



GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS IDENTIFIED WITH A READING DEFICIENCY **AND/OR FOR** STUDENTS NOT PROMOTED

Transition Class and Intensive Acceleration Class



MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Ensuring a bright future for every child

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND READING
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Introduction

To attain grade-level reading proficiency, students need systematic foundational skills instruction as well as a robust vocabulary and ample exposure to academic content. Typically, the learning needs of such students are addressed through systematic and differentiated instruction within the core reading block and providing intensive interventions to ensure these students receive the targeted instruction needed to accelerate their reading.

[The New Teacher Project](#) (Tntp) advises that “providing students with the challenging, engaging school experiences that can accelerate them back to grade level is possible even during an unprecedented school year—and even imperfect attempts to do it will create far better experiences for many students than they received before the crisis.”

Purpose

This document is intended to provide guidance to schools to support the implementation of a transition class for kindergarten through 3rd grade students and/or a Grade 3 intensive acceleration class. It includes a framework, guidelines, and recommendations to assist educators with supporting students' learning needs.

Prior to the beginning of the year, schools should begin preparing a strategic plan to provide grade-appropriate accelerated learning in response to student needs identified through diagnostic assessments.

While navigating through this document, consider the following questions to strengthen your planning process:

1. What are your goals for accelerating student learning for all students, and where do you stand against them?
2. How do you ensure that your students' experiences in school will lead to accelerated student learning for all?
(Tntp 2020)

“Acceleration Class” and “Transition Class”

DIFFERENTIATING BETWEEN ACCELERATION AND TRANSITION CLASSES

Acceleration Classes	Transition Classes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> √ For students who were retained in 3rd grade AND who have previously been retained in kindergarten or grades 1 through 3 √ Provides reading instruction and intervention for the majority of the student’s instructional day √ Incorporates opportunities to master grade-level RL and RI standards in other core academic areas √ Focused on increasing a student's reading level at least two grade-levels in one school year √ Provides access to grade-appropriate assignments focused on priority content, along with strong instruction that addresses any gaps in prior learning within the context of grade-appropriate assignments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> √ For kindergarten, first, second, or third grade students identified with a reading deficiency OR who have been retained due to a reading deficiency √ Assists 3rd grade students promoted to 4th grade with a Good Cause Exemption √ Designed to provide intensive instruction and intervention in reading to remediate the student’s specific reading deficiency √ Designed to help students master content standards within the student’s current grade √ Designed for students to attend the entire school year

Implementing a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) in a Transition or Accelerated Classroom

When providing intervention for students in Transition or Accelerated classes the essential components of MTSS should be incorporated allowing a continuum of supports to improve student outcomes for both academics and behavior. Through a problem-solving process, design and redesign of appropriate services is necessary to promote equity for ALL students.

School districts should ensure that multiple data points are being utilized as academic decisions are being made. Utilize a MTSS committee that includes special education, general education, gifted education, and English learner teachers, as well as other knowledgeable school staff, should be involved in academic and behavioral decision-making for students.

When implementing evidence-based instruction and intervention, fidelity checks should be in place to ensure that the intervention is matched to the identified deficit area and the progress monitoring is matched to the implemented intervention. Regular integrity checks and ongoing professional development should continue to occur as well, ensuring maximum progress for ALL students.

Additional information can be found in the [MTSS Guidance Document](#).

Transition Classes for Kindergarten through Third Grade

In accordance with the **Literacy-Based Promotion Act [§ 37-177-1(4)]**, a kindergarten or first, second, or third grade student identified with a deficiency in reading **must** be provided intensive interventions in reading to improve the student's specific reading deficiency, as identified by a valid and reliable diagnostic assessment. The intensive intervention must include effective instructional strategies and appropriate teaching methodologies necessary to assist the student in becoming a successful reader, able to read at or above grade-level and ready

for promotion to the next grade. A kindergarten, first, second, or third grade student with an identified reading deficiency, or who is not promoted, may be placed in a transition class.

Identifying Students for a Transition Class

A transition class is for students identified, either through an approved K-3 screener or through locally determined high-quality assessments that are technically rigorous measures of state-adopted reading standards, as having a reading deficiency or who have been retained. While **§ 37-177-1(4)** addresses kindergarten through 3rd grade students with a reading deficiency, transition classes may also be used for students retained in 3rd grade.

Guidelines for Implementing a Transition Class

- Students remain coded in MSIS at their current grade placement for the entire school year.
- Each transition class is a single-grade classroom, not a cross-section of multiple grade-levels.
- Local board policies / procedures establish transition class student selection criteria.
- Documentation of instructional interventions for areas of reading deficiency must be maintained.
- A reduced student-to-teacher ratio is recommended.
- It is strongly recommended that the Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Scaffolding Document is utilized for vertical alignment and support (<https://mdek12.org/ese/ccr>).
- Students in a transition class will take assessments based upon their current grade-level (i.e., students in a kindergarten transition class would take the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment in the fall and spring; students in a 3rd grade transition class would take the spring administration of required state assessments).

TRANSITION CLASSES MUST INCLUDE...	a minimum of 90 minutes of evidence-based reading instruction that includes: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.
	instruction provided by a highly-qualified teacher.
	intensive interventions and weekly progress monitoring.
	small-groups and data-driven classroom instruction focused on grade-level standards.
	written notification to parents about reading deficiencies, reasons for retention (if applicable), and proposed supplemental instructional services and supports.
	ongoing communication with parents and guardians, including a parent meeting and a parent contract that includes strategies to help students attain reading proficiency.

Transition Classes for Kindergarten through Third Grade

Tier 1 Grade-level Instruction (+) Intervention (+) Scaffolded Acceleration

	Kindergarten	1 st Grade	2 nd Grade	3 rd Grade
TRANSITION CLASS	Grade-level, Tier 1 instruction	Grade-level, Tier 1 instruction	Grade-level, Tier 1 instruction	Grade-level, Tier 1 instruction
	Intervention instruction	Intervention instruction	Intervention instruction	Intervention instruction
	1 st Grade accelerated instruction	2 nd Grade accelerated instruction	3 rd Grade accelerated instruction	4 th Grade accelerated instruction

Transition Framework Options

- Co-teaching within the general education classroom (push-in), will be provided by additional trained personnel during small groups for acceleration and/or intervention. (This additional small-group instruction occurs outside of the 90-minute reading block.)
- Enrichment and Acceleration Block (occurring outside of the 90-minute, Tier 1 instructional block) provided by a highly-qualified teacher.
**This option could guide schools with limited personnel.*

All students in a transition class MUST receive a minimum of 90 minutes of evidence-based reading instruction that includes phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Intensive Acceleration Class for Third Grade

In accordance with the **Literacy-Based Promotion Act** (§ 37-177-15), each district may provide, where applicable, an intensive acceleration class for any student retained in grade 3 who was previously retained in kindergarten or grades 1 through 3. The focus of the intensive acceleration class should be to increase a student's reading level at least two (2) grade-levels in one (1) school year. The intensive acceleration class should provide reading instruction and intervention for the majority of student contact each day and incorporate opportunities to master the grade 4 state standards in other core academic areas.

Identifying Students for an Intensive Acceleration Class

An intensive acceleration class is for students who were retained in 3rd grade **AND** who have been previously retained in Kindergarten or grades 1 through 3 ([Good Cause Exemption E](#)). In addition, considerations should be made for students promoted to 4th grade during the 2020-2021 school year that did not score a Level 3 and have

been identified through a screener as performing below grade-level ([Assessment Waiver](#): Miss. Admin. Code 7-3: 41.1, State Board Policy Chapter 41, Rule 41.1 Process Standard 20.2).

Guidelines for Implementing an Intensive Acceleration Class

- Students are coded as 3rd graders in MSIS.
- Local board policies / procedures establish intensive acceleration class instructional criteria.

<p>INTENSIVE ACCELERATION CLASSES MUST INCLUDE...</p>	<p>reading instruction and intervention for the majority of the school day, with an opportunity to master 4th grade content in other core academic areas (§ 37-177-15).</p>
	<p>an evidence-based reading program (including the 5 components) with proven results in accelerating student reading achievement within the same school year.</p>
	<p>instruction provided by a highly-qualified teacher.</p>
	<p>intensive Interventions and weekly progress monitoring.</p>
	<p>small-groups and data-driven classroom instruction focused on grade-level standards.</p>
	<p>written notification to parents about reading deficiencies, reasons for retention (if applicable), and proposed supplemental instructional services and supports.</p>
	<p>ongoing communication with parents and guardians, including a parent meeting and a parent contract that includes strategies to help students attain reading proficiency https://mdek12.org/sites/default/files/Offices/MDE/OAE/OEER/Literacy/LBPA/Parent%20Resources/8.12.19 parent read-at-home plan final edits complete 1.pdf).</p>

Recommendations for Implementing an Intensive Acceleration Class

- A reduced student-to-teacher ratio is recommended when implementing an intensive acceleration class.
- It is strongly recommended that the Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Scaffolding Document is utilized for vertical alignment and support (<https://mdek12.org/ese/ccr>).
- Students in an intensive acceleration class will take assessments based upon their current grade-level (i.e., 3rd grade students would take the spring administration of required state assessments).
- Districts should follow MTSS processes when providing interventions.
- It is strongly recommended that the Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Scaffolding Document is utilized for vertical alignment and support (<https://mdek12.org/ese/ccr>).

Tips for Initial Implementation of Accelerated Learning

- Identify the most critical prerequisite skills and knowledge for each subject area and current grade-level.
- Administer diagnostic assessments to determine instructional content gaps from the previous school year and identify non-mastered prerequisite skills.
- Consider modifications to the scope and sequence/pacing guidance for each subject area and grade-level to support accelerated learning.
 - Do **not** plan to address unfinished learning through “nine weeks of remediation” or another extended period of remedial content for students.
 - Predict what unfinished learning will look like when students come back to school, then update your teacher resources and training (vertically aligned curriculum maps).
 - Encourage your teachers to use curricular materials provided by the school or district.
 - Determine if critical prerequisite skills should be addressed through whole group acceleration or small-group intervention.

- Provide professional development and ongoing support to teachers and leaders in the areas of diagnostic assessments, scope and sequence modifications, and instructional pacing to support cohesion between grade-level content and accelerated learning.
- Embed opportunities for educators to progress monitor and adjust the plan of action.

Intensive Acceleration Classes for Third Grade

Tier 1 Grade-level Instruction (+) Intervention (+) Acceleration

INTENSIVE ACCELERATION CLASS	Tier 1 90-120 Minutes	Intervention	Acceleration 30-60 Minutes
	<p>Whole Group Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade-level MS-CCRS <p>Small-Group Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade-level MS-CCRS • Data-driven differentiation • Center activities focused around the 5 components of reading (phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension) <p>*Kindergarten Sample Schedule *1st - 5th Sample Schedule *Virtual Sample Schedule</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximate time-frame will be based on the selected Intervention program • Documented, individualized, evidence-based, and data-driven interventions • Weekly progress monitoring • In accordance with the MTSS framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely exposure to upcoming skills in conjunction with necessary prerequisites • Critical vocabulary instruction • Frequent formative assessments

Intensive Acceleration Framework Options

- Co-teaching within the general education classroom (push-in), will be provided by additional trained personnel during small groups for acceleration and/or intervention. (This additional small-group instruction occurs outside of the 90-minute reading block.)
- Enrichment and Acceleration Block (occurring outside of the 90-minute, Tier 1 instructional block) provided by a highly-qualified teacher.

**This option could guide schools with limited personnel.*

All students in an intensive acceleration class MUST receive a minimum of 90 minutes of evidence-based reading instruction that includes phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Steps for Implementing an Intensive Acceleration Class

Rollins, Suzy Pepper. *Learning in the Fast Lane: 8 Ways to Put ALL Students on the Road to Academic Success*. ASCD, 2014. <http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/114026/chapters/Acceleration@ Jump-Starting Students Who Are Behind.aspx>

Step	Generate Thinking, Purpose, Relevance, and Curiosity	
1	<p><i>(Note: Step 1 takes place one or two days before the core class begins the concept or standard.)</i></p> <p>Acceleration begins with a thought-provoking, hands-on activity that encompasses the big idea of the standard. Students typically work in small groups or pairs to explore the new concept by generating their own formulas, developing ideas, discovering patterns, discussing observations, or examining the content's real-world relevance. In all content areas, this step speaks to students' need to answer the question "What does this have to do with me?"</p>	<p><i>Why Step 1 Should Never Be Skipped...</i></p> <p>Students who struggle academically are more likely to tune out if they perceive that concepts are irrelevant to their own lives (or to them). Their motivation to work increases in direct correlation with their perception of the content's value and interest level. Success starters create value, relevance, and interest and foster both motivation and long-term retention of content.</p>

Step 2	<p>Clearly Articulate the Learning Goal and Expectations</p> <p>The placement of this step is quite purposeful. Step 1 showed students the real-world relevance of the new concept and triggered their curiosity. By step 2, their brains should be primed for the teacher's introduction of the learning goal—for example, "What we just explored is actually the first part of the standard we'll be learning," or "In 40 minutes, you will be able to compare and contrast the core, the mantle, and the crust."</p> <p>Explicit learning expectations are essential, but students often lack clarity about what they are studying. Learning goals are the basis of student learning, and this step is too important to rely on a wordy posted standard. Leahy, Lyon, Thompson, and William (2005) concur that simply posting a standard is rarely successful because standards tend not to be written in student-friendly language. Stiggins (2007) holds that standards should be deconstructed into classroom targets that unfold into opportunities for daily formative assessment. Some advocate for standards walls, which provide a visual avenue for articulating the patterns of standards. Standards walls help clarify for students the progression of learning—how separate goals crescendo into an understanding of the big picture of a concept. Providing these patterns for learning has an additional benefit: Willis (2006) explains that delivering new information to students in a way that builds connections to other learning enhances brain cell activity, leading to improved long-term memory and retrieval.</p>	<p><i>Why Step 2 Should Never Be Skipped...</i></p> <p>All students, but particularly those at risk of failure, benefit from explicitly stated, student-friendly learning goals. Vague references to academic expectations have little value. Without specific goals, students can lose sight of the purpose of learning.</p>
Step 3	<p>Scaffold and Practice Essential Prerequisite Skills</p> <p><i>(Note: Steps 3 and 4 can be switched in sequence or taught in tandem.)</i></p> <p>After step 2, acceleration pauses as students briefly move backward to remediate the deficits that would present a barrier to learning the new standard. To edit a potentially long list of gaps, complete the following statement:</p>	<p><i>Why Step 3 Should Never Be Skipped...</i></p> <p>Without this step, students may enthusiastically, but incorrectly, embark on their work. Scaffolding prerequisite</p>

	<p><i>Students could master the new standard if they just knew _____.</i></p> <p>Next, start filling in the high-priority gaps you identified. You can create scaffolding cheat sheets with examples of anything students need reinforcement in. If a separate teacher is providing acceleration, the regular teacher should communicate these essential prerequisite skills so that students can shore up these areas before the lesson.</p>	<p>skills in context allows students to realize success of new content.</p>
<p>Step 4</p>	<p>Introduce New Vocabulary and Review Prior Vocabulary</p> <p>Because vocabulary understanding is developed over the course of time and is a key component of prior knowledge, acceleration students in particular benefit from rich vocabulary experiences. A key to vocabulary retention is immersing students in hands-on, playful, multisensory vocabulary experiences. During acceleration classes, vocabulary development practices should be memorable, hands-on, and interactive.</p>	<p><i>Why Step 4 Should Never Be Skipped...</i> Providing targeted students with advanced knowledge of new vocabulary reaps major benefits in the core class. As the heterogeneous group begins the new unit, acceleration students realize success and gain confidence.</p>
<p>Step 5</p>	<p>Dip into the New Concept</p> <p>During Steps 1-4, students have already begun work on the new concept. They have established the concept's relevance and purpose and have a clear idea of the learning goals. They are shoring up their gaps in prerequisite skills in the context of new learning, and vocabulary development is under way. Now students are poised for going a bit deeper into the new content.</p>	<p><i>Why Step 5 Should Never Be Skipped...</i> Students' self-efficacy and enthusiasm soar as they are poised to go deeper and are, possibly for the first time in their lives, ahead of the class.</p>
<p>Step 6</p>	<p>Conduct Formative Assessments Frequently</p> <p>Because the goal of acceleration is to help students learn content in their core class the first time, it is essential to collect ongoing data of student progress. There should be a continual flow of formative</p>	<p><i>Why Step 6 Should Never Be Skipped...</i> Instructional adjustments in acceleration are immediate and</p>

assessment information between the core teachers and the "more" teachers, although the same teacher may serve both roles.

Acceleration lends itself to ongoing, transparent formative assessment that yields timely, detailed feedback from teachers and peers. Having students hold up their answers on individual whiteboards fits perfectly, as do strategies like sorts and problem solving on sticky notes. Or students can work on chart paper on the floor or at their desks. Essentially, anything that will help teachers continually "see" what students know provides valuable information on where students are and where they need to go.

ongoing based on student data. Students targeted for acceleration have an urgent need for real success right now. For that to occur, teachers must use primarily "soft" formative assessment to provide descriptive feedback.

Appendix A: A Comparison: Acceleration vs. Remediation

	Acceleration	Remediation
Self-efficacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-confidence and engagement increase • Academic progress is evident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students perceive they're in the "slow class;" self-confidence and engagement decrease • Backward movement leads to a sense of futility and lack of progress
Basic skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills are hand-picked just in time for new concepts • Students apply skills immediately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruction attempts to reteach every missing skill • Skills are taught in isolation and not applied to current learning
Prior knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key prior knowledge is provided ahead of time, enabling students to connect to new information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically does not introduce prior knowledge that connects to new learning
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treats relevance as critical component to student motivation and memory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance is not seen as a priority
Connection to core class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruction is connected to core class; ongoing collaboration is emphasized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruction is typically isolated from core class
Pacing and direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active, fast-paced, hands-on • Forward movement; goal is for students to learn on time with peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passive, with focus on worksheets or basic software programs • Backward movement; goal is for students to "catch up" to peers

Appendix B: Glossary of Terms

a

Academic Language Proficiency: The use of language in acquiring academic content in formal schooling contexts, including specialized or technical language and discourse related to each content area.

Accommodations: The practices and procedures in the areas of presentation, response, setting, and timing/scheduling that provide equitable access during instruction and assessments for students with disabilities/504/ELL. Accommodations are intended to reduce or even eliminate the effects of a student's disability; they do not reduce learning expectations. Accommodations provide access to buildings, curriculum, and assessments.

Active Learning: Any approach that focuses the responsibility of learning on the learner. Learners are engaged by matching instruction to the learner's interests, understanding, and developmental level which often includes hands-on and authentic activities. It is a process of learning new ideas, skills, and attitudes by learning from doing, performing, and taking action. Examples of active learning include discovery learning, problem-based learning, experiential learning, and inquiry-based instruction and may incorporate reciprocal teaching, high response rates, games, simulations, and role playing.

Aimline / Goal-line: The straight line connecting a student's baseline level of performance with his or her long-range goal; the slope of the aimline shows the expected rate of improvement if the student is going to meet the long-range goal.

Alignment: The degree to which assessments, curriculum, instruction, textbooks and other instructional materials, teacher preparation and professional development, and systems of accountability all reflect and reinforce the educational program's objectives and standards. One expects to see a clear linkage of the practices to the written documents from which they are drawn.

Alphabetic Principle: The understanding that the sequence of letters in written words represents the sequence of sounds (or phonemes) in spoken words.

Annual Growth: The expected amount of growth a student makes in one school year.

b

Benchmark: A detailed description of a specific level of student performance expected of students at particular ages, grades, or developmental levels. Benchmarks are often represented by samples of student work. A set of benchmarks can be used as "checkpoints" to monitor progress toward meeting performance goals within and across grade-levels.

Benchmark Assessment: The periodic assessment of all students compared to age- or grade-level standards that provides data to indicate each student's performance in relation to targeted critical skill areas.

c

Catch-Up Growth: Additional growth needed for low-performing students to meet grade-level expectations.

Co-Teaching: Two trained, cooperating teachers collaborate to meet the needs of students. They share responsibility for planning, instruction, and assessment. This allows for increased collaboration and reflection on teaching and learning.

- **Push-In:** Takes place inside the classroom.
- **Pull-out:** Takes place outside of the reading block in an alternative setting.

Comprehension: The process of constructing meaning from written text. It includes such skills as: activating prior knowledge, literal understanding of what is read, sequencing, summarizing, making inferences, predicting, and making connections between new and unknown information.

Core Curriculum: The planned instruction in a content area, which is central and usually mandatory for all students of a school district. This is Tier I.

Core Practices: The planned instructional delivery methods in a content area, which is central for all students of a school district. This is Tier I.

Cultural Diversity: Understanding that students come from a variety of ethnic, geographic, economic and religious backgrounds and how these diverse cultural and/or academic backgrounds impact the instructional process.

Culturally Responsive: The ability to acknowledge the unique needs of diverse students, take action to address those needs, and adapt approaches as student needs and demographics change over time.

Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM): A set of standardized and validated short duration tests that are used by special education and general education teachers for the purpose of evaluating the effects of instructional programs in the basic skills of reading, mathematics computation, spelling, and written expression.

Cut Score: Cutoff scores on common benchmark assessments that specify the score at or below which students would be considered for intervention. Specifically for the Literacy-Based Promotion Act, the purpose of establishing cut scores is to determine the score a child must achieve on an MDE- approved assessment or alternative standardized assessment for promotion to the fourth grade.

d

Data-Based Decision Making: The use of student performance data to guide the design, implementation, and adjustment of instruction.

Data Point: An isolated piece of data on a graph or chart that illustrates a student's performance or progress determined through a progress monitoring or benchmark assessment.

Data Review Teams: Teams of educators responsible for data analysis and decision making and who function at the level of the district, school, and grade (or content area) as well as across grade-levels in the same content area (i.e., vertical teams); includes as members: school administrators, school psychologists, grade/content area general educators, special education teachers, and various specialists and other behavioral/mental health personnel.

Diagnostic Assessments: Additional assessments used both by general educators and specialists to clarify and target the needs of individual students when the information provided by other types of assessments--such as universal common assessments--is not sufficient or is too broad. These assessments help teachers plan instruction by providing in-depth information about students' reading skills and instructional needs.

Differentiated Instruction: An approach to teaching that emphasizes ways to meet the differing needs of a group of students within the general education setting, for example, through the use of flexible small groups, varied instructional materials, or different ways of presenting the same content. This is an integral part of Tier I.

Discrepancy: a) Difference between two outcome measures; b) IQ-achievement discrepancy – difference between scores on a norm-referenced intelligence test and a norm-referenced achievement test; c) Difference between pre-test and post-test on a criterion-referenced test.

Dual Discrepancy: A dual discrepancy occurs when a student's performance and growth rate are both substantially below performance and growth rate of typical peers.

Dyslexia: A specific learning disability that is neurological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

e

Early Intervening Services: A set of coordinated services for students, with particular emphasis on students in kindergarten through grade 3, who are not currently identified as needing special education or related services, but who need additional academic and behavioral support to succeed in general education.

English as a Second Language (ESL): An educational approach in which English Learners (ELs) are instructed in the use of the English language. Instruction is based on special curricula that typically involve little or no use of the native language and is usually taught during specific school periods. For the rest of the school day, students may be placed in mainstream classrooms, an immersion program, or a bilingual program.

English Learner (EL): An active learner of the English language who may benefit from various types of language support programs. This term is used mainly in the U.S. to describe K-12 students.

Evidence-Based Practice: Evidence-based practices are educational practices and instructional strategies that are supported by scientific research studies. It is the integration of professional wisdom with the best available empirical evidence in making decisions about how to deliver instruction.

Evidence-Based Intervention: Practices that have peer reviewed, documented, empirical evidence of effectiveness. Evidence-Based Interventions use a continuum of integrated policies, strategies, activities, and services whose effectiveness has been proven or informed by research and evaluations.

Explicit Instruction: Systematic instructional approach that includes a set of delivery and design procedures derived from effective schools' research merged with behavior analysis; essential components of well-designed explicit instruction include a) visible delivery features of group instruction with a high level of teacher and student interactions and b) the less observable, instructional design principles and assumptions that make up the content and strategies to be taught.

f

Family Involvement: Any program or activity that encourages families to become involved in their child's education; for example, conferences, volunteering, helping the child with homework, attending workshops on parenting.

Fidelity: Refers to two attributes, accuracy and consistency, to which instruction, intervention, screening, progress monitoring and/or other practices are implemented in comparison to the original design or evidence-based process. Unless the instructional practice and curriculum is delivered with high fidelity, one cannot determine the basis of a student's learning or behavior difficulties.

Five Critical Elements of Reading: Phonological Awareness, Alphabetic Principle/Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, and Comprehension.

Flexible Grouping: Grouping of students that is changeable based on the purpose of the instructional activity and on changes in the instructional needs of individual students over time.

Fluency: The ability to read a text accurately, quickly, and with proper expression and comprehension. The ability to automatically recognize conceptual connections, perform basic calculations, and apply appropriate problem-solving strategies.

Formative Assessment: Ongoing assessment that is an integral part of instruction and monitoring student progress. They are used to inform and guide teachers as they make instructional decisions. It is intended to guide and enhance the learning of all students.

h

High Performing Teacher: A teacher determined by student performance data, particularly related to student growth in reading, above-satisfactory performance appraisals, and/or specific training relevant to the implementation of the Literacy-Based Promotion Act.

i

Immigrant Child: According to Title III of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, an immigrant child is an individual who a) is aged 3 through 21; b) was not born in any state; and c) has not been attending one or more schools in any one or more states for more than three (3) full academic years.

Inclusion (as a service delivery model): Students with identified disabilities are educated with general education age-/grade-level peers.

Individualized Education Program (IEP): A written document that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with IDEA 2004 that outlines the special education and related services specifically designed to meet the unique educational needs of a student with a disability.

Instructional Intervention: Explicit and systematic instruction delivered by highly skilled teachers tailored to meet the identified needs of struggling students. This instruction is delivered in small groups.

Instructional Supports and Services: The different programs and resources that a school may have available to assist students in achieving academic success.

Intensive Acceleration Class: A class where focused instructional supports and services are provided to increase a student's reading level at least two grade-levels. Districts may provide, if applicable, this class for any student retained in grade 3 *who was previously retained in kindergarten or grades 1 through 3*. The class should provide reading instruction and intervention for the majority of student contact each day and incorporate opportunities to master grade 4 state standards in other core academic areas.

Intensive Interventions: Academic and/or behavioral interventions characterized by increased length, frequency, and duration of implementation for students who struggle significantly; associated with Tier III.

Intensive Reading Instruction: Reading instruction provided to students identified with a reading deficiency. The instruction typically includes some combination of increased time, explicit instruction, enhanced instructional routines, more opportunities for students to respond and practice, enhanced feedback techniques, focus on a smaller number of objectives at a time, and smaller student to teacher ratios. The instruction is scientific and research-based. In addition, the instruction is based upon individual student diagnostic data to effectively target the deficiencies identified.

Intensive Reading Intervention: Includes specific reading instruction in phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and/or comprehension. Intensive intervention should begin when students' data indicates a reading deficiency. Intensive intervention must strategically target the student's specific reading deficiencies as identified by diagnostic assessment data. Intensive intervention must include effective instructional strategies, and appropriate teaching methodologies necessary to assist the student in becoming a successful reader, able to read at or above grade-level, and ready for promotion to the next grade. Intervention should begin as soon as student performance on an assessment indicates that the student is not making adequate progress or is deficient in some reading skill.

Intervention: Systematic and explicit instruction provided to accelerate growth in an area of identified need. Interventions are designed to improve performance relative to a specific, measurable goal based on valid information about current performance, realistic implementation, and includes on-going student progress monitoring.

L

Language Proficiency: Refers to the degree to which the student exhibits control over the use of language, including the measurement of expressive and receptive language skills in the areas of phonology, syntax, vocabulary, and semantics and including the areas of pragmatics or language use within various domains or social circumstances. Proficiency in a language is judged independently and does not imply a lack of proficiency in another language.

Limited English Proficient Students: Students that have sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing or understanding the English language and whose difficulties may deny such individuals the opportunity to learn successfully in classrooms where the language of instruction is English or to fully participate in society.

m

Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards: Standards represent the goals for what students should learn at each grade-level. They are different from curriculum.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports: A framework for effective team-based problem solving that is data-informed, evidence-based, and flexible enough to meet the academic and behavioral needs of all students. <https://www.mdek12.org/OAE/OEER/InterventionServices>

Multisensory Instruction: Instruction that incorporates the simultaneous use of two or more sensory pathways (auditory, visual, kinesthetic, tactile) during teacher presentation and student practice.

O

Over-Identification/Over-Representation: Refers to the over representation of students in special education programs/services that is above state and national averages; identification of more students for services through special education than the proportion of that population in the general population.

p

Paraprofessional: An individual who is employed in a preschool, elementary school, or secondary school under the supervision of a licensed teacher, including individuals employed in language instruction educational programs, special education, and migrant education.

Phoneme: The smallest segment of sound in a word.

Phonemic Awareness: The insight that spoken words can be conceived as a sequence of sounds; the ability to focus on and manipulate phonemes (sounds) in spoken words (e.g., segmenting or blending).

Progress Monitoring: A scientifically based practice used to assess students' academic performance and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. Progress monitoring can be implemented with individual students or an entire class. Also, the process used to monitor implementation of specific interventions.

Promotion: When students successfully complete the current school year and advance to the next grade-level.

R

Rate of Improvement: A student's growth in academic or behavioral competencies over time compared to prior levels of performance and peer growth rates.

“Read-at-Home” Plan: A plan, provided to parents by schools, consisting of research-based strategies that a parent can use at home to help a student gain reading proficiency.

(https://mdek12.org/sites/default/files/Offices/MDE/OAE/OEER/Literacy/3.19.20_printer_friendly_parent_read-at-home_plan_final_edits_complete.pdf)

Reading Screeners/Universal Reading Screeners: Assessments used to determine which children are at risk of reading difficulty and who will need additional intervention.

Remedial Instruction: Using individualized or small-group teaching to target academic weaknesses that may hinder learning. Intended to remedy a situation and to teach a student something that he or she should have previously learned.

Response to Intervention (RTI): Multi-tiered approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs. The RTI process begins with high-quality instruction and universal screening of all children in the general education classroom.

Retention: When students are required to repeat a grade because they have not met grade-level criteria. During 2014-2015, retention decisions for Mississippi students in third grade who failed to meet the score on the 3rd Grade Reading Summative Assessment will be retained unless they qualified for one of the Good Cause Exemptions.

S

Scaffolding: Refers to a variety of instructional techniques used to move students progressively towards stronger understanding and ultimately greater independence in the learning process.

<https://www.mdek12.org/ese/ccr>

Small-Group Instruction: Differentiated instruction that occurs for small groups of students according to instructional needs based upon assessment data. The teacher provides direct and explicit instruction, as well as multiple opportunities for students to practice.

Summative Assessment/Evaluation: Comprehensive in nature, provides accountability, and is used to check the level of learning at the end of a unit of study.

Supplemental Instruction Services: Provided to struggling students in addition to Tier 1, grade-level instruction in order to remedy the deficiency that was identified.

T

Teacher Support Team (TST): A problem-solving unit responsible for interventions developed at Tier 3 of RTI. It is a requirement that every school have a Teacher Support Team and that the team be implemented in accordance with the process developed by the Mississippi Department of Education.

Tiered Instructional Model: Required by the Mississippi Department of Education, a flexible approach for educational service delivery in which each tier represents an increased intensity of instructional and/or behavioral delivery that corresponds with a student's needs. Designed to address student learning with quality classroom instruction and opportunities for intervention.

Tier I: Quality classroom/grade-level instruction based on MS College- and Career-Readiness Standards, which may include differentiated instruction.

Tier II: Focused supplemental instruction for students who have not responded adequately to Tier I classroom instruction.

Tier III: More intensive or individualized interventions for students who fail to respond adequately to Tier I and/or Tier II interventions.

Transition Class: A class for students with identified reading deficiencies or students who were not promoted. Designed to provide intensive instruction and intervention to produce learning gains sufficient to meet the current grade-level performance standards while addressing the reading deficiency so that the student may advance to the next grade.

Trendline: Line on a graph that connects data points; compare against aimline to determine responsiveness to intervention.

U

Universal Screener: A brief assessment or screening of all students in a grade-level that focuses on critical target skills that is highly predictive of future outcomes. Students identified as “at risk” may need closer monitoring, interventions, or more in-depth assessment. Universal common assessments, if administered at regular intervals throughout the year, would enable the ongoing evaluation of a student’s performance relative to his/her peers in the mastery of grade-level expectations.

Appendix C: Closing the Achievement Gap

<https://www.slideserve.com/josie/teaching-all-children-to-read-annual-growth-plus-catch-up-growth-for-all-students>

Closing the Achievement Gap

Our most important measures of success are on our comprehension measures at the end of the year, particularly at the end of third grade.

1. Increase the percentage of students reading “at grade-level” each year at each grade-level from kindergarten through third grade
2. Decrease the percentage of students with serious reading difficulties each year at each grade-level

Schools that are closing the achievement gap:

- Have a relentless focus on instruction, coherent curriculum, and teacher development plan that supports curriculum
- Have a clear vision of what students are supposed to know and do; do not blame the students
- Consciously distribute leadership
- Celebrate every success
- Have skills and knowledge, not necessarily charisma
(Chenoweth, 2007)

Expected Yearly Growth Plus Catch-Up Growth

Annual Growth for All Students, Catch-up Growth for Those Who Are Behind

What are the most important ways children are diverse when it comes to learning to read?

1. They are diverse in their talent and their preparation for learning to read words accurately and fluently.
2. They are diverse in their oral language knowledge and abilities (vocabulary and word knowledge).
3. They are diverse in their abilities to manage their learning behaviors and their motivation to apply themselves to learning to read.

“Catch-up growth is driven primarily by proportional increases in direct instruction time. Catch-up growth is so difficult to achieve that it can be the product only of quality instruction in great quantity.”

Teacher Quality X Time = Growth

“This is why the primary and immediate strategy for catch-up growth is proportional increase in direct instructional time. Catch-up growth rarely occurs unless principals and teachers have good data, know each student's learning needs, and schedule proportional increases in direct instruction time.”

Appendix D: Good Cause Exemptions

§ 37-177-11. Good Cause Exemption for promotion to grade 4 of student not meeting academic requirements

A third-grade student who does not meet the academic requirements for promotion to the fourth grade may be promoted by the school district only for good cause. Good Cause Exemptions for promotion are limited to the following students:

- (a)** Limited English proficient students who have had less than two (2) years of instruction in an English Learner program;
- (b)** Students with disabilities whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) indicates that participation in the statewide accountability assessment program is not appropriate, as authorized under state law;
- (c)** Students with a disability who participate in the state annual accountability assessment and who have an IEP or a Section 504 Plan that reflects that the individual student has received intensive remediation in reading for more than two (2) years but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading **or** previously was retained in kindergarten or first, second or third grade;
- (d)** Students who demonstrate an acceptable level of reading proficiency on an alternative standardized assessment approved by the State Board of Education; and
- (e)** Students who have received intensive intervention in reading for two (2) or more years but still demonstrate a deficiency in reading and who previously were retained in kindergarten or first, second or third grade for a total of two (2) years and have not met exceptional education criteria.

Appendix E: Sample Parental Notification Letter



Date:

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Kindergarten through third grade is a vital time for establishing the basic principles in reading. Being a good reader is critical to a student's successful school experience. To help ensure students become successful lifelong readers, areas of strengths and weaknesses must be identified. All students in grades K-3 are administered a state-approved screener within the first 30 days of school to identify any deficiencies in reading. The screener is repeated mid-year and at the end of the school year for progress monitoring and to determine if deficiencies have been remedied.

This letter is to inform you that your child, _____, will be placed in a(n) _____ class due to difficulty in the area of reading based on recent state-approved screener results and/or previous retentions.

_____ class will be provided for your child during our scheduled school day for _____ times a week for _____ minutes a session for the next _____ weeks. Our team will be reviewing all available information in order to develop a plan to better assist your child in making successful progress in school. Throughout this time, progress monitoring measures will be collected and shared with you.

If you have any questions about this process or your child's skills we will be addressing through this class, please contact me at _____ or _____

Sincerely,

Teacher name

cc: Principal

Appendix F: Acceleration Planning – Sample Scope and Sequence

The New Teacher Project. *Learning Acceleration Guide: Planning for Acceleration in the 2020-2021 School Year*. TNTP, 2020.

Month	Key Priorities
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish acceleration planning structures, team and set expectations for their work. As you shift to planning for next year, you'll want to assemble a core team to support this planning process. Understand the current state of students' learning. Your acceleration team will want to deeply understand the current state of students' learning considering both data from at-home learning and in-school learning from the 2020-2021 school year. Set your acceleration vision and goals. Make sure your team is working toward a plan to give every student, regardless of their identity or background, access to The Opportunity Myth's four resources (grade-appropriate assignments, strong instruction, deep engagement, and teachers with high expectations), as well as a plan to monitor and adjust course throughout the year. Develop a workplan for the acceleration team's work. Plan when you'll draft, review, and finalize guidance around diagnosing students, updates to your curricular scope & sequences, and teacher and leader training to accelerate student learning.
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize the most critical prerequisite skills and content knowledge for each subject area and grade-level. To determine how to address unfinished learning, you'll need to prioritize the most important content knowledge and skills from previous years that students need to be successful in their current grade. Draft and finalize your guidance for how teachers should diagnose students' unfinished learning. Ensure that teachers diagnose only the most critical potential learning gaps in their grade-level and subject area. Begin making updates to your district's pacing guides or scope and sequence that reflect your acceleration plan. Begin your teacher and leader training plan to support your staff to accelerate student learning (rather than remediate it).
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finish the updates to your district's pacing guides or scope and sequences. Then do a gut check of your plan against the student and teacher data you analyzed in May, verifying that you've focused on building in the most important content knowledge and skills students will need to master grade-level standards. Finalize your "accelerate student learning" training plan and session content for teachers and leaders.
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train your "accelerate student learning" facilitators. Deliver your "accelerate student learning" training to teachers and leaders.
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate how your plan to accelerate student learning is going and make adjustments as you need to.