



Literacy

Overview of Legislation

for Charter Schools

Bill Number	Senate Bill 7003/House Bill 7002
Familiar Name	Literacy Success Act
Purpose	To ensure all LEAs and charter schools provide foundational literacy skills instruction to students in grades K-3 to improve literacy rates in Tennessee.

What are the key provisions of this legislation?

Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction

- LEAs and charter schools are required to provide foundational literacy skills instruction to K-3 students. Foundational literacy skills instruction must be the charter school’s primary form of instructional programming in English language arts.
- "Foundational literacy skills instruction" means an evidence-based method of teaching students to read that includes phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension that enables students to develop the reading skills required to meet Tennessee's academic standards.
- LEAs and charter schools are required to provide reading interventions and supports designed to improve a student's foundational literacy skills to each student identified as having a significant reading deficiency. "Significant reading deficiency" means:
 - For students in K-3: a student's score on a universal reading screener is within the range of scores determined by the department to demonstrate a lack of proficiency in foundational literacy skills.
 - For students in grades 4 or 5: a student scored below proficient in English language arts on the Tennessee comprehensive assessment program (TCAP) test most recently administered to the student.

Schools may choose to comply with this requirement by providing the interventions identified in Tennessee's response to instruction and intervention (RTI²) framework manual.



Additional Supporting Documentation: [District & School FAQs](#)

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

- Each LEA and charter school is required to develop, and submit to the department for approval by **June 1, 2021**, a foundational literacy skills plan for students in grades K-5, which shall include, at a minimum:
 - (1) The amount of time and description of time devoted to foundational literacy skills instruction;
 - (2) Adopted foundational skills instructional materials;
 - (3) Universal reading screener selected;
 - (4) Interventions and support available to students;
 - (5) Parent notification plan; and
 - (6) Professional development plan for K-5 teachers.
- The department will provide a template for the plan.
- LEAs and charter schools must submit a revised plan to the department for approval again by **July 1, 2024**, and then every three years thereafter. The requirement to submit for reapproval every three years may be exempted or made more frequent based on the school's 4th grade TVAAS data.
- LEAs and charter schools must post their approved plans on their websites. The department will post all approved plans on its website.

Instructional Materials

- LEAs and charter schools must either (a) adopt and use English language arts textbooks and instructional materials from the list approved for adoption by the state board, or (b) seek a waiver. All English language arts textbooks and instructional materials must be aligned to Tennessee's academic standards no later than **January 1, 2023**.

Additional Supporting Documentation: [Tennessee Foundational Skills Instructional Materials Adoption Guidance](#)

Universal Screener

- LEAs and charter schools must annually administer an approved universal reading screener to all K-3 students during each of the three administration windows established by the department. The department will determine the required reading



proficiency level scores. LEAs and charter schools must submit the results of each administered universal reading screener to the department.

- Approved screeners include either (a) the Tennessee universal reading screener provided by the department, or (b) one approved by the state board.
- The Tennessee universal reading screener will be provided free of charge and may also be used by LEAs and charter schools to comply with the dyslexia screening requirements established in § 49-1-229 and with the universal screening requirements established in Tennessee's RTI² framework manual.

Parent Notification of Significant Reading Deficiencies

- When an LEA or charter school determines a K-3 student has a significant reading deficiency, based on the most recent universal reading screener results, the LEA or charter school must notify the student's parent in writing and provide:
 - (1) Information about the importance of reading proficiently at the end of grade 3;
 - (2) Reading intervention activities parents may use at home; and
 - (3) Recommended reading interventions and supports for the student.
- An LEA or charter school must provide at least one home literacy report after each administration of a universal reading screener to a K-3 student who is identified as having a significant reading deficiency, and each school year for a student in grades 4-5 identified as having a significant reading deficiency.

Additional Supporting Documentation: [Parents & Families Summary](#)

Standards, Professional Development & Teacher Evaluation

- By July 31, 2021, the department shall develop and submit to the state board for approval, foundational literacy skills standards for use by all educator preparation providers for the instruction of candidates seeking a license to teach students in grades K-3 or seeking an instructional leader license. Beginning August 1, 2022, educator preparation providers must provide these candidates with training on reading instruction focused on the approved standards. Effective August 1, 2023, candidates must complete a reading instruction course and pass a reading instruction test.
- Beginning in SY 2021-2022, LEAs and charter schools may authorize teachers in the non-tested grades pre-K-2 to use the results of the approved universal reading screener as an approved alternative growth model to generate individual growth scores for teachers pursuant to the evaluation guidelines developed by the department. The



department shall not base the universal reading screener used to evaluate teachers on the pre-k/kindergarten portfolio growth model.

- By August 1, 2022, the department shall develop a foundational literacy skills instruction course and accompanying instructional materials that may be used by high school students participating in a teaching-as-a-profession career pathway developed or facilitated by the department.
- By **August 1, 2023**, teachers in K-5 must complete at least one professional development course on foundational literacy skills instruction approved by the department. Each LEA and charter school shall approve professional development points for at least one department-approved literacy-based training completed by a teacher.

Additional Supporting Documentation: [Teacher Summary](#)

What does this legislation require charter schools to do?

1. Develop a Foundational Literacy Skills Plan and submit it to the department for approval by **June 1, 2021**.
2. Post the approved Plan on the school's website.
3. Adopt state board-approved textbooks and instructional materials, or submit a waiver for approval, by **January 1, 2023**.
4. Adopt either the Tennessee universal reading screener or a state board-approved universal reading screener. Adhere to the department's screener administration and reporting schedule for all students in grades K-3.
5. Identify the school's students that have a significant reading deficiency, and provide:
 - a. Immediate notification to parents,
 - b. Reading interventions (such as RTI²) and supports to these students, and
 - c. Home literacy reports after each screening of a K-3 student and each year for a grade 4 or 5 student.
6. Ensure that all of the school's K-5 teachers complete at least one professional development course on foundational literacy skills instruction approved by the department by **August 1, 2023**. Approve professional development points for the training that they complete.
7. Submit a revised Plan to the department by **July 1, 2024** (unless exempted or otherwise changed).



For more information, visit the [2020-21 Special Session Legislation Webpage](#).

For questions, please email charter.schools@tn.gov.