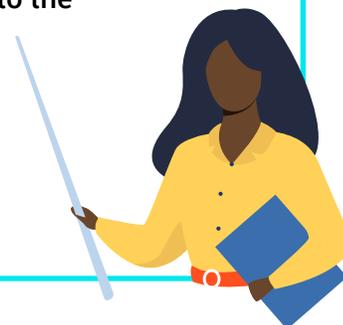


## Overview

Our nation is undergoing a literacy crisis. Two decades ago, research from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development produced the groundbreaking and influential report on the science of reading: “Teaching Children to Read.”<sup>1</sup> This National Reading Panel report reviewed existing reading research to determine the most effective methods for teaching reading. Even though the report identified the five essential components of reading instruction, the recommendations have not been implemented at scale and there have been only marginal annual gains in reading scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). At the same time, socioeconomic disparities in literacy are growing. For decades, experts have known what it takes to effectively teach reading skills, but school instruction has not caught up. Implementing evidence-based reading practices would benefit all students, but would be especially beneficial to students with reading disabilities such as dyslexia.

### FAST FACTS

- Since 2017, reading scores have slightly decreased for students in grades 4, 8, and 12, and scores have not significantly changed over the last 10 years, according to the 2019 NAEP.<sup>2</sup>
- Black and Hispanic students enter high school with average literacy skills three years behind those of White and Asian students.<sup>3</sup>
- Students impacted by poverty enter high school with average literacy skills five years behind those of high-income students.<sup>4</sup>



### NCLD believes:

1. Literacy must become a national focus in every grade to give students opportunities to succeed and develop a strong and career-ready workforce.
2. Educators in every grade and content area must be equipped to provide high-quality and effective literacy instruction to late elementary, middle, and high school students who still struggle to read.
3. Public access to evidence-based instructional strategies must be universal.

## To improve literacy nationwide, NCLD advocates for:

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- Increasing funds to allow additional states to receive grants to develop and support programs that focus on pre-literacy skills, reading, and writing for students from birth through grade 12, including English learners and students with disabilities, i.e., the Every Student Succeeds Act’s “Literacy Education for All, Results for the Nation” program, including the Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grants.
- Establishing a grant program that incentivizes states to set requirements for teacher candidate licensure, certification, or teaching standards that will prepare all educators, regardless of grade or content area, to provide evidence-based literacy instruction to students.
- Enhancing dissemination of and access to evidence-based literacy practices to ensure that educators have the resources needed to effectively instruct students.

- 1 National Reading Panel (U.S.), National Institute of Child Health, & Human Development (US). (2000). *Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction: Reports of the subgroups*. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, National Institutes of Health.
- 2 National Center for Education Statistics. National Assessment of Educational Progress (Project). (2019). *NAEP ... reading report card for the nation and the states*. National Center for Education Statistics.
- 3 Reardon, S. F., Valentino, R. A., & Shores, K. A. (2012). Patterns of literacy among U.S. students. *The Future of Children*, 22(2), 17–37.
- 4 Reardon, S. F., Valentino, R. A., & Shores, K. A. (2012). Patterns of literacy among U.S. students. *The Future of Children*, 22(2), 17–37.



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