

§ 115C-83.4B. Early Literacy Program.

(a) There is established the Early Literacy Program within the Department of Public Instruction. The Department of Public Instruction, in consultation with the Department of Health and Human Services, shall use the Early Literacy Program to build strong foundational early literacy skills utilizing the Science of Reading for children in the North Carolina Prekindergarten (NC Pre-K) program.

(b) As part of the Early Literacy Program, the Department of Public Instruction shall focus on at least the following components:

- (1) Provide a training program to educators and administrators working with children in the NC Pre-K program to ensure developmentally appropriate instruction grounded in the Science of Reading and outcomes promoting reading achievement in students. The Department of Public Instruction shall utilize a third-party independent teacher training program to deliver professional development that demonstrates evidence-based success with educators and administrators in establishing deep knowledge of literacy instruction.
- (2) Provide integration of age-appropriate resources, including digital and technological resources, in the NC Pre-K program for children to meet reading achievement goals.
- (3) Ensure administration of a formative assessment to children at the conclusion of their participation in the NC Pre-K program to determine their kindergarten readiness and the alignment of their literacy instruction with the Science of Reading. The Department shall also ensure that the results of each child's formative assessment are shared with the child's kindergarten teacher at the beginning of the next school year.

(c) The Early Literacy Program shall not use a three-cueing system, as defined in G.S. 115C-83.3(9a), or a curriculum with visual memory as the primary basis for teaching word recognition in any instruction or intervention provided to students in an NC Pre-K program. (2021-8, s. 3(a); 2023-134, s. 7.64(b).)