

Georgia Council on Literacy November 2023 Report

Georgia Code Section 20-1-44 requires the Georgia Council on Literacy to: *Review the conditions, needs, issues, and problems related to state literacy outcomes; make recommendations for legislation and appropriations to support improving such outcomes; and provide by November 30 of each year a report of such review and recommendations to the Governor, the Office of Planning and Budget, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the President of the Senate.*

Chairman's Message

On behalf of the Georgia Council on Literacy, I want to thank Governor Brian Kemp and the Georgia General Assembly for their vision of a more literate Georgia. There is nothing more important for our state than to address illiteracy and low literacy and to ensure that all our citizens can read.

I have stated at every meeting of the Council, "We gather to solve Georgia's most solvable problem." I hope this report demonstrates that we are off to a good start and promise that we will fulfill the role and mission the Georgia General Assembly expects. I do not know if this is the most important thing Georgia will undertake in the next decade, but I do know that it is as important as **anything** that Georgia will do.

At the first meeting of the Council on August 7 at Georgia Southern University, Speaker Jon Burns addressed the Council and stressed the importance of our work. He closed his comments with the admonition to "give us the facts."

So let me give you the facts. **Based on 2022 assessment data, 44% of third grade students were "ready," and 56% were not ready for the next grade/level.** For purposes of this data, we used the state's 2018 ESSA plan for reading readiness - the percentage of students at or above the Lexile stretch band midpoint.

At the State Board of Education (SBOE) meeting on November 2, the state's measure for reading was changed. Instead of using the Lexile stretch band midpoint and above as "ready," the SBOE will use the entire stretch band (520 - 820 for third grade) as "on grade level" but acknowledge that the percentage of the students below the midpoint, but within the stretch band "need additional support." The Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) and I think this measure preserves the midpoint and gives parents and students more transparency about the student support needed. Now, the question is, what are those supports? The Council will be working on that issue in 2024 to make informed recommendations for policy-maker consideration.

It is also important to monitor how we stand nationally. **The 2022 data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) shows 32% of students are proficient readers, 68% are not.** See page 17 of this report for more detail as well as access to the data information provided to the Council.

While we obviously have work to do, the passage of HB 538 and SB 211 has laid a foundation for structural change. As required by HB 538, we are positioned for all literacy instruction to be based in the science of reading research. We know this reform works. Mississippi adopted this approach a decade ago and the state has experienced tremendous growth in literacy skills.

Dr. Ben Scafadi, Director of the Education Economics Center at Kennesaw State University, provided information to me that challenges Georgia to aim high on literacy efforts. Looking back, Dr. Scafadi noted that Georgia 2013 to 2019 NAEP scores dropped by 2 points. During that

same time, Mississippi saw a 10-point increase. Mississippi did this with a focused and committed statewide approach to the science of reading research. I commend to you Dr. Scafidi's [memo](#), with this detail as well as other data that puts Georgia in an excellent position to find success.

Thankfully, we have the advantage of lessons learned from Dr. Carey Wright, the former Mississippi State School Superintendent, who presented at the October 17 Council meeting and graciously offered her support for our efforts. Dr. Wright's presentation can be found [HERE](#). We are committed to using her expertise.

Dr. Wright gave us the best advice, "there are no silver bullets. It takes committed work where everyone is rowing together and in the same direction."

I am thankful for the Georgia Council on Literacy. We now have the place where we get out of our silos and create the cross-agency alignment needed – where together we solve this problem.

Our responsibility as a Council, spelled out in SB 211, is to perform a comprehensive study of all state resources and activities that are funded to support improved literacy outcomes and set recommended priorities for future investments and strategies. This first report reflects the start of our work.

Again, on behalf of all members of the Council, it is an honor to serve our citizens in this transformative work.

Scott Johnson, Chairman

Georgia Council on Literacy

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The Georgia Council on Literacy – Duties

[Senate Bill 211](#) was introduced by Senator Billy Hickman (4th). This legislation unanimously passed both the House and Senate. Representative Bethany Ballard (147th) was the House Sponsor. Governor Kemp signed the bill into law on April 13, 2023, and the Act became effective on July 1, 2023.

Duties of the Council pursuant to OCGA Section 20- 1- 44.

- * (1) Work in partnership with the State Board of Education and the Department of Education to implement the requirements of the Georgia Early Literacy Act as provided for in Code Section 20-2-153.1;
- (2) Review the conditions, needs, issues, and problems related to state literacy outcomes; make recommendations for legislation and appropriations to support improving such outcomes; and provide by November 30 of each year a report of such review and recommendations to the Governor, the Office of Planning and Budget, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the President of the Senate;
- (3) Evaluate and consider the best practices, experiences, and results of legislation in other states regarding literacy improvements for students;
- (4) Research and make recommendations on improving literacy rates for low-income students;
- (5) Research and make recommendations on improving literacy rates for minority and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) students;
- (6) Research and make recommendations on improving literacy rates for students with characteristics of dyslexia;
- (7) Monitor state-wide literacy goals and measures set by the State Board of Education in consultation with the Department of Education and the Office of Student Achievement and provide by October 31 of each year a report to the State Board of Education of the conclusions reached through such monitoring regarding the status and effectiveness of policy initiatives;
- (8) Review changes or updates to QBE funding to enhance literacy instruction;
- * (9) Review and make recommendations on the alignment of teacher certifications to include evidence-based literacy instruction and education degree program requirements;
- * (10) Review and make recommendations for the professional development needed by current teachers for improving literacy instruction in pre-kindergarten through third grade;

(11) Review state-wide birth to age five initiatives and suggest policy and appropriation changes; and

(12) Review best practices for community-based literacy programs and make recommendations for improvement.

20-1-45.

The council shall be abolished, and this article shall stand repealed on December 31, 2026.

* These duties are related to the Council's monitoring and reporting on HB 538's requirements; page 7 includes these requirements, deadlines, and status of each.

House Bill 538 Implementation

The Council is monitoring the implementation of the requirements of HB 538. Below is a breakdown of the current status of each requirement.

High-Quality Instructional Materials

Requirement

- By Jan. 1, 2024 - SBOE shall approve high-quality instructional materials for K-3 and establish a procedure for districts to certify their materials.
- By Dec. 1, 2024 - local boards of education shall approve high-quality instructional materials for K-3 students.
- By Dec. 15, 2024, and by Aug. 1 each year thereafter, local boards shall certify to GaDOE that instructional materials and content are high-quality.

Status

- The list of high-quality instructional materials was approved by the SBOE on Nov. 2, 2023.
- GaDOE partnered with the Georgia Language Arts Supervisors Association (GLAS) to form a committee to review vendor applications for high-quality core materials. The committee was comprised of a representative appointed by each State Board of Education member. Board members were asked to appoint educators with a background in early literacy. The committee also included two members appointed by the Georgia Association of Curriculum and Instructional Supervisors (GACIS), two members appointed by the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA), and Miranda Williams (Georgia Literacy Coach, GOSA) and Amy Denty (Director of Literacy, GaDOE) served as ex-officio members. Amy Fouse and Beth Herod served as GLAS facilitators.
- It is important to note that the review committee was charged with reviewing core materials. Supplemental materials were not reviewed. However, GaDOE plans to release guidance documents that will support the district in reviewing supplemental resources.
- Link to High-Quality Instructional Materials (K-3) Advisory List- [Attachment.aspx \(eboardsolutions.com\)](#)

Universal Reading Screeners

Requirement

- By Jan. 1, 2024 - GaDOE shall establish a process for education service providers to submit universal reading screeners to be considered on the list for SBOE's approval.
- July 1, 2024 - SBOE approval of screener list.
- By Aug. 1, 2024 - GaDOE shall publish on its website the list of approved universal screeners.

- Beginning Aug. 1, 2024 - each school and system shall administer a universal reading screener three times each year to K-3 students. The results shall be reported to parents and guardians and GaDOE.
- GaDOE shall provide a free reading screener to public schools and local school systems.

Status

- The SBOE approved the list of Universal Reading Screeners on July 19, 2023.
- The Sandra Dunagan Deal Center conducted a psychometric analysis to help guide school systems when determining universal reading screeners for their systems. The GaDOE sent this report to local school systems and charter schools.
- The free screener is currently in development.
- List of screeners - [Attachment.aspx \(eboardsolutions.com\)](#)

Tiered Reading Intervention Plans

Requirement

- Beginning Aug. 1, 2024, each school and district shall implement a tiered reading intervention plan for K-3 students who have a significant reading deficiency.
 - Each student shall receive intensive reading intervention until the student is reading proficiently.
 - Parents and guardians of struggling readers shall be notified in writing (the bill identifies information that shall be sent to parents).

Status

- This portion of the bill will go into effect Aug. 1, 2024.

Teacher Training

B-5 Teacher Training

- Beginning July 1, 2025 - DECAL shall require teachers in all programs (licensed or commissioned) to receive training on developmentally appropriate evidence-based literacy instruction.

Status

- Implementation of this requirement necessitates two changes to existing systems: 1) licensing rule changes and 2) updates to Georgia Training Approval guidelines and systems. The timeline for each is below.
 - Licensing Rule Changes include:
 - Spring 2024: Rule writing and IT system updates
 - Summer 2024: Public comment period on rule changes
 - August 2024: Public hearing, DECAL board votes on changes, and accepted rules submitted to Secretary of State
 - October 2024: Rule changes ready to take effect: Georgia Training Approval (DECAL's mechanism for ensuring the quality of trainings offered to B-5 teachers) updates

- Spring/Summer 2024: Update Georgia Training Approval guidelines to ensure all approved trainers are aware of new expectations for literacy trainings
- Spring/Summer 2024: Update Georgia's Workforce Knowledge and Competencies to ensure alignment with science of reading and HB 538 requirements
- Summer 2024: Finish IT system updates
- October 1, 2024: Approved trainers begin submitting new literacy trainings to meet requirements of HB 538
- Spring 2025: Approved trainers begin submitting existing literacy trainings for re-review to ensure alignment with new requirements

K-3 Teacher Training

- GaDOE shall develop or procure training programs for K-3 teachers on:
 - Science of reading,
 - Structured literacy,
 - Foundational literacy skills, and
 - Universal reading screeners to inform them about student needs
 - By July 1, 2025, all kindergarten through third grade teachers shall complete a training program developed or procured to promote teachers' knowledge and skills for teaching all students to read, including students with dyslexia, and to ensure teachers have the knowledge and skills necessary to use approved universal reading screeners and to use assessment data to inform instruction based on student needs.
 - Each local school system shall provide instructional support for K-3 teachers including:
 - Onsite teacher training on the science of reading, structured literacy, foundational literacy skills, and evidence-based decision-making,
 - Demonstrated lessons, and
 - Feedback for improving instruction.

Status

- GaDOE has partnered with the Rollins Center and Cox Campus to provide the K-3rd grade Structured Literacy course for Georgia teachers. This will be the free offering required by the legislation and is available as the Georgia Literacy Academy in Georgia Learns and at coxcampus.org. There are currently four pathways for educators to satisfy the professional learning requirement of the Georgia Early Literacy Act.
 - Successfully complete the Georgia Literacy Academy: K-3rd Structured Literacy.
 - Successfully complete one of the [Independent Teacher Training Programs](#), accredited by the International Dyslexia Association.
 - Earn a Dyslexia Endorsement or Reading Endorsement recognized by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC).
 - Enter the teaching profession with a proficient Georgia Assessment for Certified Educators (GACE) score set by the GaPSC after July 1, 2025.

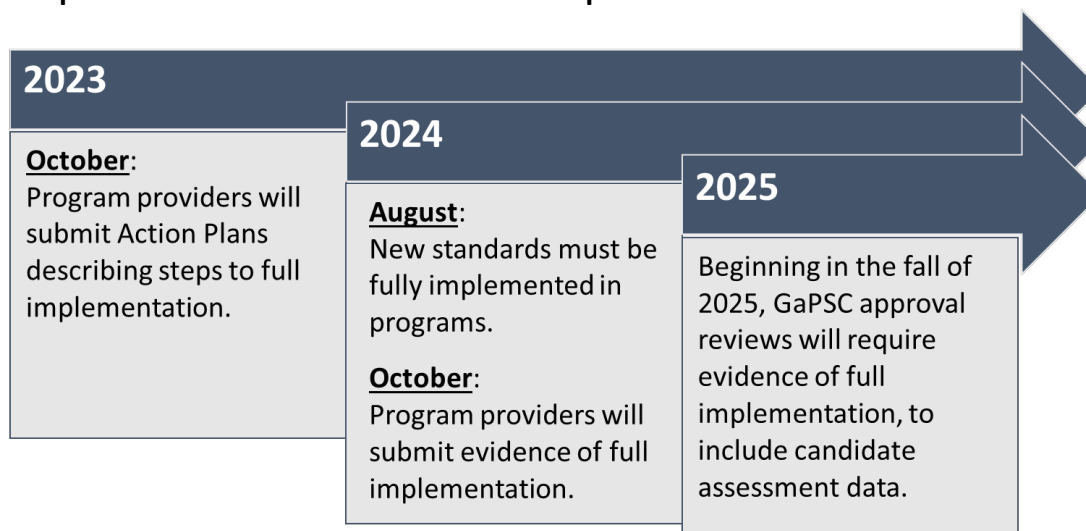
Postsecondary Education and Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation Programs Teacher Training

- Beginning July 1, 2025, the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (GACE) shall be aligned with developmentally appropriate evidence-based literacy instruction.
- The Georgia Professional Standards Commission shall:
 - Revise standards for acquiring and maintaining teacher certification in all teaching fields to include requirements regarding developmentally appropriate evidence-based literacy instruction;
 - Ensure students completing teacher certification programs have the knowledge and skills to teach reading; and
 - Create standards designed to ensure that postsecondary students completing teacher certification programs in this state graduate with the knowledge and skills necessary to teach reading.

Status

- The GaPSC adopted rules to address the standards requirements in HB 538 and they became effective July 1, 2023, including the new Foundations of Reading, Literacy, and Language rule. These changes were informed by a Reading Task Force.
- Educator preparation providers have submitted action plans to meet the requirements in the new rule. These changes will take place over the next year and program providers will submit evidence of full implementation next fall.
- There will be substantive changes to Georgia's GACE assessment program as all GACE assessments must align with the science of reading and measure different levels of understanding and application appropriate for the preparation field, as outlined in the Foundations of Reading, Literacy, and Language rule.

GaPSC Implementation Timeline for Educator Prep Providers



GaPSC GACE short-term, estimated timeline (*Subject to change*):

- August 2023 – Initiated the RFP process to procure a testing supplier
- October 2023 – Anticipate 30-day posting
- December 2023 – Contract awarded
- January 2024 – 18-month testing development process begins
- July 1, 2025 – New GACE assessments launch

Measuring the Impact of HB 538

- By April 1, 2026, GaDOE shall provide an annual report on the impacts of the implementation of HB 538 to include:
 - Research-based formative assessments with a summative component that is tied to performance indicators in ELA in grades 1 and 2.
 - Comprehensive summative assessments for 3rd grade students.
 - Nationally norm referenced instruments in reading for 3rd grade students.
 - Formative reading assessments for grades 1 and 2 students.
 - Impact of universal reading screeners, high-quality instructional materials, and instructional practices in the science of reading.

SBOE Roles and Responsibilities

- The SBOE, in consultation with the GaDOE and the Office of Student Achievement, shall establish such policies, rules, and regulations as necessary to implement uniform grade-appropriate metrics for measuring literacy.

Status

- The metric was approved by the SBOE on November 2, 2023.

SBOE Roles and Responsibilities

- The SBOE shall adopt a formative reading assessment for students in first and second grades at the discretion of public schools and local school systems.

- After each administration of such assessments, each public school or local school system shall report the results to: (1) parents and guardians of students who participated in the administration; and (2) the GaDOE for analysis and verification purposes.

Status

DRC Beacon is being expanded to first and second grades to accomplish this requirement.

Georgia Council on Literacy – Full Council Meetings

Organizational Meeting: July 19, 2023 – Virtual

Agenda

- Welcome
- SB 211 and HB 538 Summary- Council and Alliance Organizational Structure
- Georgia Literacy Coach/ Liaison to Council
 - 2023 Meeting Dates
 - Working Group Assignments
 - Travel and Reimbursement
 - Administrative Reminders
 - Bio and Photo
- Questions

Meeting 1: August 7, 2023 – Georgia Southern University

Agenda

- Welcoming Remarks
- Vision and Overview of the Council and Approval of Agenda and Minutes
- Introduction of Council Members
- Science of Reading Overview and Discussion
- Requirements of HB 538, Timeline and Agency Reporting, and Discussion
- Highlights of School System Success and Community Partnerships
- Report from the Georgia Literacy Coach
- Public Comment
- Council's Working Lunch - Goals and Stakeholder Engagement
- The Community Table, Igniting Interest Improving Literacy in your Region

Meeting 2: October 17, 2023 – Kennesaw State University

Agenda

- Council Member Networking Breakfast
- Opening Remarks
- Chairman's Remarks, Council Member Introductions, and Approval of Minutes from August 7 and Agenda for October 17
- Mississippi Experience
- “The State of Literacy in Georgia” – [2023 Deloitte Study](#)
- State Data and Analysis
- Marietta City Schools' Experience
- Council Working Groups' Reports

- Birth Through Five Years Old
- Kindergarten Through Third Grade
- Teacher Professional Development
- Community Engagement
- Council Member Activities
 - Vision and Hearing Screening - Ellen Wiley
 - Deal Center Report on Screeners - Dr. Lindee Morgan
 - Other Council Members' Activities and Discussion
- Closing Remarks
- Adjourn

Meeting 3: November 15, 2023 – Virtual

Agenda

- Welcoming Remarks
- Goals and Objectives of the Meeting
- Overview of Report
- Overview of Recommendations
 - B-3: DECAL
 - K-3: GaDOE and GOSA
 - Professional Development/Teacher Training: GaPSC and USG
 - Community Outreach: TCSG
- Council Member Discussion
- Next Steps for Report
- Adjourn

Minutes of each meeting are available at:

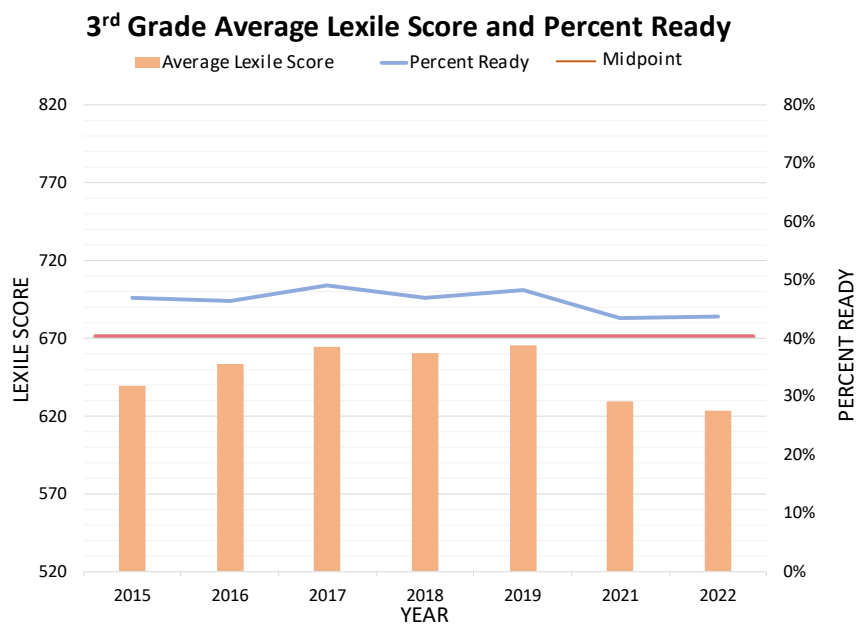
[Georgia Council on Literacy | The Governor's Office of Student Achievement](#)

Georgia Literacy Data

In 2018, Georgia agreed to a metric for reading readiness in its federal ESSA plan. The metric included in the plan used the Lexile stretch band midpoint and above as a measure of readiness. Since that time, GOSA has continued to capture data based on Georgia's ESSA plan.

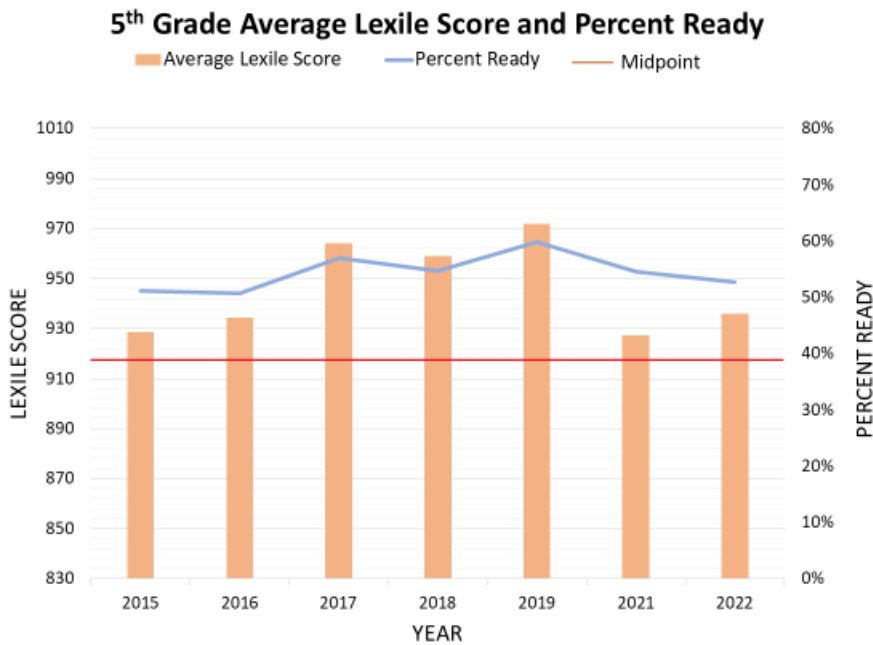
At the October 17 Council meeting, Dr. Caitlin Dooley, independent education consultant, shared the results of third, fifth and eighth grade reading based on the ESSA plan metric and 2022 data (the most current data available at the time of preparation for this presentation). See the Appendix for updated 2023 data.

Below are slides from Dr. Dooley's presentation:



Key Takeaway:

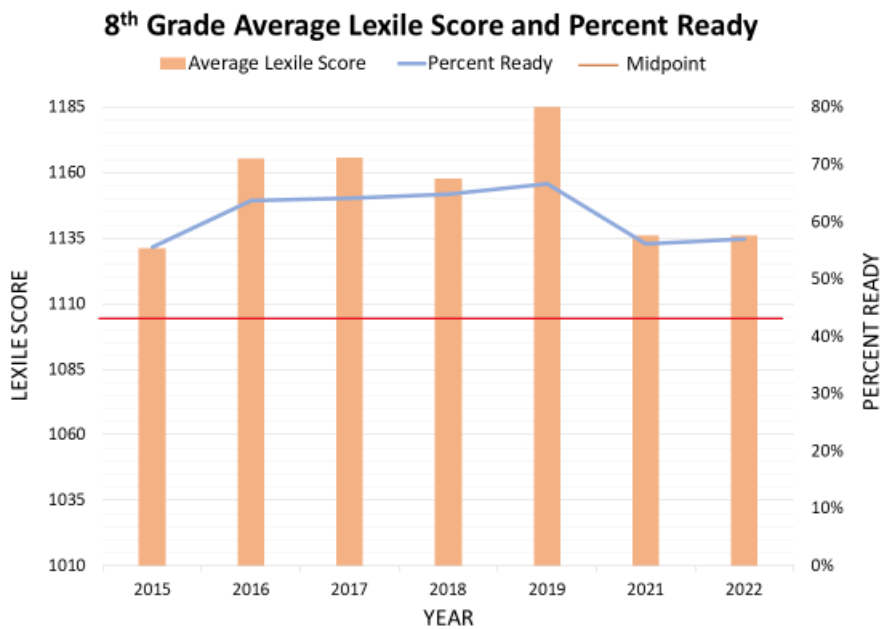
- The statewide average of 3rd Grade Lexile Scores are consistently below level of readiness.
- % of ready students are still below pre-pandemic level.



Key Takeaway:

- % of ready students as well as the statewide average Lexile score are still below pre-pandemic level.
- The statewide average Lexile score is trending upward.

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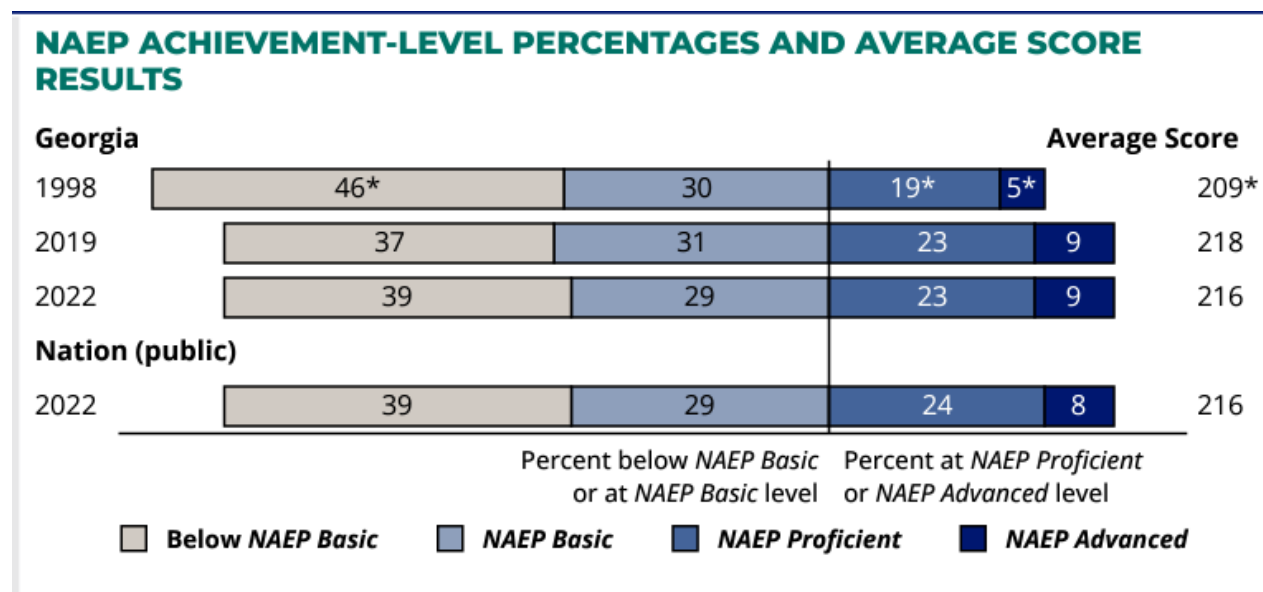
Key Takeaway:

- % of ready students as well as statewide average Lexile score are still below pre-pandemic level.

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The slides show that for the past decade, Georgia’s third grade reading performance has been flat. During the pandemic year, the state had a decline and is not rebounding as quickly as states with a strong reading foundation, e.g., Mississippi.

The nationally normed reading assessment, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), tests a random sample of students every two years in fourth and eighth grades and approximately every four years at grade 12. The assessment measures reading comprehension by asking students to read selected grade-appropriate materials and answer questions based on what they have read. The results present a broad view of students' reading knowledge, skills, and performance over time. The most recent reading assessment was given in 2022 to approximately 108,200 fourth grade students and 111,300 eighth grade students.



* Significantly different ($p < .05$) from the state's results in 2022. Significance tests were performed using unrounded numbers.

NOTE: NAEP achievement levels are to be used on a trial basis and should be interpreted and used with caution. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

Georgia's Measure for Reading

[House Bill 538](#) requires the State Board of Education (SBOE) to set goals and measures for reading. As a backdrop, in 2023, the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) asked the U.S. Department of Education to amend the state's ESSA plan.

Since 2018, Georgia's ESSA plan has required a metric for readiness as the Lexile stretch band midpoint and above. GOSA conducted research that found that the midpoint has merit. See [GOSA's Presentation Deck](#) at the November 1 SBOE meeting.

At the November 2, 2023, SBOE meeting, SBOE approved a new reading metric. The [metric](#) recognizes the midpoint by stating that students within the stretch band are "on grade level or above," and of these students:

- 1) a percentage (below the midpoint) will need additional supports;
- 2) a percentage (above the midpoint and within the stretch band) are ready for more challenging academic content; and
- 3) a percentage (above the stretch band) should receive academic enrichment opportunities.

Impact of Low Literacy on Georgia's Workforce and Economy

Deloitte conducted a study for the Council, "The State of Literacy in Georgia," finding that one in 10 adults in the state are low literate and the 800,000 adults with low literacy skills have long-term negative impacts on Georgia's workforce and economy. The study states that the state must have a workforce with strong literacy skills to meet the expected demand of over 250,000 jobs our state is creating. A copy of this study can be found [HERE](#).

Council Recommendations

This report reflects the start of our work. As the Council partners with agencies, local school systems and charter schools for the implementation of HB 538 and the Council's duties required by SB 211, the Council will have the time to formulate goals and priorities to be presented in the 2024 report.

Universal Screeners

In response to HB 538's requirement that the State Board of Education approve a list of universal reading screeners that schools may use, the Georgia Department of Education conducted a Request for Information and from that action, assembled a list of 16 screeners that the SBOE approved on July 19, 2023.

Council member, Dr. Lindee Morgan, Executive Director, Sandra Dunagan Deal Center, conducted an independent psychometric analysis of the 16 approved screeners. This report was shared at the October 17 Council meeting.

Recommendation: The Council approved distributing the final report [LINK](#) to the State Board of Education, the Georgia Department of Education and all public charter schools and school systems. The Council expected the State Board of Education to review this report and, where appropriate, make changes to the approved screener list.

Action at the time of the November 30 report: The Department of Education has acted on this report and provided this information to all local school systems and charter schools.

Other Important Council Actions

GOSA entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Georgia Foundation for Public Education, a 501(c)(3) organization, to have a restricted fund dedicated to supporting the Georgia Council on Literacy. The Foundation's board considers the Council "innovative," and donors can receive a dollar-for-dollar tax credit through the Peach Education Tax Credit for donations to the Foundation. For information about donating, go to: [Tax Credit » The Georgia Foundation for Public Education \(gfpe.org\)](#).

Council Working Group Discussions and Topics

The Georgia Council on Literacy's success is built on its relationship with the Alliance of Education Agency Heads set out in SB 211. Each state education agency head plays an important role and serves as the lead for each of the four working groups.

Working Group Discussion

The Council established four working groups, led by the agency/agencies responsible for requirements of HB 538 and SB 211: Birth to Five Years Old, Kindergarten to Third Grade, Teacher Training and Professional Development, and Community Engagement. Each Working Group met and discussed the requirements and timeline for implementation of HB 538 and SB 211 requirements and discussed other issues for future research, analysis, exploration, and implementation.

In 2024, the Council will conduct strategic planning to identify key reasons for low literacy. The 2024 report will include research and data to support a prioritization of key indicators of low literacy, and work on these indicators will begin in 2024.

Birth to Five Years Old

The Birth to Five working group met twice. The first meeting focused on a discussion of developmentally appropriate language and literacy development for young children, understanding the early learning system in Georgia including how families access the system, the differences between the early learning system and the public school system, and specific coaching programs which support early learning teachers with language and literacy teaching strategies.

For the second meeting, the Working Group members engaged in small group discussions to begin forming goals and recommendations to provide a framework for the ongoing work of the group. The topics that will be studied and discussed in 2024 include the following:

Supporting the B-5 System

- Review and update B-5 educator standards to better align with the science of reading and early education quality, supporting the implementation of the Georgia Early Literacy Act (HB 538).
- Review and update the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) to reflect current evidence-based research, including research related to the science of reading, and are in alignment with updates to the K-12 Georgia Standards of Excellence.

Supporting Educators

- Create compensation comparable to K-12 system for the early learning workforce
- Increase evidence-based professional development opportunities specific to literacy

Supporting Families

- Increase access to high-quality childcare

- Strengthen high-quality, evidence-based literacy resources
- Ensure culturally and linguistically appropriate language and literacy environments and instructional experiences

Kindergarten to Third Grade Working Group

Meeting 1

The Georgia Department of Education’s literacy director provided an overview of 2023 Georgia Milestones and 2022 NAEP data. Important points from the discussion that followed were:

- Implementing state-wide, sustained improvement requires in-depth knowledge of Georgia public schools and their diverse systems.
- We cannot improve at scale that which we cannot measure.
- Deliberative dialog is necessary for a sustainable strategy. (No “quick fixes”)

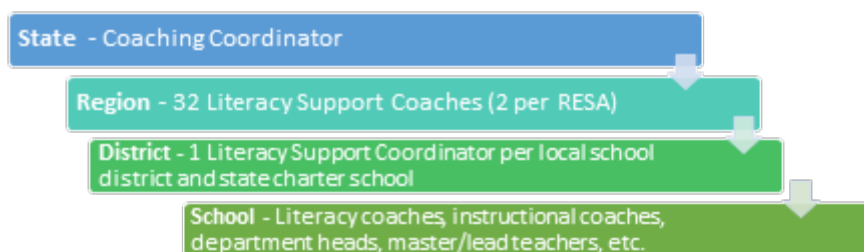
The Rollins Center for Language and Literacy provided a presentation on current professional learning in progress in Georgia’s schools.

Senator Billy Hickman shared information and led a discussion about the possibility of changing the starting age for compulsory education in Georgia.

Meeting 2

The second meeting of the K-3 working group focused on topics Council members had been exploring:

- Student retention
 - This discussion included a presentation from the Education Commission of the States and comments from Mrs. Dayle Burns encouraging the Council to explore ways to intervene with children in early grades (K-1).
 - Council members who serve as educators in the K-12 arena provided information about their experiences with retention of students.
- Literacy coaches
 - Develop a model that includes a tiered approach and support to teachers and leaders through a central framework that will provide high-quality professional learning and coaching.



- Continue to work with the Council’s literacy coach design team experts to strengthen the program development and ensure scalability and sustainability.
- Hearing and vision
 - Educate the public about hearing and vision screenings including data, practice, laws, board rules and regulations;
 - Increase diagnostic exams;
 - Identify and monitor students with hearing and vision issues through research, analysis, and the identification of strategies for improving Georgia Public Health Form 3300 and related systems;
 - Explore the frequency of screenings during a student’s educational career; and
 - Understand surrounding states’ current Medicaid practices as they relate to hearing and vision for children.
- Discussion relating to increasing background knowledge.

Teacher Training and Professional Development

Discussion included:

- The University System of Georgia’s (USG) Educator Preparation Program faculty should be trained in the science of reading research to be successful in delivering reading instruction to students.
- Partnerships should exist between USG and K-12 systems to support the science of reading research.
- The Council should explore collaborating with the USG Reading Consortium to strengthen the teacher training framework.
- GaPSC and USG should continue aligning with the requirements of HB 538.

Community Engagement

Discussion included:

- Explore approaches for expanding community partnership frameworks statewide by (a) defining community literacy partnerships, (b) conducting a survey of current community partnerships, (c) analyzing other states’ best practices, (d) analyzing the results of the L4GA grant, and (e) reviewing literature from the National Center for Family Learning.
- Investigate current effective strategies for community partnerships and how they are funded.
- Share effective strategies of community partnerships and facilitate peer-to-peer meetings.
- After a potential community partnership framework policy has been explored, determine the implementation and timelines, and investigate grant opportunities for community participation.

The Council's Year in Pictures



Governor Kemp declared September "Literacy Month."



Speaker Jon Burns reads to Pre-K class.



Senator Billy Hickman reads to Pre-K class.



Helen Rice, Miranda Williams, Scott Johnson, and Bethany Ballard at Science of Reading Symposium.



Miranda Williams reading to Pre-K class.



Miranda Williams and Scott Johnson answering questions following the Council Meeting.



Lieutenant Governor's Back to School Book Drive Event

Council Videos

Senator Billy Hickman discusses the Georgia Council on Literacy and how the public can show support.

<http://ceonews-video.s3.amazonaws.com/video/video-files/Sen.%20Billy%20Hickman%20CEO%201.mp4>

Council Member Malcolm Mitchell, along with teacher Whitney Coleman from the Atlanta Speech School, offers great tips and tricks for how to effectively read to children.

https://player.vimeo.com/video/865739525?h=f75676a74c&badge=0&autoplay=0&player_id=0&app_id=58479

Appendix

The Georgia Council on Literacy – Members

30 Members appointed by Governor Kemp, Lt. Governor Jones, and Speaker Burns

Governor Appointments

Scott Johnson, Chair, Georgia Council on Literacy

Gary Bingham, Int. Chair, Georgia State University, Dept. of Early Childhood and Elementary Ed.

Kelly McKay, Assistant Superintendent, Rabun County Schools

Andri Pilgrim, Intervention Lead Teacher and Title 1 Coordinator, Bremen City Schools

Noris Price, Superintendent, Baldwin County Schools

Katie Seymour, Instructional Coach, Putnam County Charter School System

Stephanie Westhafer, Teacher, West Jackson Elementary School, Jackson County School System

Ellen Wiley, Board of Trustees Athens Academy, Atlanta Speech School, and Trinity School

Stan DeJarnett, Vice Chair, State Board of Education

Amy Denty, Director of Literacy, Georgia Department of Education

Lindee Morgan, Executive Director, Sandra Dunagan Deal Center

Julie Walker, State Librarian of Georgia, USG Library System

<https://gov.georgia.gov/press-releases/2023-06-09/gov-kemp-announces-36-appointments>

Lieutenant Governor Appointments

Senator Clint Dixon (R – Buford), Chair, Senate Education and Youth Committee

Senator Billy Hickman (R – Statesboro), Chair, Senate Higher Education Committee

Senator Blake Tillery (R – Vidalia), Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee

Senator Jason Esteves (D – Atlanta)

Senator Freddie Powell Sims (D – Dawson)

Katie Bennett, Teacher, Brandywine Elementary School, Forsyth County Schools

Jaillene Hunter, Board of Education Member, Marietta City Schools

Bubba Longgear, Superintendent, Candler County Schools

Malcolm Mitchell, Literacy Advocate and Author

<https://ltgov.georgia.gov/press-releases/2023-05-16/georgia-council-literacy-appointments>

Speaker Appointments

Rep. Chris Erwin (R-Homer), Chair, House Education Committee

Rep. Chuck Martin (R-Alpharetta), Chair, House Higher Education Committee

Rep. Matt Hatchett (R-Dublin), Chair, House Appropriations Committee

Rep. Becky Evans (D-Atlanta)

Rep. Al Williams (D-Midway)

Yancey Ford, Superintendent, Effingham County Schools

Whit Myers, Board of Education Member, Screven County Schools

Carlette Fulcher, Teacher, Rincon Elementary, Effingham County Schools

Jeanne Seaver, Literacy Advocate

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/house/press-releases>

Council Working Group Members

Birth to Five Years Old Working Group

Agency Lead: DECAL

- Chairman Scott Johnson
- Lindee Morgan
- Gary Bingham
- Ellen Wiley
- Jeanne Seaver
- Jason Esteves
- Becky Evans
- Julie Walker
- Stephanie Westhafer

Kindergarten to Third Grade Working Group

Agency Lead: GaDOE and GOSA

- Chairman Scott Johnson
- Amy Denty
- Stan DeJarnett
- Ellen Wiley
- Malcolm Mitchell
- Andri Pilgrim
- Stephanie Westhafer
- Carlett Fulcher
- Bubba Longgear
- Kelly McKay
- Jaillene Hunter
- Katie Seymour
- Katie Bennett
- Freddie Powell Sims
- Jeanne Seaver
- Clint Dixon
- Chris Erwin
- Blake Tillery
- Matt Hatchett
- Becky Evans
- Whit Myers

Teacher Professional Development Working Group

Agency Lead: USG and GaPSC

- Chairman Scott Johnson
- Andri Pilgrim
- Kelly McKay
- Katie Bennett
- Whit Myers

- Gary Bingham
- Chuck Martin
- Al Williams
- Becky Evans

Community Engagement Working Group

Agency Lead: TCSG

- Chairman Scott Johnson
- Billy Hickman
- Ellen Wiley
- Julie Walker
- Stan DeJarnett
- Noris Price
- Jaillene Hunter
- Yancy Ford
- Becky Evans
- Gary Bingham

Council Working Group Agendas

Birth to Five Years Old Meetings

September 11, 2023

- Welcome and Purpose of Working Group
- Importance of Working Group
- Update from the Georgia Literacy Coach
- Introduction of Working Group Members & Literacy Discussion
- Understanding the B-5 Landscape in Georgia and Discussion
- Break
- B-5 & HB 538
- Reflections from the Meeting: 3-2-1 Protocol
- Final Announcements
- Closing Remarks

November 2, 2023

- Welcome
- Welcome and Purpose of Meeting
- Working Group Members' Discussion and Comments
 - Summary of September Meeting
 - Support for B-5 Literacy Development
 - Opening discussion
 - Break out rooms/small group discussions for committee members
 - Teachers
 - Families
- Break
- Goals/recommendations for ongoing work
- Closing Remarks and Next Steps
- Adjourn

Kindergarten to Third Grade Meetings

September 12, 2023

- Welcome and Purpose of Working Group
- Importance of Working Group
- Update from the Georgia Literacy Coach
- Data Review
- Data Discussion
- Rollins Center for Language and Literacy Presentation and Discussion
- SB 241 Overview and Discussion
- Reflections from the Meeting
- Final Announcements
- Closing Remarks

November 7, 2023

- Welcoming Remarks
- Chair's Remarks
- Remarks from Special Guest
- Student Retention Policies in Other States
- Student Retention from Council Member Experience
- Retention Discussion
- Literacy Coach Recommendation and Discussion
- Other Topics to be Discussed
 - Hearing and Vision Report
 - Increasing Background Knowledge
- Adjourn

Teacher Training and Professional Development Meetings

September 12, 2023

- Welcome and Overview of GaPSC Literacy Work
- Importance of Working Group
- Update from the Georgia Literacy Coach
- Implementation Timeline and Discussion- New Standards for Teachers of Reading
- Plans for New Certification Assessments for Teachers of Reading
- Break
- Teacher Workforce Data and Discussion
- Reflections from the Meeting
- Final Announcements
- Closing Remarks

November 13, 2023

- Welcoming Remarks
- University System of Georgia Update
- Updates from Schools of Education
- Council Member Discussion
- Closing Remarks
- Adjourn

Community Engagement Meetings**September 14, 2023**

- Welcome and Purpose of Working Group
- Importance of Working Group
- Update from the Georgia Literacy Coach
- 2 Gen Work in Georgia
- Overview of Community Literacy Organizations in Georgia and Discussion
- Georgia Family Connection Presentation and Discussion
- Get Georgia Reading Campaign Communities
- Discussion of Potential Goals
- Final Announcements
- Closing Remarks

November 1, 2023

- Welcoming Remarks
- Chair's Remarks
- September Working Group Meeting Recap and Discussion
- Community Framework Idea and Discussion
- Closing Remarks
- Adjourn

2023 English Language Arts and Lexile Data

[See here.](#)