LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Teaching and Learning/Division of Literacy

Literacy Sustainability Guidance

Purpose: Throughout the past several years, LDOE has allocated nearly $150 million in literacy funds to school systems to increase literacy outcomes. This does not include local dollars school systems have invested in literacy. However, these funds made available through grants are expiring. This document serves as a guide when determining how to sustain these literacy practices and make decisions about where to invest future funding.

Levers to Increasing Literacy Outcomes: While there are many levers to improving literacy outcomes, this document will focus on two levers that greatly impact student outcomes and promote sustainability: Instructional Materials and Building Teacher Capacity.

- **Building Teacher Capacity:** Building teacher capacity is a lever to improving literacy outcomes by ensuring those closest to the students have the knowledge and skills to plan and deliver effective literacy instruction. Building teacher capacity can occur through high-quality professional learning. This can be achieved through multiple opportunities.

Professional Learning	Sustainability Opportunity
Foundations of Literacy Training	Instruction grounded in the science of reading includes evidence-based practices in teaching students to read. It emphasizes a direct, systematic approach to instructing phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. • Act 108 - The Department is building a Louisiana Science and Art of Teaching Reading course free of charge for all educators beginning in October 2024 through Canopy. This course will meet the requirements of Act 108. • Utilize the plethora of K-12 literacy webinars on the Louisiana Department of Education's website. Access it through the Literacy Library page under Professional Growth Literacy Pillar and in Canopy.
Instructional Leadership Teams	Members of the ILT need to deeply understand the high-quality instructional materials teachers are using to ensure school-level plans attend to the specific content teachers are teaching. • Analyze student, teacher, and leader data • Incorporate best practices for high-impact strategies to support implementation of high-quality

	instructional materials ● Build the capacity of leaders in HQIM to lead teacher collaboration (train the trainer and leverage content leaders on campus). ● Consider the [Active Implementation Formula](#)
[Teacher Collaboration](#)	Teachers receive new learning from a knowledgeable facilitator (a member of the school-level ILT) and the opportunity to internalize the new learning as they collaborate with peers based on their own student needs and upcoming lessons. ● Analysis of student work from a high-quality curriculum ● Unpacking, planning, discussing, and annotating units and lessons from high-quality instructional materials utilizing the [ELA Unit Study Protocol](#). ● Plan for and address the needs of diverse learners through strategic implementation of the three instructional best practices found in the [Special Education Playbook for System Leaders](#) ● Addressing unfinished learning through acceleration
Feedback and Coaching	Feedback and coaching are two effective tools for growing teacher capacity. This provides an opportunity to facilitate the individual growth of teachers. ● Observations ● Walkthroughs ● Teacher Collaboration Follow-up ● Student-work Analysis ● Co-Planning ● Modeling
Literacy Coaches	Literacy coaches serve a specific role in building teacher capacity in literacy. While literacy coaches are typically considered for K-3 support, they may serve teachers who serve birth through twelfth grade. In the absence of a literacy coach, several roles may serve as the literacy expert on campus and support teachers through teacher collaboration, feedback, and coaching. ● Instructional coach/Master Teacher ● Teacher leader ● Principal/Assistant Principal ● External Literacy Provider

- **High-Quality Instructional Materials:** Instructional materials are one of the most important tools educators use to enhance student learning through instruction that is grounded in the science of reading. All literacy instructional materials should align to state standards, be free of 3-cueing, and be identified as high-quality. Core materials, supplemental materials, and assessments should be instructionally coherent, ensuring that all materials use the same approach and strategies to provide students with a cohesive experience throughout the day.

High-Quality Instructional Materials	Sustainability Opportunities
Core Materials	High-quality core materials ensure that students engage more deeply in the standards and serve as the tool to provide students with academic success. ● Provides a sequence of lessons that target grade-level skills and knowledge through instruction ● Maximizes direct and explicit instruction ● Applies the science of reading ● Provides opportunities for guided and independent practice ● Supports all learners, including students with disabilities and English Learners ● Provides opportunities to provide academic feedback based on student responses on formal and informal assessments.
Intervention/ Supplemental Materials	Supplemental materials should serve as proactive support to upcoming classroom content to ensure students' readiness for grade-level instruction. It provides an opportunity for more direct and explicit instruction and practice in the skills students need according to data to access core instruction. ● Curriculum Coherence 　○ Covers the same topics or concepts as core materials 　○ May use pieces of core materials to support extra time to learn 　○ Supports access to core instruction 　○ Same structured literacy approach to learning how to read ● Impact Data: Do we have the impact data showing that the increase in student outcomes is a result of the supplemental material or program, and not because of good core instruction or intervention? ● Single Focus: Oftentimes, schools have a plethora of supplemental materials that provide student data in response to intervention. In some cases, teachers and students are spending the same amount of time, or more time in supplemental instruction than they are in core. If core instruction is high-quality, then the need for supplemental materials decreases.

Assessments	Assessments serve a pivotal role in literacy teaching and learning. They are the measure of student progress as a result of instruction and provide teachers with the information they need to make data-driven decisions. No single assessment informs literacy instruction, therefore, educators should use a variety of assessments to drive literacy instruction.
	● Curriculum assessments 　○ Diagnostics - identifies a student's strengths and weaknesses in reading; provides specific skills students lack. 　○ Formative - opportunities throughout the lesson to check for student understanding. 　○ Summative - evaluates student knowledge at the end of a unit or instructional period. ● Literacy screener: DIBELS 8th 　○ Measures if a student is at risk of reading struggles or eligible for additional instructional support. 　○ Provides an opportunity for tiered intervention grouping and progress monitoring. ● State and National 　○ LEAP (3rd - High school) 　○ NAEP (4th and 8th)

Guiding Questions: When determining which literacy practices you will continue to fund, consider the following guiding questions:

- What growth have you seen in literacy (B-5, K-5, 6-8, and 9-12)?
- What can you attribute that growth to?
- What literacy efforts still need improvement?
- What training can happen in the next 12 months to ensure capacity is built to continue running programs for both teachers and leaders?
- How can you maximize positions over the next 12 months to optimize impact?
- What positions, if taken away, would stop literacy progress at any site?
- What is the cost of services per student per year? Per month? Per day?
- What other funds could potentially be used for that person/people to ensure work continues?
- What services/activities are other programs or partners already providing?

Sample SWOT Analysis:

Considering the levers to build sustainability, conduct a SWOT Analysis to determine next steps. Below is a sample SWOT analysis that the school system conducted. After considering their current strengths and weaknesses, they determined some opportunities that will lead to next steps in ensuring sustainability.

Strengths	Weaknesses
● What does your program do well? ● What unique resources can you draw on? ● What do others see as your program's strengths?	● What could your program improve? ● Where do you have fewer resources than others? ● What are others likely to see as weaknesses?
● *We have an established process to collect and analyze data according to each instructional program at the district level.* ● *We have a research-based phonemic awareness curriculum, with over 20 hours of professional development offered to all teachers in K–3.* ● *We have literacy coaches at each of our CIR schools and have identified personnel at the other schools to serve as literacy leaders.* ● *All teachers and leaders have been trained through Act 108.* ● *We have a non-negotiable at each school to provide a minimum of 45 minutes a week for teacher collaboration.*	● *We haven't hosted a professional development opportunity for any teachers and leaders who are new to our core instructional materials.* ● *When conducting a program analysis, we recognize our 3rd- 5th-grade students are exposed to 7 different ELA programs for core instruction, intervention, and tutoring. Although the district purchases core materials, schools use their own funds to purchase additional programs and assessments causing incoherence and over testing.* ● *Teachers do not use opportunities throughout the lesson to gather data on student understanding.* ● *Leaders are only providing feedback on lessons after instruction following evaluations.*

Opportunities	Threats
- What opportunities, collaborations, and resources are available to your program? - How could you turn your strengths into opportunities?	- What external variables and forces could have a negative impact on your project? - What services or activities are other programs already providing? - What threats do your weaknesses expose you to?
We offer monthly principal meetings, each focusing on a new topic. These sessions facilitate collaboration and resource sharing. We may be able to offer sessions focused on using the teacher collaboration structure to plan for evidence-based literacy instruction through HQIM and provide follow-up support to check for transfer, as well as provide feedback. *We excel in data collection and analysis, and we have the opportunity to harness this strength by conducting an impact study to determine a single supplemental program for teachers to use. We could also ensure alignment with our core materials. This would lessen the number of programs teachers use, as well as save some funding.*	*An external variable of concern relates to the potential for teacher attrition rates, which would require us to conduct the same professional learning each year.* *Some teachers may be upset if their favorite program is eliminated. We will need data to back up the decision.* *A threat to the success of our students lies in the possibility of high-quality instructional materials not being implemented with fidelity in the classroom. This concern revolves around the potential inconsistency or inadequate utilization of these materials, which could undermine their intended impact on student learning and achievement. Leader feedback in the usage of these materials could also undermine the intended impact.*