percentages of children with complete ratings by domain were as follows: Social-emotional (93.2%), Physical (93.1%), Language (98.4%), Cognitive (98.0%), Literacy (97.9%), and Mathematics (97.7%). The table below indicates that the majority of NC Pre-K children assessed finished the 4-year-old year meeting or exceeding Widely Held Expectations: Social-emotional (88.0%), Physical (92.4%), Language (85.1%), Cognitive (85.1%), Literacy (88.7%), and Mathematics (79.5%).

Percentages of NC Pre-K children below, meeting, and exceeding
Widely Held Expectations by domain of development

		Below	Meet	Exceed	Meet + Exceed
Social-Emotional	%	12.0	57.4	30.6	88.0
	n	2556	12225	6517	18742
Physical	%	7.6	67.2	25.3	92.4
	n	1609	14292	5372	19664
Language	%	14.9	66.4	18.7	85.1
	n	3356	14929	4195	19124
Cognitive	%	14.9	71.4	13.7	85.1
	n	3328	15999	3068	19067
Literacy	%	11.3	75.4	13.3	88.7
	n	2531	16878	2967	19845
Mathematics	%	20.5	64.3	15.2	79.5
	n	4588	14350	3394	17744