



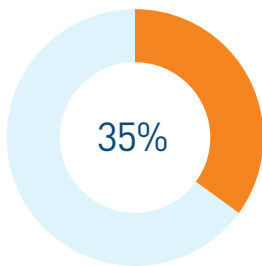
EMPOWERED

empowering michigan education

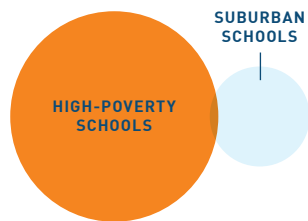


IMPROVING LITERACY OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS IN MICHIGAN

Building an Educator Workforce Capable of Literacy Instruction



Children in high-poverty schools are 35% more likely to experience principal turnover than students in middle-class schools.



Children in high-poverty schools are twice as likely to have inexperienced teachers as students in suburban schools.

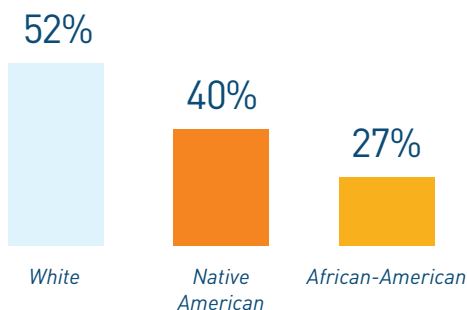
The lack of teachers and principals skilled at delivering and leading literacy instruction is crippling Michigan students.

Students' literacy capacities—and their trust—wither in the absence of the expert instruction of a teacher who knows them well. Yet, too few Michigan classroom teachers have the adequate experience to develop students' proficiencies with reading and writing.

Students of color and students affected by poverty bear the brunt of inconsistent and insufficient literacy teaching. As a consequence, these students' literacy skills lag behind that of their peers.

WRITING PROFICIENCY OF MICHIGAN FOURTH-GRADERS

Outcomes from the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)



Sometimes, teachers themselves come to schools without a certification or background in literacy teaching, compromising the quality of literacy instruction in some of our most economically challenged communities. Even worse, many of these teachers are assigned to remediation courses, where they are grossly underprepared to meet the needs of students requiring targeted and intensive literacy intervention.

At other times, teachers lack the capability to deliver excellent literacy instruction because underperforming schools do not provide the professional development or coaching that propel teachers to become the literacy experts they need to be.

Chronic turnover in teachers—and principals—is an additional, persistent problem. ¹ Turnover disrupts the years of substantive training and planning that it often takes to build a quality literacy program.

We need to give Michigan teachers and principals the training and supports necessary for maintaining a strong teaching force. To do so, we must:

- **Strengthen, increase the time for, and require pre-service and inservice training** that provides intensive and ongoing literacy professional development in reading and writing instruction for all teachers, across the grade-range and content areas, with an equivalent literacy training component for administrators.
- **Encourage ongoing, job-embedded collaboration** as a form of professional development that enables educators to solve difficult problems of practice related to literacy.
- **Invite all primary caregivers and childcare providers to early childhood professional development** based at school districts and Intermediate School Districts, encouraging such caregivers (and all teachers) to annually assess the quality of their literacy practices and supports and to create action plans for further growth based on the results.
- **Fund, over a ramp-up period of five years, the equivalent of a minimum of one full-time literacy instructional coach** per 20 classroom teachers and a minimum of one per school.
- **Tailor teacher evaluation to include a specific concern with the quality and effectiveness of literacy instruction** and train district or school administrators to effectively assess best practices in literacy instruction.
- **Stabilize the chronic turnover of teachers and principals in low-performing schools** so that substantive, multi-year training and literacy plans can be implemented.

Want to learn more about what you can do? Read the full report on *Improving Literacy Outcomes for Students in Michigan's Most Vulnerable Schools* at aclumich.org.

¹ School Leaders Network. (2014). CHURN: The High Cost of Principal Turnover. Retrieved from http://connectleadsucceed.org/sites/default/files/principal_turnover_cost.pdf.

WHO CAN HELP

Here is how we, as a state, can take action to ensure a quality literacy education for all of our children.

GOVERNOR, STATE BOARD, AND LEGISLATURE

- Fund incentives to recruit and retain high-quality teachers, instructional coaches, and school leaders for the communities most in need.
- Increase certification requirements to include additional literacy coursework and field experience that is aligned with current research and standards.

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE SCHOOL REFORM/REDESIGN OFFICE

- Revise testing requirements for certification (PRE- and MTTC) to focus on knowledge and skills that have been shown in research to predict student growth.
- Specify certification grade bands at grades PK–2, 3–5, 6–8, and 9–12 to ensure that teachers of different developmental periods possess the requisite literacy teaching knowledge and practical skill to serve the students they teach.
- Improve process for reviewing and approving professional development offerings to satisfy clock hour requirements.
- Tailor teacher evaluation to include a specific concern with the quality and effectiveness of literacy education, and train district and school administrators to effectively assess the quality of literacy education.

UNIVERSITIES AND TEACHER EDUCATION PROVIDERS

- Aggressively recruit prospective teachers for undergraduate and masters-with-certification programs who have a commitment to work in communities most in need.
- Expand pre-service/inservice training that provides intensive and ongoing literacy professional development for all teachers, with an equivalent literacy training component for school leaders and instructional coaches.
- Provide high-quality, low-cost continuous professional development to districts and schools through long-term university-school partnerships, including, but not limited to, the Michigan Standards, state testing measures, and teacher evaluation measures.

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND LOCAL SCHOOLS

- Implement evidence-based strategies to reduce chronic turnover of teachers and principals in low-performing schools so that substantive, multi-year professional development and literacy plans can be implemented.
- Provide high-quality, low-cost continuous professional development to all teachers.