



Reading Initiative for Student Excellence



R.I.S.E. Arkansas

(R.I.S.E.: Reading Initiative for Student Excellence)

Current Reality in Arkansas:

- 31% of Arkansas' 4th-grade students are proficient in reading (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2015).
- 27% of Arkansas' 8th-grade students are proficient in reading (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2015).
- Arkansas ranks in the lower third in reading scores in comparison to other states (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2015).
- 48.6% of Arkansas' students in grades 3-10 are proficient in English language arts (ACT Aspire, 2015).
- 39% of Arkansas' graduating seniors met reading readiness benchmarks on the ACT (2015).

R.I.S.E. Arkansas Goals:

1. Increase the number of students in grades 3-8 who meet the ACT Aspire reading readiness benchmark by 10% within 3 years.
2. Rise above the bottom third in state comparisons within 5 years on the 4th-grade NAEP reading assessment.
3. Increase the number of graduates meeting The ACT reading readiness benchmark by 10% within 5 years.

Reading Initiative Actions:

1. Establish a culture of reading in Arkansas by coordinating a statewide reading campaign with community partners. Educate parents about the importance of reading, and increase access to books in the home.

The Facts:

*(Sources: Family and Community Engagement Research - Scholastic.com;
Children's Literacy Foundation - clifonline.org)*

- Reading is the cornerstone for success in college, career and community engagement.
- On average, children in poverty have been exposed to only 25 hours of one-on-one reading, compared to middle class children who have been exposed to 1,000-1,700 hours of one-on-one reading. Only 48% of young children are read to daily.
- 61% of low-income families have no age appropriate books in their home, with low-income neighborhoods having an average of one book for every 300 children. Middle-income homes have an average of 13 books per child.

- Having books at home is a better indicator of educational success than a parent's education.

Building the Culture

- ADE is proud to announce its 2nd Annual Reading Conference: A Focus on Dyslexia and the Science of Reading in Hot Springs. The FREE conference for educators will be held March 6-7, 2017, at the Hot Springs Convention Center. Districts are encouraged to send a team of educators. Learn more at <http://www.arkansased.gov/events/498/2017-ade-reading-conference-for-arkansas-schools>.
 - ADE will implement a R.I.S.E. Arkansas book talk campaign using #RISEArkansas.
 - ADE will implement a social media campaign that promotes a culture of reading.
 - Collaboration is the key to success. ADE is committed to collaborating with partners to promote a culture of reading and provide support for districts and higher education.
 - School districts will receive personalized materials this spring in order to launch a district reading campaign in the fall of 2017.
 - ADE will collaborate with stakeholders to look for opportunities to increase the number of books in the home.
 - An emphasis will be placed on educating parents about the importance of early literacy.
 - Resources for the well-being of the whole child will be provided.
2. Increase the depth of knowledge for teachers in the area of phonics and phonological awareness and how that knowledge impacts fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and writing. This includes focusing on the science of reading, or how a student learns.

Changing the Focus and Strengthening Instruction

- Educators must have an understanding of the science of reading as well as an in-depth understanding of phonics and phonemic awareness to support beginning readers. Intermediate level teachers also need this knowledge to provide support to struggling readers and help independent readers decode multi-syllabic words and have a basis for understanding the English language.
- This summer ADE will launch the R.I.S.E. Academy to support kindergarten through second-grade teachers for the 2017-18 school year. Education service cooperatives and several school districts will host the academies. ADE is currently providing training to more than 80 literacy specialists to assist with the academies this summer. Forty of these specialists will become lead trainers who will facilitate the academies and provide support for approximately 1,000 educators who teach grades K-2 for the 2017-18 school year. ADE specialists, higher education representatives, and state and district literacy specialists will provide regional support networks for each cohort group.
- This year-long blended learning professional development will provide educators with in-depth information related to the science of reading, evidence-based instructional strategies and how to make data-based decisions for students. Participants will receive coaching and opportunities for collaboration with other educators.
- The R.I.S.E. Academy will expand to train educators in grades 3-12 in 2018-19. The academy also will include administrator training. The administrator training will focus on reading supports and resources necessary to implement an effective reading program within the school, building foundational knowledge related to the science of reading and instructional components that should be evident during classroom observations.
- Language acquisition and vocabulary development begins long before students enter kindergarten. Collaboration with business and education partners, including higher education, is essential to improving instruction for future teachers to promote a deeper

understanding of the science of reading. Collaboration with the DHS Early Childhood Division is necessary to promote the importance of early literacy instruction for students in preschool entering kindergarten.

Call to Action:

1. ADE is kicking off this campaign by providing 150 books that will be distributed today. The students in attendance will leave today with a book to take home and read with their families. Additional books are available today for adults to take and share with someone in their communities.
2. All partners here today, including legislators, educators and community members, are encouraged to strengthen their partnerships to promote a culture of reading in their communities. This is not a one-time event; the importance of reading should be a focus throughout the entire year. Work together to hold a book drive, and donate the books to children. Volunteer by reading to students at the local school. Hold reading events in communities. The possibilities are endless.
3. This is a phased campaign. Additional materials and resources will be provided this spring to school districts so they can launch their own campaign or build upon an existing reading campaign this fall.
4. Visit <http://www.arkansased.gov> to learn more. Be sure to share outreach efforts online using #RISEArkansas.