

# Mississippi Momentum

Teacher Preparation for Early Literacy Instruction:  
A Statewide Partnership is Born

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President  
Higher Education Literacy Council



## Session Overview

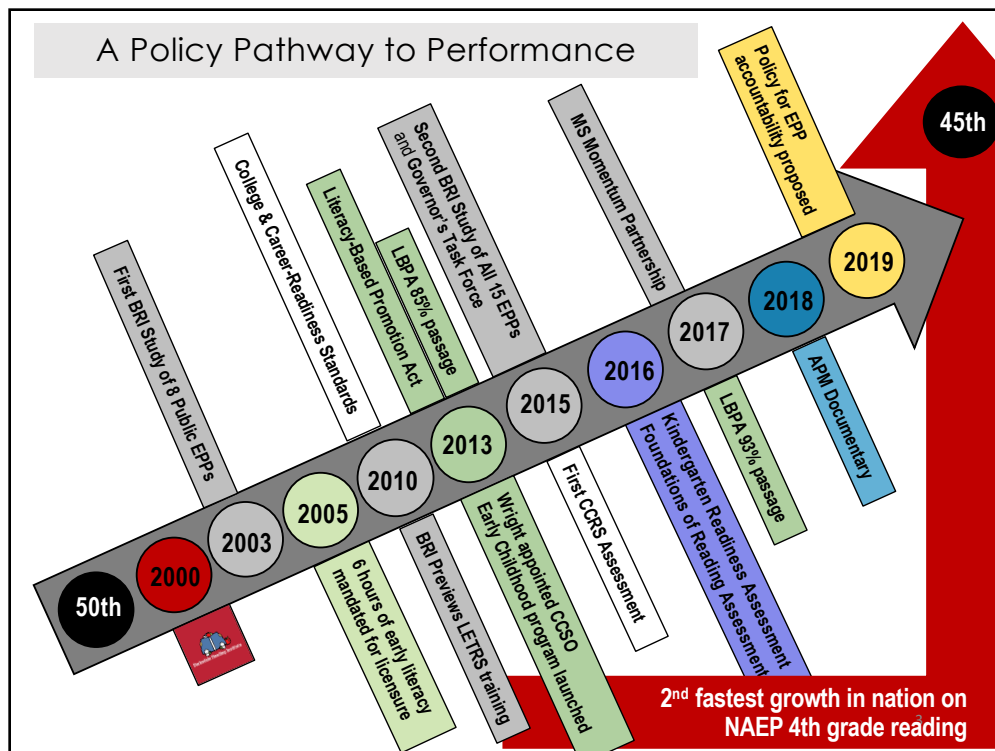
### Context for Literacy Initiatives in Mississippi

- Barksdale Statewide Studies on Teacher Preparation
- College and Career Readiness Standards
- Legislative Action: Literacy Based Promotion Act
- Role of the Governor's Task Force

### MS Momentum Partnership Project

- LETRS Training for content
- Seminars for pedagogy
- Campus visits for mentoring

### Role of the Higher Education Literacy Council



# Literacy Accountability



## Literacy-Based Promotion Act

- SB 2347 enacted in 2013, revised in 2016
- End of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade assessment  
*85% in 2015 to 93% in 2018*
- Good cause exemptions
- Instructional coaches for literacy support schools



## Foundations of Reading Test

- Effective July 2016
- Content knowledge of scientifically research-based reading instruction and assessment
- Traditional and alternate route candidates and supplemental endorsements
- Supports critical role of classroom teachers in ensuring reading proficiency by end of third grade
- Passing score of 229

## Highlights of the Statewide Studies



Background, Structure, Lessons

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## Bookends: Barksdale Studies

**2003**

- Assess impact of pre-service faculty support in 8 public EPPs against MS Reading Reform Model
- Serious gaps in 5 reading components
- 20 minutes to learn how to teach phonics
- Mandate for EL1 & EL2

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**2015**

- Assess all 15 EPPs against state mandate and established science of reading
- Assess sufficiency of EL1 & EL2 in light of LBPA
- 282 minutes to learn how to teach phonics
- Serious gaps remaining in evidence-based practices and modeling

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# Intended Content of Early Literacy 1 & Early Literacy 2

*As prescribed by HELC and recommended by MDE licensure  
Appendix A in the statewide report*

## Early Literacy 1 (EL1) 3 hours

Concepts, materials, and teaching strategies for oral language development and systematic early reading and writing instruction, specific to **concepts of print, phonemic awareness, and phonics.**



## Early Literacy 2 (EL2) 3 hours

Concepts, materials, and teaching strategies for oral language development and systematic early reading and writing instruction, specific to **fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.**

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## Purpose: The 4 Study Questions

- 1 Do the EL1 & EL2 courses meet the **intent of the licensure** requirement to strengthen early literacy instruction?
- 2 Do the early literacy courses **sufficiently equip pre-service candidates** with the foundational knowledge and practical skills required to deliver effective reading instruction in K-3 on "day one"?
- 3 Are there **gaps or duplications** in the scope, sequence, and content of early literacy courses that might prevent efficient and sufficient preparation for early literacy instruction?
- 4 Are pre-service candidates **exposed to pedagogy** (in class and in the field) that reflects best practices supported by current and evidenced-based literacy-related research?

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## Nine Key Findings

- Finding 1.** The five essential components of reading instruction are the primary focus of all teacher preparation literacy programs through the state-mandated courses.
- Finding 2.** The structure and content of early-literacy courses are inconsistent across the state.
- Finding 3.** Established research-based principles of early-literacy instruction remain largely unapplied in preparation and practice.
- Finding 4.** “Balanced Literacy”—as interpreted by Mississippi teacher preparation programs and in many K-3 classrooms—has resulted in widespread use of practices that are not supported by research.
- Finding 5.** High standards for learning have become the norm in early literacy and in teacher preparation.
- Finding 6.** Opportunities to observe instruction being modeled, followed by opportunities to practice, are insufficient for developing entry-level skills for teaching.
- Finding 7.** Time in the field associated with early-literacy instruction has increased significantly.
- Finding 8.** Most programs now offer a distinct assessment course, usually specific to assessing reading difficulties.
- Finding 9.** Writing as a component of literacy is inadequately addressed.

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## Instructional Minutes Devoted to Learning to Teach the 5 Components

Average Number of Minutes within Semester Courses of EL1 and EL2 Spent Learning to Teach These Components of Reading					
EL 1 MINUTES			EL2 MINUTES		
Alphabetic Knowledge	Phonological and Phonemic Awareness	Explicit Phonics	Fluency	Vocabulary	Comprehension
54 mins.	150 mins.	282 mins.	114 mins.	154 mins.	329 mins.
Out of approximately 2,450 total instructional minutes in a semester of EL1 486 minutes (or approximately 8 class hours) were spent on HOW to teach these foundational skills 20% of course time			Out of approximately 2,750 total instructional minutes in a semester of EL2 597 minutes (or approximately 10 class hours) were spent on HOW to teach these reading skills. 22% of course time		

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## Learner Snapshot

A method for describing trends in pre-service courses in early literacy

Learner Snapshot - Statewide Results  
Percentage of 60 Classes in which Item was Recorded on a Learner Snapshot

LEARNER SNAPSHOT – Statewide Results	
<b>Objective</b>	
47% Session's objective was visible or clearly conveyed.	
89% Objective, as stated or implied, was appropriate to course goals.	
<b>Content</b>	
74% ALL content presented related to course objective and was logically sequenced.	
50% ALL content was accurate and supported by the convergence of science in early reading.	
<b>Instructional Format</b>	
85% If content presented in lecture format from PowerPoint or textbook, it did not consume more than 50% of class time.	
48% Content presented in multiple and complementary forms (e.g., graphs, narration, etc.).	
61% Whole group interactive activity was used to illustrate a concept.	
48% Small group or partner work (project based/collaborative learning) related to teaching or assessing an early literacy skill appropriate to this course.	
11% Activity included independent work (e.g., Do Now, "hook", quiz).	
<b>Direct Instruction</b>	
29% Previously assigned readings, activities, quizzes, and/or field experiences were explicitly debriefed.	
55% Instructor provided direct instruction about the concept (prior to and distinct from modeling) with clear explanations and examples.	
58% Instructor challenged students to think critically resulting in deeper discussion & purposeful student questions.	
23% Instructor used effective method(s) to check for understanding (e.g., summary debrief, exit ticket, classroom response system, etc.).	
<b>Modeling</b>	
24% Instructor modeled how to teach or assess an early literacy skill appropriate to objective.	
38% Instructor showed examples of literacy activities.	
24% Video or other media was used to illustrate or model instruction or assessment of an early literacy skill appropriate to the course.	
<b>Student Practice</b>	
18% Student(s) practiced how to teach or assess an early literacy skill.	
26% Student(s) presented material or led discussion about an early literacy concept or skill.	
Note: Beyond the first two sections on Objective and Content, it is not expected that all of these would be observed in a single session.	

**47%** objective clearly stated

**50%** content accurate and evidence-based

**24%** modeled instruction

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## Three Big Ideas

page 62 in the Statewide report @ [www.msreads.org](http://www.msreads.org)

### **Big Idea #1:**

Adopt established **research-based practices** at every level of reading education to guide teacher preparation, coaching, professional development, and licensure.

### **Big Idea #2:**

Develop and adopt core principles and practices based on the science of reading for early literacy **course content and delivery** in all teacher preparation programs.

### **Big Idea #3:**

Directly involve educators in **shaping policy** and practice (HELC); **provide developmental support and training to pre-service** faculty for early literacy instruction; **strengthen program approval process**.

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# Role of the Governor's Task Force

from the Statewide Study  
to an Action Plan



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## 30-Member Governor's Task Force

- Governor's Advisor for Education & Workforce Development
- IHL Commissioner and staff
- State Superintendent and MDE senior staff
- Education Deans (public & private)
- Early Literacy Pre-service Faculty (public & private)
- K-3 District and Building administrators
- K-3 Teachers
- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
- Barksdale Reading Institute

Three Working Groups established to develop recommendations and implementation strategies for the "Three Big Ideas"



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# GTF Working Groups

## #1

### Embed science of reading at all levels of the system:

- PD guidelines and evaluation
- MS Matrix of Early Literacy Skills

## #2

### Consistency of content and structure of early literacy courses

- Standardized EL1 & EL2 course descriptions & objectives

### Professional growth for pre-service faculty

- LETRS training
- Pedagogy seminars
- Site-based modeling and mentoring

## #3

### Maintain 15-hour reading requirement

### Renewal of licenses must include pd in early literacy content

### Establish statewide body to support seamless system for teacher preparation and policy advice

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### Mississippi Matrix for Teaching Early Literacy Skills

This document complies with the technical content standards for the Governor's Task Force on Educator Preparation for Early Literacy Instruction to ensure that the preparation of teachers in Mississippi is aligned with the state's early literacy goals. The Mississippi Matrix is a tool for the Department of Education (DOE) to ensure that the preparation of teachers is aligned with the state's early literacy goals. The matrix is a tool for the DOE to ensure that the preparation of teachers is aligned with the state's early literacy goals. The matrix is a tool for the DOE to ensure that the preparation of teachers is aligned with the state's early literacy goals. The matrix is a tool for the DOE to ensure that the preparation of teachers is aligned with the state's early literacy goals. The matrix is a tool for the DOE to ensure that the preparation of teachers is aligned with the state's early literacy goals. 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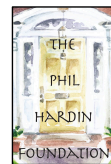
## MS Momentum: A Partnership Is Born



from the Governor's Task Force to  
Boots on the Ground



W.K.  
KELLOGG  
FOUNDATION™



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## The Structure of MS Momentum

Year 1



Year 2



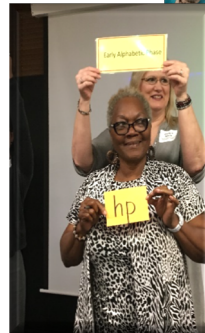
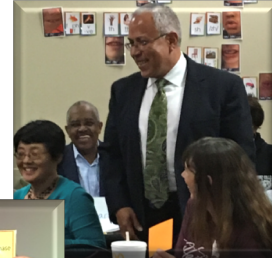
Year 3

- Four critical partners and support of Governor
- Governor endorsement and adoption of MS Matrix, based on Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teaching of Reading (KPS)
- 3 years of funding from Mississippi and national sources  
(Phil Hardin Foundation & WK Kellogg Foundation)
- Participation from 14 of the 15 EPPs
- MDE provides LETRS training in Mods 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9 with Dr. Antonio Fierro as sole trainer and higher education faculty mentor
- Intervening seminars for additional LETRS reinforcement and focus on effective pedagogy (Dr. Fierro and Dr. Michael Cormack, Barksdale CEO)
- Dr. Fierro on all campuses for modeling of early literacy instruction to pre-service candidates and professional support directly to faculty
- External evaluation by the Cradle to Career Policy Institute (University of NM)

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## Peer Training in the Science of Reading for Pre-service Faculty

- Provided under existing MDE contract (funded by the LBPA) as part of MS Momentum Partnership
- Approximately 40 faculty from 14 of the 15 EPPS participated in all eight modules, including four in-person training days with Dr. Fierro
- Completed during 2017-18 academic year



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## The Driving Force: Research-based content



### Research-based content

- Rigorous
- Thoughtfully constructed
- Well-sequenced
- Aligned to early literacy courses

Peer instructor

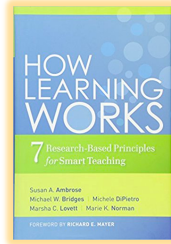
Time for practice

Checks for understanding

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## SEMINARS: A Focus on Effective Delivery of Instruction



- Facilitated by Dr. Antonio Fierro, EPP mentor and Dr. Michael Cormack, CEO of the Barksdale Reading Institute
- Anchor text – *How Learning Works: Seven researched-based principles for smart teaching* (Ambrose, Bridges, DiPietro, Lovett, & Norman, 2010).
- Protocols from the National School Reform Faculty for application in revising course syllabi, schedules, assignments, and assessments
- Review and assessment of LETRS content; practice with Foundations of Reading test items

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## CAMPUS VISITS: Modeling Explicit Instruction & Mentoring Faculty



*Where in Mississippi is Antonio Fierro?*



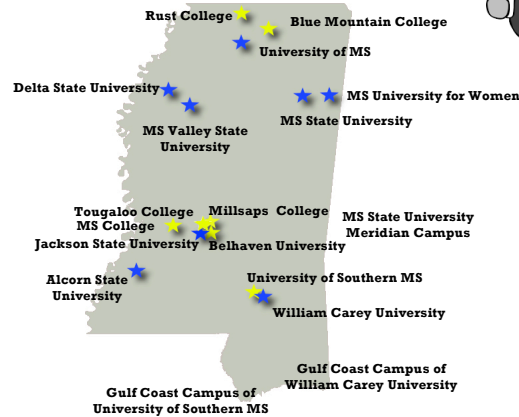
Moving LETRS content into practice in  
pre-service course work

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## All Over Mississippi

(embed video here)



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## Highlights from Campus Visits

- Modeling instruction
- LETRS Review with pre-service students
- Review of early literacy course syllabi
- Feedback on assignments

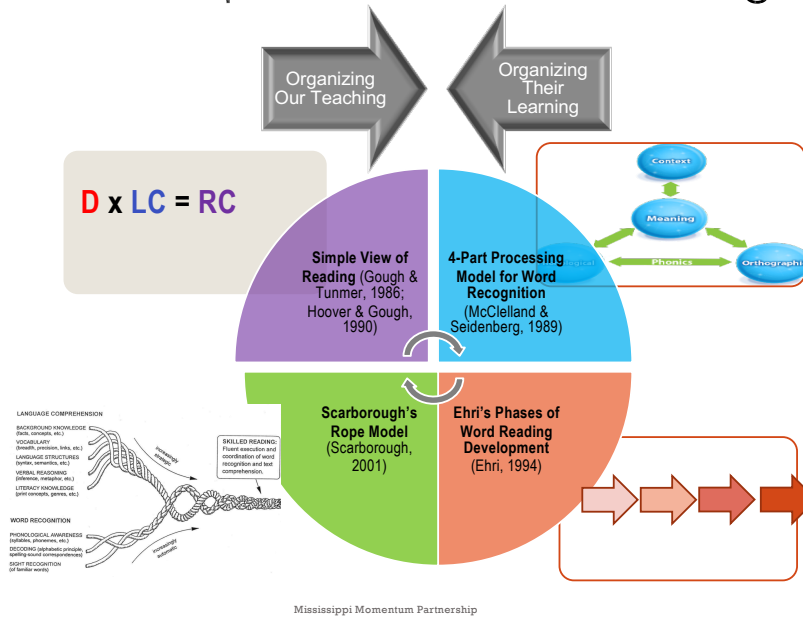


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# Organizing Instruction using the Conceptual Models of Reading



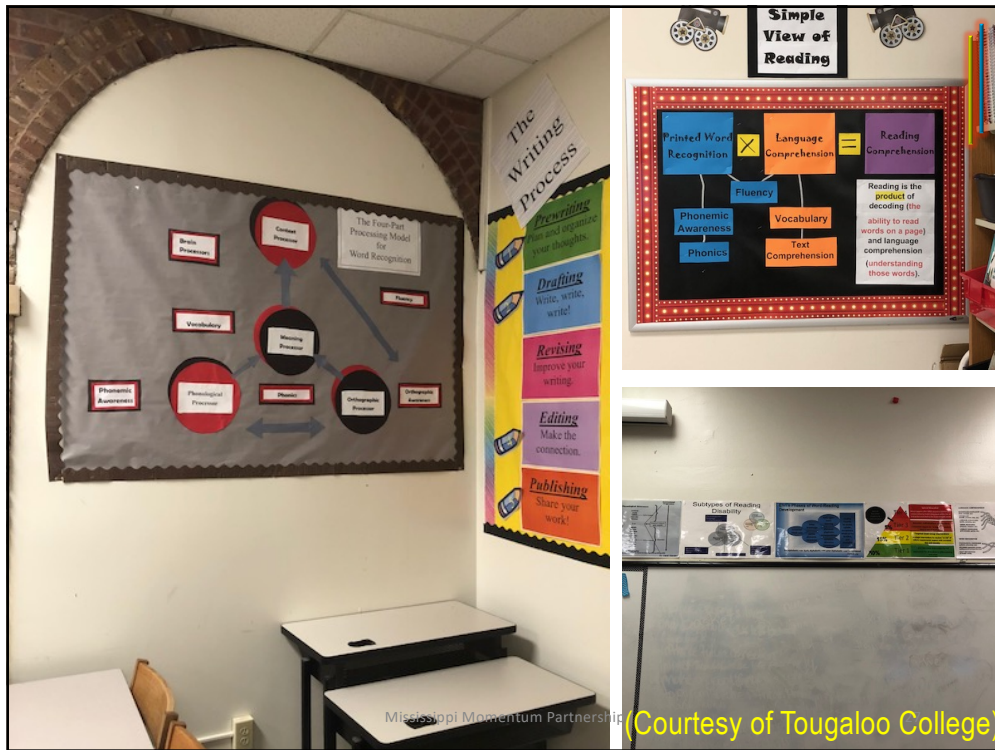
## The Reading Universe<sup>®</sup>

[www.readinguniverse.org](http://www.readinguniverse.org)

The Reading Universe<sup>™</sup>  
Understanding the Big Picture: A Professional Development Guide to Illustrate the Universe of Skills for a Structured Approach to Early Literacy Instruction

ONGOING ASSESSMENTS: Unsound Screening, Benchmark, Diagnostic, Progress Monitoring, Formative and Summative					
CONCEPTS OF PRINT	PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS	PHONICS	FLUENCY	ORAL LANGUAGE	VOCABULARY
<b>Basic Book Parts</b> Understand that written language represents meaningful oral language and the book and print have a function.	<b>Syllables</b> Identify, blend, segment, isolate, or manipulate (delete, add, substitute).	<b>Alphabetic Principle</b> Understand the relationship between letters and sounds.	<b>Accuracy</b> Reading with accuracy (word-by-word).	<b>Receptive Language</b> Understand verbal, nonverbal, and written communication.	<b>Comprehension</b> The ability to recognize and understand the meaning of oral and written texts.
<b>Directionality</b> Read from left to right and top to bottom; identify the first letter, word, and sentence.	<b>Onset and Rhyme</b> Identify, blend, segment, recognize and produce rhyming words.	<b>Regularly Spelled High-Frequency Words</b> Recognize and produce high-frequency words in the phonics stage and beyond.	<b>Rate</b> Pace of words read.	<b>Expressive Language</b> Produce meaning through verbal, nonverbal, and written communication.	<b>Levels of Understanding</b> Identify, infer, and evaluate multiple dimensions of meaning from text.
<b>Punctuation</b> Identify letter, word, and sentence boundaries; recognize capitalization and punctuation.	<b>Articulation</b> Accurate oral production of sounds including consonants, stops, affricates, fricatives, nasals, liquids, and glides.	<b>Beginning Phonics</b> Identify and use letter-sound correspondences; identify, blend, segment, and manipulate (delete, add, substitute) words in the phonics stage.	<b>Expression</b> Phrasing, intonation, and punctuation; appropriate emphasis.	<b>Knowledge of Words</b> Access prior knowledge, infer word meanings, and explicitly teach new words.	<b>Products of Comprehended Text</b> Identify, infer, and evaluate multiple dimensions of meaning from text.
<b>Text Features</b> Recognize, identify, and use illustrations, photographs, chapter titles, headings, captions, labels, and diagrams.	<b>Phonemic Awareness</b> Identify, blend, segment, manipulate (delete, add, substitute) individual sounds in words.	<b>Advanced Phonics</b> Identify and use letter-sound correspondences; identify, blend, segment, and manipulate (delete, add, substitute) words in the phonics stage.	<b>Irregularly Spelled High-Frequency Words</b> Recognize and produce high-frequency words in the phonics stage and beyond.	<b>Morphology</b> Understand the meaning and origin of words, roots, and affixes.	<b>Business Reading Success</b> Reading Universe <sup>™</sup>
<b>EARLY WRITING/ENCODING</b>					
STRUCTURED LITERACY INSTRUCTION: Sequential, Systematic, Explicit, To Mastery, and Cumulative					

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## Replicating K-3 Support for Pre-service

Support for K-3 teachers:

- Professional development sessions for content and pedagogy
- Instructional coaching
- Grade level team in PLCs
- Principal observations



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## Next Steps

- Ensure the science of reading content is embedded in the EL1 and EL2 coursework.
- Establish a teaching and learning laboratory (model classroom) at each institution.
- Create a review session that will help prepare students to take the Foundations of Reading exam.
- Adopt and disseminate the MS Matrix of Early Literacy Skills
- Review and streamline 15-hour reading requirement sequence.
- Continue to build the Higher Education Literacy Council as a force for change and accountability in teacher preparation for K-12 literacy instruction

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## 15-hour consideration

- Structure of the English Language (3 hours)
- Early Literacy 1 (3 hours) 5 components of reading, plus writing
- Early Literacy 2 (3 hours)
- Assessment, Recognition, and Intervention of Reading Difficulties, including Dyslexia and English Language Learners (3 hours)
- Fundamentals of Reading for Upper Elementary Grades (3 hours)

Language Arts and Writing courses would fall outside the 15-hour requirement.

## Proposed Policy

**All faculty and external providers who prepare teachers for early literacy instruction shall be required to show evidence of the knowledge of the science of reading by passing the same exam their students must take to be licensed.**

## Evaluation of Impact



Dr. Scott Hughes

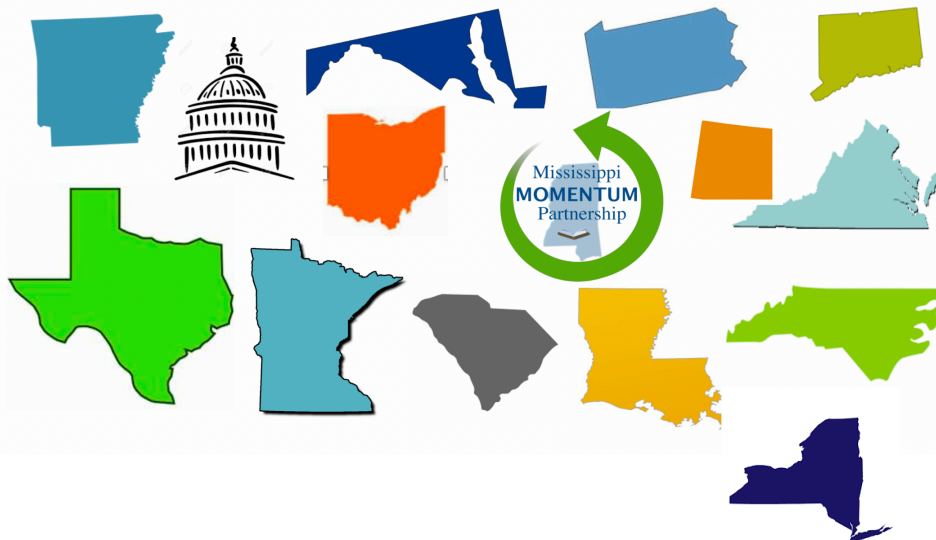


- External evaluation by Cradle to Career Policy Center at The University of New Mexico.
- Coordinate data collection specific to changes in teacher preparation content, early literacy instruction, and pre-service candidate attitudes relative to preparation to teach reading on 'day one'.
- Governor's Task Force to review impact to inform additional changes and supports to strengthen early literacy instruction and proficiency

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## Momentum Beyond Mississippi!



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## Sustaining the Effort



[www.mshelc.org](http://www.mshelc.org)

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## Rethink Mississippi!



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