TEXAS

STATE LITERACY PLAN 2025

TEA — Texas Education Agency

Texas Reading Initiative

2025 Texas State Literacy Plan

Contents

The Texas State Literacy Plan (TSLP) was funded by the Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant. The TSLP was developed by stakeholders across the agency highlighting work that is ongoing to support education service centers, districts and campuses in improving their language and literacy instruction practices to support student literacy development.

Executive Summary

In 2019, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) was awarded $26.6 million through the federal Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) grant program. The goal of the Texas State Literacy Plan (TSLP) is to ensure that every child in Texas has access to high-quality instruction and materials to prepare students for the literacy demands of college and career by high school graduation. To achieve this goal, the plan centers on the integration and alignment of early language and pre-literacy skills for children from 0 to school entry and on high-quality literacy instruction for students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12. The TSLP outlines practices and systems in homes, early childhood education settings and schools that support successful literacy development, and college and career readiness. The Texas Education Agency literacy priorities include:

- High-Quality Early Literacy Supports
- High-Quality Instructional Materials
- High-Quality Student Supports
- High-Quality Professional Learning
- High-Quality Leadership Supports

Texas State Literacy Plan Overview

The Texas State Literacy Plan focuses on interlocking systems of support based on the science of reading and learning. These systems of support encompass high-quality early literacy supports, high-quality instructional materials and student supports, high-quality professional development and leadership supports to maximize literacy instruction and to propel Texas to become the state with the highest literacy rates in the United States.
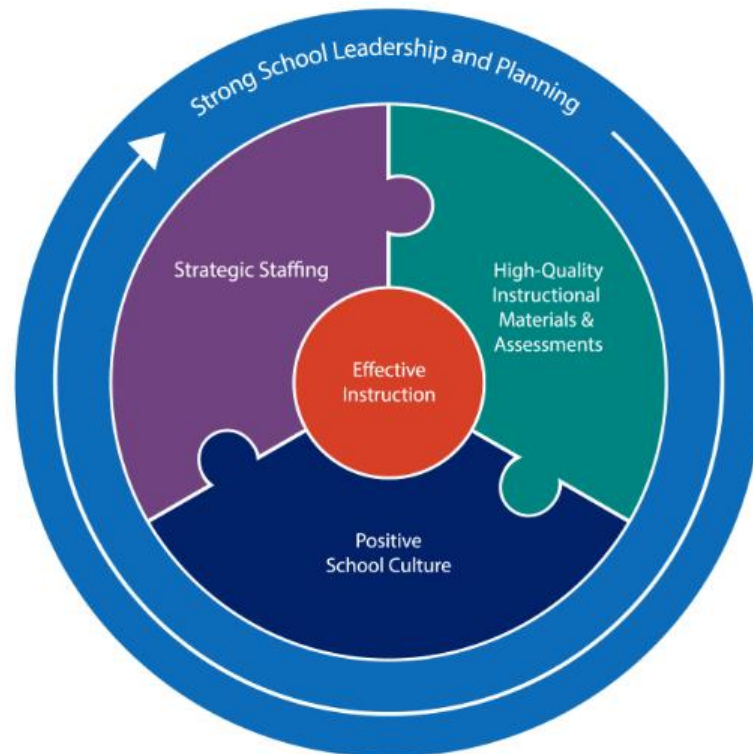
Figure 1: Effective Schools Framework

The TEA, in collaboration with its statewide partners for literacy and stakeholders, is using the continuous improvement process to improve literacy outcomes for students. In each section of the TSLP, the continuous improvement process at the state level is detailed, illustrating how the TEA and its partners assessed statewide literacy needs and developed plans to leverage the CLSD grant funds to address those needs within a Comprehensive and Integrated Literacy Model. The TSLP is not meant to establish new guidance for curriculum and instruction in literacy.

High-Quality Early Literacy Supports

Establishing a strong foundation in literacy begins long before a child enters the classroom. In Texas, the Family Engagement team at the Texas Education Agency (TEA) are built on the belief core to TEA, that parents are each child's first teacher. By fostering meaningful partnerships between families, schools, and communities, TEA aims to create a collaborative environment where children can thrive. This section highlights the importance of high-quality early literacy supports grounded in robust family engagement—

paving the way for every child to enter school ready to learn and to succeed throughout their academic journey and beyond.

Family Engagement: Parents are a Child's First Teacher

The Family Engagement team's role at TEA is to support the collaborative efficacy of families, schools, and communities to build relationships that support student learning and achievement. Through supporting and engaging families as essential partners in their child's education, students will achieve academic proficiency and have the foundational knowledge and skills to be school ready and extend to college-career-ready.

The family engagement team's goal is to support increases in school systems developing and implementing Family Engagement plans to increase parental engagement and support student learning.

Our goal is to:

- Support school systems in writing a comprehensive and individualized Family Engagement Plan that meets the unique needs and concerns of a school system's Early Childhood population, allowing for increased collaboration between school and home.

- Support school systems to partner with families to increase parent engagement through executing intentional and impactful activities outlined in the Family Engagement plan

- Support school systems in engaging families as essential partners, students will increase oral language proficiency and have the foundational knowledge and skills to be school ready

- Connect, engage, and partner with community organizations and agencies to create an awareness and decrease the knowledge gap for the families and schools

Family Engagement is a component of high-quality prekindergarten. TEA conducts touchpoints and supports school systems and Educational Service Centers (ESCs) with the implementation of key High-Quality Prekindergarten program practices and alignment with statutory mandated requirements.

- Curriculum
- Implementation of student progress monitoring
- Implementation of program evaluation

- Teacher qualifications
- Family engagement plan and its implementation
- Data reporting to the early childhood data system

Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines

TEA collaborated with internal and external stakeholders to revise and update the 2015 Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines. The Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines were revised to align with the Kindergarten Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), condense content, include language for multi-lingual learners and special populations, eliminate errors and ambiguity, and to meet section 508 accessibility compliance. Implementation of the 2022 Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines began in the 2023-2024 school year.

The guidelines offer Texas educators information and support to prepare all children for success in kindergarten. The intended use of the guidelines is to provide guidance for planning quality learning experiences for children aged three to five years of age. The Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines are:

- Designed to help educators identify the types of knowledge and skills that are typical of PK aged children,
- To be used noting that there is considerable variability in development among children,
- Intended to help with implementing effective instructional practices and learning experiences, and
- Designed as a resource to inform decisions that pertain to curriculum and instruction.

In addition, the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines are not intended to be used as a curriculum, assessment tool, or checklist. They are not meant to be used in isolation, or to stifle the creativity of caregivers and educators. Rather, they are meant to serve as a resource for families, educators, and administrators to provide developmentally appropriate guidance and practices around young children's development and learning in the prekindergarten environment.

Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines include multiple domains of learning, each with a broad range of skill development, to help prekindergarten programs identify the essential foundational skills of success for children of all backgrounds, experiences, and levels of

development. The Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines are directly aligned with Texas Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), to ensure that all children in Texas receive appropriate learning experiences and are ready for kindergarten. There are ten domains in the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines, with three focused on Emergent Literacy.

Each domain contains skills of development. These skills are not to be taught in isolation but on the premise that learning occurs on a continuum, and that development is highly interrelated. Additionally, outcome statements of end-of-year expectations of learning and development are provided. The outcomes describe specific, observable skills, behaviors, and concepts that children should know and be able to do at the end of prekindergarten.

The Emergent literacy domains focus on:

Language and Communication: Explaining the differences in words and sounds, talking to children about objects and their names (labeling), using expanded vocabulary, and modeling language with grammatical complexity are all ways in which teachers can help to build children's oral language development. Additionally, the pragmatics of oral language in an academic setting, such as conversational skills and the development of storytelling and oral explanations, are an important part of all children's oral language development. Given adequate opportunities to interact with responsive adults in language-rich classrooms, young children's language abilities will expand rapidly during these years. The language and communication domain of learning includes not only receptive (listening) and expressive (speaking) skills, but also vocabulary and sentence structure skills. Mastery of these skills will build young children's ability to understand what they hear and communicate their own ideas and experiences effectively.

The language and communication domain also includes guidance for multilingual learners and is divided into the following skills: listening comprehension, speaking (conversation), articulation, vocabulary, and sentence structure.

Reading Domain:
From a pre-schooled age, children can become aware of systematic patterns of sounds in spoken languages, manipulate sounds in words, recognize words or environmental print, learn the relationship between sounds and letters, and establish a basic understanding of storytelling and story structure. The goal of emergent literacy instruction in prekindergarten is not to teach children to read connected text or even whole words, but rather to teach the building blocks that will provide children the foundation needed to become proficient readers and writers. When given ample opportunities to interact with books and other forms of print, as well as explicit and systematic instruction in emergent literacy skills, children can learn much more about the purposes and concepts of written language and

about the letters that can be combined to form print and their corresponding sounds. Young children learn best through experiences that are meaningful and interesting to them and benefit from guided practice and repetition.

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS: Development Timeline[1]

	2-3 YEARS OLD	3-4 YEARS OLD	4-5 YEARS OLD	5-6 YEARS OLD	6-7 YEARS OLD
AUDITORY DISCRIMINATION	Distinguishes voices (e.g., knows mom vs. dad's voice)	Distinguishes sounds (e.g., animal noises or vehicles)	Distinguishes words (e.g., recognizes when two words are the same or different)		
SENTENCE SEGMENTATION	Becomes aware that sentences are made up of words that carry meaning	Counts the number of words in a sentence	Recognizes which word changes in a sentence	Manipulates words in a sentence and replaces them with new words to make a new sentence	
RHYMING	Exposure to rhyme through nursery rhymes and finger plays	Identifies rhyme	Identifies and produces a mix of real and nonsense rhymes	Distinguishes between rhymes (can determine which does not rhyme)	Rhyme completion (can complete a sentence with a word that rhymes)
ALLITERATION		Identifies if two words begin with the same sound	Produces a word that begins with the same sound	Generates a list of words that begin with the same sound	Distinguishes between alliterative and non-alliterative words in a list, sentence, or story
SYLLABLES	Syllable awareness through finger plays	Blending and segmenting compound words	Blends and segments multisyllabic words up to 3 syllables	Blends and segments multisyllabic words up to 5 syllables	Syllable manipulation (adding, deleting, substituting)
ONSET-RIME[2]		Identifies the onset in words (single letters and consonant blends)	Blends onset and rime to form *familiar* one-syllable words	Blends onset and rime to form one-syllable words	
PHONEMES[3]		Isolating initial phonemes	Blending and segmenting 2-3 phonemes	Blending and segmenting 4-5 phonemes	Blending and segmenting phonemes; phoneme manipulation

[1] Skill development is fluid. Children may not follow the exact order outlined in this generalized timeline.

[2] Onset-rime is only taught in English-language instruction.

[3] In Spanish, phoneme blending is taught to help children blend individual syllables (2-3 phonemes) in words, which they will then use syllables to decode.

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Figure 2: Phonological Awareness: Development Timeline

Funding

The Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines are funded by the state and federal governments.

Alignment with other Initiatives

The Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines are aligned with the science of reading, the Texas Reading Academies, and the Research Based Instructional Strategies.

High Quality Instructional Materials

A strong education begins with access to high-quality instructional materials that are aligned to rigorous academic standards and support excellent teaching. Recognizing this, the Texas Legislature enacted House Bill 1605 (88R), creating a framework to ensure that

every student benefits from content that is both effective and appropriate. Through the Instructional Materials Review and Approval (IMRA) process and the development of Open Education Resources (OER), the Texas Education Agency (TEA) is helping school systems elevate the quality of instruction across the state. This section explores how these efforts are driving student achievement and preparing learners for a successful future.

To prepare Texas students for success after graduation, school systems must ensure that all students have access to effective teachers who use proven, rigorous instructional materials. To assist school systems with this, the Legislature passed House Bill (HB) 1605 (88R), which established a review process for instructional materials called the Instructional Materials Review and Approval (IMRA) and directed TEA to develop a set of state-owned textbooks and instructional materials. These materials are called Open Education Resources, or OER.

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) Guide

Across Texas, new educators enter the teaching profession with varied experience and understanding of the TEKS. Even experienced educators differ in their understanding of 1) content-related terms and concepts; 2) how concepts are supported in other content areas; 3) research-based resources; 4) what students should know and be able to do when entering and exiting a grade level; and 5) how students could demonstrate proficiency of the student expectations.

The TEKS Guide for K–8 English Language Arts and Reading and K–6 Spanish Language Arts and Reading helps teachers and parents understand each student expectation in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and provides valuable resources to support instruction. The TEKS Guide is organized by components to provide various kinds of educator support which includes detailed and further explanations, glossaries, research, examples of demonstrated proficiency, vertical alignments, SE-related resources, and instructional materials.

The TEKS framework is based on the TEKS, which are the standards that outline what students should know and be able to do at each grade level or course. The TEKS include student expectations (SEs), which are the specific knowledge and skills that students must demonstrate. Instructional materials include the books, lesson plans, grading rubrics, and other materials that convey the TEKS to students. Local and state assessments measure the degree to which students have learned the content and skills specified in the TEKS.

The TEKS framework guides educators in teaching students the required knowledge and skills. The SBOE reviews, revises, and adopts the TEKS after input from educators and other stakeholders. The TEA provides resources to support instruction, such as the TEKS Guide, and coordinates the review and approval of instructional materials

As such, the primary purpose of the TEKS Guide is to provide an easily accessible online resource through which educators can develop an in-depth and shared understanding of the TEKS and the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) of every student expectation (SE) at each grade level (K-8).

Ultimately, the purpose of the TEKS Guide is to become the primary resource to support teachers with specific content; to increase the comprehension of each student expectation in each content area included in the TEKS; and to increase educators' efficacy in delivering instruction. The long-term goal is to provide a resource teachers find valuable and promote its use because it significantly increases their understanding of the TEKS and their efficacy in teaching the content.

Funding

TEA receives funding through both state and federal sources. The Texas Education Agency submits a Legislative Appropriations Request to the Legislative Budget Board every two years. The Texas Legislature adopts the state budget that funds state operations.

Data and Continuous Improvement

The RLA TEKS Guide is revised and continuously improved on an ad-hoc basis in response to feedback from the field regarding requests for additional support, expansion of resources, corrections of errors, etc.

Educators have multiple opportunities to report on how the TEKS Guide works well and areas in which the TEKS Guide needs improvement. Educator feedback provides anecdotal, qualitative data indicating that the TEKS Guide is considered a useful and effective tool.

Alignment with Other State Initiatives

The TEKS Guide aligns with other state literacy initiatives through supporting Reading Language Arts Research Based Instructional Strategies. It also complements and supports other TEKS-based resources hosted on the TEA Texas Gateway website, the TEKS guide serves as a resource for the Instructional Materials Review and approval process, serves

as a resource for future cycle of review, revision and adoption of the RLA TEKS. Additionally, curriculum and assessment use information in the TEKS Guide to calibrate what students should know and be able to do in response to classroom instruction and on the STAAR.

English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) Guide

The English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) are the state standards that outline the language acquisition expectations for students and proficiency level descriptors for emergent bilingual (EB) students, (also known as English Learners), in English. Literacy instruction that effectively integrates second language acquisition standards with quality content area instruction ensures that EB students acquire social and academic language proficiency in English, learn the knowledge and skills in the reading language arts TEKS, and reach their full academic potential. Effective literacy instruction in second language acquisition involves giving EB students opportunities to listen, speak, read, and write at their current levels of English development while gradually increasing the linguistic complexity of the English they read and hear, and are expected to speak and write.

The State Board of Education (SBOE) has authority over the state curriculum standards, including the TEKS and the ELPS. In 2020, the SBOE directed TEA to identify a panel of writers who are experts in language acquisition from Texas institutions of higher education and an education service center to develop recommendations for revisions to the ELPS based on current research. The ELPS Guide is based on second language acquisition research that explains the language acquisition progression through five proficiency levels: pre-production, beginning, intermediate, high-intermediate, and advanced.

Stages of Second Language Acquisition

Second language development and acquisition are considered a sequential process that can be somewhat predictable but also depends largely on individuals and language learning contexts (Hill & Miller, 2013; Reed & Railsback, 2003). As research has indicated, it takes time for EB students to develop English language proficiency; however, classroom teachers can help support this process so that EB students learn the academic English necessary to engage in content-area learning (Hill & Miller, 2013). Hakuta et al. (2000) reported that it took EB students four to seven years to achieve academic English proficiency. Other researchers have found that time to be closer to five to seven years (Cummins, 1981; Lindholm-Leary & Borsato, 2006; Thomas & Collier, 2002).

Preproduction

This level of language development is called Preproduction because EB students are typically developing receptive language skills in the additional language–listening being the first. Krashen (1981a, b) dubbed this time the silent period, as EB students tend to be quiet

when they are first exposed to English oral and written language as a new language. Krashen and Terrell (1983) emphasized, "...comprehension precedes production, i.e., listening (or reading) comprehension precedes speaking (or writing abilities)" (emphasis original, p. 20). EB students at this point are absorbing large quantities of English and beginning to process it. They may have up to 500 receptive English words they understand but are less comfortable using (Reed & Railsback, 2003). Their comprehension requires teacher scaffolding, and EB students can be asked to respond in non-verbal ways, such as pointing, nodding, gestures, or drawing (Hill & Miller, 2013). It is recommended that teachers encourage EB students to speak when they are comfortable doing so (Krashen & Terrel, 1983).

Beginning

This level is typified by early speech emergence. EB students begin to produce English in the form of one-word or two- to three-word phrases (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). They may have up to 1,000 receptive and active English words they understand and use (Reed & Railsback, 2003). EB students at this stage also require teacher support for comprehension. They normally use the present tense and repeat keywords and familiar phrases (Hill & Miller, 2013). They can respond to basic comprehension questions in the form of yes/no, either/or, and who/what/where questions (Reed & Railsback, 2003).

Intermediate

At this level, EB students tend to have up to 3,000 words in their English inventory, and they can readily use short phrases and simple sentences or ask short questions (Reed & Railsback, 2003). These students are characterized by good comprehension, making grammatical and pronunciation errors (that can possibly interfere with communication), but not yet engaging fully with figurative language or humor that relies on figurative language or cultural/societal situatedness (Hill & Miller, 2013).

High-Intermediate

EBs at this point often know up to 6,000 words and are starting to create complex sentences, express opinions, share thoughts, request clarification, and speak for a longer period (Reed & Railsback, 2003). They now have strong comprehension and might make occasional grammatical mistakes (Hill & Miller, 2013).

Advanced

EB students who have reached this level often know more specific content-area vocabulary and are able to fully engage in grade-level classroom activities with minimal

teacher support (Reed & Railsback, 2003). Their spoken grammar and vocabulary usage enable them to communicate independently and freely with peers in the same age group (Reed & Railsback, 2003).

For EB students to be successful, they must acquire both social and academic language proficiency in English. Social language proficiency in English consists of the English needed for daily social interactions. Academic language proficiency consists of the English needed to think critically, understand and learn new concepts, process complex academic material, and interact and communicate in English academic settings.

School systems are required to provide literacy instruction in a manner that is linguistically accommodated (communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded) commensurate with the EB student's level of English language proficiency. These students require focused, targeted, and systematic second language acquisition to provide them with the foundation of the English language to support literacy instruction in English.

The ELPS Guide is a resource that will support educators and parents in their understanding of the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS). The ELPS Guide would be organized by components to provide various kinds of educator support including detailed and further explanations, glossaries, research, related demonstrated proficiency levels, various alignment charts, and student expectation (SE)-related resources. The ELPS Guide target population includes EB students in kindergarten to grade 12 enrolled in Texas public schools or open-enrollment charter schools. The 2023–2024 PEIMS data report indicates that over 1.1 million students are coded as EB students enrolled in Texas public schools or open-enrollment charter schools.

The purpose of the ELPS Guide is to provide a consistent and clear interpretation of the ELPS so that all educators in Texas have the same understanding of the standards and Proficiency Level Descriptors (PLD), and access valuable resources to support instruction. The ELPS Guide will support reading language art educators in making the content linguistically accessible to EB students.

The ELPS instructional framework outlines student expectations and proficiency level descriptors for EB students learning English. The ELPS are organized across the four domains of language acquisition: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

The ELPS framework is used to provide instruction in the knowledge and skills of the foundation and enrichment curriculum in a manner that is linguistically accommodated (communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded) commensurate with the student's levels of English language proficiency (pre-production, beginning, intermediate, high intermediate, and advanced) to ensure that the student learns the knowledge and skills in the kindergarten through 12th grade required curriculum. The ELPS framework supports content-based instruction that is linguistically accommodated to help EB students acquire English language proficiency. The EB students require focused, targeted, and systematic second language acquisition instruction to provide them with the foundation of the English language necessary to support content-based instruction and accelerated learning of English.

Funding

TEA receives funding through both state and federal sources. The Texas Education Agency submits a Legislative Appropriations Request to the Legislative Budget Board every two years. The Texas Legislature adopts the state budget that funds state operations.

Data and Continuous Improvement

The ELPS Guide is in the early stages, and the team is still determining the release date, measurement, and reporting processes of the initiative. The team will collaboratively finalize the metrics, methods to collect data, timelines, and tracking systems, and then submit them to leadership for review and approval.

After the release of the ELPS Guide, there will be a series of informational sessions, "ELPS 101", available to educators interested in expanding their understanding of the ELPS and learning how to navigate the ELPS Guide. These sessions would provide an opportunity to collect data about satisfaction with the resource and the effectiveness of the tool. In addition to these data points, the team will collect data on the click rate on publications announcing the launch of the ELPS Guide and will monitor quarterly user interaction with the published ELPS Guide.

The ELPS Guide will provide Texas educators with the tools and resources to inform instruction and improve EB student achievement. To meet this goal and continuous improvement, we will provide multiple opportunities for educators to provide input during the ELPS Guide development process. After the ELPS Guide release, we will provide opportunities for educators to report how the ELPS Guide works well and areas in which the ELPS Guide needs improvement.

TELPAS is an English language proficiency assessment aligned to the Texas English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS). This assessment is designed to assess the progress that EB students make in learning the English language. TELPAS fulfills ESSA requirements for assessing EB students in kindergarten through grade 12 in four language domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

All EB students in kindergarten through grade 12 enrolled in Texas public schools or open-enrollment charter schools are required to participate in TELPAS. EB students are required to be assessed annually with an English language proficiency assessment until they meet EB reclassification criteria.

Alignment with Other State Initiatives

The TEKS Guide aligns with other state literacy initiatives in the following ways:
- serves as a resource for the review and approval of instructional resources
- serves as a resource for a future cycle of review, revision, and adoption of ELPS
- serves as a resource for pre-service teachers enrolled in a teacher preparation program and new teachers expanding their understanding of the ELPS and how to incorporate the ELPS during content-area instruction
- Assessment-Curriculum and assessment use information in the ELPS Guide to calibrate what students should know and be able to do in response to second language acquisition instruction and on the TELPAS.

Research Based Instructional Strategies (RBIS)

Texas is committed to providing all students with high-quality literacy instruction based on the science of reading and research-based instructional strategies. As part of this work, Texas set out to explicitly define these practices, culminating in the Reading Language Arts Research Based Instructional Strategies (RLA RBIS). Through RBIS RLA Extended Research, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) identified the four pillars that must be present for students to succeed:

1: **Foundational Skills:** Provide explicit, systematic practice with literacy foundational skills based on the science of reading

2: **Text Complexity:** Give all students regular practice with grade-level, complex text and its academic language

3: **Knowledge Coherence:** Building knowledge and vocabulary through texts in all content areas

4: **Text-based Responses:** Reading, writing and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literacy and informational texts
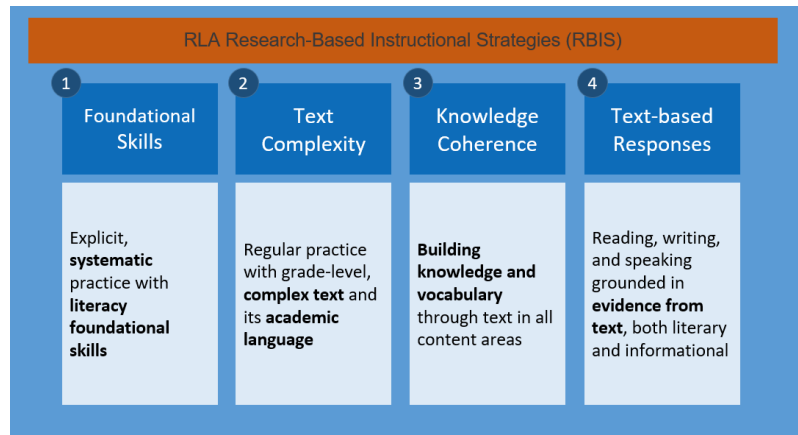

Figure 3:RLA Research Based Instructional Strategies

The goal of the RBIS training is to provide training across the state to ensure district and campus leaders understand how students learn to read and the pillars that must be present for strong literacy instruction.   Strong Foundations Planning (SFP) can further provide schools systems support in developing a strong instructional framework in literacy, adoption supports in selecting HQIM, and training to support creating systems to effectively manage instruction at the district level. The Research Based Instructional Strategies are foundational in changing hearts and minds towards the science of reading.

TEA provides various levels of training to the state; certification pathways and non-certification pathways that include full literacy RBIS training or overview of RBIS presentations (1 hour or mini sessions). These training pathways are designed for state Approved Providers who support districts in the adoption and implementation of HQIM.

To ensure quality of implementation, the RBIS Training and Certification Program was created to provide professional development for Education Service Centers (ESCs) and school systems to teach the science behind how students learn and highlight the need for High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM). The RBIS Training and Certification Program is available for Education Service Center (ESC) personnel and Third-Party Vendors. School systems may contract with the Approved Providers independently or through the Strong Foundations Planning grant (authorized by the General Appropriations Act (GAA), Article III, Rider 76, 88th Texas Legislature, 2023; General Appropriates Act (GAA), Article III, Rider 94, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023).

Continuous Improvement:

The Research Based Instructional Strategies team is committed to continuous improvement by providing interim and annual improvements. At the completion of each training session participants provide feedback via pre and post RBIS surveys, net promoter scores and exit tickets. In response to data, training content is refined for clarity and conciseness. Annual continuous improvements are informed by an analysis of data from the field on the effectiveness of those trained, the hearts and minds impact participants, and the content pre/post survey responses. Trends in those areas are aligned to inform future improvements for the initiative (e.g. training, certification/post-certification support).

Integration with Other State Initiatives

The RBIS training program provides foundational training for the Strong Foundations Planning grant and partners with other state initiatives such as SAV, Reading and Math Academies, MOTSS, CLSD and Strong Foundations Implementation (SFI) provides direct grant funds to school systems for technical assistance to support high-fidelity implementation of the Bluebonnet Learning, state-developed open education resources (OER) instructional materials, including high-quality professional learning for teachers, instructional coaches, school leaders, campus administrators, and district leaders on effectively implementing Bluebonnet Learning.

Instructional Materials Review and Approval

The new Instructional Materials Review and Approval (IMRA) process replaces the former State Board of Education (SBOE) Proclamation and the Texas Resource Review (TRR) processes. IMRA was enacted under House Bill (HB) 1605 (88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023) and brings new components to a single, SBOE-governed review of instructional materials.

IMRA Cycle 2024 includes full-subject, tier-one instructional materials intended for classroom-wide instruction to support all students in K–5 English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR), Spanish Language Arts and Reading (SLAR), and K–12 mathematics. Partial-subject, tier-one instructional materials for K–3 English and Spanish phonics are also included.

The IMRA Review Process

The process includes both trained **Quality Reviewers** and **Suitability Reviewers** as well as **public feedback** to generate the final report for each product.
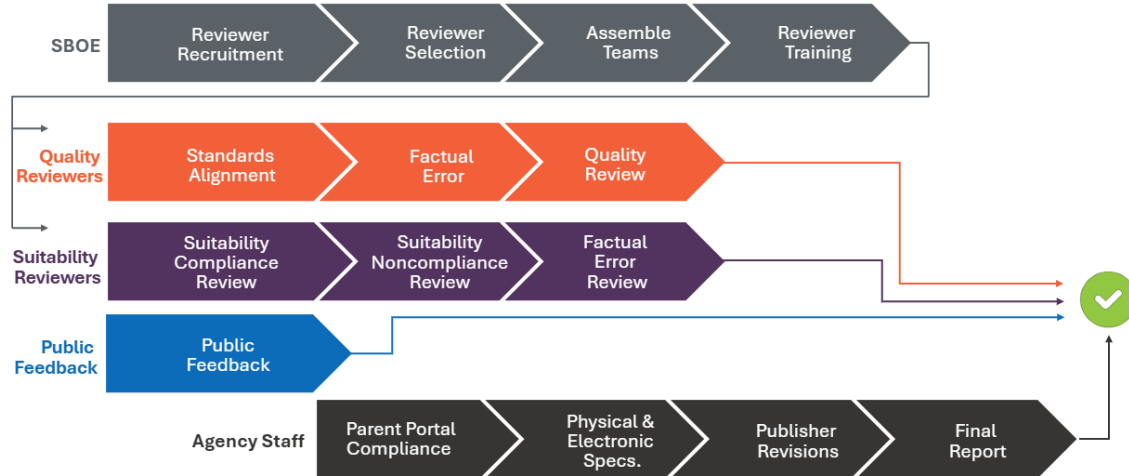
SBOE: Reviewer Recruitment → Reviewer Selection → Assemble Teams → Reviewer Training

Quality Reviewers: Standards Alignment → Factual Error → Quality Review

Suitability Reviewers: Suitability Compliance Review → Suitability Noncompliance Review → Factual Error Review

Public Feedback: Public Feedback

Agency Staff: Parent Portal Compliance → Physical & Electronic Specs. → Publisher Revisions → Final Report

Figure 4: IMRA Review Process

Multi-Year Plan to Complete Reviews of Instructional Materials

Cycle 2024 Materials in classrooms SY 2025–26	Cycle 2025 Materials in classrooms SY 2026–27	Cycle 2026 Materials in classrooms SY 2027–28	Cycle 2027 Materials in classrooms SY 2028–29	Cycle 2028 Materials in classrooms SY 2029–30	Cycle 2029 Materials in classrooms SY 2030–31	Cycle 2030 Materials in classrooms SY 2031–32	Cycle 2031 Materials in classrooms SY 2032–33
Foundation Subjects • Math K–12 • ELAR K–5 • SLAR K–5	**Foundation Subjects** • Math K–12 • ELAR K–6 • SLAR K–6	**Foundation Subjects** • Math K–12 • Math Advanced • ELAR K–6 • SLAR K–6	**Foundation Subjects** • Math K–12 • Math Advanced • ELAR K–6 • SLAR K–6	**Foundation Subjects** • Math K–12 • Math Advanced • ELAR K–6 • SLAR K–6	**Foundation Subjects** • Math K–12 • Math Advanced • ELAR K–12 • SLAR K–6 • Science K–12 • Social Studies K–12	**Foundation Subjects** • Math K–12 • Math Advanced • ELAR K–12 • SLAR K–6 • Science K–12 • Social Studies K–12 • Prekindergarten	**Foundation Subjects** • Math K–12 • Math Advanced • ELAR K–12 • SLAR K–6 • Science K–12 • Social Studies K–12 • Prekindergarten
	• Math Supplemental	• Math Supplemental • RLA Supplemental	• Math Supplemental • RLA Supplemental	• Math Supplemental • RLA Supplemental	• Math Supplemental • RLA Supplemental	• Math Supplemental • RLA Supplemental	• Math Supplemental • RLA Supplemental
		Enrichment Subjects • Positive Character Traits • Fine Arts • CTE (Batch 1)	**Enrichment Subjects** • Positive Character Traits • Fine Arts • CTE (Batch 1) • CTE (Batch 2) • Languages Other Than English (LOTE)	**Enrichment Subjects** • Positive Character Traits • Fine Arts • CTE (Batch 1) • CTE (Batch 2) • CTE (Batch 3) • Languages Other Than English (LOTE) • Religious Literature	**Enrichment Subjects** • Positive Character Traits • Fine Arts • CTE (Batch 1) • CTE (Batch 2) • CTE (Batch 3) • Languages Other Than English (LOTE) • Religious Literature	**Enrichment Subjects** • Positive Character Traits • Fine Arts • CTE (Batch 1) • CTE (Batch 2) • CTE (Batch 3) • Languages Other Than English (LOTE) • Religious Literature	**Enrichment Subjects** • Positive Character Traits • Fine Arts • CTE (Batch 1) • CTE (Batch 2) • CTE (Batch 3) • Languages Other Than English (LOTE) • Religious Literature • Health • Physical Education

Each year IMRA reviews will **cumulatively** expand to include more courses and categories of instructional materials.

Figure 5: Multi-Year Plan to Complete Reviews of Instructional Materials

Funding

All SBOE-approved instructional materials will be considered high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) and eligible for the new funding entitlements outlined in TEC 48, Sections

48.307 and 48.308. For school systems, this means access to an additional $540 million in instructional materials formula funding, on top of the funds already allocated via the Instructional Materials and Technology Allotment (IMTA).

The SBOE approved a 10-year plan for [TEKS revisions and IMRA rubric development and reviews](#) at the November 2024 meeting. The plan is subject to change and is dependent upon availability of funding and resources.

Continuous Improvement

Instructional materials in the IMRA cycle are reviewed for their coverage of relevant prekindergarten guidelines (TPG), English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS), and Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as well as quality and suitability based on SBOE-approved rubrics. All materials are reviewed by teams of professional reviewers and open to public review and comment.

Alignment with Other State Initiatives

IMRA rubrics are aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, the science of reading, research based instructional strategies, and providing supports for all learners.

Open Education Resources

The General Appropriations Act (GAA), Article III, Rider 70, 85th Texas Legislature, 2017, requires the Commissioner of Education to set aside $10,000,000 from the instructional materials fund (IMF) in each fiscal year of the biennium to develop open-source instructional materials. The rider specifies that the materials are to be developed through a request for proposals (RFP) process and in alignment with the requirements of the Texas Education Code (TEC), §31.071. TEC, §31.002, defines OER as instructional materials. OER can be designed as a full subject, tier one instructional material, which includes a full textbook and related components including teachers' guides. Bluebonnet Learning materials approved by the SBOE during the 2024 IMRA process cover Bluebonnet Learning K-5 English Language Arts & Reading (ELAR). Bluebonnet Learning K-5 Reading Language Arts (RLA) is built to cover the ELAR TEKS, weaving together elements of the science of reading with a cross-curricular knowledge building approach consistent with a classical education model that is focused on the fundamentals.

The Commissioner shall annually submit a report by September 1 to the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House, the Legislative Budget Board, and the

presiding officers of the standing committees of the legislature with primary jurisdiction over public education. The report shall include information on the number and type of open education resource instructional materials developed, use of those materials by school districts and open enrollment charter schools and plans for assessing the effectiveness of those materials.

- Ensure **full coverage of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).**
- Align to the **English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS)** and **prekindergarten guidelines**.
- Provide **evidence-based best practices** in the relevant content areas of reading language arts (RLA), math, science, and social studies.
- **Support all learners**, including students with disabilities, Emergent Bilinguals (EB), and students identified as gifted and talented.
- Meet **grade-level suitability** requirements.
- Be **free from factual errors**.
- Enable **frequent progress monitoring** through embedded and aligned assessments.
- Provide teacher and student-facing lesson materials with implementation support.
- Follow **Manufacturing Standards and Specifications for Textbooks (MSST)** for physical and electronic materials.
- Receive **approval from the SBOE** through the Instructional Materials Review and Approval (IMRA) process.

HQIM provides teachers with resources that ensure all students access rigorous, grade-level content. Review all the criteria HQIM must meet in each grade level and content area in the IMRA Quality and Suitability Rubrics.

Open Education Resources (OER), now branded as Bluebonnet Learning, are optional, State Board of Education (SBOE) approved, high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) that are freely available for use. These textbooks, owned by the state, can be modified over time to improve them for students and teachers. Bluebonnet Learning are state-developed instructional materials that were built specifically for Texans based on Texas' state standards, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Bluebonnet Learning materials were built using evidence from cognitive science to ensure teachers have access to high-quality, on-grade-level materials, freeing up teacher time to provide the highest quality instruction and differentiated supports for students.

Bluebonnet Learning RLA immerses students in classic literature along with reading lessons about art, history, culture, science, and technology. As a product built for Texas students, the content features strong representation from the diverse people, places, and history of Texans and is 100% aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

Bluebonnet Learning K-5 Reading Language Arts (RLA) weaves together elements of the science of reading with a knowledge building approach to deliver a comprehensive Reading Language Arts program. Bluebonnet Learning K–5 Reading Language Arts is guided by extensive research on the science of reading, which is a compilation of research-based best practices for literacy instruction. For students to get optimal results from our literacy instruction, language comprehension and word recognition must work hand in hand. In other words, the recognition of sounds, letters, and words integrated with knowledge, vocabulary, sentences, connections, and gist are the most impactful reading instruction for students.

In Bluebonnet Learning K–5 Reading Language Arts, instructional Reading Language Arts units are centered around complex texts that are intentionally sequenced to build content knowledge and vocabulary across the K–5 program. Cervetti, Wright, and Hwang (2016) emphasize that "knowledge can be built and leveraged simultaneously," which emphasizes the importance of building knowledge and vocabulary through text in all content areas. The Bluebonnet Learning K–5 Reading Language Arts Knowledge units build knowledge coherence with a focus on literature, history, science, and the arts. Unit topics may have some overlap with content required by science and social studies TEKS but are not designed to cover the requirements of those standards. Because research shows that students' listening comprehension outpaces their reading comprehension until their early teens, the program strategically uses Read-Aloud text in this strand, allowing students to focus their cognitive energy on gaining meaning from the words and better understanding from the images. As Shanahan (2020) highlights, exposing students to more complex text is crucial for challenging their understanding and fostering deeper comprehension.

Through integration of the language comprehension and word recognition strands, the program is designed to produce increasingly automatic and strategic student performance of literacy tasks. Through research-based pedagogy, teachers will encourage students to build connections and context, and listen and understand, while emphasizing interactivity and assessing what is important.

The content of the intentionally sequenced knowledge units in the Bluebonnet Learning K-5 Reading Language Arts product has been chosen consistent with the approach of a classical education. A classical education provides numerous benefits for K-12 students,

emphasizing a well-rounded foundation in the liberal arts and sciences, along with a focus on critical thinking and eloquent expression. This approach cultivates a depth of understanding and appreciation for historical contexts, enabling students to draw connections between past and present. Through its integration of literature, science, the arts, and history, classical education encourages students to deepen their understanding of how our society has changed over time. This approach is paired in the early grades with a focus on foundational literacy skills including phonics, spelling, handwriting, and grammar. This holistic approach not only enriches students' intellectual development but also nurtures positive character traits and civic responsibility The Bluebonnet Learning K–5 Reading Language Arts program is structured to provide a comprehensive approach to literacy that intentionally builds background knowledge early while strengthening and developing foundational skills in students.

The instructional materials are split into grade bands for Grade K–2 students and Grade 3–5 students. It is important for teachers to note that a key component of the program includes the two strands of Foundational Skills and Reading Language Arts. The strands have fundamental implementation differences across the K–2 and 3–5 grade bands. Grades K–2 consist of daily Foundational Skills and RLA instruction, taught in separate instructional blocks. The daily Foundational Skills lessons teach reading and writing in tandem, which help support learning related to phonemic awareness, sound-letter patterns, or spelling patterns. As a result, Grade K–2 Foundational Skills lessons support instruction of comprehensive decoding, writing mechanics, structure, and processes.

In Grades K–2, daily Reading Language Arts lessons provide background, academic, and conceptual knowledge to ensure students are prepared to transition from learning to read to reading for comprehension and application purposes. The Reading Language Arts units are built upon a coherent knowledge sequence resulting from years of research and consultation with content experts, educators, cognitive scientists, and others. The sequence is designed to build upon earlier content so that students become generally knowledgeable in the early grades and can rely on a robust web of prior knowledge when encountering new complex texts and material in later grades.

In Grade 3, the program structure transitions to combine foundational literacy and language arts instruction together into integrated units that build background knowledge via the study of complex texts. In addition, a strand of Foundational Skills units for 3rd grade is now available. The daily foundational skills lessons are structured similarly to the Grade K-2 units, teaching phonics, high frequency words, decoding and encoding, and

morphology; grounded in decodable readers. It is not required to implement both strands with third grade students.

In grades 4 and 5, the Reading Language Arts units are taught as an integrated instructional block. Integration of foundational skills and knowledge coherence in Grades 4 and 5 ensures students become competent in all communication modes, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Because Bluebonnet Learning has been approved by the SBOE as approved high-quality instructional materials (HQIM), these materials are an optional resource for public schools. School systems in Texas have local control over which instructional materials to use.

Funding

The Instructional Materials and Technology Allotment (IMTA) was restored in House Bill 1, 88th Texas Legislature, to traditional levels (approximately $1 billion per biennium). School system IMTA account allocations have already been made based on HB 1. HB 1605 does not change the current IMTA process or structure. Districts may spend IMTA funds on any instructional materials and instructional technologies. HB1605 established additional funding for school systems, above funds provided by the IMTA:

To support the purchase of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) approved by the State Board of Education, public school systems are entitled to $40 per student per year.

For any school system that chooses to use Texas OER Textbooks, school systems are entitled to an additional $20 per student to cover the costs of printing the textbooks. (OER Textbooks are free for anyone to download).

Continuous Improvement

The Bluebonnet Learning OER initiative is ongoing and aligned with the annual IMRA submission cycle. A typical review process is completed over a period of about four months. Currently, we anticipate submitting new products for IMRA 2025 and 2029. For each cycle, we currently follow internal development processes that are subject to change.

OER materials will begin implemented in August 2025. The data points listed below were key drivers in the development process. It was important to monitor our progress along the way to ensure we met key deadlines using internal and external data sources.

The key data sources include:

- Student Achievement Data (STAAR)
- Use internal process metrics such as our team "Workstream Metrics"
- State Review and Approval (SBOE)
- IMRA Review Reports
    o Public Feedback Comments
    o State Review Panel Findings for TEKS/ELPS coverage
    o State Review Panel Findings for quality and suitability using the IMRA Rubric
- Internal Development Process
    o Internal Stakeholder Feedback
    o External Stakeholder Feedback
    o Key stakeholder feedback
- Implementation (Forthcoming)
    o Feedback from the field

The OER products are submitted through the annual IMRA cycle and are ongoing until 2030. Between now and 2030, we plan on submitting the Spanish K-5 RLA Open Education products through the IMRA process. Planning and development of materials takes approximately 14-20 months. Once products are developed, a sample timeline for implementation is as follows:

➢ May: Materials are submitted for IMRA and are reviewed by the state review panel.
➢ May-October: Revisions for improvement are made based on state review panel feedback, key stakeholder feedback, and public comment.
➢ November: SBOE vote on approved HQIM
➢ December: Updated EMAT site available to districts to compare materials
➢ March: Materials will be made available in EMAT site to requisition SBOE-approved instructional materials.
➢ Summer: New materials are shipped to districts
➢ August: School year begins

Alignment with Other State Initiatives:

Texas Reading Initiative: Provides funding for literacy coaches to help K-5 students read on-grade level. This initiative also offers literacy conferences. This aligns with the OER department's emphasis on providing students with rigorous, on-grade level materials.

HB 3 Texas Reading Academies: Aligned with what teachers are learning in the Reading Academies, our materials are developed with the Science of Teaching Reading approach, students will practice and build their literacy skills every day in the Bluebonnet Learning K–5 Reading Language Arts Program. In Grades K–3, students will engage in explicit instruction to develop and grow their literacy skills, as well as develop knowledge coherence across a variety of themes to build and deepen their knowledge of reading, vocabulary, and content knowledge.

In the upper grades, skills instruction becomes integrated within knowledge lessons where students can apply their foundational literacy skills through increasingly complex content-rich texts, purposeful re-reading, and greater emphasis on writing. Students begin to use their skills to understand complex ideas and engage more deeply in academic content across subject areas, including key historical events, literary works, and science concepts. The Science of Teaching Reading is based on a strong skills foundation, knowledge and context, and relevant, challenging texts.

Strong Foundations: School systems can apply for two types of Strong Foundations grants. The **planning grant** helps school systems adopt or prepare to use high-quality instructional materials (HQIM). The **implementation grant** supports school systems in effectively implementing HQIM. Because Bluebonnet Learning is a HQIM, this funding provides needed support to implement the instructional materials effectively. School systems are supported in the implementation of Bluebonnet Learning K-5 RLA in the following ways:

- Strong Foundations Planning (SFP) provides direct grant funds to school systems for technical assistance to develop a strong instructional framework in math or literacy, based in the research-based instructional strategies (RBIS), to guide teaching and learning in the school system
- Strong Foundations Implementation (SFI) provides direct grant funds to school systems for technical assistance to support high-fidelity implementation of the Bluebonnet Learning, state-developed open education resources (OER) instructional materials, including high-quality professional learning for teachers, instructional coaches, school leaders, campus administrators, and district leaders on effectively implementing Bluebonnet Learning. The Strong

Foundations Grant Program (Texas Education Code, 29.0881) was established through House Bill 4545, 87th Texas Legislature, 2021, and offers K–5 Math and Literacy, comprehensive tier-one instructional supports, including curriculum, instructional leadership, and planning supports.

Effective Schools Framework (ESF): The purpose of the Effective Schools Framework is to provide a foundation for the alignment of statewide resources and supports the needs of Texas districts and schools. The implementation of this framework was developed in conjunction with school and district leaders, including a national review of research about what makes high-performing schools excellent.

The Effective Schools Framework consists of a set of district commitments and, for schools, essential actions. District Commitments describe what local education agencies do to ensure that schools are successful. The Essential Actions describe what the most effective schools do to support powerful teaching and learning.

The ESF defines 5 levers that are essential in high performing campuses. They include:

Lever 1 – Strong School Leadership Planning: Effective campus instructional leaders with clear roles and responsibilities develop, implement, and monitor campus systems and structures that are aligned to a compelling school mission, vision, values, and goals rooted in student achievement

Lever 2 – Strategic Staffing: Campus leadership retains effective, well-supported teachers by strategically recruiting, selecting, assigning and inducting teachers so that all students have access to high-quality educators.

Lever 3 – Positive School Culture: Campus systems support positive school culture through explicit behavioral expectations, school-wide culture routines, proactive and responsive student support services, and involved families and communities.

Lever 4 – High-Quality Instructional Materials and Assessments: All students engage daily with TEKS-aligned, high-quality instructional materials, and assessments that support learning at appropriate levels of rigor.

Lever 5 – Effective Instruction: Campus leaders provide teachers with job-embedded professional development, including observation and feedback cycles, and access to time and data needed to reflect, adjust, and deliver instruction that meets the needs of all students.

STAAR Redesign: The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) was redesigned, and the changes were implemented in the 2022–2023 school year to make the test more tightly aligned to the classroom experience.

The STAAR redesign was a result of House Bill (HB) 3906 passed by the 86th Texas Legislature, 2019. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) worked with a wide range of education stakeholders, including the Assessment Education Advisory Committee, to explore the most instructionally supportive approach to implementing these changes.

The STAAR redesign includes several components:

- Online testing and accommodations
- New question types
- Cross-curricular passages
- Evidence-based writing

Bluebonnet Learning K-5 RLA materials have been designed to align with the redesign of our state assessment. Each unit included in the materials has embedded paper and pencil assessments to support classroom teachers. But units also included assessment options designed in a digital format aligned with the STAAR redesign, so when appropriate, students have opportunities to practice taking assessments online using the QTI unit assessments in K-5, which include new question types and evidence-based writing. Within the lessons themselves, students participate in class discussions and answer questions that match the cognitive complexity the summative assessment requires. As a knowledge-building curriculum, students are exposed to cross-curricular passages that connect to social studies and science topics. Beginning in Kindergarten, students are explicitly taught the writing process. Throughout each grade level, students participate in a variety of evidence-based writing activities that not only solidify their learning but also serve as important formative assessment data for the teacher.

TEA OER team develops and publishes materials. These materials are submitted to a state review panel and ultimately submitted to the State Board of Education for approval. Once approved, the TEA IMI team provides implementation support to ESCs. ESCs provide implementation support and professional learning to school system staff and adopted materials.

Teacher Incentive Allotment: House Bill (HB) 3 established district local optional teacher designation systems and the Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) that are dedicated to recruiting, rewarding, and retaining highly effective teachers in all schools, with particular

emphasis on high-needs and rural schools. In 2019-2020, 26 local education agencies (LEA) developed plans that were approved by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for local designation systems, and over 3900 teacher designations were issued.

High-Quality Supports for all Learners

The Texas Education Agency is dedicated to providing appropriate supports for all learners. This section explores the comprehensive framework of high-quality supports designed to empower all learners—particularly Emergent Bilingual students, students receiving Special Education services, those benefiting from Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) and Dyslexia services. Additionally, it highlights the critical role of state assessments in monitoring progress and ensuring accountability. By aligning resources, instructional strategies, and data-driven practices, educators can foster academic success and meaningful growth for every student, regardless of background or ability.

Emergent Bilingual

Biliteracy Development of partner language and English through all content areas in bilingual programs, especially in Dual Language Immersion (DLI) programs and leveraging the Texas Effective Dual Language Immersion Framework (TxEDLIF).

Emergent Bilingual Students in Texas

Texas serves more than 5.5 million students with approximately 1.3 million students identified as emergent bilingual (EB), which makes up about 24% of the student population across the state. Emergent bilingual students enrich the classroom spaces with their linguistic and background assets. In the past 10 years, student enrollment continues to increase along with the number of varied languages represented in our school systems and with Spanish being the top language at 86%, followed by Vietnamese, Arabic, and other languages. ([Fact Sheet 1](#))

State Approved Models

The Bilingual Education Act of 1968 has given Texas the opportunity to make notable and significant strides to serve the fastest growing EB student population. As a result, Texas educators have increased awareness and understanding of the importance of strategically addressing the affective, linguistic and cognitive needs of EB students. Research supported instructional practices include a) instruction in the home language, b) use of high-quality and authentic resources that meet students' linguistic and background needs, c) integration of collaborative learning models and d) multiple, meaningful opportunities to

develop oracy across all content areas. In addition, Texas has six state-approved bilingual education program models: Dual Language Immersion (DLI) One-way, and Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Two-way, Transitional Early-Exit, Transitional Late-Exit, and English as a Second Language (ESL) Pull-Out, ESL Content-Based. While all program models support the linguistic needs of EB students, they are designed differently with unique goals. Transitional bilingual programs utilize home language instruction and ESL programs provide access to home language; the goal of both Transitional and ESL programs is English proficiency. Only the DLI program models offer additive bilingual education with goals of bilingualism, biliteracy, and increased awareness of student backgrounds. Students' home language is utilized through the duration of the program to ensure students develop strong literacy skills in home language to advance English proficiency. The research in the field consistently demonstrates positive long-term academic achievement for EB students participating in DLI programs.
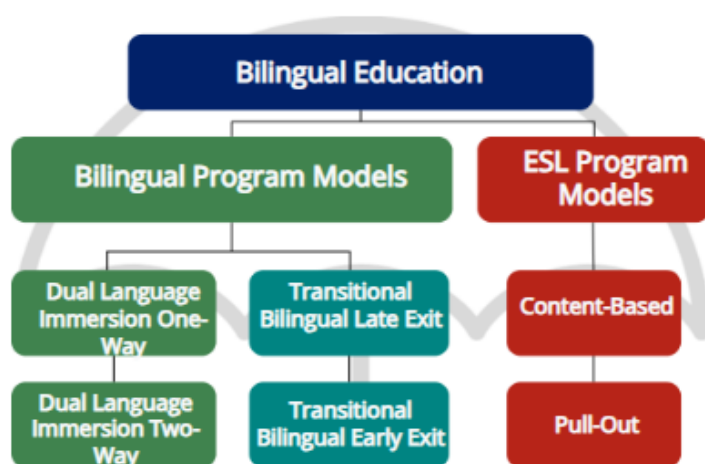
Figure 6: Texas Bilingual Education Models

Funding Source

Local Education Agencies, including districts, charter schools, and districts of innovation, who have identified EB students, are allocated state and federal funds dedicated to supporting the linguistic and academic needs of EB students. Schools can use these funds in various ways, such as equipping teachers and school leaders with high quality continuous professional learning, providing high-quality instructional resources, and developing programs to connect families of EB students to parent resources and projects. (*Funding Guidebook: Bilingual Education Allotment (BEA) & Title III, Part A Supporting Emergent Bilingual (EB) and /or Immigrant Students*)

Texas Effective Dual Language Immersion Framework (TxEDLIF)

Texas Effective Dual Language Immersion Framework (TxEDLIF) was developed with the passage of House Bill 3 in the 86th legislative session in 2019, which tasked TEA with providing guidance and monitoring for the effective implementation of dual language immersion (DLI) one-way and two-way programs. House Bill 3 also incentivized school systems to implement DLI programs with an increase of 0.05 in their Bilingual Education Allotment (BEA) fund for all EB students participating in a DLI one-way or two-way program and 0.05 for non-EB students participating in a DLI two-way program.

The TxEDLIF, aligned to the agency's Effective Schools Framework (ESF), is a manageable instructional framework for school systems grounded in evidence-based dual language pedagogy designed to increase the effective implementation and sustainability of dual language immersion programs and positively impact student achievement. The framework consists of five levers and includes DLI-specific essential actions, key practices, success criteria, and a rubric for self-assessment to support reflective practices and continuous improvement. (TxEDLIF Website)

The Emergent Bilingual (EB) Web Portal

All resources supporting effective program implementation and state and federal guidance are available to educators, administrators, Education Service Centers (ESCs), and parents/families in the EB Web Portal linked here. The site, which can be translated into multiple languages, has a plethora of resources that educators can access to deliver high-quality instructional practices that promote language development while achieving academic standards through all disciplines. Administrators can easily access professional development opportunities to strengthen systems and campus / district improvement plans as well have timely information to meet state and federal requirements when serving EB and newcomer students in all public-school settings. Parents and families can easily navigate the portal to learn more about state assessments and how to connect school and home learning.

Figure 7: Emergent Bilingual Portal

Stakeholders can inform the EB Division of necessary changes through the "Contact Us" portal. In addition, feedback is leveraged through the EB inbox for continuous improvement. Monthly engagements with ESCs representatives foster collaboration and input for necessary updates to resources.

Special Education

As of 2023-24, 14% of students in Texas are served by special education. Additionally, there has been an increase of almost 70% of students identified with dyslexia in the past 5 years (329,247 students as of 23-24). Students with a specific learning disability account for 35.8% of students served by special education. The graph below shows students who met grade level for Reading Language Arts across the state versus those who met grade level and served by special education. This data shows the need for additional support for students with disabilities in literacy instruction.
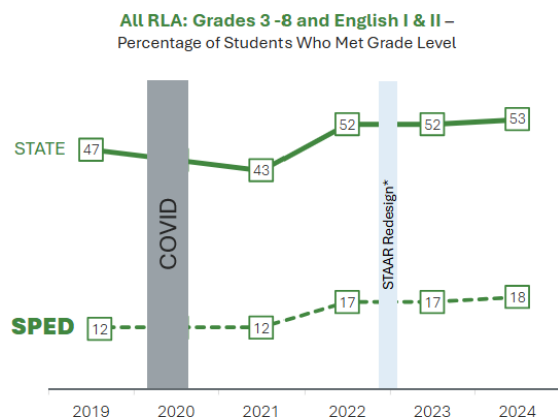
Figure 8: STAAR Score Correlation

The Office of Special Populations and Student Supports (OSPSS) is responsible for the agency's compliance efforts, as well as monitoring the compliance results of school systems, in relation to the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Part of the IDEA supervision process is for each state to develop a state systemic improvement plan (SSIP), which allows states to develop and implement a comprehensive, multi-year plan to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. The state's current SSIP revolves around improving reading proficiency rates among students with disabilities, particularly in grades 4, 8, and in high school. The SSIP is merely one facet of the agency's overall literacy initiatives but is one that OSPSS closely monitors.

Within the Office of Special Populations and Student Supports, two divisions (Special Populations Systemwide Integration and Special Education Technical Assistance) provide literacy support specifically to students with disabilities. These supports are supplemental to core instruction. While our integration division actively works to align with reading

academies and high-quality instructional materials to ensure cross agency initiatives are providing appropriate and aligned supports for students with disabilities, highlighted below are several available tools that are available to educators.

1) **Literacy for All** aims to equip educators with the knowledge and skills to support students in grades 4-12 who struggle with reading. Educators gain a comprehensive understanding of how to create effective literacy environments that cater to all students' needs. This initiative focuses on foundational reading skills and covers:

- The science of teaching reading
- Essential skills for proficient reading
- How the brain learns to read
- Characteristics of dyslexia and dysgraphia
- The impact of learning abilities on reading
- Effective instruction and accommodations to remove learning barriers

Literacy for All can be accessed at multiple levels. An asynchronous course is available for educators to access, and ESCs can provide a synchronous course as a professional learning opportunity for educators.

2) **Foundational Reading Lesson Set** provides Texas teachers with comprehensive instructional materials for creating year-long phonics lessons. This set is designed for first graders learning to read and for first, second, and third graders needing additional support. The materials are adaptable for students at various levels, though clue cards for primary grades may need replacement for older students sensitive to age-appropriate activities. This set ensures teachers have the resources needed to support unique learning needs throughout the year. It includes:

- Routines for all phonics lesson components
- Materials for the entire school year
- Top 500 sight words
- Approximately 4,000 decodable words
- Over 200 image cards for phonological awareness
- More than 80 sound-spellings ordered by frequency
- Over 40 sound-spelling cards for common phonograms

The Foundational Reading Lesson Set materials can be found on the Texas SPED Support website for any educators.

1) **English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR) K-5: Self-Determination Alignment** provides educators with a guide to integrating self-determination skills within the ELAR Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for elementary students. This

resource helps teachers identify where self-determination skills are addressed in the curriculum and aids in developing standards-based annual Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals for students receiving special education and related services. Self-determination skills lead toward self-advocacy and self-awareness and can help improve outcomes for students, including in their literacy journey.

2) **English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR) 6-12: Self-Determination Alignment** offers a similar guide for middle and high school educators. It aligns self-determination skills with the ELAR TEKS for older students, supporting the creation of standards-based annual IEP goals tailored to each student's needs. The self-determined K-12 TEKS Vertical Alignment documents can be found on the Texas Sped Support website for any educators.

3) **Teaching Literacy to Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities** is a training program is adapted from a previous training from TEA's Low Incidence Disabilities network entitled *Teaching Literacy to Students with Significant Disabilities* which was developed by the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the work of Karen Erickson. This training is designed to equip teachers with the knowledge and tools necessary to deliver meaningful literacy instruction to students with significant cognitive disabilities. This training will provide educators with strategies and resources to create impactful literacy experiences tailored to these students' unique needs. There are six courses in this series:
   - Phonemic Awareness and Phonics
   - Concepts of Print
   - Vocabulary
   - Fluency
   - Comprehension
   - Writing

Our *Teaching Literacy to Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities* Series Teaching Literacy to Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities can be accessed asynchronously or synchronously. An asynchronous course is available for educators to access, and ESCs will provide a synchronous course and coaching as a professional learning opportunity for educators.

Funding

Funding sources have historically been through IDEA B.

Data and Continuous Improvement

As part of the Special Education Leadership grant, each ESC is required to also have a goal, with specific measurable progress measures, around the overall SSIP goal to improve reading proficiency outcomes.

Data analytics are recorded through TEA Learn providing information on enrollment and completion of courses. Data analytics are tracked for the number of views when a person accesses materials on the Texas Sped Support website. Courses provided through ESCs are tracked through participant attendance.

Overall initiative effectiveness is indicated based on STAAR data and individual student progress on IEP goals. Quarterly, each ESC reports progress toward the goal, and the state provides its progress on the SSIP at least annually through the State Performance Plan (SPP).

Literacy for All and Foundational Reading Lesson Set is reviewed and updated as needed. This depends on legislative changes or updates, current research, and updates to agency-aligned initiatives. The SSIP is a comprehensive, multi-year plan and must be updated at least once every six years.

Alignment with Other State Initiatives:

Literacy for All and Foundational Reading Lesson set align with Texas Reading Academies by aligning with the Science of Teaching Reading. Our *Teaching Literacy to Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities* Series dives deeper into strategies needed to provide meaningful literacy instruction and experiences to students with complex access needs. (Moves beyond general education literacy instruction with strategies that may be included in the specially designed instruction for students receiving special education services.

Multi-tiered Systems of Support

All students need high-quality, research-based literacy instruction. This is fundamental within Tier 1 or Universal instruction within the overall Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework. Students who are at-risk or showing gaps in their literacy skills need to be identified early and provided targeted or intensive intervention to accelerate learning to close the identified gaps. We know that strong universal instruction and early intervention

are the most effective ways to prevent lasting skill gaps. Students receiving intervention need to be carefully monitored with ongoing data collection that can be analyzed on a regular basis to make instructional decisions. Progress monitoring data is analyzed, shared with families, and used to decide if interventions need to be intensified, maintained, or reduced based on student response. At any point in the intervention process, students who are suspected of having a disability and who may need special education must be referred for a timely evaluation under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Tiered Interventions Using Evidence-Based Research (TIER) is a TEA initiative working to provide educators, caregivers, and other educational stakeholders with the knowledge and materials to ensure appropriate implementation of MTSS in schools across Texas. TIER collaborates with a grantee team at the University of Texas at Austin Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk (MCPER) to support initiative implementation. TIER has developed a series of modules, or broad topics, that focus on different components of MTSS. Within each module, there are individual trainings related to the overall module. Examples of modules that connect specifically to literacy include academic intervention (specific trainings on reading and writing), universal screening (including for reading difficulties), and progress monitoring (including for reading and writing interventions). These training courses are available to district staff through certified TIER trainers at every Education Service Center (ESC) in Texas. These trainers attend agency sponsored trainer of trainer events, take post assessments on the material, and submit artifacts as evidence of competency to obtain certification as trainers and coaches supporting content implementation with district staff. Some TIER trainings are also available through self-paced online courses. These courses are available at no cost to Texas educators and are approved for Continuing Professional Education (CPE) hours. Districts also have access to certify their own staff to provide TIER turnaround training and coaching by participating in agency sponsored trainer of trainer and certification events. The district level certified TIER trainers then provide training, coaching, and implementation support using TIER training materials within their own district.

In addition to creating, training, and coaching on MTSS implementation, this initiative also creates and disseminates a variety of tools and resources, such as overview and process documents, progress monitoring tools (e.g. data graphing), and intervention materials through the Texas Sped Support Website, under MTSS resources.

At the Federal level, the IDEA specifies that criteria adopted by a state for determining whether a child has a specific learning disability (SLD) must not require the use of severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement; must permit the use of a

process based on the child's response to scientific, research-based intervention; and may permit the use of other alternative research-based procedures. In Texas, a student must either demonstrate an insufficient response to scientific, research-based intervention (RTI) or exhibit a pattern of strengths and weaknesses (PSW) as one of the components considered to determine whether the child meets the eligibility criteria of SLD. Intervention response is a critical component found within an MTSS framework. The TIER initiative provides training, coaching, and resources that help districts implement the MTSS framework, including components of response to intervention (e.g. progress monitoring and data-based decision making).

At the state level, the Texas Education Code (TEC), Section 26.0081 requires districts to provide parents with notice whenever their child begins to receive intervention strategies. Intervention strategy for the purposes of this requirement means a strategy in an MTSS that is above the level of intervention generally used in that system with all children. The term includes response to intervention (RTI) and other early intervening strategies. In a three-tiered MTSS, Tier 2 and Tier 3 academic and nonacademic student level interventions would be considered intervention strategies. The TIER initiative training courses and the TEA MTSS website include information about notification to parents.

Specifically connected to reading and the universal screening components embedded within an MTSS framework, Texas has two requirements. TEC, Section 28.006, requires that students in kindergarten, first grade, and second grade be administered a beginning of year reading screener. This screener helps identify students in need of reading intervention, and the results must be reported to parents. Another state requirement of TEC, Section 38.003, mandates that school systems administer universal dyslexia screening for all kindergarten and first grade students. The TIER training covering academic screening provides information about how the results of these state mandated reading screenings can be used to identify students who are at risk of dyslexia or other reading difficulties to provide appropriate interventions, including referrals for special education evaluations when a disability and need for special education is suspected.

Funding

The TIER initiative is funded by federal IDEA-B state discretionary funds.

Data and Continuous Improvement

The impact metric for this project is connected to State Performance Plan Indicators (SPPI), specifically around reducing the gap in proficiency that exists between students with disabilities and students without disabilities on state reading and math assessments.

To support this primary impact metric, the team monitors and responds to a variety of data points including:

- The percentage of students in Texas that receive an intervention strategy each year
- The number of TIER certified trainers in the state by ESC region, district, and area of certification
- The post-test results of participants who take TIER training
- The reach of our TIER courses and workshops (position, regions, districts)
- The number of school or campus teams that are coached on MTSS implementation by our TIER certified trainers
- The fidelity of implementation of MTSS processes ratings based on coach observation before and after coaching support
- The satisfaction ratings of participants who engage in coaching and implementation support with TIER trainers
- Site visits, clicks, and downloads of MTSS content on the Texas Sped support website.

Short term goals include increasing the number of TIER certified trainers in both districts and ESCs across the state. We monitor the quality of MTSS team implementation through observations and coaching sessions completed by our certified trainers. Other goals include targets for the number of MTSS district teams trained and coached each year, and the quality of training and services provided.

We track goals on a quarterly and annual basis, which are reported on project dashboards. We track milestone progress using digital work plans that feed into our overall project dashboard. The project is reported to the Office of Special Populations and Student Support (OSPSS) leadership approximately twice per year. We plan annually for the project through a needs assessment and planning process that takes place each spring.

The TIER initiative kicked off during the 20219-2020 school year. Early years of the initiative primarily consisted of content creation and setting up certification programs. We continue to update and revise content annually to increase alignment with other TEA initiatives that were not in existence during initial content creation. We continue to develop some new content as needs arise in the field. Currently, our initiative primarily focuses on training ESC and district staff through our certification process so that they can turn around training and coaching with implementation support within their region or district.

Regarding our efforts to grow certified trainers across the state, we currently have over 100 TIER certified trainers at the ESC level. We have over 200 TIER certified trainers at the district level. During the 2023-2024 school year, about 4,000 educators participated in in-

person TIER training at their ESC. Over 42,000 educators completed one or more online TIER training courses. The average number of participant post-test scores across all training courses was 88%.

Across the 23-24 school year, 98-99% of coaching participants reported "strongly agree" to the following statements:

> -Coaching improved my practice: 98%
>
> -My coaching experience was positive: 99%
>
> -I would refer a colleague for this type of training and coaching experience: 98%

Alignment with Other State Initiatives

Within our project, whenever the project discusses Tier 1 or core literacy instruction, we ensure that we are communicating the same ideas of what makes for high quality instruction as other initiatives. So, for example, we base our reading content on the science of teaching reading, which is directly taught within our Texas Reading Academies (TRA) initiative. Similarly, we infuse concepts from the Reading Language Arts Research Based Instruction Strategies (RBIS) training. We reference the state board of education websites for districts to find information on high-quality instruction materials (HQIM), including those that are open education records (Bluebonnet). When thinking about reading intervention, our initiative aligns with our State Dyslexia Handbook and the resources and guidance provided by the TEA dyslexia team, including the Texas Dyslexia Academies and other dyslexia courses developed by the agency. Regarding special education referral and identification, our initiative aligns with the state's special education technical assistance guidance and requirements for child finding and evaluation. We ensure that our resources and training align with and reinforce our federal and state requirements to ensure that interventions are not used to delay or deny referrals for special education services.

Dyslexia

The dyslexia initiative focuses on ensuring early identification, effective instruction, appropriate accommodations, and specially designed instruction (SDI) for students with dyslexia. The requirements established by the State Board of Education (SBOE) through the Dyslexia Handbook: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders, which provides comprehensive procedures for school districts, charter schools, campuses, teachers, students, and parents/guardians. The handbook also guides the development of

written procedures for serving students with dyslexia and serves as a valuable resource for educator preparation programs and other entities. Additional policies and legislation that drive our initiative:

- TEC §38.003 Screening and Treatment
- 19 TAC §74.28 Students with Dyslexia and Related Disorders
- TEC §28.006 Reading Diagnosis
- TEC §38.0031 Technology Plan
- TEC §38.0032 Dyslexia Training
- TEC §21.054 Continuing Education
- TAC §232.11 CPE Hours for Dyslexia
- TEC §21.044 Educator Preparation
- 19 TAC §97.1071(c) Special Program Performance; Monitoring, Review, and Supports
- TEC §48.103 Dyslexia Allotment
- TEC §48.009 (b) Required REIMS Reporting/Dyslexia Indicator Code
- TEC §29.0031 Dyslexia and Related Disorders
- TEC §29.0032 Providers of Dyslexia Instruction
- TEC §7.102(c)(28) State Board of Education
- TEC Chapter 8 Regional Education Service Centers Title 2: Public Education under Subtitle B. State and Regional Organization and Governance. Sec. 8.061 Dyslexia Specialist
- TEC §21.4552(b-1) Teacher Literacy Achievement Academies

Students with dyslexia have unique needs that require specific support and interventions from trained staff to help them succeed academically. The following are key needs for these students and the staff who assist them:

- Early identification and evaluation under the IDEA
- Structured evidenced-based, explicit, and systematic instruction in phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency, sound symbol association, syllabication, orthography, morphology, syntax, reading fluency and comprehension
- Delivery of dyslexia instruction using research-based practices such as simultaneous, multisensory (VTAKT), systematic and cumulative, explicit instruction, diagnostic teaching to automaticity, synthetic instruction, and analytic instruction

- Accommodations through a Section 504 plan, and accommodations and modifications provided through an individualized education program (IEP)
- Professional development for educators such as those in educator preparation programs and staff working with students with dyslexia who need ongoing training to understand and implement effective identification and instruction in the science of teaching reading, as well as spelling, and writing

The activities, milestones and timeline relate to the resources created by the technical assistance team such as the Dyslexia Handbook, The TEALearn Dyslexia course, and Texas Dyslexia Academies. These resources aim to equip educators with the knowledge and tools necessary to identify and support students with dyslexia and related disorders effectively, ensuring they receive the appropriate interventions and accommodations to succeed academically.

Some additional goals of the dyslexia initiative are to increase understanding of staff who work with students with dyslexia around the special education process, early identification through screening, evaluation, and evidenced based instruction and accommodations and modifications that benefit students identified with dyslexia and related disorders.

Additionally, this initiative is closely connected to the State Performance Plan Indicators (SPPI). Specifically, it relates to SPPI 11: Child Find, which measures the percentage of children evaluated within compliant timelines. This aligns with the handbook's emphasis on the early identification and timely evaluation of students with dyslexia. Additionally, it connects to SPPI 12: Early Childhood Transition, which supports the handbook's goal of early identification and intervention. It also relates to SPPI 13: Secondary Transition, ensuring that students with dyslexia receive the necessary support to successfully transition to postsecondary education or employment. Finally, it aligns with SPPI 14: Post-School Outcomes, which focuses on the long-term success of students with dyslexia.

Funding

The Dyslexia initiative is funded through state and federal funds.

Data and Continuous Improvement

TSDS/PEIMS -Dyslexia At- Risk Screening

TSDS/PEIMS -Dyslexia and Related Disorders Identification

Needs Assessment

Results Driven Accountability (RDA)

State Performance Plan Indicators (SPPI)

Local Educational Agency professional development needs due to state requirements and ESC needs assessment

Dyslexia Handbook updated when State Board of Education deems necessary and if there are legislative changes.

All TDA test scores are posted and participants number for online and face to face trainings, and SPPI data.

Alignment with Other State Initiatives

The Dyslexia Handbook aligns with other state literacy initiatives by incorporating evidence-based practices and comprehensive guidelines that support early identification, effective instruction, and appropriate accommodations and modifications for students with dyslexia. A few ways it aligns:

- Integration with early literacy laws
- Data requirements for at-risk for reading disabilities
- Support for educator training on dyslexia and dysgraphia
- TEKS
- Science of Teaching Reading (STR)

Assessments

The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR)

The **State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®)** is an assessment program designed to measure the extent to which students have learned and are able to apply the knowledge and skills defined in the state-mandated curriculum standards, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Every STAAR question is directly aligned to the TEKS currently in effect for the grade and subject or course being assessed.

STAAR helps to ensure that Texas students are competitive with other students both nationally and internationally. Another important function of STAAR is gauging how well schools and teachers prepare their students academically. In addition, STAAR fulfills the requirements of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, which requires that all students be assessed in specific grades and subjects throughout their academic careers.
STAAR is an online assessment in mathematics, reading language arts (RLA), science, and social studies for students in grades 3–8 and high school and online tests in Spanish for students in grades 3–5.

High school students who entered the ninth grade in the 2011–2012 school year or later must take and pass certain required courses and End of Course (EOC) assessments to graduate from a Texas public high school. These are English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and U.S. History. If a student takes and passes any of these EOC assessments end-of-course exams in middle school, those scores will count toward their state testing requirements for graduation.
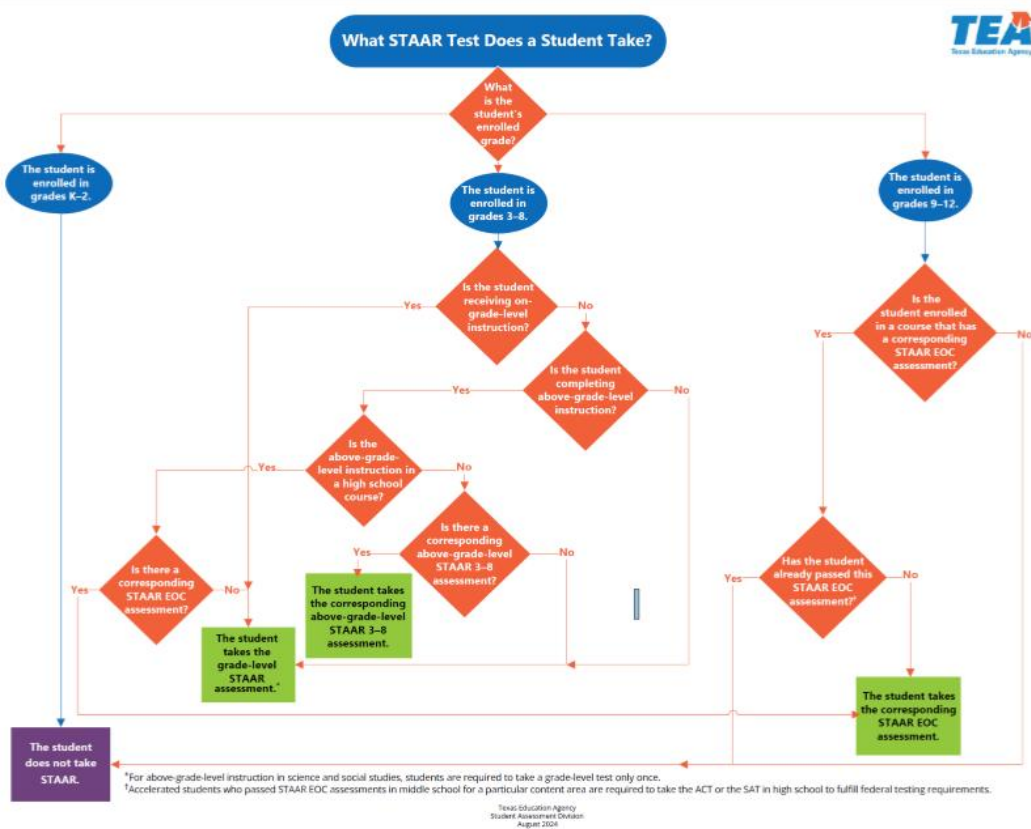

Figure 9: STAAR Test Infographic

STAAR Alternate 2

STAAR Alternate 2 is a standardized alternate academic achievement assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards. It is designed to measure the extent to which a student has learned and is able to apply the defined knowledge and skills in the TEKS. STAAR Alternate 2 is administered individually to students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who meet the participation requirements. STAAR Alternate 2 fulfills ESSA and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). ESSA requires that all students be assessed in specific grades and subjects throughout their academic careers, whereas IDEA requires that students with disabilities have access to the same standards as their nondisabled peers and that they be included in statewide assessments. The STAAR Alternate 2 is not a traditional paper-pencil or multiple-choice test. Instead, it involves test administrators observing students as they respond to standardized state-developed assessment questions that align to the grade-level TEKS through prerequisite skills. Teachers evaluate student performance based on standard scoring instructions specific to each item on STAAR Alternate 2.

STAAR Alternate 2 includes the following assessments:
- grades 3–8 mathematics,
- grades 3–8 RLA,
- grades 5 and 8 science,
- grade 8 social studies, and
- EOC assessments for:
  - Algebra I,
  - English I,
  - English II,
  - Biology, and
  - U.S. History.

With the redesign of STAAR, STAAR Alternate 2 reading and writing assessments were combined into an RLA assessment for each grade to mirror STAAR. The redesigned STAAR Alternate 2 RLA assessments were implemented in spring 2023.

The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS)

The **Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS)** is an English language proficiency assessment aligned to the Texas English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS). This assessment is designed to assess the progress that emergent

bilingual (EB) students make in learning the English language. TELPAS fulfills ESSA requirements for assessing EB students in kindergarten through grade 12 in four language domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. TELPAS assesses second language development in the domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Online assessments are used to assess all domains in grades 2–12. For students in kindergarten through grade 1, holistically rated assessments based on ongoing classroom observations and written student work are used.

All students enrolled in Texas public schools and open-enrollment charter schools, including virtual schools, are required by federal and state law to participate in the Texas Assessment Program. EB students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12 who are not over the age of 21 are required to be assessed annually with an English language proficiency assessment until they are determined to be proficient by meeting the EB student reclassification criteria available on the Bilingual and English as a Second Language Education Programs webpage. This includes students classified as emergent bilingual (EB)/English learner (EL) in the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) whose parents have declined bilingual or English as a second language (ESL) program service (PEIMS code C).

In rare circumstances, a student receiving special education services may not be required to participate in one or more TELPAS language domains for reasons associated with the student's particular disability. The reason for not assessing the student must be determined by the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee in conjunction with the language proficiency assessment committee (LPAC) and must be well supported by documentation in the student's individualized education program (IEP) by the ARD committee and in the student's permanent record file by the LPAC. Participation decisions must be considered individually for each student on a domain-by-domain basis.

The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) Alternate

TELPAS Alternate is an alternate English language proficiency assessment that measures the progress that EB students in grades 2–12 with the most significant cognitive disabilities make in acquiring the English language. It fulfills the ESSA requirements that EB students who cannot participate in the general English language proficiency assessment even with allowable accommodations be assessed annually until they are determined to be proficient in the English language. TELPAS Alternate is a holistic inventory based on

ongoing classroom observations used for the four language domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Accommodations

Accommodations are defined by The Texas Education Agency as changes to materials or procedures that enable students to participate meaningfully in learning and testing. Accommodations policies may apply to any student taking the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) or the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) depending on his or her needs and whether the student meets the eligibility criteria, as applicable. These policies are divided into three main categories:

- **Accessibility features** are procedures and materials that should be made available on state assessments to students who regularly use them during classroom instruction. A student may **NOT** be required to use accessibility features during testing, and there is no need to document their use in the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) for test administrations. Accessibility features with the type of support, description, and examples of what practices are allowed and not allowed are listed in the table on the Accessibility page within the District and Campus Coordinator Resources (DCCR).

- **Locally approved designated supports** do not require TEA approval for students who meet eligibility criteria outlined in the individual designated support policy documents found in the Accommodations section of the District and Campus Coordinator Resources. Each policy document includes a description of the designated support, the assessment the support applies to, eligibility criteria, and other information. Locally approved designated supports include the following:

  - Basic Transcribing- allows responses to be entered into the Test Delivery System (TDS) via trained test administrators or speech-to-text (STT) software when a student has a disabling condition that prevents the student from independently entering responses through keyboarding or the use of a mouse.
  - Braille and Refreshable Braille- provides braille test materials or screen reader support for refreshable braille displays to a student with a visual impairment (VI).
  - Calculation Aids- provides an alternate method of computation for a student who is unable to effectively use paper-and-pencil methods.
  - Content and Language Supports- allows for various types of assistance (e.g., scaffolded directions, assistance with tracking, graphic organizers, simplified language, graphic representations of

vocabulary and concepts) to support a student's understanding of passages, test questions, and answer choices.

- Individualized Structured Reminders- allows a test administrator to provide a student with individualized structured reminders to stay on task during a test administration beyond what is required or allowed for any student during standard administration procedures.
- Large Print- provides a student with enlarged paper test materials (18 pt font) when the student cannot effectively access test materials in standard print size.
- Manipulating Test Materials- allows a test administrator to physically manipulate test materials, online tools, and equipment for a student who is unable to do so independently.
- Mathematics Manipulatives- allows a student to use concrete objects or pictures of concrete objects that the student can touch and move to visualize abstract concepts.
- Oral and Signed Administration- allows test material to be read aloud or signed to a student. All references in this document to reading support during oral administration also apply to oral interpretation (e.g., lipreading) and signing during a signed administration. Online oral or signed administration is administered via text-to-speech (TTS) or ASL videos. Students in need of this support should be identified prior to the administration so they can become familiar with this tool.
- Spelling Assistance- various types of spelling assistance (e.g., spell check, word prediction) for students with disabilities.
- Supplemental Aids- allows a student to use paper-based resources that assist in recalling information.

- **Designated supports requiring TEA approval** require the submission and approval of an Accommodation Request Form (ARF). The appropriate team at the campus level (e.g., admission, review, and dismissal [ARD] committee, Section 504 committee, Response to Intervention [RtI] team, student assistance team) determines whether the student meets the specific eligibility criteria listed on the policy document and, if so, submits an ARF to TEA. Accommodation requests must be reviewed and approved by TEA before a student can use one of these designated supports on a state assessment. The decision to use one of these designated supports is recommended by the appropriate team at the campus level based on the eligibility criteria and is documented as "pending TEA approval."

These supports represent a category of assistance that can potentially make an assessment administration non-standard, so specific guidance is provided from the agency to ensure validity is maintained. The four supports requiring TEA review and approval are:

- Extra Day- allows a student to complete an assessment over two consecutive days.
- Complex Transcribing- allows a test administrator to record a student's dictated mathematics, scratch work and computations when the student cannot accomplish this task independently.
- Mathematics Scribe (STAAR only)- allows a test administrator to record a student's dictated mathematics scratch work and computations when the student cannot accomplish this task independently.
- Other- provides opportunities for students with unique needs not addressed explicitly with any accessibility features or another designated support. Other designated supports are not intended to provide additional supplemental aids not listed as allowed or for students who fail to meet established eligibility criteria for designated supports.

Special Administrations of an Assessment

STAAR assessments, including accommodated versions, and TELPAS listening and speaking assessments and reading and writing assessments are generally administered online, except in the following scenarios:

- Accommodations Cannot be Applied- A student might need testing accommodation that is not possible to provide in an online setting. Prior to a special administration of an assessment, consideration should be given to accessibility features, locally approved designated supports, and designated supports requiring Texas Education Agency (TEA) approval. A student should be designated as eligible for a special administration only if a required accommodation documented in the student's individualized education program (IEP), individual accommodation plan (IAP), or Section 504 paperwork cannot be delivered in an online format.

- Unable to Participate in One Domain of TELPAS- District testing personnel may register a student for a special administration if the student's admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee has determined that the student is not required to participate in TELPAS for a specific domain because of the student's disability. For

example, a student who is deaf and whose ARD committee has determined the student will not be assessed in the listening domain will not take the TELPAS listening and speaking online assessment. The student is eligible to be rated holistically in speaking.

▪ Technology Access is Precluded- District personnel must make every effort to administer STAAR and TELPAS assessments online. In rare situations where appropriate computers or technology are unavailable, as might occur on occasion with a homebound student or a student in a juvenile justice alternative education program (JJAEP), jail, or detention center, that student may be eligible for a special paper or holistic administration.

Paper by Request
The 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, passed HB 1225, which permitted districts to provide paper administrations of STAAR to any student whose parent, guardian, or teacher requests it. Requests must be submitted to the district by September 15 for fall administrations and December 1 for spring administrations. The number of students who are administered paper tests by request is limited to 3 percent of the total number of students enrolled in the district and is separate and distinct from the students who are eligible to receive a special paper administration of STAAR.

Accommodations for STAAR Alternate 2
STAAR Alternate 2 is a standardized assessment intended to be appropriate for eligible students in its original, intact form. However, it is critical that students with disabilities be provided access to the assessment through careful use of accommodations wherever appropriate. Therefore, allowable accommodations may be provided to students with disabilities to enable them to participate meaningfully in the assessment. Test administrators may use accommodations only if they are routinely provided in classroom instruction and listed in the student's IEP. Some accommodations provided during classroom instruction may not be allowed during testing, as they would invalidate the content being assessed or compromise the security and integrity of the test.

Accommodations for TELPAS Alternate
TELPAS accommodations should reflect the instructional accommodations indicated in the student's IEP. A teacher's determination of the English proficiency of a student with the most significant cognitive disabilities using TELPAS Alternate should reflect the student's performance in English using the same accommodations used in daily instruction.

For purposes of TELPAS Alternate, "English" is not limited to the typical spoken or written English of other state assessments. It is important to recognize that some EB students use sign language, braille, or another method of communication as a substitute for traditional English in one or more domains.

Funding: State and Federally Required Assessments

All State-required assessments are identified in Texas Education Code (TEC), §39.023 and §39.027.

o TEC, §39.023(a) includes grades 3–8 assessments.

o TEC, §39.023(b) includes all assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

o TEC, §39.023(c) includes EOC assessments.

o TEC, §39.023(l) includes grades 3–5 Spanish assessments.

o TEC, §39.027(e) includes English language proficiency assessments.

STAAR is required by state law [TEC, §39.023 (a) and (c)] in

o Grades 3–8 in mathematics,

o Grades 3–8 in reading,

o Grades 5 and 8 in science,

o Grade 8 in social studies, and

o High school for Algebra I, English I, English II, Biology, and U.S. History.

STAAR Spanish is required by state law [TEC, §39.023(l)] in

o Grades 3–5 in mathematics,

o Grades 3–5 in reading, and

o Grade 5 in science.

STAAR Alternate 2 is required by state law [TEC, §39.023(b)] in

o Grades 3–8 in mathematics,

o Grades 3–8 in reading,

o Grades 5 and 8 in science, and

o Grade 8 in social studies.

TELPAS is required by state law [TEC, §39.027(e)] for English learners (ELs) in kindergarten through grade 12 in

o Reading,

o Writing,

o Listening, and

o Speaking.

Federally-Required Assessments

- Federally required assessments are identified in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) section 1111(b)(2) (page 23).
- ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I) (aa) requires mathematics and reading or language arts assessments in each of grades 3–8.
- ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I) (bb) requires mathematics and reading or language arts assessments at least once in grades 9–12.
- ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(II) (aa) requires science assessments not less than one time in grades 3–5.
- ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(II) (bb) requires science assessments not less than one time in grades 6–9.
- ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(II)(cc) requires science assessments not less than one time in grades 10–12.
- ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(D) requires alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for grades for grades 3–8 and high school in mathematics and reading or language arts.
- ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(D) requires alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards in science.
- ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(F) requires academic assessments in languages other than English that are present to a significant extent in the participating student population.
- ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(G) requires annual English language proficiency assessments for all Els.

Data and Continuous Improvement

The STAAR Redesign was passed by the 86th Texas Legislature in 2019. It included online testing, new question types, and cross-curricular passages. Additional information on the legislation requiring the STAAR Redesign and the components of the redesign can be found here: https://tea.texas.gov/student-assessment/assessment-initiatives/staar-redesign .

The data provided by the Texas Assessment Program plays an important role in decision-making about student performance and public education accountability. Individual student test scores are used to aid in the identification of students who may benefit from accelerated instruction and to assist in making graduation decisions. In addition, the aggregated student performance results from the Texas Assessment Program are a major component of state and federal accountability systems used to rate individual public schools and school districts in Texas. The data are also used in educational research and in the establishment of public policy.

Items are field-tested before they are used on an operational test form. Whenever possible, TEA conducts field tests of new items by embedding them in spring operational tests so that the field-test items are randomly distributed across the state. This procedure ensures that a large representative sample of responses is gathered on each item. Experience has shown that embedded field testing yields sufficient data for precise item evaluation and allows for the collection of statistical data on a large number of items in a realistic testing situation. (Performance on field-test items does not affect students' scores on the operational tests.) TEA also periodically conducts stand-alone field tests of new items (e.g., extended constructed-response items on English and Spanish Reading Language Arts STAAR assessments) by administering them to a purposefully selected representative student sample. Tests are constructed from the bank of items determined to be acceptable after data review. Field-test data are used to place the item difficulty values on a common Rasch scale. This scale allows for the comparison of the difficulty of each item with that of all other items in the bank. When a new form of assessment is administered, the questions on the new form are generally different from those on older forms. Despite the fact that different test forms target the same knowledge and skills, some forms will be slightly easier or slightly more difficult than others. As a result, in most cases student performance cannot be compared directly across test administrations using raw scores. To facilitate comparisons, raw scores from different test forms and administrations are placed onto a common scale resulting in scale scores. Unlike raw scores, scale scores allow for direct comparisons of student performance across separate test forms and different test administrations. A scale score considers the difficulty level of the specific set of questions on a test form, and it describes students' performance relative to each other and relative to the performance standards across separate test forms.

Three scales underlie the STAAR (including STAAR Spanish), STAAR Alternate 2, TELPAS, and TELPAS Alternate assessments: the raw score scale, the Rasch scale, and the reporting scale. The scales are defined as follows:

- The raw score scale is defined as the number of items answered correctly, regardless of difficulty.
- The Rasch scale is a transformation of the raw scores onto a scale that considers the difficulty of the items and is comparable across different test forms and administrations.
- The reporting scale is a linear transformation of the Rasch scale, through scaling constants, onto a user-friendly scale. Because the transformation is linear, the reporting scale also considers item difficulty. The reported scale

scores are comparable and maintain performance standards across test forms and administrations.

Test results can be used to evaluate the performance of a group over time. Test results can be used when evaluating instruction or programs that require average scores or year-to-year comparisons. The tests are designed to measure content areas within the required state curriculum, so the consideration of test results by content area and reporting category might be helpful when evaluating curriculum and instructional programs. All test scores can be compared with statewide and regional performance within the same content area for any administration. Test scores can also be used to identify where an individual student needs additional instruction or support in each subject. This identification can help educators plan the most effective instructional intervention. Finally, individual student test scores are also used in conjunction with other performance indicators to assist in making placement decisions. While scores can contribute to decisions regarding placement, educational planning for a student should take into account as much student information as possible. Generalizations from test results can be made from the specific content area being measured on the test. However, because each test measures a finite set of skills with a limited set of items, any generalizations about student achievement derived solely from a particular test should be made with great caution and with full reference to the fact that the conclusions are based only on that test. Instruction and program evaluations should take into account as much information as possible, rather than relying on test scores alone, to provide a more complete picture of student performance.

STAAR reports on the following data:

- Performance Standards
- Progress Measures
- Statewide Summary Reports
- Statewide Item Analysis Reports
- Raw Score Conversion Tables
- Aggregate Data
- 100-Point Scale Tables

STAAR final assessment reports, including individual student report cards and data files, are available annually for district testing coordinators in the Centralized Reporting System (CRS). The primary purpose of CRS is to provide teachers with access to their students'

test results for STAAR, STAAR Alternate 2, TELPAS, and TELPAS Alternate. Teachers can see performance information by assessment, reporting category, and test question.

All STAAR test questions and answers are made available in the Family Portal, so families and teachers can work together to better support students learning specific skills.

The Family Portal, available at https://www.texasassessment.gov/, gives families even more information, including tips for how to support learning at home.

The general public can find out how any school in the state of Texas performed on the state assessments here: https://txresearchportal.com/

Alignment with Other State Initiatives

As summative assessments, the Texas Assessment Programs provide important annual feedback at scale on student achievement and progress. Other literacy initiatives within the agency and across the state are able to analyze the data to determine if their partner school systems have experienced positive gains from the implementation of their strategies and support. Summative assessments are not meant to influence the development of instructional practices.

High-Quality Professional Learning

Texas Reading Academies

The Texas Reading Academies ensure that all kindergarten through third-grade educators receive training in evidence-based literacy instruction. The program equips educators with the skills and resources necessary to implement effective reading instruction, assess student progress, and use data-driven strategies to support literacy development.

Legislative Requirement

House Bill 3 (HB 3), passed by the 86th Texas Legislature in June 2019, mandates that all K-3 teachers, including special education teachers, and principals participate in the HB 3 Reading Academies. School systems may exempt educators who do not serve as the teacher of record for required grade levels, including teachers of art, music, physical education, and theatre.

More information on compliance requirements can be found in the **HB 3 Compliance Rules** document:

Texas Education Code, Chapter 28:

HYPERLINK "https://texas.gov/"Literacy Standards for K-3

Each school district and open-enrollment charter school must:

1. Implement a phonics curriculum with systematic, direct instruction in kindergarten through third grade.
2. Ensure that all K-3 classroom teachers and principals attend a teacher literacy achievement academy developed under **Section 21.4552** by the end of their first year in the role.

Teacher Literacy Achievement Academy

Training includes:

- Effective and systematic instructional practices in reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension).
- Evidence-based methods for struggling readers.
- Instructional strategies for writing (optional).

Program Goals & Structure

Traditional Program Overview

- **Training Format:** Year-long, in-person training.
- **Entry Points:** July, August, September, January, and June.
- **Pathways Offered:**
- English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR)
- Biliteracy
- Administrator (Blended Model)

Support & Development Initiatives

- Monthly webinars and bi-monthly Reading Academy Facilitator (RAF) sessions.
- Cohort leader and authorized provider training.

Pilots Initiatives

- **Educator Preparation Program (EPP) Pilot**
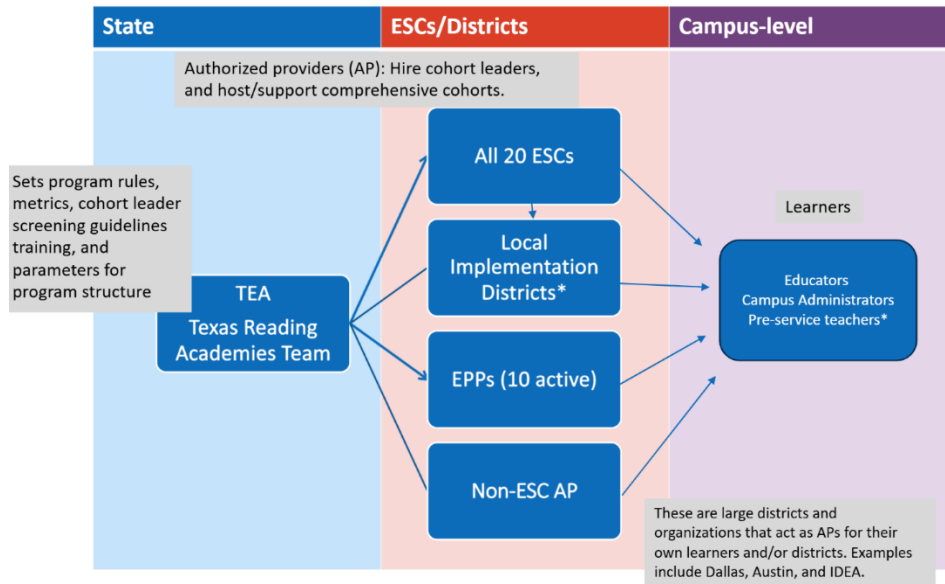
Delivery Chain – Texas Reading Academies

Figure 10: Texas Reading Academies Delivery Chain

Continuous Improvement cycle:

Authorized providers must track the specified metrics and are evaluated annually. As part of the continuous improvement process, providers must report any missed metrics and develop a plan for improvement.

The Reading Academies operate within a continuous improvement cycle, using a comprehensive set of metrics to measure program efficacy, satisfaction, and impact statewide. These metrics assess not only the fidelity of implementation by authorized providers and learner perceptions, but also the impact on learners' confidence in understanding and applying the material in their classrooms. Additional metrics evaluate the effectiveness of coaching and observation components within the program, as well as how the Texas Education Agency supports implementation through cohort leaders and authorized providers.

Strong Foundations

Strong Foundations Implementations is part of the Strong Foundations Grant Program and was established through House Bill 4545 during the 87th Texas Legislature in 2021. This legislation aimed to provide comprehensive support for K–5 Math and Literacy by offering tier-one instructional supports, including curriculum, instructional leadership, and planning supports. The program's vision is to ensure that all Texas students have access to rigorous, grade-level content and instruction every day.

Strong Foundations Implementation (SFI) provides direct grant funds to school systems for technical assistance to support high-fidelity implementation of the Bluebonnet Learning instructional materials, including high-quality professional learning (HQPL) for teachers, coaches, school leaders/campus administrators, and district leaders on effectively implementing Bluebonnet Learning. Strong Foundations Implementation is the OER Instructional Material Support program established by Chapter 31 of the Texas Education Code.

The focus of SFI is to provide supports for school systems across the implementation stages.

Strong Foundations Implementation is grounded in three pillars of support:

Turnkey Professional Learning:

- A series of professional learning sessions designed for specific audiences and differentiated by phase of implementation for teachers, coaches, and leaders.

  - **Teachers/Coaches:** Foundational, intermediate, and advanced sessions that support the development of deep product knowledge, use of HQIM protocol best practices, and supporting all learners. Coaches also learn strategies to support teacher success.
  - **Leaders:** Systems alignment, creating conditions for success, leading internalization, and establishing practices that support successful implementation.

Flexible Implementation Support:

- Flexible implementation supports are provided for specific audiences and differentiated by phase of implementation for teachers, coaches, and leaders.
  - Additional professional learning sessions
  - Partnered observation and feedback cycles with leaders and/or coaches
  - Modeling of internalization, lesson rehearsal, and student work analysis protocols

- Resources, case studies, and templates that support small group facilitation and reflection

Leader Coaching:

- Leaders receive coaching and consulting support monthly throughout the duration of the grant.
    - Partnered observations with coaches
    - Partnered learning walks with school and district leaders
    - Monthly consultation meetings with school and district leaders
    - Reviewing of implementation data including survey feedback, observations, and progress monitoring data
    - Providing feedback on action plans and other deliverables

Strong Foundations Implementation includes two types of school system supports: Implementation supports and Product Supports. Together both types of supports ensure coherence across leaders, coaches and teachers.

Implementation supports are provided by Implementation Advisors and focus on professional development and supports for districts and school leaders. Product supports are provided by Product Advisors and focuses on supporting teachers and coaches. The school system will select one Approved Provider for both types of supports. In most cases, Implementation Advisors and Product Advisors will be different individuals at an organization.

Implementation Academies

As part of implementation academies, implementation advisors are required to provide the following supports to leaders:

- Action Plans: Implementation Advisors support school systems in completing required deliverables, including action plans.
- Monthly Supports: Implementation Advisors provide at least monthly supports to school system leaders. Supports will differ based on the school system's context – some months may be consultation and coaching meetings, others may be redelivery of turnkey trainings, and others may be a combination of both.

- Learning Walks: Implementation Advisors join school system leaders on learning walks at least twice a year to determine the degree of implementation fidelity. Advisors also support leaders in analyzing the findings from learning walks over the year.

Product Academies

As part of product academies, product advisors are required to provide the following supports to teachers and coaches:

- Professional Learning: Product Advisors deliver professional learning for teachers and coaches focused on developing best practices for implementation and building understanding of key protocols.
- Flexible Supports: Product Advisors provide flexible supports to build the capacity of teachers and coaches. Flexible supports may include additional professional learning sessions, observation and feedback, or internalizations and rehearsals during professional learning communities.
- Observations: Product Advisors conduct quarterly observations.

Funding

Funding for the **Strong Foundations Implementation (SFI)** program comes from various sources, including:

1. **State Funds**: Allocated through specific riders in the Texas state budget, such as Rider 76 and Rider 94
2. **Federal Funds**: Title I funds are also used to support certain aspects of the program

These funds are strategically allocated to ensure comprehensive support for school systems in implementing high-quality instructional materials and professional learning.

In all SFI grants options, School Systems are required to use:

- Fifty percent (50%) of grant funds to contract with a single, approved provider, per instructional material from the LASO Cycle 3 approved provider list for SFI to support grant activities (it is highly recommended that school systems contract with the same provider for all instructional materials).
- Twenty percent (20%) of grant funds for additional support from the approved provider and/or salaries, or partial salaries, for instructional coaches or other positions directly supporting implementation of the instructional materials.

- Thirty percent (30%) of grant funds for other allowable expenses (e.g., print materials, digital licenses, teacher stipends, instructional coaches, approved assessment platforms).

Continuous Improvement

Strong Foundations Implementation

As part of each grant cycle, continuous improvements are implemented. We use the data from every cycle of training to make changes based on the feedback and needs of the different cohorts.

Current Impact of HQIM Implementation across the state:

Strong Foundations Implementation and Product Academies continuous improvement strategy focus on alignment across the other TEA initiatives and coherence across the content:

Alignment to Other State Initiatives

Strong Foundations Implementation is closely aligned to many initiatives across the agency:

- **Strong Foundations Planning:** as part of the continuum of implementation. Once school systems receive support through the planning stages, they can move into the implementation stages and receive aligned supports.
- **RBIS:** All training resources provided to Approved Providers under Strong Foundations Implementation are grounded in Research-Based Instructional Resources.
- **IMRA:** Implementation supports under the Strong Foundations Implementation is grounded in SBOE approved instructional materials like Bluebonnet Learning that have gone through the IMRA process.
- **Reading Academies:** All training resources provided to Approved Providers under Strong Foundations Implementation are connected to the research-based content from Reading Academies.

Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs)

Educator Preparation RBIS & HQIM Training Pilot- Our literacy initiative, the Educator Preparation RBIS & HQIM Training Pilot, is designed to equip teacher candidates with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively utilize high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) and research-based instructional strategies (RBIS) in both mathematics and reading/language arts (RLA). This initiative focuses on developing comprehensive training materials that cover essential aspects of HQIM, including identification, lesson internalization, student work analysis, adapting lessons to meet student needs, and utilizing formative and summative assessments to enhance teaching practices.

The training is structured as a Training of Trainers (ToT) pilot, where Educator Preparation Program (EPP) faculty who teach teacher candidates will undergo the training. These faculty members will then incorporate modules on these topics into their coursework and syllabi, ensuring that teacher candidates are well-prepared to use HQIM from day one in the classroom. The RBIS in RLA specifically addresses critical areas such as text complexity, complex grade-level texts, knowledge coherence, and text-based responses.

By participating in this initiative, teacher candidates will gain valuable insights into how to balance conceptual and procedural understanding in their teaching practices, ultimately leading to improved student outcomes. This initiative aims to create a ripple effect, where trained EPP faculty empower future educators to deliver high-quality, research-informed instruction that meets the needs of all learners.

The Educator Preparation RBIS and HQIM Training is driven by House Bill 1605, which passed during the 88th Texas Legislature. This legislation mandates that teacher candidates be prepared to use high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) and Texas Open Education Resources (OER) when available in their subject areas.

House Bill 1605 establishes an expanded process for the State Board of Education (SBOE) to approve HQIM, increases funding for these materials, and supports transparency and accessibility for parents. The Texas Open Education Resources initiative, as directed by House Bill 1605, involves the development of state-owned instructional materials that align with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards. These resources are designed to be accessible and adaptable, providing educators with high-quality, cost-effective options for classroom instruction. Together, these policies ensure that teacher candidates are well-equipped to deliver effective, research-informed instruction using the best available materials, ultimately enhancing student learning outcomes.

Certification Pathway	TRA	K-5 RLA	6-12 RLA	TMA	K-5 Math	6-12 Math
Core Subjects with STR(grades EC-6)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Core Subjects with STR(grades 4-8)		X	X	X	X	X
Early Childhood (Grades PK-3)	X	X		X	X	
English Language Arts and Reading with STR (Grades 4-8)		X	X			
English Language Arts and Reading/ Social Studies with STR (Grades 4-8)		X	X			
Mathematics (Grades 4-8)					X	X
Mathematics (Grades 7-12)						X
Mathematics/Physical Science/Engineering (Grades 6-12)						X
Mathematics/Science (Grades 4-8)					X	X
Physical Science (Grades 6-12)						X
Physical Science/Mathematics/ Engineering (Grades 8-12)						X
Physics/Mathematics (Grades 7-12)						X
Reading Specialist (Grades EC-12)		X	X			

Figure 11: Certification Pathways

For the success of the Educator Preparation RBIS & HQIM Training Pilot, Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) have several critical needs:

- High-Quality Training Materials: EPPs require access to comprehensive, research-based instructional materials that align with state standards and best practices. These materials should be specifically designed to support the training of teacher candidates in the effective use of HQIM and RBIS.
- Professional Development: Continuous professional development opportunities for EPP faculty are essential. Faculty need to stay updated on the latest educational strategies, technologies, and legislative requirements, such as those outlined in House Bill 1605.
- Collaboration and Partnerships: Strong partnerships with local schools, districts, and educational organizations are vital. These collaborations provide real-world teaching experiences and mentorship opportunities for teacher candidates, enhancing their practical skills and readiness for the classroom.
- Resource Allocation: Adequate funding and resources are necessary to support innovative teaching methods, technology integration, and uniquelearning

environments. This ensures that EPPs can effectively implement the training pilot and meet the needs of their teacher candidates.

- Regulatory Compliance: Guidance and support to meet state and federal education policies and standards are crucial. EPPs need to ensure that their training programs comply with House Bill 1605 and other relevant legislation, preparing teacher candidates to use HQIM and Texas Open Education Resources effectively.

Teacher Candidate Needs: Teacher candidates participating in the training pilot have specific needs to ensure they are well-prepared for their teaching careers:

- Practical Experience: Opportunities for hands-on teaching practice in different classroom settings are essential. This practical experience helps teacher candidates build confidence and competence in using HQIM and RBIS.
- Mentorship and Support: Access to experienced mentors who can provide guidance, feedback, and support throughout their training is crucial. Mentorship helps teacher candidates navigate challenges and refine their teaching practices.
- High-Quality Instructional Materials: Training on how to identify, adapt, and utilize high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) and Texas Open Education Resources (OER) effectively is a key need. Teacher candidates must be equipped with the skills to select and implement the best materials for their students.
- Assessment Skills: Developing skills in both formative and summative assessment techniques is vital. Teacher candidates need to learn how to monitor and improve student learning outcomes through effective assessment practices.

Table 1:Open Education Resource Phases

Phase	Goals	Activities	Milestones	Timeline
Phase 1: Planning & Preparation	Establish foundational elements for the initiative. Ensure all stakeholders are aligned with the project's objectives.	Finalize vendor contracts. Conduct project kickoff to define scope, objectives, timeline, and assign roles and responsibilities. Perform initial research and needs assessment through stakeholder interviews, review of existing data and	Vendor contract finalized. Project kickoff is completed. Initial research and needs assessment completed.	1-2 months

		resources, and analysis of current PA materials.		
Phase 2: Key Document Development	Develop comprehensive project documentation to guide the initiative.	Develop a detailed project plan outlining goals, methodologies, timelines, resources, and stakeholders. Create a landscape report detailing the EPP landscape, relevant statutes and bills, and alignment with HQIM/OER and current PA work.	Project plan developed. Landscape report completed.	1 month
Phase 3: Course Creation	Develop training and certification courses.	Create training and certification courses, including strategies for integrating materials into courses and aligning with Reading Academies. Conduct feedback round 1 to refine courses.	Training and certification courses are developed. Feedback round 1 completed.	6 months
Phase 4: Strategic Planning & System Buildout	Design and build the systems necessary for the initiative's success.	Develop a PA redesign plan. Build a certification/participant tracking system.	PA redesign plan completed. Certification/participant tracking system built.	2 months
Phase 5: Training Pilot with EPPs	Implement the training pilot with Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs).	Run the training pilot with selected EPPs.	Training pilot completed. Coaching sessions completed	2 months
Phase 6: Data collection & support	Support EPP faculty in implementing the modules and collect data on	Provide ongoing support and resources to EPP faculty. Conduct regular check-ins and feedback sessions. Collect and analyze data on module	Support system established for EPP faculty. Regular feedback sessions conducted. Data	12 months

	their effectiveness.	implementation and outcomes.	on module implementation collected and analyzed.	
Phase7: Reporting & Recommend ations	Evaluate the pilot and provide recommendations for next steps.	Compile initial report and recommendations based on pilot outcomes. Develop a next steps plan for further implementation and scaling.	Initial report and recommendations completed. Next steps plan developed.	1-2 months

House Bill (HB) 2, passed by the 89th Texas legislature in June 2025, established two separate certificate fee incentive structures for hard-to-staff areas. Special Education or Bilingual Education fields will have both their certification exam fees waved for their first attempt on the associated content pedagogy exam and certification fee application fee waived. Additionally, as of September 1, 2025, teachers will be eligible for one reimbursement subsidy when they achieve standard certification in select Career and Technical Education (CTE) fields. The subsidy will be applicable to teachers who achieved their certification on or after 9/1/25. The subsidy comes in the form of a reimbursement payment to the district, and it is the district's responsibility to ensure reimbursement of costs is applied to the teacher. Districts may choose to do this by paying these fees directly for the teacher at time of registration.

Alignment with Other State Initiatives

The Research-Based Instructional Strategies (RBIS) we focus on are directly aligned with the objectives of the HB 3 Reading Academies. These academies, mandated by House Bill 3, require all kindergarten through third-grade teachers and principals to attend literacy achievement academies. Our RBIS training includes key components such as text complexity, complex grade-level texts, knowledge coherence, and text-based responses, which are integral to the Reading Academies' curriculum.

Our High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) modules align with the Strong Foundations Implementation initiative, which provides comprehensive support for the adoption and effective use of HQIM. The Strong Foundations program, established through House Bill 4545, offers grants to school systems to develop and implement instructional frameworks based on HQIM. Our training pilot includes modules on identifying HQIM, lesson internalization, student work analysis, adapting lessons to meet different student

needs, and utilizing formative and summative assessments. These modules are designed to equip teacher candidates with the skills necessary to implement HQIM effectively, mirroring the goals of the Strong Foundations initiative.

Our initiative also aligns with the Statewide Mentorship Training program, which aims to support first-year teachers through comprehensive mentoring. Teacher mentors participating in this program will be trained to support new educators in effectively utilizing HQIM and implementing RBIS. This alignment ensures that first-year teachers receive consistent, high-quality guidance and support, enabling them to apply these strategies and materials in their classrooms from the outset. By integrating our training pilot with the mentorship program, we create a cohesive support system that enhances the professional development of both new and experienced teachers, ultimately leading to improved student outcomes

High-Quality Leadership Supports

District and leadership support is vital to improving literacy. Therefore, the Texas Education Agency has invested in several initiatives that support districts focusing on change management, implementation of research-based instructional strategies, and high-quality instructional materials.

Effective District Framework

The Effective District Framework (EDF) describes the highest leverage district practices that can be implemented to enhance the student experience and improve student outcomes. The Effective District Framework is an aspirational framework grounded in a set of research-based actions and key practices that work together to guide districts toward success. It supports school districts in aligning systems and resources to ensure a rigorous, supportive student experience. One component of this framework is providing access to high-quality instructional materials. By using Bluebonnet Learning instructional materials, districts are able to leverage the foundational essential action 4.1, which is the daily use of high-quality instructional materials. The Bluebonnet Learning K-5 RLA materials provide effective lessons that are standards-aligned, have an appropriate level of rigor, and provide research-based instructional practices.

The Texas Education Agency supports school districts in implementing best practices from the Effective District Framework through Texas Strategic Leadership. The program focuses on engaging in strategic planning centered on the student's academic experience, ensuring students have access to high-quality instructional materials. We also support districts and

school boards by setting district goals for third grade reading achievement and performance to manage progress toward meeting the goals. While there is no specific legislation that drives our strategic planning, HB-3 supports the work as it requires districts to focus on the science of teaching reading best practices and have board adopted goals related to grade 3 reading proficiency. Texas Strategic Leadership uses The Four Disciplines of Execution to drive the development of training and resources for performance management support. We also reference the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching's Six Core Principles of Performance Management and the Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) cycle.

The first phase of the strategic planning process includes a landscape analysis where the team collects data and artifacts to determine the current state of the student academic experience at the school district. We utilize data from state accountability, classroom walkthrough data, stakeholder feedback, and district artifacts to support the district in determining the needs of a specific student population and to set realistic and ambitious goals for literacy. The team analyzes the district's state accountability data to determine which student groups are the lowest for their district and we address that within their strategic plan by setting specific goals and a measurement and implementation plan to ensure progress toward meeting those goals.

In year 2, the TSL ESC staff members support districts in developing a performance management dashboard and establishing performance routines based on metrics which measure student proficiency and growth.
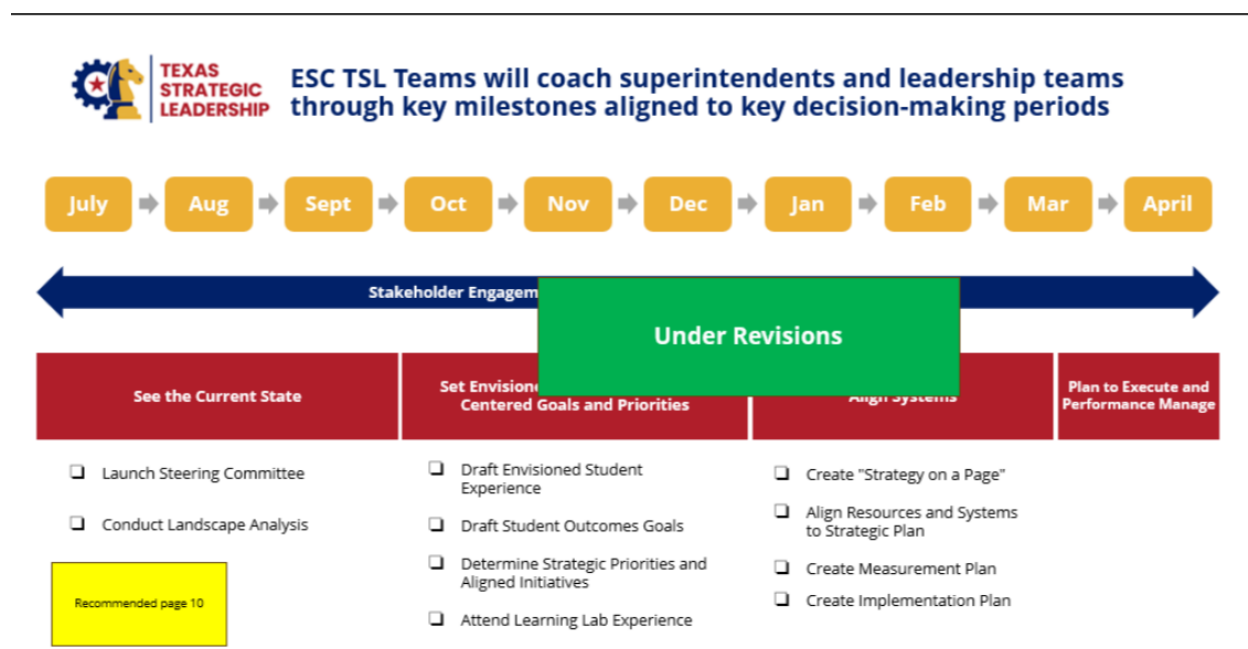
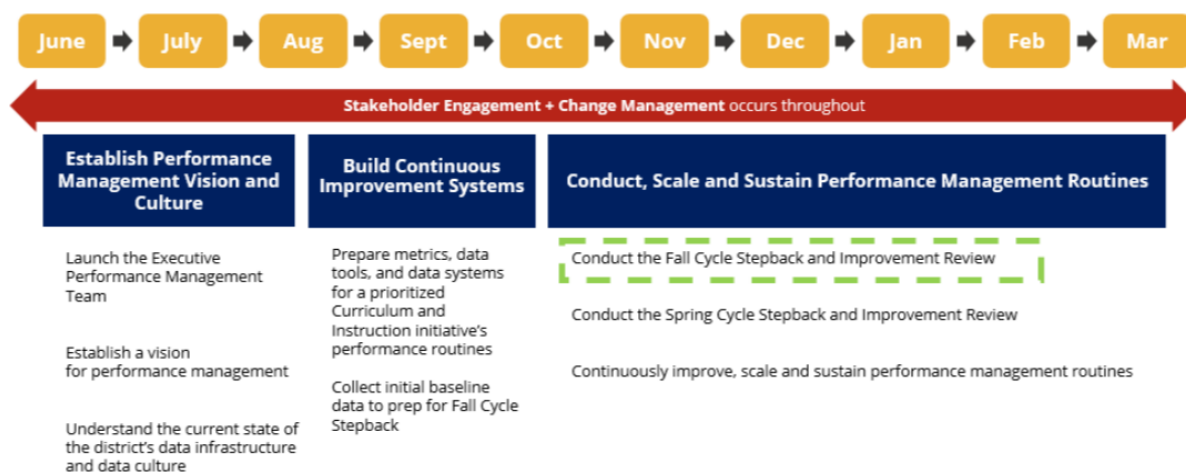*Figure 12: Texas Strategic Leadership Timeline*

Figure 13: Texas Strategic Leadership Timeline Continued

August- Launch the Executive Performance Management Team/Establish a Vision for Performance Management

September-Build measurement plan aligned to prioritized initiatives/Establish a Performance Routine Series/Begin Data Collection

October- Conduct Fall Stepback

December- Conduct Fall Improvement Review

February- Conduct Spring Stepback

April- Conduct Spring Improvement Review

June- Conduct Deep Dive/Revisit Strategic Plan Goals

Continuous Improvement

The ESF staff uses data and feedback from the Regional Education Service Centers and the Superintendents who are engaged in the work to revise and update our tools on an annual basis, primarily in the spring to prepare for summer training of ESC staff.

Alignment with Other State Initiatives:

ESF is in alignment with the Texas Reading Academies, Strong Foundations, Texas Instructional Leadership and the Teacher Incentive Allotment. Additionally, ESF is in alignment with the unique Lone Star Governance Initiative for School Boards.

Lone Star Governance

Founded on research, Lone Star Governance (LSG) is a continuous improvement model for governing teams—boards in collaboration with their superintendents—who choose to focus intensely on only one primary objective: **improving student outcomes**.

The purpose of Lone Star Governance is to provide coaching and support, through a continuous-improvement framework, for school governing teams that choose and commit to intensively focus on the objective to improve student outcomes. Lone Star Governance accomplishes this intense focus through tailored coaching aligned to the five pillars of the Texas Framework for School Board Development: Vision and Goals, Systems and Processes, Progress and Accountability, Advocacy and Engagement, and Synergy and Teamwork. In addition to the primary focus on improving student outcomes, Lone Star Governance provides systems for governing legal and fiscal responsibilities.

Strong Foundations Planning (SFP)

The Strong Foundations Grant Program ([Texas Education Code, 29.0881](#)) was established through House Bill 4545, 87th Texas Legislature, 2021 and offers K–5 Math & Literacy comprehensive Tier 1 instructional supports, including curriculum, instructional leadership, and planning supports. Through the [Learning Acceleration Support Opportunities (LASO)](#) application, school systems can apply for the Strong Foundations Grant that provides in-kind support for pre-implementation planning and content- and product-specific professional learning for teachers, coaches, and administrators on effectively implementing HQIM.

The Strong Foundations Planning grant is focused on winning the hearts and minds of Texas districts using training in the Research Based Instructional Strategies (RBIS) in Math and Literacy. It serves as the district level to support teams to create and use an instructional framework to guide their decision making. Often districts determine that rigorous instructional materials are missing and decide to engage in a materials adoption process aligned to the vision outlined in their instructional framework.

The current program guidelines outline the grants awarding criteria that dictate which student populations are targeted. LASO Cycle 3 that supports SY25-26 has prioritized the following districts: Districts under conservatorship for instructional needs, rural districts, and districts with high percentages of students who are economically disadvantaged.

Funding

This grant is authorized by the General Appropriations Act (GAA), Article III, Rider 76, 88th Texas Legislature, 2023; General Appropriates Act (GAA), Article III, Rider 94, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023. Districts are awarded through a competitive grant process for yearly awards.

Continuous Improvement

The Strong Foundations Planning Grant has robust data cycles. Each training that Approved Providers must become certified to receive ongoing opportunities for feedback and input. Small adjustments and improvements are made throughout the grant cycle, and larger adjustments are made in anticipation of the next approved provider's training cycle.

Districts provide frequent survey-based feedback to both their Approved Providers and TEA. This data, along with all other data inputs, is rolled into approved provider dashboards as well as internal TEA dashboards.

Supports of monthly meetings and communities of practices are offered monthly and feedback is utilized in the moment and month to month to ensure that the training, resources and supports that TEA and Approved Providers are giving align with the goals of the grant and the support requested by the district.

Alignment to Other State Initiatives

The Strong Foundations Planning Grant is closely aligned with the Strong Foundations Implementation Grant. If districts make the decision to adopt HQIM that is supported by TEA, they are able to apply to and be awarded the implementation grant to learn deeply about the product and best practices for strong implementation. The Approved Providers that support Strong Foundations Planning also support Strong Foundations Implementation, creating a strong connection of support and coaching that districts can receive.

Strong Foundations Planning is also connected to the diagnostics team at TEA through the integration of the Academic Review as an optional support in the grant. Academic Reviews are utilized, if needed, by the approved provider and district to determine how aligned and rigorous their instructional materials are. Often times these findings move districts to make key decisions about adopting and implementing HQIM.

The Strong Foundations Planning grant is rooted in the Research Based Instructional Strategies (RBIS) in Math and Literacy. They are key training that districts receive to use as a reflection point for their current state. RBIS are also a base for the creation of their Instructional Frameworks. Approved Providers become RBIS certified in a rigorous, high-quality training program in order to redeliver this content to district leadership teams and staff.

Texas Instructional Leadership (TIL)

Texas Instructional Leadership (TIL) enhances literacy in Texas by building the capacity of leaders and superintendents to implement research-based instructional practices. Through job-embedded professional development, TIL equips campus-based leaders, including teachers and principals, with essential skill development and system design in areas such as data-driven instruction, schoolwide culture, and materials internalization and alignment. These practices are crucial for fostering effective literacy instruction and establishing a strong foundation for academic success across all student populations.

TIL strongly emphasizes coaching and ongoing support to ensure the sustainable implementation of these strategies. By providing one-on-one coaching for principal managers and targeted implementation support for district leaders, TIL promotes alignment and accountability at every level of the education system. This multi-layered approach helps integrate high-quality literacy instruction into daily teaching practices, leading to significant improvements in student outcomes.

TIL fosters statewide collaboration by engaging educators from all 20 regions of Texas, ensuring that best literacy practices are consistently applied. With its commitment to rigorous training and support, TIL has developed a network of instructional leaders who are well-equipped to tackle literacy challenges and drive meaningful progress in schools. This systematic and comprehensive approach positions TIL as a vital force in improving literacy outcomes throughout Texas.

Texas Instructional Leadership (TIL) is driven by several key policies and pieces of legislation to improve educational outcomes across the state. Central to TIL's foundation is the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) mission to strengthen instructional leadership and ensure high-quality student education, aligning with mandates under the Texas Education Code (TEC). Specifically, TEC provisions emphasize evidence-based professional development, data-driven instruction, and accountability to enhance student performance. These legislative and policy frameworks collectively drive the structure and priorities of the TIL initiative, ensuring it aligns with state and federal educational objectives while demonstrating its effectiveness in improving instructional leadership and student outcomes.

TIL also operates within the broader framework of state and federal policies, such as Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which prioritizes evidence-based interventions and continuous school improvement, particularly for Title I campuses. ESSA mandates the use of effective instructional strategies, which TIL addresses through its focus on observation, feedback, lesson alignment, and formative assessments. Furthermore, TIL supports the goals outlined in the A-F Accountability System, which measures campus and district performance in areas like student achievement and school progress. By equipping school leaders with tools and training to improve instructional practices, TIL directly contributes to meeting the accountability standards outlined in this system.

The primary goal of Texas Instructional Leadership (TIL) is to build the leadership capacity of principal supervisors and principals, ensuring the consistent application of effective teaching practices across campuses. This is achieved by promoting evidence-based

leadership practices such as observation and feedback, materials internalization and alignment, data-driven instruction, and schoolwide culture routines.

TIL activities encompass the delivery of high-quality, job-embedded professional development and implementation support. Each participating principal supervisor and principal undergo four full days of content training led by an ESC TIL Coach in areas including observation/feedback, data-driven instruction (DDI), Materials Internalization and Alignment, and Schoolwide Culture Routines. Additionally, two follow-up practice-based training days and one day of principal-manager-specific training reinforce the initial sessions. Each participant also receives seven half-day coaching sessions over nine months to support implementation. ESC TIL Coaches guide this process, ensuring that participants effectively apply learned practices in their daily leadership roles.

Milestones are closely tied to the fidelity of implementation (FOI) metrics. TIL aims for engaged Principals to achieve 60% "near full" implementation of instructional practices within the first year and 80% within the second year. These metrics are tracked through the consistent use of tools such as observation/feedback rubrics, data review protocols, and internalization protocols at the unit and lesson levels. Another key milestone is for 70% of leaders coached by ESC TIL Coaches to achieve full implementation of at least six key action steps within one year.

The timeline for TIL is structured into nine-month engagement periods, including phases of base training, practice-based follow-up, and ongoing coaching. Progress is continually monitored to ensure alignment with the initiative's objectives, and data is collected throughout to inform adjustments and improvements. By combining structured training, personalized coaching, and robust progress monitoring, TIL ensures that its goals are met, and that participating leaders are equipped to drive literacy improvements across their campuses.

The instructional framework of Texas Instructional Leadership (TIL) focuses on four core content areas, each aimed at enhancing instructional leadership and improving student outcomes, particularly in literacy. These areas are Observation and Feedback, Data-Driven Instruction (DDI), Schoolwide Culture Routines (SCR), and Materials Internalization and Alignment (MIA).

Observation and Feedback are essential for enabling principals to conduct effective classroom observations and provide targeted feedback to teachers. This process promotes continuous improvement in teaching practices and ensures literacy instruction meets high-quality standards.

Data-driven instruction (DDI) emphasizes using student performance data to inform instructional decisions, address learning gaps, and enhance literacy outcomes. By prioritizing data analysis, leaders can create strategic interventions to support student growth.

Schoolwide Culture Routines (SCR) focus on establishing a positive and consistent learning environment that supports academic achievement and literacy development. These routines create a framework for behavior and expectations, allowing students and teachers to concentrate on learning.

Funding

Texas Instructional Leadership (TIL) is primarily funded by Title I and Title II of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Title I funds target schools with high percentages of economically disadvantaged students, providing them with the resources and professional development needed to improve instructional quality and student achievement. This aligns with TIL's focus on enhancing educational outcomes through evidence-based practices and capacity building.

Title II funding, however, is aimed at improving teacher and principal effectiveness, central to TIL's mission. These funds support high-quality professional development, coaching, and leadership training for educators at all levels, helping to cultivate strong instructional leaders. Together, Title I and Title II funding form the financial backbone of TIL's comprehensive approach to improving education outcomes across Texas.

Continuous Improvement

Texas Instructional Leadership (TIL) uses a variety of data sources to shape its strategies and measure its impact. Central to this initiative is student performance data, including standardized test results, particularly in literacy and core academic areas. These data points help identify areas of need and guide the implementation of instructional leadership practices to improve outcomes.

TIL also relies on progress-monitoring data from its coaching and professional development training programs. This includes metrics such as the frequency and quality of observation and feedback sessions, the fidelity of implementation of all TIL content areas, and the use of data-driven instruction in classrooms. Evidence from these activities helps identify trends, refine training approaches, and ensure TIL meets the unique needs of districts and campuses. Additionally, TIL uses data from the A-F Accountability System, which evaluates school performance across domains including student achievement,

progress, and closing achievement gaps. It also leverages survey results from teachers and principals, feedback from Education Service Center (ESC) coaches, and implementation of evidence from on-site visits. Together, these data sources create a comprehensive feedback loop that drives decision-making and ensures the initiative effectively addresses literacy and broader educational challenges in Texas schools.

By building school and district leader capacity, TIL teaches them how to train their teachers in best practices, which in turn increases reading and math scores. Our structured approach ensures that TIL remains responsive to the needs of schools while demonstrating its effectiveness in improving instructional leadership and student outcomes. TIL addresses literacy improvement and instructional practices across all grade levels, recognizing the importance of supporting students from early childhood through secondary education. By focusing on these populations, TIL works to create appropriate opportunities and foster academic success for students who stand to benefit most from enhanced instructional leadership.

Alignment with Other State Initiatives

Texas Instructional Leadership (TIL) aligns closely with other Texas Education Agency (TEA) state initiatives, particularly the Reading Academies, by complementing and reinforcing their shared goal of improving literacy outcomes across the state. Both initiatives emphasize the importance of evidence-based practices in literacy instruction and professional development for educators. While the Reading Academies provide teachers with foundational knowledge and strategies aligned with the Science of Teaching Reading, TIL builds on this by enhancing the instructional leadership skills of campus and district leaders to support and sustain these practices at scale.

Through job-embedded professional development and coaching, TIL ensures that principals, instructional coaches, and teacher leaders are equipped to oversee the effective implementation of the practices introduced in the Reading Academies. This includes how to effectively internalize HQIM and implement data-driven instruction, all of which are essential for improving literacy. Moreover, TIL's focus on observation and feedback creates a system of accountability and continuous improvement, enabling leaders to support teachers in applying the strategies they learn in the Reading Academies.

TIL's alignment with TEA's broader mission ensures that both initiatives work together to create a cohesive approach to improving literacy in Texas. By targeting leadership development and the systemic implementation of best practices, TIL provides the structural support necessary to amplify the impact of the Reading Academies and drive sustained progress in student literacy outcomes.

Texas Lesson Study (TXLS)

The purpose of the Texas Lesson Study (TXLS) is to accelerate learning and improve student outcomes in Texas by ensuring schools prioritize building collaborative and sustainable professional learning communities (PLCs). These PLCs drive teacher development to use high-quality instructional materials, including Texas Open Education Resources (OER). TXLS is a job-embedded professional learning structure that supports teachers in improving their fidelity of implementation of high-quality materials. It also aids district and campus leaders in leading collaborative teacher meetings focused on examining and improving instructional practices.

TXLS aims to increase the capacity of local school systems to implement high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) and OER with fidelity. This is achieved by refining structures and systems that support collaborative PLCs, modeling and coaching school system facilitators to lead weekly PLCs focused on HQIM protocols, and providing professional development that unpacks best practices of TXLS and HQIM. This approach engages participants in deliberate practice using HQIM and results in school system leaders taking ownership of the work in future years.

Funding

Funding authorized by the General Appropriations Act of the Texas Legislature and the

 Legislative Appropriations Act.

Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement for TXLS is informed by data collected from local education agency participants, regional service center providers, field observations and artifact reviews. Performance of the region service center providers is addressed through repeated coaching cycles throughout the school year. Programming improvements are implemented at the beginning of each grant cycle.

Data is collected on the number of campuses served; the number of teachers served; and the number of students served by the program; Measures of program effectiveness, including student achievement and teacher growth.

Alignment with Other State Initiatives

Texas Lesson Study provides job-embedded professional learning for teachers to effectively implement high-quality instructional materials in classrooms, including reading and language arts settings.

High Quality Integrated Supports

Leadership and Instructional Foundations for Texas (LIFT)

In an effort to continue to better support teachers, coaches, and leaders in implementing HQIM alongside key instructional systems, the aforementioned programs of Strong Foundations Planning, Strong Foundations Implementation, Texas Lesson Study, and Texas Instructional Leadership will merge into one cohesive program in the 26-27 school year.

The LIFT (Leadership and Instructional Foundations for Texas) program is a multi-year initiative designed to support Texas school systems in building the instructional and systems-level capacity needed to deliver high-quality learning experiences for all students. Through a combination of capacity-building and technical assistance, LIFT empowers school systems to adopt, implement, and sustain research-based instructional strategies and aligned systems that drive student achievement.

The vision for LIFT is for all Texas students to have access to rigorous, grade-level content and instruction every day. The program is structured to support districts where they are in the implementation process, providing capacity building support and technical assistance to strengthen instructional practices in math or literacy.

LIFT is grounded in the belief that sustainable instructional improvement requires a clear vision, strong leadership, aligned systems, and high-quality instructional materials (HQIM). The program supports school systems in developing and executing a coherent instructional framework, strengthening the learning environment school-wide, and building the internal capacity to manage performance and scale effective school-wide practices.

Program Elements

Two-Phase Structure

The planning Phase for school systems intending to adopt SBOE-approved HQIM for implementation in the 2027–2028 school year: Focuses on building a robust instructional framework in math or literacy grounded in RBIS and laying the groundwork for effective instructional practices through implementation of strong school-wide routines.

Technical assistance may include:

- Conducting a diagnostic of current instructional materials and practices to inform HQIM adoption and readiness.
- Support in developing a shared vision for excellent instruction rooted in RBIS, along with clear expectations and aligned systems for HQIM implementation.
- Providing upfront training to build a shared understanding of the mindsets, skills, and systems needed for sustained instructional leadership and HQIM implementation.
- Supporting the development of schoolwide routines and observation/feedback systems to establish RBIS-aligned learning environments.
- Assisting with the adoption of SBOE-approved HQIM and ensuring enabling conditions are in place for effective launch and long-term success.

Implementation Phase:

For school systems implementing a Bluebonnet Learning product in the 2026–2027 school year. Focuses on strengthening instructional leadership in the service of implementing Bluebonnet Learning and improving instructional quality and school climate.

Technical assistance may include:

- Developing district-level transition plans and campus-level action plans.
- Providing upfront training and ongoing implementation support for school and district leaders.
- Coaching instructional leaders to close practice gaps, implement HQIM with fidelity, and lead effective feedback cycles.
- Conducting classroom observations to assess and support implementation fidelity.
- Facilitating high-quality professional learning (HQPL) for teachers and coaches.
- Supporting teachers with lesson internalization, PLC engagement, student work analysis, and use of HQIM-embedded scaffolds.

- Helping LEA stakeholders strengthen performance management systems and align structures for sustained success.

Funding

LIFT is funding allocated through Texas legislature HB 1604.

Continuous Improvement

School systems participating in LIFT Agree to the submission of required deliverables, including teacher IDs, class rosters, and planning artifacts, using TEA-provided templates. Examples include diagnostics, rollout plans, observation and feedback cycles, student assessment data, coaching plans, and professional learning session plans.

- Active participation in implementation supports and coaching activities, such as calibration walks and use of observation and feedback tools.
- Engagement in TEA-administered surveys for stakeholder committees, teachers, coaches, school leaders, and LEA leads.
- Collection and submission of classroom observation data to support and assess implementation fidelity.
- Provision of artifacts demonstrating systems-building efforts, such as lesson internalization supports, student work analysis protocols, and feedback routines. Submission of deliverables using TEA templates

The TEA district engagement team will gather stakeholder feedback from engaged districts to inform upgrades for LASO Cycle 5 and beyond.

Alignment with Other State Initiatives

LIFT is designed as a cross-agency support that aligns state initiatives in providing support for schools implementing SBOE approved HQIM and Texas Open Educational Resources.

Appendix 1

Texas State Literacy Plan Glossary

Academic language: the vocabulary and language structures used to communicate knowledge of different academic content areas

Age-appropriate: suitable for a particular age or age range

Assessment: a method educators use to measure and document the academic readiness, learning and development progress, and skill acquisition of students (Abbott, 2013)

Bilingual program: an academic program that provides instruction in students' primary language or in both the primary language and English. The extent of the primary language instruction depends on the type of bilingual program. Bilingual education in Texas commonly refers to early-exit or transitional programs, in which students are instructed in their primary language in the early grades, for 2–3 years, with the goal of transitioning to English-only instruction. Compare with *dual language programs*.

Bluebonnet Learning Instructional Materials: TEA developed Bluebonnet Learning instructional materials, which are considered state-developed OER. This includes materials approved by the SBOE through the IMRA process and pilot materials that will eventually be submitted for review. As state-developed OER, IMRA-approved Bluebonnet Learning instructional materials are eligible for the SBOE-Approved Instructional Materials Entitlement (Section 48.307) and the State-Developed OER Instructional Materials Entitlement (Section 48.308).

Coaching: an approach to professional development that involves directly supporting instructional staff. Coaches support teachers' professional growth through observation and reflection of classroom practice, modeling, and individualized guidance with ongoing feedback.

Core instruction: the instruction provided to all students in the class (Tier I instruction). It is usually guided by a comprehensive core reading program. Part of the core instruction is usually provided to the class as a whole, and part is provided during the small group differentiated instruction period.

Data: facts or information collected from observation or assessment and used to evaluate, measure, or document a specific phenomenon

Diagnostic data: information collected for the purposes of determining students' instructional needs

Differentiated supports: supports that are adjusted to meet the individual needs of learners in a given classroom

Dual language program: an academic program that develops literacy and academic language skills in students' primary language and one additional language, with the goal of achieving full literacy in both languages

Early literacy: the knowledge about reading and writing that children develop before they can read or write

ELAR: English Language Arts and Reading; see *State Standards*

ELPS: English Language Proficiency Standards, which outline English language proficiency level descriptors and student expectations for English learners. They are part of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills and are required to be integrated into each subject in kindergarten through grade 12.

Emergent literacy: the skills, knowledge, and practices that are developmental precursors to conventional forms of reading and writing

EOC: End of Course

EOY: End of Year

EPP: Educator Preparation Program

ESC: Education Service Center

ESL: English as a second language

Evidence-based: established as being effective through multiple high-quality studies that indicate causality and demonstrate meaningful effects on student outcomes (Cook & Cook, 2011). The term *research-based* commonly refers to instructional practices based on research that has identified some principles or theories that are believed to be strong but have not necessarily shown causal effects on student outcomes.

Expressive skills: language skills in speaking and writing

Fidelity: the degree to which instruction follows the intent and design of a program

Fluency: the ability to read text quickly, accurately, and with proper expression

Formative assessment: an assessment that provides information needed to adjust teaching and learning throughout the instructional process

High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM): HQIM refers to materials aligned to academic standards, content-rich with clear learning outcomes, reflect evidence-based practices, and provide a full suite of teacher and student materials.

IEP: Individualized Education Plan

Impairment: Sensory impairments include vision or hearing weakness that impact a child's ability to learn. Physical impairments refer to a physical dysfunction that affects a student's movement and/or coordination.

Implementation: The process of putting educational plans, strategies, curricula, or policies into action within a school system

Indicators: statements that describe practices and systems that may be planned or taking place at different levels of implementation of a TSLP *Action Step*

Instructional Materials: An instructional material is any content that conveys the essential knowledge and skills of a subject through any medium or combination of media. The term includes, but is not limited to:

- material used by a **teacher**, including a lesson plan, answer key, grading rubric, or unit plan;
- material used by a **principal** or **campus instructional leader** to support instruction; and
- material used by a **student**, including a book, supplementary materials, a combination of a book, workbook, and supplementary materials, computer software, magnetic media, DVD, CD-ROM, computer courseware, on-line services, or an electronic medium, or other means of conveying information to the student or otherwise contributing to the learning process through electronic means, including open education resource instructional material.

In addition to the general definition of instructional materials, HB 1605 established three categories of instructional materials:

Full-Subject, Tier-One: Instructional material designed to provide a student full coverage of 100% of state standards adopted by the State Board of Education (SBOE) for a certain subject and grade level in the required curriculum under Section 28.002 or for prekindergarten without the need for supplementation, if implemented as designed. This includes providing all the materials required for students to learn and practice, like

workbooks, manipulatives, assessments, and embedded language supports as well as all the materials required for teachers to plan and teach, including but not limited to planning guides, pacing calendars, lesson plans, and family letters.

Partial-Subject, Tier-One: Instructional material designed to provide a student with mastery in a portion of the essential knowledge and skills adopted by the SBOE for a certain subject and grade level in the required curriculum under Section 28.002 or for prekindergarten without the need for supplementation in the essential knowledge and skills covered, if implemented as designed.

Supplemental: Instructional material designed to assist in the instruction of one or more of the essential knowledge and skills adopted by the SBOE for a subject in the required curriculum under Section 28.002 or for prekindergarten.

Language domains: the four skills that are part of language acquisition and use: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Language proficiency: English learners' level of proficiency in English for the four language domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Sources of this data include the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS).

Learning Acceleration Support Opportunities (LASO): Consolidated grant applications that are bundled to accelerate academic gains focused on Curriculum and Instruction, More Tiem and Innovative School Models.

Leadership and Instructional Foundations for Texas (LIFT): A three-year program designed to strengthen instructional systems across districts and campuses. Its goal is to build the capacity of school systems to design and execute coherent instructional systems that support the effective use of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM). The program provides upfront training, ongoing implementation support, and targeted coaching. LIFT serves as the next iteration of the Strong Foundations and Texas Instructional Leadership grants, streamlining and enhancing their core components into a single, cohesive program.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS): A comprehensive, evidence-based framework used in schools to provide targeted support to all students. It integrates academic, behavioral, social-emotional, and mental health services into a cohesive system to ensure every student receives the help they need to succeed.

Open Education Resources (OER): OER materials reside in the public domain or are released under an intellectual property license allowing free use, reuse, modification, and sharing with others**.**

Oral language: language skills in listening comprehension and speaking

Outcomes: students' development over a particular period or that focuses on the results of instruction or academic program

Phonological awareness: the knowledge of the structure of oral language and the understanding that language is composed of sub-parts that can be manipulated. This includes a continuum of auditory skills that are foundational skills when learning to read.

Progress monitoring: assessment administered at regular intervals that measures students' progress toward targeted literacy goals

Receptive skills: language skills in listening comprehension and reading

Research Based Instructional Strategies: A set of research-based practices that are supported by research and should be present in classrooms, regardless of instructional materials. These practices relate directly to the design of instructional materials and the approach required to implement them well.

State Board of Education (SBOE): is a constitutionally established body responsible for setting policies and standards for Texas public schools.

Screening/Screener: a short, valid, and reliable assessment that measures students' literacy skills. For young children, the term *screener* may also be used to refer to assessments of health and physical development, such as hearing and vision. The purpose of screening is the early identification of students who could benefit from an intervention or supplemental instruction.

SLAR: Spanish Language Arts and Reading; see *State Standards*

STAAR: State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness

Stakeholders: all people with an interest or concern in literacy instruction and outcomes, such as teachers, students, administrators, service providers, parents/families, and specialists

State-Developed OER Instructional Materials Texas Definition: State-developed OER are any instructional materials created by TEA. State-developed instructional materials are considered open education resources (OER). If approved by the SBOE, state-developed OER materials qualify for the SBOE-Approved Instructional Materials Entitlement (Section 48.307) and the State-Developed OER Instructional Materials Entitlement (Section 48.308).

State standards: the three sets of research- and evidence-based standards that help ensure all students in grades K–12 become college and career ready. They include the English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR) and Spanish Language Arts and Reading (SLAR) Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS); the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS); and the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS).

Strong Foundations Planning (SLP): provides direct grant funds to LEAs for technical assistance to develop a strong instructional framework in math or literacy, based in the research-based instructional strategies (RBIS), to guide teaching and learning in the LEA.

Strong Foundations Implementation (SFI): provides direct grant funds to LEAs for technical assistance to support high-fidelity implementation of the Bluebonnet Learning, state-developed open education resources (OER) instructional materials, including high-quality professional learning for teachers, instructional coaches, school leaders, campus administrators, and district leaders on effectively implementing Bluebonnet Learning.

Struggling reader: a student of any age who has not mastered the skills required to fluently read and comprehend text written at a level one could reasonably expect a student of that age to read

Supplemental instruction: targeted instruction that goes beyond that provided by the comprehensive core language arts and reading program. The term is commonly used to describe Tier II and/or III instruction.

TEA: Texas Education Agency

TEKS: Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills; see *State Standards*

TELPAS: Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System; see *Language proficiency data*

Tier 1 instruction: evidence-based core classroom literacy instruction coupled with universal screening to identify students at risk for reading difficulties

Tier 2 instruction: intervention instruction and frequent progress monitoring (for example, every 1-4 weeks) that struggling readers receive in addition to Tier I instruction

Tier 3 instruction: a highly intensive and individualized intervention involving smaller groups and more frequent progress monitoring provided to students who do not make adequate progress in Tier II or for whom the identified gap in reading skills warrants this level of intervention

Universal screening: See *Screening/Screener*.

Validity: the degree to which an assessment tool measures what it claims to measure

Vertical alignment: alignment across age levels, grade levels, or course levels

Appendix 2

Texas State Literacy Plan Resources

Assessment

2023-2024 Technical Digest

District and Campus Coordinator Resources

Student Assessment Overview page of https://tea.texas.gov/

STAAR Redesign

TexasAssessment.gov

Practice and Released Tests and Item Sets

Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 101. Assessment

Texas Assessment Research Portal

State and Federal Required Assessment Fact Sheet

Dyslexia Resources and Tools

Texas Dyslexia Academies

TEALearn Dyslexia Course

Dyslexia Handbook

Dyslexia and Related Disorders | Texas Education Agency

Effective Schools Framework Resources and Tools:

Effective Schools Framework | Texas Education Agency

texasesf.org | Effective Schools Framework

Outreach Resources | texasesf.org

Multi-Tiered Student Supports Resources and Tools:

Workshops/ online courses/ trainer of trainer events

MTSS resources

State MTSS contacts at ESCs (supporting training and coaching)

Open Education Resources and tools.

https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/government-relations-and-legal/government-relations/oer-leg-report-2019-final-accessible.pdf

https://tea.texas.gov/node/2041111

https://tea.texas.gov/academics/instructional-materials/house-bill-1605/house-bill-1605-and-imra

https://tea.texas.gov/academics/instructional-materials/bluebonnet-learning

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https://tea.texas.gov/academics/instructional-materials

https://texasesf.org/

https://tea.texas.gov/academics/instructional-materials/strong-foundations

https://im.tea.texas.gov/imra

Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines

Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines | Texas Education Agency

- 2022 TX Prekindergarten Guidelines: Comprehensive (English)
- 2022 TX Prekindergarten Guidelines: Comprehensive (Spanish)
- 2022 Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines-Spanish Translation Crosswalk 2022 TX Prekindergarten Guidelines: Comprehensive (Vietnamese)
- 2022 TX Prekindergarten Guidelines PK4 Streamlined
- 2022 TX Prekindergarten Guidelines PK3 Streamlined
- 2015-2022 PKG Side-by-Side Comparison PK4
- 2015-2022 PKG Side-by-Side Comparison PK3

Texas Special Education Support

https://spedsupport.tea.texas.gov/

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Appendix 4

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