



## ► Maryland READS Statement on Version 4 of MSDE's Draft Literacy Policy

October 21, 2024

Maryland READS applauds the Maryland State Board of Education, Dr. Wright, and her team for taking swift and decisive action to address the reading crisis in Maryland, AND for being responsive to feedback on the draft literacy policy, as demonstrated by the thoughtful revisions across its four versions.

While the process and **the resulting policy may be imperfect**, they represent a **crucial step in the right direction** toward a comprehensive approach to literacy in our state. This momentum is both significant and encouraging.

*If engaged in a meaningful and more efficient manner*, the organizations that participated in the review of this policy can play a pivotal role in its evolution and, more importantly, in its successful implementation. Their insights, expertise, and ongoing engagement can contribute to the development of a literacy framework that not only meets the needs of our students but positions Maryland as a national leader in literacy education.

For these reasons, we strongly urge MSDE to establish a task force that convenes for **monthly meetings** where MSDE engages in a meaningful way with these key stakeholders. Consistent and formal engagement will ensure greater collective collaboration among all stakeholders and MSDE, foster transparency, and provide opportunities to fine-tune the policy and its rollout, **maximizing its impact**.

**Maryland READS** is committed to serving as a resource, providing continued input on the development of literacy policies, supporting related legislative efforts, and helping to craft the rollout of this policy that will be essential for effective implementation. We look forward to partnering with the Department to ensure this critical work leads to meaningful, lasting improvements in literacy outcomes for all students across Maryland.

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**Maryland READS** is a non-profit organization that was founded to end the literacy crisis in Maryland. Based on the most current rigorous research and evidence of impact, Maryland READS focuses on three proven paths to closing the literacy gap: improving reading instruction in the classroom through the Science of Reading; creating thriving community-based reading ecosystems outside the classroom; and addressing barriers that prevent students from becoming proficient readers like addictive technology. Through collaboration and strategic partnerships, Maryland READS is building a powerful statewide network to provide community leaders with a place to engage, share best practices, advocate and shape their action plans to ensure all children have the literacy skills necessary for success in school and beyond. Learn more about our growing reading network at [marylandreads.org](https://marylandreads.org)