

BOARD MEMO

Date: April 25, 2024

For ACTION

For INFORMATION

FROM: Carmen Sanders, M.S., Executive Director of Instructional Support
Kimberly Schell, K–12 Literacy Coordinator and Secondary Literacy Specialist
Carolyn Wooster, Ed.D., Elementary Literacy Instructional Specialist

THROUGH: Pierrette Finney, Ed.D., Chief Academic Officer
Melanie Kay-Wyatt, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Michelle Rief, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: Virginia Literacy Act

ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:

- Goal 1: Systemic Alignment
- Goal 2: Instructional Excellence
- Goal 5: Family and Community Engagement

SY 2023-2024 PRIORITY AREA:

- Academic Achievement
- Tier 1 Instruction: Alignment, Rigor, Engagement

FY 2024 BUDGET PRIORITY:

K-4 Literacy

SUMMARY:

As a result of the ACPS School Board’s commitment and in alignment with the Virginia Literacy Act, Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) is focused on students' literacy achievement.

DETAILS:

This presentation updates the School Board on the actions currently underway to improve ACPS literacy achievement. With these efforts, ACPS will be well-positioned to realize the goals and requirements of the Virginia Literacy Act as it is enacted in SY 24–25.

BACKGROUND:

ACPS has been working to continuously improve its literacy instruction in light of the latest reading research. The work of ACPS’ teacher leaders to innovate with new resources and practices has positioned ACPS to enter the 2024–2025 school year with VDOE-approved high-quality instructional materials already in place.

Enactment of the Virginia Literacy Act when it takes effect in Fall 2024 will entail a number of

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requirements, including:

- Developing a division-wide literacy plan
- Ensuring all Kindergarten–Grade 5 teachers have and use evidence-based literacy resources for the entire literacy block
- Staffing at least one reading specialist for every 550 students in Kindergarten–Grade 3
- Providing professional development in evidence-based literacy practices to teachers, reading specialists, and principals
- Developing, implementing, and monitoring individualized reading plans for students falling below benchmarks on literacy screeners in Grades K–3.

ACPS leaders are working to manage legislation requirements in ways that will support teachers with growing into increasingly skilled use of evidence-based literacy resources and practices.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the information about ACPS' Literacy Instruction.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 240425_Board_Presentation_K–4_Literacy_Updates_v1

REFERENCES:

- March 2, 2023, Board Memo - Area of Strategic Focus: K–4 Literacy Update
- Virginia Literacy Act Summary Document

CONTACT:

- Kimberly Schell, kimberly.schell@acps.k12.va.us
- Carolyn Wooster, carolyn.wooster@acps.k12.va.us