Roanoke City PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Comprehensive LITERACY PLAN

2025-2027

School Division: **Roanoke City Public Schools**
Superintendent: **Dr. Verletta White | vwhite@rcps.info**
Local School Board Chair: **Dr. Elizabeth Jamison | ejamison@rcps.info**
Division VLA Lead: **Dr. Wendy Durham | wdurham@rcps.info**
Initial Local Board Adoption Date for Division Comprehensive Plan: **06/25/2024**
Biennial Updates: **06/30/2025**

An electronic version of this document can be found online at THIS LINK on the RCPS website.

RCPS Vision Statement

To provide all students with a strong educational foundation that enables them to become lifelong learners and contributing members and leaders of the global community.

RCPS Mission Statement

RCPS provides an inclusive and equitable, student-centered culture that empowers lifelong learning. Through meaningful, relevant, and engaging learning opportunities, we will empower all students to dream, excel, and meet their full potential to benefit our city and its citizens.

RCPS Core Beliefs

- We put students first.
- We embrace equity and celebrate diversity.
- We value effective, high-quality instruction.
- We value our community.
- We value you.

RCPS Theory of Action

In RCPS, our theory of action is to graduate our students with a diploma and resume of skills and experiences that are based on effective daily instruction and relationship building. It is steeped in our values of equity, collective teacher efficacy, community engagement and involvement, and organizational trust. These practices will be evident in a literacy-rich learning environment for all students.

RCPS Literacy Vision Statement

Roanoke City Public School's vision for literacy is for all learners to become successful readers by:

- employing literacy instruction that is grounded in the science of reading
- embedding authentic reading, writing, and discussion opportunities every day across all content areas
- identifying, targeting, and addressing individual student reading needs
- investing in high impact and continuous professional learning for administrators and teachers
- fostering a partnership for literacy with parents, guardians, and community stakeholders
- ensuring high quality instruction in every classroom

RCPS is committed to closing literacy achievement gaps and meeting the literacy needs of all students through a focused, intentional and systematic approach.

Cover art adapted from Pixabay vector illustration

Table of Contents

Initial Literacy Plan Development Committee (2024-25) 1
Literacy Plan Development Process 1
Introduction 2
Definition of Literacy 2
Authentic Literacy 3
The Virginia Literacy Act 4
RCPS Literacy Vision Statement 5
Science-Based Reading Research 6
Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction 6
High Quality Instructional Materials 7
Evidence-Based Reading Research Training 9
Monitoring Student Achievement and Progress 10
Assessing Division Progress 11
Engaging Parents, Caregivers, and Community 12
Division Literacy Plan Certification 13
Resources 14
Appendix A: Grade K-5 Quality Additional Materials 15
Appendix B: Grade 6-8 Quality Additional Materials 16
Appendix C: Role of RCPS K-12 Libraries in Literacy Achievement 17

Initial Literacy Plan Development Committee (2024-25)

Dr. Verletta White | Superintendent
Mr. Archie Freeman | Chief Academic Officer
Mr. Greg Johnston | Executive Director of Academics
Dr. Ben Lewis | Executive Director of Special Education
Mrs. Rachel Floyd | Supervisor of Reading Improvement
Dr. Lisa Renard-Spicer | Supervisor of Secondary English Language Arts
Mrs. Elizabeth Schenkel | Supervisor of EL and World Languages

Literacy Plan Development Process

January 2024-June 2024
Development of
Comprehensive Literacy Plan

- assemble Literacy Plan Development Committee
- examine Virginia Literacy Act (VLA) implications for RCPS
- study and discuss VLA Implementation Playbook
- track changes/updates from VDOE and VLP as issued
- examine RCPS literacy data
- examine RCPS resources and materials
- draft literacy vision statement & gather feedback
- finalize literacy vision statement & determine communication plan
- determine strengths/challenges/opportunities with regard to implementation of VLA requirements
- determine upcoming professional development and training needs related to VLA implementation
- communicate VLA requirements to building administration
- determine means of monitoring student achievement
- determine means of monitoring division progress
- determine means of communicating with and supporting parents, caregivers, and families
- determine means of communicating and partnering with community and varied stakeholders

Introduction

At the heart of this literacy plan is the RCPS belief that all students can achieve and that literacy is the foundation for achievement across all grade levels and content areas.

This plan provides a framework for literacy development that will serve as a core for curriculum, instruction, and assessment in Roanoke City Public Schools. The purpose of this literacy plan is to support the entire RCPS community in developing students as proficient readers, writers, independent thinkers, and effective communicators who will graduate fully ready for future academic endeavors and careers. This plan is designed to clarify expectations and ensure implementation consistency for all stakeholders regarding literacy education and the role of literacy at the center of academics and instruction across our division.

This is a dynamic document that will be revisited and updated both at regularly planned intervals and as need arises to meet the demands and challenges that will be encountered by students, teachers, leadership teams, parents, and community members and to be responsive to new research, evolving technology, emerging high quality resources as they become available, and best practices in literacy education.

This document aligns with the goals and strategies included in *The Roadmap to Student Success*—our division's strategic plan—as well as the RCPS Instructional Framework and meets or exceeds requirements of the Virginia Literacy Act (VLA).

Definition of Literacy

Within the Virginia public school system, literacy is defined as "the ability to read and write. However, an expanded definition of literacy also carries additional significance. Some examples depicting the broader range of literacy include: academic literacy, computer literacy, cultural literacy, economic literacy, functional literacy, media literacy and workplace literacy" (SOURCE | VDOE).

RCPS academics and instruction is centered on **authentic literacy**, which emphasizes engagement with real-world texts and materials to develop strong reading, writing, discussion, and comprehension skills. See Authentic Literacy on the next page for further details.

RCPS' goal for literacy instruction mirrors that of the state of Virginia: "To ensure that all children have the necessary skills to become successful readers, writers, speakers, and listeners with the critical thinking skills that are required to be successful as they progress and transition through the stages of their lives" (SOURCE | VDOE).

Authentic Literacy

Authentic literacy is a concept that emphasizes engaging with real-world texts and materials in any content area to develop strong reading and comprehension skills.

Definition and Importance

Authentic texts are those that exist in the real world, beyond the classroom or instructional context. These texts include books, articles, newspapers, websites, advertisements, and more.

Authentic literacy recognizes that reading extends beyond textbooks and contrived passages in any language. It involves interacting with materials that have genuine relevance and meaning.

Exposure to authentic texts helps readers develop critical thinking, cultural awareness, and a deeper understanding of various topics.

Characteristics

Real-world context: Authentic texts are encountered in everyday life, reflecting the situations readers encounter outside of school.

Richness and complexity: These texts often present complex ideas, diverse perspectives, and nuanced language.

Varied genres: Authentic texts span different genres, including fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and more.

Cultural diversity: They expose readers to diverse cultures, experiences, and voices.

Purposeful communication: Authentic texts serve a purpose beyond mere practice—they inform, entertain, persuade, or educate.

Benefits of Using Authentic Texts

Motivation: Authentic texts engage readers because they relate to real-life interests and experiences.

Vocabulary development: Exposure to varied vocabulary enhances language skills.

Critical thinking: Analyzing authentic texts encourages deeper thinking and interpretation.

Cultural competence: Readers gain insights into different cultures and perspectives.

Preparation for real-world reading: Authentic literacy prepares students for lifelong reading beyond the classroom.

Examples

Novels and literature: Classic novels, contemporary fiction, and poetry.

News articles: Current events, opinion pieces, and investigative journalism.

Websites and blogs: Online content covering diverse topics.

Advertisements: Analyzing ads helps develop media literacy.

Personal narratives: Memoirs, autobiographies, and personal essays.

Authentic Assessment

Beyond traditional tests, authentic assessment evaluates students' abilities to apply literacy skills in real-world scenarios.

Examples include writing essays, creating multimedia presentations, or participating in book discussions.

In summary, authentic literacy encourages readers to explore beyond textbooks, fostering a love for reading and a deeper understanding of the world.

The Virginia Literacy Act

The excerpt below from the VDOE website outlines the parameters and expectations of the Viriginia Literacy Act (VLA) for school year 2024-2025.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

With the passage of the Virginia Literacy Act (VLA) in the 2022 General Assembly, Virginia is taking the lead nationwide to improve early literacy outcomes for Virginia's young learners. Through the VLA, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) will support school divisions through a multi-year effort with tools, resources, technical assistance and funding.

Beginning in the 2024-2025 school year:

- Every student in kindergarten to grade five will receive core literacy instruction based on scientifically based reading research and evidence-based literacy instruction, as defined in the VLA. Students in kindergarten through grade eight will also receive evidence-based supplemental instruction and intervention, as outlined in an individualized student reading plan, if they do not meet literacy benchmarks.
- Every family will have access to online resources to support literacy development at home and will be able to participate in the development of their child's student reading plan if their child does not meet literacy benchmarks.
- Every teacher will use evidence-based literacy curriculum, assess student learning using approved literacy screeners, use student-level data to inform instruction and intervention, and participate in pre-service preparation or training on evidence-based literacy instruction.
- Every reading specialist, in consultation with classroom teachers, will coordinate and oversee intervention for students not meeting literacy benchmarks, and will develop and monitor student progress on student reading plans, working closely with families and teachers.
- Every division will develop a literacy plan, ensure the use of evidence-based literacy curriculum, staff enough reading specialists to support intervention needs, and provide professional development to support teachers, reading specialists, and principals.

SOURCE | VDOE

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

Note that VDOE anticipates the VLA will be a "multi-year effort" and that the VLA for 2024-2025 is primarily focused on early literacy efforts (K-5). This RCPS Comprehensive Literacy Plan meets the expectation of the VLA for 2024-2025 and in many ways exceeds them. While the VLA currently focuses on grades K-5, RCPS is proactively working to implement best practices in research-based literacy education in middle school and high school as well. As the VDOE amends and abridges the VLA to include more or different directives and resources, this document will be revised to reflect those emerging additions and requirements. For example, it is anticipated that approval of a reading screener for grades 4-8 will be forthcoming from the state in the next months.

RCPS Literacy Vision Statement

This section corresponds to SECTION ONE of the VLA Division Literacy Plan Template.

Roanoke City Public School's vision for literacy is for all learners to become successful readers by:

- employing literacy instruction that is grounded in the science of reading
- embedding authentic reading, writing, and discussion opportunities every day across all content areas
- identifying, targeting, and addressing individual student reading needs
- investing in high impact and continuous professional learning for administrators and teachers
- fostering a partnership for literacy with parents, guardians, and community stakeholders
- ensuring high quality instruction in every classroom

RCPS is committed to closing literacy achievement gaps and meeting the literacy needs of all students through a focused, intentional, and systematic approach.

Communication of Vision to Stakeholders

Stakeholder Group	Timeline	Plan for Communication
All Staff	Weekly	RCPS Weekly Administrator Memo to share news, updates, resources, and support opportunities.
Community Members	Periodically	Presentations to the school board to include division data and update on the implementation and success of requirements of the Virginia Literacy Act.
Families and Caregivers	Quarterly	Report cards to share student data and progress in literacy. Website with resources for supporting literacy at home.

Science-Based Reading Research

Science-based reading research is comprised of decades of scientific research about how students become proficient readers. The research can be loosely summarized by a formula known as the Simple View of Reading:

Figure 1 The Simple View of Reading

The Simple View of Reading means that to become skilled readers:

- Students must be able to decode (D) the words on the page by understanding the sounds that letters make and blending those sounds together to make words
- Students must also have the necessary language comprehension (LC) skills, such as vocabulary, background knowledge, and understanding of language structures to comprehend what they decode.
- Once students can do both these things—decode and comprehend—with sufficient fluency, they will become proficient readers with ample reading comprehension ability (RC).

Another way of capturing this idea is through Scarborough's Rope (see figure 2). This provides a more detailed visual representation of the decoding (D) and language comprehension (LC) skills that must be explicitly taught for students to become skilled readers.

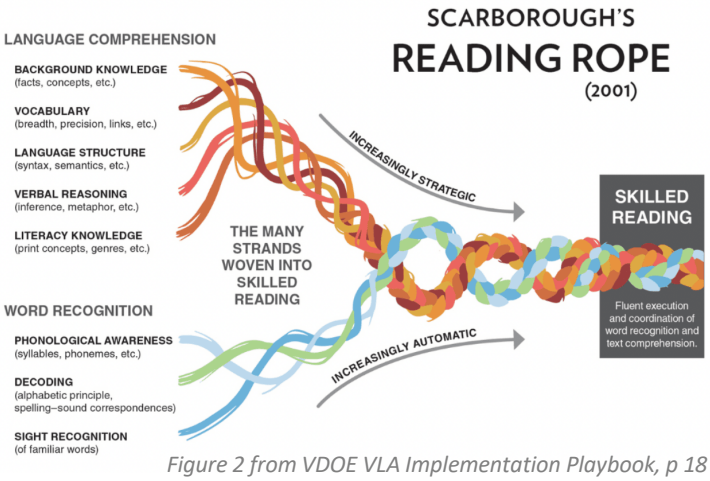

Figure 2 from VDOE VLA Implementation Playbook, p 18

Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction

Evidence-based literacy instruction (EBLI) refers to classroom practices based on clear and convincing data from well-designed research. EBLI, in short, is the idea that classroom practices related to literacy should be grounded in the best available current scientific evidence about how children learn to read, write, and think critically rather than relying on past tradition, limited anecdotal evidence, social media trends and online education influencers, individual personal judgement, or other influences lacking research-based support. EBLI should follow a systematic scope and sequence, be explicit, and provide many opportunities for students to practice with newly acquired skills. Simultaneously, instruction should allow all students to access complex texts that build knowledge about the world and important topics through a coherent sequence.

It is important to acknowledge that the evidence base for literacy instruction evolves and changes over time. This means that educators need both initial training and ongoing professional development with access to credible sources on current science in order to base their teaching decisions on evidence rather than opinion and assumptions. See Evidence-Based Reading Research Training for the RCPS plan for professional development in the science of reading and EBLI.

High Quality Instructional Materials

This section corresponds to SECTION TWO of the VLA Division Literacy Plan Template.

As noted in the VDOE's *VLA Implementation Playbook*, high quality instructional materials (HQIM) "can be thought of as curriculum, or all of the instructional content that is used to teach students" (p. 2). Effective HQIM are designed around science-based reading research and evidenced-based literacy instruction.

K-5 Core HQIM "provide evidence-based, comprehensive literacy instruction aligned to science-based reading research. Phonemic and phonological awareness, phonics, literacy, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing are all required components of a core program. Core programs are implemented in Tier 1 classrooms" (VDOE, *Virginia Literacy Update*, April 2025). While the VLA does not require adoption or implementation of a state-approved core HQIM in grade levels beyond grade 5, the textbook program adopted by RCPS for grades 6-8 (HMH *Into Literature*) is grounded in evidence-based literacy instruction and integrated with *Writable*, which is also grounded in research.

Supplemental programs "provide additional evidence-based literacy instruction and practice in a specific literacy skill (i.e., phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, writing) aligned to science-based reading research. The supplemental program is used to enhance a core instructional program [K-5] and grade-level instruction [6-8] during whole class or small group instruction" (VDOE, *Virginia Literacy Update*, April 2025).

Intervention programs "provide systematic, explicit evidence-based instruction aligned to science-based reading research to students who persistently struggle to master literacy skills including phonemic awareness [K-5], phonics, word knowledge [6-8], fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension" (VDOE, *Virginia Literacy Update*, April 2025).

RCPS prekindergarten is in alignment with providing HQIM resources and instructional personnel training that are grounded in the science of reading research. These materials also seamlessly bridge into K-5 instruction and HQIM.

The expectation in RCPS is that daily lessons in grades K-12 be grounded in the division's selected HQIM, supplemental materials, and intervention programs and that leaders should be able to walk through classrooms and see every teacher using those materials. Materials from other sources, such as those available from *Teachers Pay Teachers* online, should not be used in place of division HQIM.

This does not imply "scripted" teaching or loss of teacher autonomy, as noted in the VDOE's Virginia Literacy Act Implementation Playbook (p 25): "Many teachers fear a loss of autonomy when new curriculum is introduced. These fears are understandable, for HQIM does require teachers use their materials to ground all of their daily instructional experiences." However, "teachers will have consistent access to high-quality grade-level content, and they will no longer spend significant time searching for or creating materials for daily lessons. Instead, teachers can use their new materials to focus on the needs of their students and creating instructional experiences grounded in materials and supports tailored to their needs."

High Quality Instructional Materials in RCPS

	General Education	Special Populations
Core pre-K Program	FrogStreet	All special populations will receive the same core program.
Supplemental pre-K	Really Great Reading	
Core K-5 HQIM	Imagine Learning – EL Education	All special populations will receive the same core program.
Supplemental K-5	Really Great Reading Grades K-3 95% Phonics Core Grades 4-5	All special populations will receive the same supplemental programs.
Intervention K-5	Lexia Core 5	Lexia Core 5 Lexia ELD (EL)
Core 6-8 Textbook	HMH Into Literature with Writable	All special populations will receive the same core program.
Supplemental 6-8	Scholastic Scope IXL	All special populations will receive the same supplemental programs.
Intervention 6-8	Lexia PowerUp	Lexia ELD (EL) Lexia PowerUp

Evidence-Based Reading Research Training

This section corresponds to SECTION THREE of the VLA Division Literacy Plan Template.

RCPS is committed to prioritizing and maintaining ongoing professional development in the science of reading and implementation of HQIM. During SY 2024-25, all instructional staff took part in science of reading training through either Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) or online modules provided by Virginia Literacy Partners (VLP). Building principals participated in two-day in-person training provided by VLP. The chart below outlines current plans for SY2025-2026 and 2026-2027 training.

Training	Target Audience
Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS)	All elementary teachers, K-12 EL teachers, and K-12 special education teachers
VLP Reading Specialist Training Modules	K-8 Reading Specialists
VLP Elementary and Middle School Administrators Professional Development	Elementary and Middle School Principals and Assistant Principal designees
VLP Science of Reading Training Modules	Grade 6-8 teachers of English, science, social studies, math

Additional Professional Development

Grade K-5

All existing, returning teachers to RCPS have received training in the implementation of core programs. RCPS purchases the *Really Great Reading* virtual implementation training course for all teachers new to the program. RCPS also provides in-person training on implementation and lesson planning with Imagine Learning – EL Education. RCPS is committed to ongoing training and support in core program implementation.

Grade 6-8

All existing, returning English teachers received comprehensive training with HMH *Into Literature* and *Writable* in 2021-2022 when the division adopted it as the secondary English core textbook program. Administrators were also trained at that time. At the start of each school year, new-hire teachers are trained with core textbook program. Brush-up and new-feature training is provided to returning teachers annually. At any time, teachers may take advantage of HMH and Writable online learning modules and webinars. Grade 6-8 English teachers receive additional training annually with IXL implementation and best practices.

Monitoring Student Achievement and Progress

This section corresponds to SECTION FOUR of the VLA Division Literacy Plan Template.

Assessment	Frequency	Person Responsible
Virginia Language and Literacy Screener (VALLSS) | Grades Pre-K to 3	3 times/year	Classroom teachers & reading specialist
Virginia Literacy Partnerships (VLP) K-3 progress monitoring	Every 2-4 weeks	Classroom teachers & reading specialist
Virginia Language and Literacy Screener (VALLSS) | Grades 4-8	2 times/year	Classroom teachers & reading specialist
Lexia Core 5 (K-5) & Lexia Power Up (6-8) Growth Monitoring	ongoing	Classroom teachers & reading specialist
NWEA MAP Growth Assessment | reading | Grades 2-8	3 times/year	Classroom Teachers
RCPS Writing Portfolio Samples | K- 5 progress monitoring	3 times/year	Classroom Teachers
RCPS Writing Portfolio Samples | 6- 8 progress monitoring	3 times/year	Classroom Teachers
VDOE Standards of Learning Assessments | Grades 3-12	annual	Classroom Teachers
VAAP for qualified students	annual	SPED Teachers
WIDA for EL students	annual	EL Teachers

RCPS Reading Specialists

Reading specialists are employed in each RCPS elementary and middle school. As noted in the Code of Virginia (§ 22.1-253.13:1), "A reading specialist, in collaboration with the teacher of any student who receives reading intervention services…shall develop, oversee implementation of, and monitor student progress on a student reading plan." In addition, reading specialists serve as literacy coaches and co-teachers for teachers in the classroom, provide literacy-related professional development within the buildings, and work directly with students on reading improvement efforts. Reading specialist job description and contact information is at THIS LINK on the RCPS website, as required by the VLA.

Student Reading Plans

Beginning in 2024-2025, per the VLA, a building-based reading intervention team will create a student reading plan for each student in grades K-8 who has not made sufficient reading progress as determined by VALLSS. As noted in the Code of Virginia (§ 22.1-253.13:1), each reading plan must follow a VDOE template and must include the student's specific reading skill deficiencies; goals and benchmarks; a description of the measures to evaluate and monitor student reading progress; evidence-based literacy instruction, strategies, resources, and materials to be provided to parents in support of reading progress; and any additional services the team may deem beneficial and appropriate.

Assessing Division Progress

This section corresponds to SECTION FIVE of the VLA Division Literacy Plan Template.

In addition to monitoring student achievement progress, RCPS is committed to supporting teachers in implementing the science of reading and HQIM through a recursive system of lesson planning, instruction delivery, reflection, feedback, coaching, and adjustment. The 'Literacy Planning Cycle' model below articulates this ongoing, cyclical process.

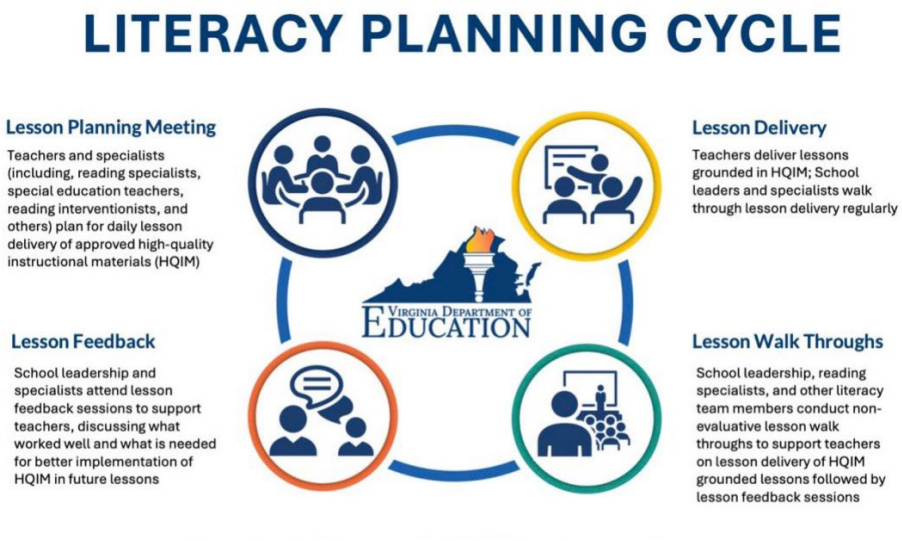

Figure 3 from VDOE VLA Implementation Playbook, p 37

Progress Monitoring Tool	How Often	Person(s) Responsible
Lesson Planning Meetings	weekly	classroom teachers building-level instructional teams
Lesson Delivery	daily	classroom teachers supported by instructional coaches & reading specialists
Literacy Walkthroughs	weekly	building administrators instructional coaches reading specialists division content area supervisors
Feedback and Coaching	weekly	classroom teachers building administrators instructional coaches reading specialists division content area supervisors
Data Meetings	monthly	building instructional leadership teams central office school improvement personnel

Engaging Parents, Caregivers, and Community

This section corresponds to SECTION SIX of the VLA Division Literacy Plan Template.

RCPS believes in being positive and proactive in educating parents, caregivers, and the community about the important role of literacy to student achievement in all grade levels and subject areas. RCPS will continue to promote early literacy awareness and parent/caregiver support through the work of the Booker T. Washington Empowerment Center. Beginning in 2024-2025, each elementary and middle school in the division will host an annual literacy event. The RCPS Literacy Website has been established and will be continually updated to serve as a source of information for caregiver resources, highlighting core literacy instruction, understanding science of reading research, and sharing local literacy events. Literacy points of contact within the division and their contact information are available at THIS LINK.

Parents and caregivers will be informed of diagnostic screener results. If the results from the screener indicate that a student has been identified as needing a student reading plan, the parents and caregivers will have the opportunity to participate in a meeting as a vital member of the student's reading intervention team. Upon notification of the meeting, if the parent or caregiver does not attend, the reading intervention team will make those determinations to build the plan and provide a copy and explanation of the plan's contents to the parents and caregivers.

Home Support for Literacy

- 52 Weeks of Reading
- Community Events
- English Learner Resources
- Ideas to Strengthen Literacy Skills at Home
- Questions to Ask When Reading at Home
- Read-Aloud Tips
- Reading Resources
- What Can I Do at Home?

Community Partnerships

RCPS will continue to build on existing partnerships with Star City Reads and Roanoke City Public Libraries in support of literacy development and seek to develop new and beneficial partnerships as opportunities arise.

Division Literacy Plan Certification

We certify that the information reported in the division literacy plan is accurate. This information includes:

- Section One: Planning for Comprehensive Communication
- Section Two: Selecting High-Quality Instructional Materials
- Section Three: Ensuring Virginia Literacy Act Evidence-Based Reading Research Training
- Section Four: Monitoring Student Assessment and Progress
- Section Five: Assessing Division Level Progress
- Section Six: Engaging Parents, Caregivers, and Community

Division Superintendent/ Authorized Designee Signature	Print Name	Date
Verletta White	Verletta White	11/11/25

Resources

Code of Virginia

KAPPAN: Why School Librarians Matter

RCPS English Language Arts web page

RCPS Literacy web page

RCPS Roadmap to Student Success: Strategic Plan

VDOE Literacy web page

VDOE Division Literacy Plan Template and Instructions

VDOE Virginia Literacy Act

- VLA Updates

VDOE Virginia Literacy Act Implementation Playbook

Appendix A: Grade K-5 Quality Additional Materials

In addition to the K-5 Core Program instructional materials, RCPS has procured and vetted additional materials that teachers can include when planning literacy instruction and ensuring cross curricular connections. **Use of these materials must *support* and never *replace* use of our core HQIM and purchased supplemental/intervention materials.**

Geodes

Geodes lets students practice decoding skills through authentic texts that bolster background knowledge and vocabulary in science, history and the arts. These readable books help students practice foundational skills and build knowledge.

Power Readers and SuperCharged Decodable Readers

A series of decodable and chapter books that allow students to work on the systematic building of phonological awareness, decoding, irregular word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, morphology and comprehension.

CommonLit

CommonLit offers an extensive and robust cost-free library of resources that complement our core HQIM. CommonLit resources can be searched by grade level, text complexity level, topic, standard, etc. The resource includes suggested text pairings, related media for a text, a teacher guide, and a parent guide. Features available include translation of text into a plethora of first languages as well as a read-aloud option.

ReadWorks

ReadWorks is a no-cost resource that offers teachers a library of curated fiction and nonfiction passages along with interactive vocabular supports, text dependent question sets, and teacher guidance. Resources can be filtered by topic and is especially useful for making cross curricular connections.

Additional Resources at PLATO Gifted Center

Students at the Gifted Resource Center also use literature units for advanced learners from College of William & Mary, *Jacob's Ladder*, *Junior Great Books*, and *Write Now Right Now*.

Appendix B: Grade 6-8 Quality Additional Materials

Approved HQIM for secondary English classes is supplemented by anthologies, novels, memoirs and other stand-alone trade books. For whole-class instruction, teachers are supplied with a division supplemental book list by grade level that is reviewed and revised annually and aligns with the text complexity guidance provided in Appendix A of the 2024 VDOE English Standards of Learning.

Currently, the following additional materials are included as resources in curriculum guides for grades 6-8. **Use of these materials must *support* and never *replace* use of our core textbook program and purchased supplemental/intervention materials.**

CommonLit

CommonLit offers an extensive and robust cost-free library of authentic literacy resources that are evidence-based and complement our core textbook program. CommonLit resources can be searched by grade level, text complexity level, topic, standard, etc. The resource includes suggested text pairings, related media for a text, a teacher guide, and a parent guide. Features available include translation of text into a plethora of first languages as well as a read-aloud option.

NoRedInk

Secondary English teachers in RCPS should primarily be using *Writable* for writing instruction and support (integrated with our adopted curriculum, HMH *Into Literature*) and IXL for practicing discrete writing skills; however, NoRedInk offers additional writing practice resources backed by promising evidence. RCPS teachers may use the free version of NoRedInk to supplement their use of *Writable* and IXL.

Read/Write/Think

Read/Write/Think is a cost-free project of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), providing pedagogical strategies and vetted lessons that align with standards. From the website: "Lesson plans on ReadWriteThink are based on the IRA/NCTE Standards for the English Language Arts and also are aligned to individual state standards and, when applicable, to the Common Core State Standards." Teachers are able to view VA ELA standards alignment for lessons and learning activities.

ReadWorks

ReadWorks is a no-cost resource based in the science of reading. It offers secondary English teachers a library of authentic literacy resources that can be filtered by book study or topic and is especially useful for differentiation. ReadWorks is also helpful for access to reading passages across the subject areas, including text-associated vocabulary study. It offers suggested paired passages for compare/contrast analysis – an emphasis of the VDOE ELA standards.

WETA AdLit (All About Adolescent Literacy)

AdLit is an education service of WETA, made available to teachers at no-cost by a grant from the National Education Association. It features a library of research-based best practices in teaching literacy to adolescent learners. "

WeWillWrite

WeWillWrite is a dynamic online platform that blends a variety of proven methods – such as short bursts writing, think-pair-share, frequent teacher feedback, peer review, inductive learning, and gamification.

Appendix C: Role of RCPS K-12 Libraries in Literacy Achievement

School libraries have an integral role to play in students' literacy achievement. As noted in *Kappan*, "Data from more than 34 statewide studies suggest that students tend to earn better standardized test scores in schools that have strong library programs" ("Why School Librarians Matter," 2018). The authors of that article go on to elaborate that "benefits associated with good library programs are strongest for the most vulnerable and at-risk learners, including students of color, low-income students, and students with disabilities."

Students tend to show literacy gains in schools where librarians do most or all of the following:

- curate the library collection with the school's literacy vision and goals in mind
- present and showcase the library's collection in interesting and engaging ways
- gain and use an overview understanding of what is taught in the school
- provide authentic literacy resources across the subject areas
- assist teachers and students in selecting books and other resources
- plan collaboratively with classroom teachers
- instruct students, working with classroom teachers and also independently
- provide in-house professional development to teachers
- serve on school instruction-related committees
- facilitate the use of technology by students and teachers
- create and implement reading incentive programs
- host literacy events and/or work with a committee at the school to do so
- create an environment that encourages and supports independent reading

Teacher/Librarian Collaboration

An important key to the library's positive role in boosting literacy for students is collaboration between teachers and the librarian. As noted by Hutchinson (2023), "it's possible to provide online and physical resources for specific lessons. Planning together will also provide the opportunity to create lessons that include the skills and appropriate keywords to engage students in academic reading with purpose." Classroom teachers need to make it a point to initiate collaboration with school librarians, and vice versa.