

# A LEADER'S GUIDE TO A THEORY OF ACTION FOR Raising Michigan's Literacy Achievement

The path to raising student achievement is not a direct line from funding to outcome. High levels of student achievement will result only when core instructional practices are defined with educator and system supports in place that contribute to literacy success for every student. These include the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) General Education Leadership Network (GELN) Literacy Task Force (Early Literacy Task Force, 6-12 Task Force) *Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy* (Birth to Age 3, Prekindergarten, Grades K-3, Grades 4-5) recommended for use in every classroom every day, *Essential School-Wide and Center-Wide Practices in Literacy* in every school and center, and *Essential Coaching Practices in Elementary Literacy* in use by every literacy coach. For the *Essential Instructional Practices for Disciplinary Literacy* (Grades 6-12), it is important that the practices are used consistently in every classroom on a regular basis.



## Literacy Theory of Action



## This theory of action requires a structure of supports from the system to the student level.

- If we have *Essential Instructional Practices in Literacy* articulated and adopted at the system level,
  - ▶ we can align **research, practice, resources and policy.**
- If we have aligned policies, funding, initiatives, and resources system wide,
  - ▶ we can develop **leadership** for literacy at the state, regional and local levels.
- If we have state-wide leadership capacity focused on literacy at the school and center level in an intentional, multi-year manner,
  - ▶ we can embed and sustain professional learning through literacy **coaching** statewide.
- If teaching teams and individual teachers are supported by quality coaching,
  - ▶ we can strengthen the literacy instructional practices for all **Michigan Teachers.**
- If we have the *Essential Instructional Literacy Practices* occurring in every classroom, every day,
  - ▶ **All Michigan children** develop strong literacy knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

*Each element is critical and will be attended to in ongoing evaluation and improvement of this initiative.*

## **Professional learning design**

As documented in the MAISA GELN ELTF *Essential School-Wide and Center-Wide Practices in Literacy: Prekindergarten and Elementary Grades* and *Essential Coaching Practices in Elementary Literacy*, support of administrators' and teachers' development requires job-embedded ongoing professional learning. After being introduced to new knowledge, skills, and dispositions, administrators and teachers need opportunities to practice and receive feedback as they employ new learning in the school, center, and classroom. Resources provided through Michigan Department of Education grants are developing skills of ISD early literacy coaches and creating a sustainable system of resources, including:

- Essential practices in literacy instruction, coaching, school-wide and center-wide practices, and leadership;
- access to university researchers who are experts in the area of early literacy;
- professional learning opportunities and a network to provide ongoing support; and
- print, video, and digital resources about effective literacy instruction, coaching, and leadership.

“One size fits all” professional learning does not meet the needs of today’s educators. A blended training model of online and face-to-face experiences offers professional learning and corresponding wrap-around supports, including a statewide literacy mentors’ network. Instructional modules under development will provide a rich library of video instruction segments. Also under development is an online professional learning community to support all Michigan early literacy educators.

These intentional efforts will ensure a consistent, ongoing source of support for high-quality literacy instruction, resulting in improved literacy skills for all Michigan students.