

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS 2024-2025

SPARKING EARLY LITERACY GROWTH IN WEST VIRGINIA: PHASE 3

Proposals for Transformational Projects and the Expansion of Promising Practices
in the Areas of School Readiness, High Quality Instruction & Extended Learning



West Virginia Public Education Collaborative
WVPEC@mail.wvu.edu

Full Proposal Deadline: [MARCH 15, 2024](#)

**CLAUDE
WORTHINGTON
BENEDUM
FOUNDATION**

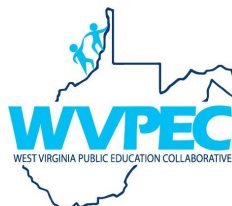


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GRANT SNAPSHOT

Grant Title: Sparking Early Literacy Growth in West Virginia: Phase 3

Summary: This Request for Proposals (RFP) aims to solicit proposals for new and expansion projects to support the early literacy growth of West Virginia children from Birth to Age 8 in high-need schools and student populations. Public and private schools, early care and early childhood centers, after-school and summer learning programs, nonprofit organizations, colleges and universities, and other literacy-focused stakeholders, including community and public organizations, are encouraged to apply.

Grant Focus: Funded projects will focus on one of the following: school readiness, high quality instruction, or extended learning.

Grant Priorities: High-need student populations (Birth - Age 8) communities and other educational support systems/organizations in high-need, low-performing schools. Priority will be given to high quality proposals from locations that have not received prior Sparking Early Literacy Growth funding.

Grant Types:

New SELG Grants are intended for schools/organizations seeking funding to pilot transformational ideas within a yearlong early literacy project in school readiness, high quality instruction, and/or extended learning. For more information on New Early Literacy Grants, go to p.10.

SELG Expansion of Promising Practices Grants are intended for schools/organizations seeking funding to support the replication and expansion of specific promising practices piloted during Phases 1 and 2 of the Sparking Early Literacy Growth initiative.

- Forming corporate partnerships to allow for family literacy training in the workplace.
- Aligning curricular and intervention efforts with after school providers.
- Providing scaffolded, STEAM-integrated writing instruction to students in grades PreK-3

For more information on SELG Expansion of Promising Practices Grants, go to p.13.

Funding Cycle: August 2024 - August 2025

Grant Funder: Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, Pittsburgh, PA

Grant Administrator: West Virginia Public Education Collaborative, Morgantown, WV

Contact:

The West Virginia Public Education Collaborative is responsible for the selection, oversight, and management of all Sparking Early Literacy Growth projects. All inquiries related to the RFP should be directed to the WVPEC.

Donna Peduto, Executive Director
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Section 1: Focus and Priorities

The Benedum Foundation's mission is "to encourage human development in West Virginia and Southwestern Pennsylvania through strategically placed charitable resources." The purpose of this RFP, disseminated on behalf of the [Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation](#) by the West Virginia Public Education Collaborative (WVPEC) with the support of the West Virginia Department of Education, is to solicit and fund transformational ideas, initiatives, and interventions for high-need schools and student populations to support the early literacy growth of West Virginia children birth to Age 8.

The Sparking Early Literacy Growth grant initiative is in its third funding phase. In 2021, the Benedum Foundation funded 9 projects for \$400,000. Due to various COVID-19 disruptions, these grant projects were extended with an additional \$150,000. In 2022, the Benedum Foundation funded 8 projects for \$400,000. Additional projects have been funded by the Roy and Gwen Steeley Foundation, the EQT Foundation, and the Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation.

This grant program's primary focus and significant priorities align with [West Virginia House Bill 3035 - The Third Grade Success Act](#), a legislative mandate supporting schools' strategies to close the 3rd grade reading achievement gap. As such, the Sparking Early Literacy Growth program aligns with the West Virginia Department of Education's [Ready, Read, Write West Virginia](#) initiative. This grant program's focus and significant priorities support the Benedum Foundation's strategic initiative to achieve grade-level reading proficiency for all West Virginians.

Results from the 2022 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) show that only 22% of students in West Virginia are at or above the NAEP proficient level, which is less than in 2019 (30%) and 1998 (28%) ([The Nation's Report Card, 2022](#)).

This grant funding focus aligns with the work of the WVPEC, which supports public schools through outreach and innovation to foster productive dialogue and respond rapidly to emerging P-20 issues in West Virginia. At the end of the funding cycle of this grant, the WVPEC will consider the outcomes of each funded project in collaboration with the West Virginia Board of Education and the West Virginia Department of Education to make recommendations to the West Virginia State Legislature and local school leadership for scaled adaptation.

Proposals describing projects that address the grant's significant priorities in novel ways will receive the highest consideration for funding. These priorities are critical in addressing children's early literacy development.

Public and private schools, early care and early childhood programs, after-school and summer learning programs, nonprofit organizations, colleges and universities, and other literacy-focused stakeholders/communities/public organizations in West Virginia are encouraged to apply.

Grant Focus

Projects must align with at least one of the following foci: school readiness, high quality instruction, or extended learning.

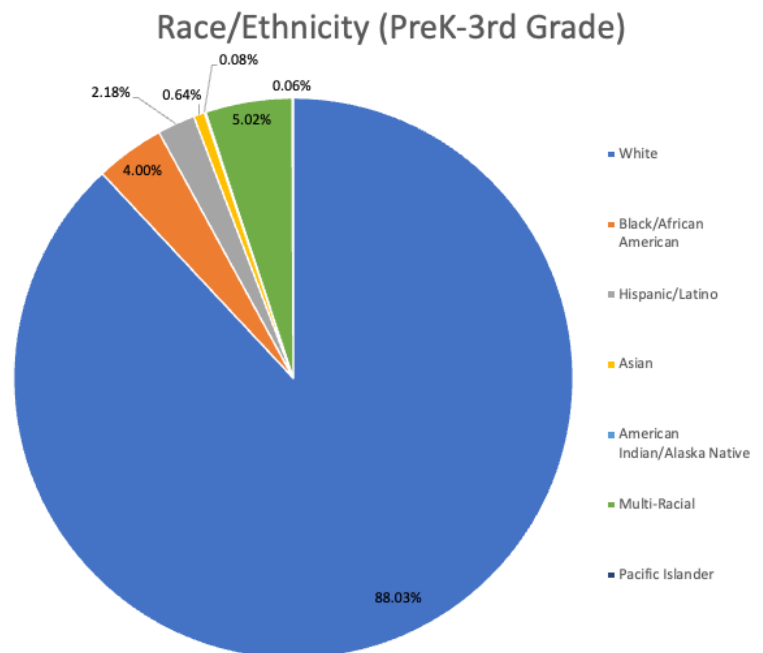
- **School Readiness (SR)** - In West Virginia, school readiness refers to the process of ensuring children have access to the best available resources before entering first grade. Available resources support children and their families and focus on maximizing children's holistic development from birth. Acknowledging that previous experiences significantly impact each child's development, school readiness also entails the capacity of schools and programs to welcome families and be prepared to serve all children effectively within the developmental domains of health and physical development, social and emotional development, language and communication, cognition and general knowledge, and individual approaches to learning.
- **High Quality Instruction (HQI)** - In West Virginia, evidence-based instruction must be implemented, and student learning must be monitored to ensure academic success. *HB 3035: Third Grade Success Act* requires counties to align materials, training, and instruction to the Science of Reading, defined as evidence-based reading instruction including phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics and spelling, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, plus writing.
- **Extended Learning (EL)** - In West Virginia, extended learning is a critical component of the comprehensive approach to reading success by the end of third grade. According to Policy 2512, extended learning is the primary acquisition of knowledge and skills through instruction or study outside the traditional classroom, and it includes instructional support for students to ensure grade-level proficiency and prevent summer learning loss. This learning loss tends to disproportionately affect students from low-income families. After school programs operate at the nexus of schools, families, and communities to expand learning opportunities for all youth. Programs provide more time for deeper learning and creative spaces for exploration. Quality afterschool engages students in enriching opportunities to help close academic and opportunity gaps among students most in need. These programs support students' learning by providing transformative learning experiences in unique settings.

Grant Priorities

Projects must target high-need populations of literacy learners. Target high-need populations include, but are not limited to: children and communities of low socioeconomic status (SES), children in foster care, children in the custody/care of grandparents or other extended family members, children enrolled in special education, children identified as homeless, children experiencing trauma and behavioral challenges, children who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), English Language Learners (ELLs), and children who are reading and writing below grade level.

The table below provides a snapshot of the West Virginia public school students in grades PreK through 3 during the 2022-2023 school year. In addition, students were enrolled in private schools and PreK programs.

WEST VIRGINIA PRE K – 3 STUDENT DATA SNAPSHOT	
Total Students	81,698
Enrolled in PreK	13,586
Economically Disadvantaged	48,213
Enrolled in Special Education	16,431
English Language Learners	899
In Foster Care	936
Students Experiencing Homelessness	3,353
Source: West Virginia Department of Education, 2023	



Grant Types

The Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation and the West Virginia Public Education Collaborative are committed to soliciting new proposals and expanding promising practices to support the literacy development of West Virginia’s youngest learners. Therefore, the third phase of the Sparking Early Literacy Growth in West Virginia initiative will offer two grant types: New Early Literacy Grants and Expansion of Promising Practices Grants.

New SELG Grants are intended for schools/organizations seeking funding to pilot transformational ideas within a yearlong early literacy project in school readiness, high quality instruction, and/or extended learning. For more information on New Early Literacy Grants, go to p.10.

SELG Expansion of Promising Practices Grants are intended for schools/organizations seeking funding to support the replication and expansion of specific promising practices piloted during Phase 1 and 2 of the Sparking Early Literacy Growth initiative. For more information on the Expansion of Promising Practices Grants, go to p.13.

The promising practices demonstrated by the model projects below are eligible for expansion grants.

Grant Focus	Promising Practices	Phase 1 & 2 Model Project	School/County
School Readiness (SR)	Forming corporate partnerships to allow for family literacy training in the workplace.	Forging Foundations for Families	Moorefield Elementary/Hardy County
Extended Learning (EL)	Aligning curricular and intervention efforts with after school providers.	Read with Me Weirton	Weirton Elementary/Hancock County
Highly Quality Instruction (HQI)	Providing scaffolded, STEAM-integrated writing instruction to students in grades PreK-3	Building Self-Efficacy One Writer at a Time through I CAN Plans and STEAM Journal Writing Clubs	Berkeley County

Grant seekers interested in replicating these promising practices, with the support of model project leadership should apply for expansion grants.

This RFP is designed to guide grant seekers on both grant types. Pages 5 to 6, will provide an overview of grant priorities and preferences and pages 7-9 will provide requirements for both grant types.

- Guidance and next steps specific to new SELG grant projects start on page 10.
- Guidance and next steps for SELG expansion of promising practices grant projects start on page 13.

Section 2: General Requirements for both Grant Types

The following sections outline the requirements of both (1) new and (2) expansion grant projects. The following section, Section 3, details the expectations specific to each unique grant type.

All proposed projects must be implemented in West Virginia and focus on children in West Virginia, Birth to Age 8 (typically 3rd grade). The proposal must explicitly describe the project's targeted learner (e.g., special education, low SES). Proposals may focus on a specific age or grade range within Birth to Age 8 (e.g., first-grade students, toddlers); individual projects do not need to span the entire Birth to Age 8 range. Projects may involve teachers, children, families, and/or communities and must address at least one of the three grant focus areas:

- o school readiness
- o high quality instruction
- o extended learning

Proposals may be submitted by the following:

- o West Virginia public and private school administrators and teachers
- o Early care and early childhood education program/center administrators and teachers
- o After school and summer learning program administrators and teachers
- o West Virginia universities and colleges (four-year, two-year, and community)
- o Other literacy focused stakeholders, including community and public organizations, which include but are not limited to libraries, family healthcare providers, parent associations (PTA), and WV legal aid

No limits exist on the number of proposals a school/organization/stakeholder group can submit – for either new or expansion projects. There is a limit of one submission per project director.

Projects are not limited to the county where the grant seeker's organization or school is located.

Projects can be implemented in and among West Virginia's 55 counties.

If funded, the project director must submit a final report to WVPEC within thirty days of the end of the funding period. More information regarding reporting expectations can be found on pages 8 to 9.

Outcomes and Student Assessment

Projects must identify, in detail, at least two measurable project outcomes. Project outcomes should align with impacts on learners, school, parents, or community. Proposals must specifically

identify how the outcomes will directly influence improved literacy skills in the target population (children Birth - Age 8).

- One of the two outcomes must measure student change/growth/improvement using a pre-post assessment tool (selected by the project director/organization). Assessment plans may consist of data collected from the organization's existing assessment strategy or include assessment protocols specific to the project. Grant seekers should consult the appendix for additional information on assessment measures.
- Outcome 2 and any other outcomes may include growth measures or change with other participants (teachers, families, community members, etc.) or grant components (e.g., family engagement with the school's website, improved literacy environment, teacher perception)

Note: As described on page 13, expansion projects must include an Outcome 3, based on collaborative efforts with model projects.

Budget

The maximum award amount will vary depending on the grant type. See section 3 for specific guidance.

- Each proposal must include a detailed budget and a narrative that justifies expenditures. The budget template is included in the appendix.
- Funds may be used for personnel, stipends/incentives, equipment and materials, training costs, supplies, travel, and other necessary materials. Indirect costs (e.g., organization's facilities and administrative expenses or overhead) line items are not allowed.
- Matching funds are strongly encouraged but not required. To clarify, matching funds, often referred to as cost-sharing, represent an institutional commitment to a project. These matching funds may include in-kind contributions such as reallocating organizational resources or staff or the inclusion of other outside funding contributions. Matching funds, in-kind, or additional/external funding should be included in the overall budget and explained in the budget narrative.

Grant Reporting

All Sparking Early Literacy Growth in West Virginia projects must report periodically on the project's implementation and progress toward the required outcomes by the deadline provided.

- Upon receiving funding and prior to grant implementation, projects will submit pre-assessment data (e.g. summary of scores, student demographics, assessment timeline, etc.) for the identified target population.
- Approximately six months after receiving funding, projects will submit a mid-term report to document project implementation, provide a budget update, and share mid-term assessment data.
- After the funding cycle, projects will submit a final report describing the project's challenges, successes, and lessons learned. A complete budget report and analysis of student data will be included.
- The WVPEC may request additional information throughout the funding cycle to assist with presentations, newsletters, and social media posts.

The West Virginia Public Education Collaborative will share project reports with the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation.

Section 3: Expectations by Grant Type

This section of the RFP will address specific expectations for (1) collaborative partnerships, (2) pre-award support, (3) budget, and (4) submission requirements. The section is organized by grant type. New SELG grant requirements are presented first, followed by a parallel listing of expectations for expansion of promising practices grants.

A. New Sparking Early Literacy Growth Grants

Collaborative Partnerships

Collaborative educational and community partnerships are required for funding consideration. We define collaboration as "two or more entities working together toward a shared goal" (Frey et al., 2006). We believe collaboration between educational and community partners across public, private, and nonprofits can leverage resources toward improving early literacy. Additionally, meaningful partnerships may also positively contribute to a project's sustainability beyond the grant's funding cycle.

To receive a grant award and funding, all early literacy grant proposals must include at least one collaborative educational/community partner (i.e., agency, school, after-school program); some projects may include more than one partner. Those seeking funding should consider the list of eligible grantees as partners, including public and private schools, early care and early childhood programs, after-school and summer learning programs, nonprofit organizations, colleges, universities, and other literacy-focused stakeholders/communities/public organizations. Proposals may also consider local businesses, individuals, professional literacy organizations, or other educational stakeholders

Given the multifaceted nature of the early literacy projects, this RFP does not require one specific model or type of partnership. Grant partners may contribute to the project's outcomes in a variety of ways, including, but not limited to, planning, engaging in problem-solving and decision-making, supporting evaluation efforts, consulting, providing resources (e.g., books, space), serving as thought partners, leading professional learning efforts for teachers/classroom aides/parents, developing curriculum materials, facilitating access to birth-8 student populations, assisting project implementation, providing in-kind personnel support, conducting student assessments, and/or supporting/contributing to project's overall budget, etc.

Grant seekers must outline each partner's detailed roles and responsibilities in the grant proposal narrative. Each partnership may vary in intensity and contribution; minimal expectations include clearly defined roles of each partner, ongoing and consistent communication, and engaged focus on the grant project's implementation and outcomes throughout the grant's funding cycle (i.e. 1 year). Each partner, including the submitting school/agency/group, must complete and sign an acknowledgment/agreement form.

Pre-Proposal Support

The WVPEC is committed to providing pre-proposal support to grant seekers by offering informational sessions and 1-1 technical assistance. Engaging in these opportunities is strongly recommended, however, participating does not guarantee funding.

The WVPEC will host three informational sessions to review grant guidelines and criteria and answer questions. The informational sessions are scheduled for the West Virginia Reading Association on November 17, 2023, and virtual sessions on December 12 and January 22, using the Zoom meeting platform. Please refer to the timeline for dates/times and registration details for these sessions.

The WVPEC will also provide 1-1 support to schools, organizations, and groups seeking funding upon request. WVPEC partners from Marshall University, West Virginia University, and the West Virginia Department of Education are available to consult with prospective grant seekers to provide feedback, particularly grounded in a proposal's early literacy components. These conversations should occur during the initial planning phase of the proposal development. Grant seekers may sign up for 1-1 technical assistance meetings when submitting the Intent Form.

Budget Request

New Sparking Early Literacy Grant Growth grant seekers are invited to apply for up to \$50,000 in funding. The proposed budget must align with the expectations listed in Section 2 as well as those outlined below.

- Maximum budget request: \$50,000
- Up to \$5,000 may be allocated to the project director to compensate for the time leading and organizing activities.
- No more than \$15,000 may be allocated for professional development consultant fees.

Proposal and Submission

Grant seekers must complete an electronic submission of all proposal components. The grant application portal can be accessed on the WVPEC website at <https://wvpec.wvu.edu/events-and-initiatives/earlyliteracy>.

The first step for grant seekers is to submit an Intent Form by February 1, 2024. The form requests basic information on grant personnel, location/county, and grant focus. Additionally, grant seekers can request a 1-1 technical assistance meeting. Grant seekers must complete the Intent Form to be eligible to submit a full proposal.

Each proposal will consist of a four-part electronic submission including a Cover Sheet, Narrative,

Budget, and Acknowledgement Form. See the appendix for all application materials, including New SELG Grant narrative proposal prompts.

A panel of literacy professionals representing PreK-12 personnel, higher education faculty, and community organizations will review proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation. If a member of the review panel provides 1-1 consulting to a specific grant seeker, that reviewer will not participate in that project's evaluative review.

B. Expansion of Promising Practices Grants

Collaborative Partnerships

A significant component of the SELG Expansion of Promising Practices Grants is to create and nurture collaborative partnerships between the grant seekers and the model project personnel who have experience implementing the promising practices during SELG Phase 1 or 2. As such, in addition to the two required outcomes, SELG Expansion of Promising Practices Grant proposals must include a required Outcome #3, describing expected outcomes of the collaboration with the model project leadership throughout project implementation.

Model Project Descriptions

1. *Forging Foundations for Families - Moorefield Elementary/Hardy County Schools*
 - a. Project Focus: School Readiness (SR)
 - b. Model Project Description: As part of the Forging Foundations for Families program, the staff of Moorefield Elementary School invited family members of students in grades PreK-2 to literacy workshops throughout the school year. Each session was offered at two locations: Moorefield Elementary School and on the job site of one of Hardy County's largest employers: Pilgrim's Pride. The primary focus of each session was to provide caregivers with tips and resources to support their children's learning. At each session, caregivers received a book and other supplemental materials. Presentations generally began with a children's book being read aloud, followed by an explanation of how to interact with the book and an explanation of how to use the supplemental materials provided. Families had the opportunity at each session to interact with the presenters and fellow caregivers.
 - c. Promising Practice: Forming corporate partnerships to allow for family literacy training in the workplace.

2. *Read with Me Weirton - Weirton Elementary/Hancock County Schools*
 - a. Project Focus: Extended Learning (EL)
 - b. Model Project Description: Read with Me Weirton is an extended learning literacy program that aims to leverage the impact of research-based literacy instruction to provide after school tutoring and intervention to students PreK to third grade who are at-risk or struggling to meet grade level reading proficiency. Read with me Weirton offers unique coordination and collaboration between Weirton Elementary School and its dedicated community partners, including Energy Express, Hancock County Schools, the Storybook Cafe, and the Weirton Christian Center. Capitalizing on strong, long-standing relationships, Read with Me Weirton puts into action the adage that "it takes a village." The project leverages teamwork in new and exciting ways to reduce the impact of low socioeconomics, a history of low reading proficiency, and the devastating learning losses associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - c. Promising Practice: Aligning curricular and intervention efforts with after school providers.

3. *Building Self-Efficacy One Writer at a Time through I CAN Plans and STEAM Journal Writing Clubs - led by Berkeley County Schools*
 - a. Project Focus: High Quality Instruction (HQI)
 - b. Model Project Description: Students in several West Virginia counties used an "I CAN" framework to learn foundational writing skills such as spelling words, crafting sentences

and creating compositions. After school, students participated in a STEAM writing club to practice the same "I CAN" framework while engaging in hands-on STEAM activities. Participating specialists, teachers, and students employed scaffolded writing activities in their classrooms and participated in STEAM writing clubs, while parents received additional materials to support instruction at home.

- c. Promising Practice: Providing scaffolded, STEAM-integrated writing instruction to students in grades PreK-3

Pre-Proposal Support

The WVPEC is committed to providing pre-proposal support to grant seekers by offering informational sessions and 1-1 technical assistance. Engaging in these opportunities is strongly recommended, however, participating does not guarantee funding.

The WVPEC will host three informational sessions to review grant guidelines and criteria and answer questions. The informational sessions, scheduled for the West Virginia Reading Association on November 17, 2023), and virtual sessions on December 12 and January 22, using the Zoom meeting platform. Please refer to the timeline for dates and registration details for these sessions.

The WVPEC will also provide 1-1 support to schools, organizations, and groups seeking funding upon request by completing the Intent Form.

Budget

Sparkling Early Literacy Growth Promising Practice grant seekers are invited to apply for up to \$30,000 in funding. The proposed budget must align with the expectations listed in Section 2 and those outlined below.

- Maximum award amount: \$30,000
- Up to \$5,000 may be allocated to the project director to compensate for the time leading and organizing activities.
- Up to \$15,000 may be allocated for professional development consultant fees.

Proposal and Submission

Grant seekers must complete an electronic submission of all proposal components. The grant application portal can be accessed on the WVPEC website at <https://wvpec.wvu.edu/events-and-initiatives/earlyliteracy>.

The first step for grant seekers is to submit an Intent Form by February 1, 2024. The form requests basic information on grant personnel, location/county, and promising practice. Additionally, grant

seekers can request a 1-1 technical assistance meeting using this form. Grant seekers must complete the Intent Form to be eligible to submit a full proposal.

Each proposal will consist of a four-part electronic submission, including a Cover Sheet, Narrative, Budget, and Acknowledgement Form. See the appendix for all application materials, including SELG Expansion of Promising Practices narrative proposal prompts.

After the initial review of the submitted application by the WVPEC staff, applicants advancing to the next round will be invited to meet with model project leadership to discuss project expansion. The WVPEC will make final selections, the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation and the model project leadership.

Section 4: Timeline and Summary

Grant Proposal Timeline

Date	Action Item
November 17, 2023	Request for Proposals (RFP) released
November 17, 2023 10:25 a.m.	Grant informational session #1 held at the West Virginia Reading Association's Annual Conference
December 12, 2023 4:00 p.m.	Grant informational session #2 (virtual) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register at https://bit.ly/SELG3_Dec12
January 8, 2024 - March 14, 2024	Technical Assistance via 1-1 consulting by request. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register using Intent Form or by emailing wvpec@mail.wvu.edu
January 22, 2024 10:00 a.m.	Grant informational session #3 (virtual) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register at https://bit.ly/SELG3_Jan22
February 1, 2024	Intent Form due; must be received by 11:59 p.m. EST <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register at https://bit.ly/SELG3_IntentForm
March 15, 2024	Electronic proposals due; must be received by 11:59 p.m. EST <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New SELG Grants: https://bit.ly/SELG3_NewGrantApp • SELG Expansion of Promising Practices Grants: https://bit.ly/SELG3_ExpansionGrantApp
June 2024	Formal notification of awards
August 2024	Implementation period begins

Summary of Required and Recommended Components

<p>Required Components</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Must align with at least one of the following foci: school readiness, high quality instruction, or extended learning. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SELG Expansion of Promising Practices Grants must seek to replicate one of the identified promising practices ● Must take place in West Virginia and explicitly focus on West Virginia children, Birth to Age 8. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Must identify and prioritize low-performing learners Birth to Age 8 in schools, classrooms, populations, and communities. ○ Must identify the targeted student population (e.g., special education, low SES) and grade level (e.g., first-grade students, toddlers) that will be impacted most by the project. Must provide relevant supporting statistics/information demonstrating need for the targeted population. ● Project proposals must include at least <u>one</u> collaborative educational and community partnership with other schools, educational groups/organizations, or WV public and community organizations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New SELG Projects: Must complete and upload a WVPEC partnership acknowledgment/signature form signed by representatives from both partnering organizations (e.g., superintendent, principal, director). ○ SELG Expansion of Promising Practices Grants must collaborate with model project leadership. ● Must identify, in detail, at least two measurable project outcomes, including a measure of participant (ie., student and/or teacher, or parent/family member/guardian) change/growth/improvement using a pre-post assessment tool [selected by project director/organization]. Projects should measure the impact on risk factors that affect target populations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SELG Expansion of Promising Practices Grants must identify a third outcome related to collaboration with the model project leadership ● Must submit Intent Form by February 1, 2023 at 11:59 p.m. ● Must submit a full application by March 15, 2024 at 11:59 p.m. EST.
<p>Strongly Recommended</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learning opportunities in early literacy for teachers and other stakeholders working directly with children (e.g., parents, aides, instructional assistants and other providers.) ● Matching funds/in-kind/cost-share. ● Attend a virtual informational session. ● Request WVPEC technical assistance via 1-1 consulting.

Appendices

Appendix A: New SELG Grant Application

The proposal comprises four parts (cover sheet, narrative, budget, and partnership agreement), all submitted electronically. Below is a list of all the information grant seekers should have prepared to complete a proposal submission.

Part 1: Cover Sheet

Project Title

Proposing School/Organization(s)

Collaborative Educational/Community Partner

Project focus (click all that apply):

- High Quality Instruction (HQI)
- School Readiness (SR)
- Extended Learning (EL)

Two Sentence Project Summary

Age/Grade Level (select all that apply)

Target Population (e.g. ELL, low-SES, special education)

Counties Served

Requested Budget Amount

Project director information (Name/Title, Address, Phone, Email)

Secondary contact information (Name/Title, Address, Phone, Email)

Part 2: Narrative Prompts

1. Project Description (500 word maximum)
2. Describe the inspiration behind this project. How was this idea developed?
3. How will it align with the grant categories (school readiness, high quality instruction, or extended learning) and contribute to student growth? (250 word maximum)
4. Provide a statement of need.
 - a. Describe precisely the specific needs of the school and/or community and the rationale for the project's target population.
 - b. Describe the student population targeted in this project. Use available school/district data to demonstrate need.
 - c. Number of students, Age/grade, Target population (ELL, low-SES, special education, etc.)
5. How will the project engage classroom teachers/school professionals, families and community members, or any other participating population?

6. Identify at least two project outcomes. For each outcome, how will success be measured? Please refer to the appendix for early literacy assessment examples.
 - a. Required: Student Growth Outcome 1 and which assessment you will use to measure success.
 - b. Required: Outcome 2 and how you will measure success.
 - c. Optional: Outcome 3 and how you will measure success.
7. Provide an implementation plan, including a month-by-month timeline (August 2024-August 2025).
8. Describe how you will sustain the project after the first year of funding funding.
9. Identify the project's key personnel. Include position, email addresses, expertise area, previous grant experience, and contributions to the project.
 - a. Describe the educational and/or community partnership and briefly outline each partner's role in the grant project.

Part 3: Budget (see Appendix C)

Part 4: Partnership Acknowledgement Form (see Appendix D)

Appendix B: SELG Expansion of Promising Practices Grant Application

The proposal is composed of four parts (cover sheet, narrative, budget, and partnership acknowledgment form), all submitted electronically. Below is a list of all the information grant seekers should have prepared to complete a proposal submission.

Part 1: Cover Sheet

Project Title:

Proposing School/Organization(s):

Collaborative Educational/Community Partner(s):

Promising Practice (select one):

- High Quality Instruction (HQI) by providing scaffolded, STEAM-integrated writing instruction to students in grades PreK-3
- School Readiness (SR) by forming corporate partnerships to allow for family literacy training in the workplace.
- Extended Learning (EL) by aligning curricular and intervention efforts with after school providers.

Age/Grade Level (select all that apply):

Target Population (e.g. ELL, low-SES, special education):

Counties Served:

Project director information (Name/Title, Address, Phone, Email):

Secondary contact information (Name/Title, Address, Phone, Email):

Requested Budget Amount:

Part 2: Narrative Prompts

1. Describe precisely the specific needs of the school and/or community and the rationale behind choosing this promising practice (500 word maximum).
2. Describe the student population targeted in this project (ELL, low-SES, special education, etc.). Use available school/district data to demonstrate need. Include number of students, age/grade etc.
3. Describe how you plan to implement this promising practice in your project.
4. What do you hope to learn from model project leadership that will help you successfully implement this project? What support do you anticipate needing to implement this project?
5. Identify at least three project outcomes. For each outcome, how will success be measured? Please refer to the appendix for early literacy assessment examples.
 - a. Required: Student Growth Outcome 1 and which assessment you will use to measure success.
 - b. Required: Outcome 2 and how you will measure success.

- c. Required: Draft Outcome 3 (Collaboration with Model Project) and how you will measure success.

Part 3: Budget (see Appendix C)

Part 4: Partnership Acknowledgement Form (see Appendix D)

Appendix C: Required Documents

Sparking Early Literacy Growth Grant Budget Form

School Name/County: _____

Project Director Name: _____

Project Title: _____

Category	Requested Amount	In-Kind <small>(ex. Staff time, Title Funds, other grants, school district support)</small>	Budget Justification <small>Describe how the expenses align with the purpose of the grant.</small>
Professional Development/ Technical Assistance			
Supplies			
Equipment			
Personnel <small>(Please include number of staff, rate, and time commitment)</small>			
Other			
Total			

Partnership Acknowledgement Form

To be considered for a grant award and funding, all early literacy grant proposals must include at least one collaborative educational/community partner (i.e., agency, school, after-school program); some projects may include more than one partner. Please complete this form and attach it to the online application.

Proposing School/Organization	
Project Director Name	
Title	
Phone	
Email	
Signature	

Administrator/Organization Leader	
Name	
Title	
Email	
Signature	

Educational/Community Partner	
Partner Contact Name	
Title	
Phone	
Email	
Signature	

*If you have more than two partners, please include the partner's information below.

Appendix D:

The Science of Reading: Talking Points and Supporting Research



The Science of Reading – What’s the Difference?

The *Science of Reading* is the body of scientific research conducted over the last several decades that demonstrates how the brain becomes proficient with language and proves which instructional practices are the most effective for developing strong readers and writers. There are several key differences between practices from previous reading movements and the *Science Of Reading* research consensus.

Ineffective Practices During the Eras of Reading First and Balanced Literacy	Best Practices Based on the <i>Science of Reading</i>
Using pictures and other clues to guess words instead of decoding them; a practice known as three-cueing	Teaching phonics explicitly and systematically with a clear scope and sequence and without three-cueing
Memorizing lists of whole high-frequency words (often referred to as “sight” words)	Mapping the sound-spelling patterns of high-frequency words to make them easier for students to remember and transfer to similar words
Restricting students to leveled texts with limited knowledge and vocabulary for comprehension and content instruction	Using complex grade-level texts for comprehension and content instruction with supports to give all students access
Treating comprehension like a skill and focusing on extensive instruction of isolated strategies with simple texts	Intentionally building knowledge and practicing strategies in the context of rich grade-level texts
Teaching vocabulary words in isolation only	Teaching vocabulary both out-of-context and in the context of rich grade-level texts
Separating writing instruction from reading instruction	Integrating writing as a learning tool to master decoding skills and to synthesize and communicate comprehension of topics and texts

Research Consensus by Topic with Links to Supporting Documents



Phonological and Phonemic Awareness

Phonological awareness is an umbrella term that means an awareness of the sounds in spoken words, including syllabication, rhyming, segmentation, and blending of individual sounds (phonemes). Phonemic awareness is an awareness of the individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words.

Phonemic awareness is an important predictor of future reading success, plays a critical role in accurate and automatic word reading, and is the foundation for phonics, fluency, and spelling.

- [Kilpatrick – How we Remember Words and Why Some Children Don't](#)
- [Teaching Phoneme Awareness in 2022: A Guide for Educators](#)
- [Meeting the Challenges of Early Literacy Phonics Instruction](#)

Phonemic awareness instruction should be explicit (direct), systematic (from easier skills to harder ones in a cumulative review cycle), data driven, and should follow a scope and sequence.

- [What's Settled About the Science of Reading?](#)
- [National Reading Panel Report](#)
- [Teaching Phoneme Awareness in 2022: A Guide for Educators](#)

Phonics

Phonics is the relationship between the individual sounds (phonemes) in written language and their corresponding spelling patterns (graphemes).

Phonics instruction should be explicit (direct), systematic (from easiest skills through advanced in a teach/practice/ review cycle that achieves mastery), data driven, and should follow a scope and sequence that includes all the major skills (no gaps).

- [What's Settled About the Science of Reading?](#)
- [National Reading Panel Report](#)
- [Meeting the Challenges of Early Literacy Phonics Instruction](#)

Three-cueing (guessing words based on pictures and other clues) should not be taught or encouraged because it causes students to rely on clues other than phonics patterns, which prevents the formation of brain connections that make orthographic mapping (process used by skilled readers) possible.

- [At a Loss for Words: How a Flawed Idea is Teaching Millions of Kids to be Poor Readers](#)
- [Orthographic Mapping: Cracking the ABC Code](#)
- [How the Brain Learns to Read \(min. 3:28-15:38\)](#)
- [Kilpatrick – How we Remember Words and Why Some Children Don't](#)

Both irregularly and regularly spelled high-frequency words should be taught by mapping sound-spelling patterns as much as possible, not memorizing whole words. Memorizing whole words uses visual memory, which takes much more effort, stores the words in a different part of the brain that isn't as easily accessible, and doesn't make the orthographic connections that allow students to transfer the sound-spelling patterns to other similar words.

- [New Brain Study Sheds Light on How Best to Teach Reading](#)
 - [Stanford Study on Brain Waves Shows How Different Teaching Methods Affect Reading Development](#)
 - [How the Brain Learns to Read \(min. 3:28-15:38\)](#)
 - [Kilpatrick – How we Remember Words and Why Some Children Don't](#)
 - [Understanding and Teaching Reading Fluency in Your Classroom](#)
 - [Teach Sight Words as You Would Other Words](#)
-

Fluency

Fluency is reading accurately (accuracy) at a conversational pace (automaticity) with appropriate expression (prosody).

Fluency is an important component of comprehension because it frees up working memory so readers can focus on meaning. Instruction progresses from the letter and word level to connected grade-level texts and should include modeling (preferably with human vs. tech voice), repeated readings, and progress monitoring.

- [National Reading Panel Report](#)
 - [Understanding and Teaching Reading Fluency in Your Classroom](#)
 - [The Complex Nature of Reading Fluency— A Multidimensional Approach](#)
-

The most effective fluency practice strategies include choral reading, echo reading, and partner reading.

- [National Reading Panel Report](#)
 - [Developing Fluent Readers](#)
-

Once students have mastered decoding, fluency instruction is most effective with grade-level texts.

- [What Texts to Use to Teach Fluency](#)
 - [Teaching Oral Reading Fluency to Older Students](#)
-

Vocabulary

Vocabulary is the knowledge of words and word meanings required to understand and communicate effectively when listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Most words are learned indirectly through read-alouds, discussions, and a wide volume of reading. All the methods for building knowledge also build vocabulary.

- *What's Settled About the Science of Reading?*
- *Effective Vocabulary Instruction*
- *Teaching Vocabulary*
- *Job One: Build Knowledge*

It takes repetition and multiple exposures for students to “own” a word (learn it to the point that they add it to their speaking and writing lexicon).

- *Words are Learned Incrementally Over Multiple Exposures*
- *Effective Vocabulary Instruction*
- *Teaching Vocabulary*

Students need to learn 2,000-3,000 words a year, so it is crucial to teach vocabulary both directly (out-of-context) and in the context of reading, discussing, and writing about complex, grade-level texts.

- *The Influence of Vocabulary on Reading Acquisition*
- *Teaching Vocabulary*
- *Effective Vocabulary Instruction*

Since we can only directly teach about 200-300 words a year, it is imperative to choose words that are not well-known to students, are encountered across multiple academic domains, are part of a word family, are abstract, or have multiple meanings.

- *Effective Vocabulary Instruction*
- *Choosing Words to Teach*

Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the ability to make meaning from text

It is settled science that background knowledge of words and the world is the single largest driver of reading comprehension, but activating prior knowledge only benefits students who have it (typically those with higher SES). We must start building knowledge the moment students enter school and cannot afford to wait until they can decode independently. This is accomplished through interactive read-alouds in the primary grades. Reading multiple texts about one topic (text sets) builds knowledge and vocabulary four times faster than other methods.

- *What's Settled About the Science of Reading?*
- *Knowledge at the Center of English Language Arts Instruction*
- *Effect of Prior Knowledge on Good and Poor Readers' Memory of Text*
- *Reading Comprehension Requires Knowledge—Of Words and the World*
- *Job One: Build Knowledge*
- *Building Knowledge—What an Elementary Curriculum Should Do*
- *Reading to Learn from the Start*

Explicit comprehension strategy instruction is effective, but only up to six lessons. Beyond that, it's best to teach and practice comprehension strategies in the context of reading, discussing, and writing about complex grade-level texts, using text evidence and allowing the demands of the text to guide instruction.

- *The Usefulness of Brief Instruction in Comprehension Strategies*
- *Don't Spend Excessive Time Teaching Formal Comprehension Skills – p. 22*
- *Rethinking How to Promote Reading Comprehension*
- *Building Knowledge: The Case for Bringing Content Into the Language Arts Block*
- *The Opportunity Myth*

Using a scaffolded analytical reading routine that involves repeated reading of challenging text with text-dependent questions and other supports to give all students access improves fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension at the same time.

- *Why Children Should be Taught to Read With More Challenging Texts*
- *How Close is Close Reading?*
- *What's Settled About the Science of Reading?*
- *Knowledge at the Center of English Language Arts Instruction*
- *Taking the Complexity Out of Teaching With Complex Texts*

Leveled texts should not be used for comprehension or content instruction. The idea of independent, instructional and frustration-level text is based on a study that was not completed properly and has been debunked many times. Students learn more from complex grade-level texts combined with lots of instructional support to give all students access.

- *Limiting Children to Books They Can Already Read – Why it Reduces Their Opportunity to Learn*
- *New Evidence on Teaching Reading at Frustration Levels*
- *What Does the Easter Bunny Have in Common With the Independent Reading Level?*
- *What's Settled About the Science of Reading?*

Writing

Writing is communicating thoughts and ideas using written language.

Writing to synthesize and communicate students' understanding of complex grade-level texts using text evidence, enhances comprehension of both literary and informational text.

- *Writing to Read: Evidence for How Writing Can Improve Reading*

Writing about grade-level social studies, science, and math topics promotes students' learning of the material and builds their academic vocabulary.

- *Writing to Read: Evidence for How Writing Can Improve Reading*

Foundational writing skills are important predictors of future academic success.

- *Handwriting in Early Childhood Education: Current Research and Future Implications*
- *Promoting Preschoolers' Emergent Writing Skills*

Explicitly teaching the writing process, organizational structures, and foundational skills of writing in the context of reading, comprehension, and content instruction will improve decoding, fluency, and comprehension.

- *Teaching Elementary School Students to be Effective Writers*
 - *Teaching Writing to Improve Reading Skills*
-

For more information, please visit <https://wvde.us/ready-read-write/>.

Appendix E: Assessing Student Literacy Learning

Projects must measure student change/growth/improvement using a pre-post assessment tool [selected by project director/organization]. Assessment plans may consist of data collected as part of the organization’s existing assessment strategy or include assessment protocols specific to the project.

Selecting Assessments

ILA Literacy Leadership Brief: Literacy Assessment – What Everyone Needs to Know

The quality and utility of both summative and ongoing literacy assessments depends on the context and consequences of their use (ILA, 2017). All literacy assessments must provide some value-added for teaching and learning (International Reading Association, 2010a). A

West Virginia Department of Education Approved Screener List

Assessment Name	Assessment Type	Provider	Administration Type	Frequency of Assessment	Length	Meets Classification Accuracy Criteria	Meets Validity Criteria	Meets Reliability Criteria	Literacy Component	Numeracy Component	Dyslexia Screening Component
Acadience Reading & Math K-6 Learn More (PDF)	Universal Screener	Voyager Sopris Learning	Manual or Digital Entry	3 times per year	5-10 minutes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Istation Learn More (PDF)	Universal Screener	Istation	Digital	3 times per year	30 Minutes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
i-Ready Diagnostic for Reading and Math	Universal Screener	Curriculum Associates	Digital	3 times per year	45 Minutes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Learn More (PDF)												
Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) GROWTH Learn More (PDF)	Universal Screener	NWEA	Digital	3 times per year with optional summer administration	45 Minutes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
mCLASS - DIBELS 8th Edition Learn More (PDF)	Universal Screener	Amplify	Manual or Digital Entry	3 times per year	1-5 Minutes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	?	Yes	Yes
Star Assessments (Star Reading Star Math and Star Early Literacy) Learn More (PDF)	Universal Screener	Digital	3 times per year	15-30 Minutes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
AimswebPlus Learn More (PDF)	Universal Screener	Pearson	Digital	3 times per year	10-35 Minutes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

For more information about assessment related to the Third Grade Success Act, please visit <https://wvde.us/third-grade-success-act/>

Formal Literacy Assessments

- Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP): CTOPP helps to measure phonological awareness, phonological memory, and rapid naming. Measuring this type of processing provides an early gauge for reading fluency. The test comes in two forms: one for ages five to six and one for seven to twenty-four. Testing can take at least thirty minutes but can increase depending on the number of subtests administered. Results are categorized into raw scores, standard scores, age equivalents, grade equivalents, and percentile ranks.
- Gates-MacGintie Reading Test (Gates): Gates measures student levels of and achievement in reading based on state and national standards. The test measures important reading stages along a comprehension continuum. Two test levels are available—Level 1 is 1:55 minutes, and Level 2 is 2:75 minutes. There are also alternate pre and post testing options. Gates is suitable for Reading First and Striving Readers programs. Online reports of the test are available in Interactive Results Manager.
- Gray Oral Reading Test (GORT): GORT measures oral reading rate, reading fluency, reading accuracy, and reading comprehension. The test ranges from fifteen to forty-five minutes long and offers both pre and post testing forms. Test results are rate scores, accuracy scores, fluency scores, comprehension scores, standard scores, quotients, and percentiles. GORT also provides miscue analysis that can be used to drive future instruction.
- Test of Reading Comprehension (TORC): TORC measures reading comprehension. There are different test sections for different subjects that include key vocabulary words pertaining to each subject, allowing for assessment of reading comprehension relative to the subject area. The test is forty to sixty minutes in length. The results are categorized into scores for general vocabulary, syntactic similarity, paragraph reading, sentence structure, subject vocabulary, and reading direction.

Appendix F: West Virginia Public Schools Data Snapshot

West Virginia Public Schools Data Snapshot			
	3rd Grade Reading Proficiency (based on the WV General Summative Assessment)	Percentage of Low SES Students	Percentage of Special Education Students
STATE OF WV	81,273	48,213	16,431
COUNTY			
Barbour	40.2%	57.9%	27.1%
Berkeley	32.3%	54.2%	19.0%
Boone	44.6%	69.6%	23.4%
Braxton	30.7%	69.3%	24.9%
Brooke	46.0%	61.7%	27.2%
Cabell	45.6%	61.3%	22.5%
Calhoun	34.6%	72.5%	19.8%
Clay	40.0%	77.1%	21.8%
Doddridge	53.1%	57.1%	23.2%
Fayette	30.7%	63.9%	22.1%
Gilmer	44.4%	53.7%	18.6%
Grant	42.7%	59.1%	16.0%
Greenbrier	38.4%	64.0%	22.9%
Hampshire	43.6%	58.4%	19.3%
Hancock	46.0%	50.5%	22.9%
Hardy	37.9%	55.5%	20.2%
Harrison	39.6%	54.6%	22.4%
Jackson	50.4%	57.8%	19.0%
Jefferson	34.4%	44.7%	14.9%
Kanawha	36.5%	67.5%	18.0%
Lewis	26.2%	70.1%	19.6%
Lincoln	30.3%	66.6%	21.5%
Logan	39.7%	71.1%	22.2%
Marion	41.2%	52.1%	18.1%
Marshall	47.2%	53.0%	18.4%
Mason	36.7%	60.2%	19.3%
Mercer	35.6%	68.1%	23.5%

Mineral	26.7%	50.2%	18.9%
Mingo	34.1%	79.6%	13.0%
Monongalia	49.4%	37.1%	15.8%
Monroe	13.8%	63.5%	20.7%
Morgan	52.3%	53.4%	18.9%
McDowell	22.4%	76.7%	18.1%
Nicholas	33.7%	66.5%	18.4%
Ohio	56.5%	56.6%	18.9%
Pendleton	44.9%	46.2%	8.6%
Pleasants	30.9%	54.3%	16.0%
Pocahontas	40.7%	59.9%	11.7%
Preston	36.8%	50.9%	19.9%
Putnam	49.6%	43.7%	19.2%
Raleigh	45.3%	65.6%	20.3%
Randolph	23.3%	58.3%	18.3%
Ritchie	54.2%	57.9%	24.0%
Roane	26.9%	61.0%	23.5%
Summers	22.2%	74.5%	21.4%
Taylor	40.3%	48.6%	22.9%
Tucker	33.9%	46.8%	16.7%
Tyler	48.1%	60.8%	12.2%
Upshur	31.3%	65.8%	17.9%
Wayne	49.5%	69.0%	29.1%
Webster	43.7%	69.6%	15.2%
Wetzel	27.7%	65.4%	20.9%
Wirt	38.2%	56.7%	28.5%
Wood	55.0%	60.3%	23.8%
Wyoming	32.9%	69.5%	28.5%

Source: ZoomWV (West Virginia Department of Education, 2023)