

# Early Literacy Targeted Interventions

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# Legislative Intent

The legislature finds that the ability to read at or above grade level is essential for educational success. The legislature also finds that too many Montana children are not reading proficient at the end of 3rd grade.

## Purpose

1. Provide parents with voluntary early literacy interventions for their children (**parental choice**);
2. Increase the number of children who are reading proficient at the end of 3rd grade and in so doing help those children develop their full educational potential pursuant to Article X, Section 1(1), of the Montana constitution (**academic improvement**); and
3. Foster a strong economic return for the state on early literacy investment through enhancing Montana's skilled workforce and decreasing future reliance on social programs and the criminal justice system (**economic enhancement**).



*“The legislature intends that the board of public education, the office of public instruction, and the boards of trustees of school districts collaborate to implement the early literacy targeted intervention programs and achieve the purposes under subsection.”* HB 352 (2023)

# Early Literacy Targeted Interventions

## Summer Jumpstart Program

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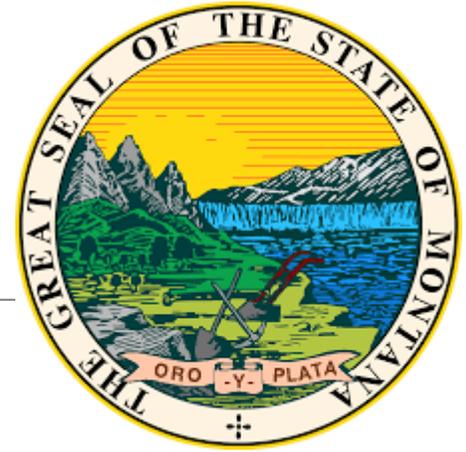


1. For an eligible child who is 5 years of age or older on or before September 10th of the year in which the child is to participate in the program and who has not yet completed 3rd grade, the trustees may offer a jumpstart program.
2. The jumpstart program must:
  - (i) take place during the time between the end of one school calendar year and the start of the next school calendar year, as determined by the trustees, preceding a child's entry into Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> grade, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade;
  - (ii) be at least 4 weeks in duration and provide at least 120 instructional hours;
  - (iii) be aligned to a framework determined by the Board of Public Education; and
  - (iv) be designed in a manner to increase the likelihood of a child being evaluated at the end of the ensuing school year to be at or above a trajectory leading to reading proficiency at the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

*\*\*Important – eligible children qualify for a .25 ANB payment, which is approximately \$1,500 per eligible elementary school aged student.\*\**

# Summer Jumpstart Program

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What can this look like in  
your community?

# Early Literacy Targeted Interventions

## Home-Based Program

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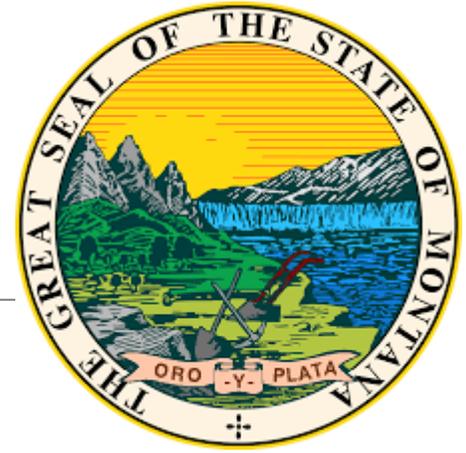


1. For an eligible child who is 4 years of age or older on or before September 10th of the year in which the child is to participate in the program and who has not yet completed 2nd grade, the trustees may offer a home-based program.
2. The home-based program must be selected by the Montana Board of Public Education and must:
  - (i) be operated by a nonprofit entity;
  - (ii) be research-based and proven effective at developing early literacy skills in populations at risk of not being reading proficient at the end of 3rd grade;
  - (iii) foster parental engagement; and
  - (iv) have a cost of no more than \$1,000 a year (annually) for each child.

*\*\*Important - If the annual appropriation for this program is not sufficient to fully fund all eligible children participating in the home-based program, the superintendent shall limit participation on a first-come, first-served basis. Funding allocated at \$1.5 million for 1,500 students.\*\**

# Home-Based Program

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What can this look like in  
your community?

# Early Literacy Targeted Interventions

## Classroom-Based Program

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1. For an eligible child who is 4 years of age or older on or before September 10th of the year in which the child is to participate in the program and who is not entering and who has not completed Kindergarten, the trustees may offer a classroom-based program, which may be a half-time or full-time program.
  - (i) A full-time program must allow a parent or guardian to enroll the child half-time;
  - (ii) The classroom-based program must align with developmentally appropriate early education learning standards as determined by the Board of Public Education; and
  - (iii) The standards must include a requirement for ongoing evaluation of student progress used to tailor instruction to specific student needs.

*\*\*Important – eligible children qualify for a 1.00 ANB payment, which is approximately \$6,000 per eligible elementary school aged student.\*\**

# Classroom-Based Program

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What can this look like in  
your community?

# Legislation Timeline

*\*\*Important – the early literacy targeted intervention programs, outlined by HB 352, are voluntary programs, as school districts can choose which programs to offer or not, and parents and guardians can determine whether their children participate or not.\*\**



1. The Montana Board of Public Education, the Office of Public Instruction, and the boards of trustees of school districts shall collaborate and prepare for the full implementation of HB 352 for the 2024/2025 school year beginning July 1, 2024.
2. The legislature intends that the evaluation methodology be available for local school district administration in the spring of 2024 to determine child eligibility.
3. The legislature intends that school districts operating multi-year kindergarten programs in the school year beginning July 1, 2023, plan for the transition to early literacy targeted intervention programs for the school year beginning July 1, 2024.

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Facilitated by McCall Flynn, Board of Public Education and Caitlin Jensen, Zero to Five Montana

# Early Literacy Advisory Council Members

# Scope of Work

The Council followed the scope of work, as determined by the Board of Public Education:

- ❖ Identify 3rd grade reading proficiency level.
- ❖ Review previous exceptional circumstances statute language for reference.
- ❖ Recommend an evaluation methodology which will be used to determine whether a child is at, above, or below a developmental trajectory leading to reading proficiency at the completion of third grade.
- ❖ Identify a framework for the jumpstart program.
- ❖ Recommend a home-based early literacy program.
- ❖ Review Title 10, Chapter 63 – Early Childhood Education Standards to ensure they align.



# Advisory Council Work and Next Steps

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## Draft Rule – Evaluation Methodology

- ❖ Evaluation methodology: adopted by the local board of trustees to identify, enroll, and admit children; must be overseen by and include application of professional judgment of qualified employees; a child may not be evaluated unless requested by the child's parent or guardian; and administered in April, May, or June.
- ❖ Identified skills for certain grade levels: oral language, phonological awareness, alphabet awareness, phoneme awareness, listening comprehension, developmental spelling, vocabulary, word reading, connected text reading fluency, connect text accuracy, reading comprehension, reading composite.
- ❖ List of approved screening tools: made publicly available by Board of Public Education, yet allows school districts to choose their own and justify that the tools are developmentally appropriate, research based, cost effective, and (if possible) aligned to formative assessments, as required in the legislation.
- ❖ Definition: "evaluation methodology" means an age-appropriate research-based methodology, instrument, or assessment selected by the board of public education to determine, based on a child's age or grade level, whether the child is above, at, or below a developmental trajectory leading to reading proficiency on completion of 3rd grade.

# Advisory Council Work and Next Steps

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## Draft Rule – Jumpstart Program Framework

- ❖ Jumpstart program: offered by the local board of trustees to support early literacy targeted intervention based on evaluation methodology and aligned to the Montana Early Childhood Education Standards (Chapter 63) and the Montana Content Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy (Chapter 53).
- ❖ Personnel: overseen by and include application of professional judgment of qualified employees and must be designed in a manner to increase the likelihood of a child being evaluated at the end of the ensuing school year to be at or above a trajectory leading to reading proficiency at the end of 3rd grade.
- ❖ Definition: "jumpstart program" means a program that is at least 4 weeks in duration and provides at least 120 instructional hours and takes place during the time between the end of one school calendar year and the start of the next school calendar year, as determined by the trustees, preceding a child's entry into Kindergarten, First grade, Second grade, or Third grade.

Methodology Matrix – aligns identified literacy skills with the school year that screening will take place

Screening Tool Crosswalk – aligns universal screening tools with the identified literacy skills

# Advisory Council Work and Next Steps

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## Draft Rule – Early Childhood Education Standards

- ❖ Application: The early childhood education standards are for a child between the ages of 3 and 5 for preschool programs and between the ages of 4 and 5 for early literacy targeted interventions implemented through the classroom-based program for four-year-olds and summer jumpstart program preceding kindergarten.
- ❖ Personnel: teachers with an early childhood (P-3) endorsement are required for public preschool programs, while teachers with an early childhood (P-3) endorsement or elementary (K-8) endorsement are required for early literacy targeted intervention classroom-based programs. Teachers with an elementary (K-8) endorsement are encouraged to pursue professional development to support early childhood instruction.
- ❖ Developmental Domains and Content Standards: Makes clear that public preschool programs and early literacy targeted intervention classroom-based programs and jumpstart programs preceding kindergarten adhere to all developmental domains and that public preschool programs must adhere to all content standards, while early literacy targeted intervention classroom-based programs and jumpstart programs preceding kindergarten must only adhere to the English Language Arts and Literacy content standards.
- ❖ Renaming: The rules will be located in subchapter 1, which will be renamed Early Childhood Education Standards.

# Transition from Exceptional Circumstances to Early Literacy

MTSBA will be sending out new policies (Policy 3100)

School Board will need to determine what services they will offer:

- Early Literacy Program
- Summer Jumpstart Program
- Home-Based Program

After the board meeting, you can then get a team together to determine how you will:

- Get the word out to families in your community;
- Determine which assessments you will use to screen children;
- Set up times for screening (April, May, and June); and
- Determine a process for screening and acceptance.

Make sure you let your families know that Exceptional Circumstances is going away.

Don't wait till the School Board Meeting to start having these conversations and making plans as the timeline is very short!!



# What you should know...

1. Exceptional circumstances pathway is sunsetting in 2024.
2. New early literacy targeted intervention programs will be effective July 1, 2024.
3. Districts should start preparing now to identify screening tools to assess children in April, May, or June of 2024 in preparation for 24/25 school year.
4. Board of Public Education will approve list of approved screening tools March 2024.
5. The Board of Public Education will approve new Early Literacy Targeted Intervention Standards (evaluation methodology and jumpstart program) as part of Title 10, Chapter 54 March 2024.
6. The Board of Public Education will approve new Early Childhood Education Standards as part of Title 10, Chapter 63 May 2024.
7. Home-based program selection will go through an RFP process. The Board of Public Education will approve May 2024.
8. Schedule School Board meetings.
9. Prepare student waiver.



# Questions?

Thank you!