



CLSD Local Literacy Plan Toolkit

Kindergarten-12th Grade

October 2025

Table of Contents

CLSD Local Literacy Plan Toolkit.....	1
Kindergarten-12 th Grade	1
Using the Toolkit	1
Essential Parts of a Literacy Plan.....	1
Introduction	1
Literacy Team.....	2
Literacy Vision	3
Needs Assessment	3
Goals	16
Literacy Instruction	17
Use of Data.....	18
Leadership.....	20
Professional Development.....	21
Family Involvement.....	24
Partnerships	25



Using the Toolkit

Use this toolkit as a guide to the essential components of a local literacy plan. Inside, you will find guidance and suggestions for each part of the plan, along with resources and examples to reference. The toolkit also includes fillable boxes designed to support you in drafting and organizing your plan as you move through the process.

Essential Parts of a Literacy Plan

Your final literacy plan will include all of the essential parts outlined in this toolkit. Each section is designed to be created piece by piece, and together they will build a comprehensive literacy plan for your district or organization.

- ❖ Introduction
- ❖ Literacy Vision
- ❖ Literacy Team
- ❖ Needs Assessment
- ❖ Goals
- ❖ Literacy Instruction
- ❖ Use of Data
- ❖ Professional Development
- ❖ Leadership
- ❖ Family Involvement
- ❖ Partnerships

Introduction

The introduction sets the purpose of the literacy plan. It explains why the plan exists, what it aims to accomplish, and how it will guide literacy work across the district or organization. Although the introduction is listed first, your team may complete it last. Most teams will begin by setting the direction and purpose of the plan by developing a literacy mission or vision statement.

A literacy plan sets the vision for an organization's literacy programming and serves as a roadmap to guide implementation and achieve performance goals.

A comprehensive literacy plan should:

- Be informed by a needs assessment
- Align with the Statewide Comprehensive Literacy Plan
- Include age bands served
- Include specific goals
- Include instruction and practices supported by evidence
- Include a plan for professional learning
- Be data-driven, with appropriate collection and use of data
- Reflect leadership, educator, partner, and family voice and communication



In this section, you might include:

- When the plan was created
- Who was involved in its development
- Why it is important to have a documented literacy plan

Resources:

- Cherry Creek Literacy Plan 2023-2027
- North Harrison R-III Missouri
- Naugatuck Public Schools (CT)

Literacy Team

The organization's literacy leadership team develops the literacy plan. A leadership team should include members to inform literacy instruction and improvement in the district or program, such as support staff, reading intervention specialists, educators from various grade levels and curriculum directors.

Members of the leadership team should include individuals with key positions at various levels of the organization. These individuals may include, but are not limited to:

- Superintendent/Head of School/Principal/Director;
- District/Campus/Building-level administrators;
- Teacher leaders from various content areas, grade/age levels, buildings and specialized instructional areas;
- Program directors and supervisors (special education, English learners (EL), curriculum, and early childhood); and
- Family and community engagement team members

[illegible]



Literacy Vision

Set the direction and purpose of your literacy plan by creating a mission and vision that reflect your local needs and context. These statements will ground your work and help ensure alignment across your schools, programs, and partners.

When drafting this section, you might include:

- A brief overview of your district/organization and current literacy practices
- Vision and mission statements that articulate your commitment to literacy
- Priorities related to vision and mission
- Connection to long-term goals for student outcomes and system improvement

Resources:

- [CDE's Strategic Plan](#)
- [CO Statewide Literacy Plan](#)
- [Adams 12 Strategic Literacy Vision](#)
- [Literacy at Boulder Valley](#)
- [Common Mission and Vision Strategy Guide](#)

Needs Assessment

The goal of a needs assessment is to help educators identify, understand, and prioritize organizational needs to improve student outcomes and overall performance. Start by reviewing your current practices, then determine and prioritize the areas to focus on. Key areas of assessment include leadership and systems, instruction and professional learning, and family and community partnerships.

Overview of Current Practices	
Core Instruction	
Evaluation	
Targeted Instruction, Supplemental Supports	
Intensive Instruction, Individualized Supports	
Sharing Information with Stakeholders	
Professional Development	

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A. Leadership and Systems:

Engaged Leadership and Well-Developed Infrastructure to Support Teachers

A1. How do program leaders show their support for helping all staff build the skills they need to provide high-quality, research-based literacy instruction?

- ☐ **Emerging:** There may be a limited understanding of reading acquisition and evidence-based instructional practices among program leaders; clarity and informed decision-making are inconsistent, and a unified voice on literacy matters is lacking.
- ☐ **Progressing:** Some leaders may possess a deep understanding of reading acquisition and evidence-based instructional practices. Literacy expertise has not been developed. A unified voice and comprehensive expertise are in progress but still needed.
- ☐ **Excelling:** Program leaders possess a deep understanding of reading acquisition and evidence-based instructional practices. Leaders provide clarity when needed and engage in informed decision-making. There is a unified voice on literacy matters.

Indicator A1 Action Plan

Current Status	<input type="radio"/> Emerging	<input type="radio"/> Progressing	<input type="radio"/> Excelling
Evidence/Notes			

Indicator A1 Action Steps

What specific steps, key checkpoints will be taken to reach the next status?

A2. How do program leaders create and support a culture of continuous learning for staff?

- ☐ **Emerging:** The organization is beginning to foster a culture of learning among staff, with sporadic professional development opportunities and limited encouragement for continuous improvement.

Staff may experience discomfort or struggle with new learning initiatives, indicating a need for more structured support and encouragement.

- ☐ **Progressing:** The organization is actively cultivating a culture of learning for staff, providing regular professional development opportunities and encouraging ongoing learning and skill enhancement. Staff are not included in decision making and may feel uncomfortable or challenged in adapting to new learning experiences.
- ☐ **Excelling:** The organization has successfully established a robust culture of learning for staff, with comprehensive and targeted professional development programs, strong support for continuous improvement, and a collaborative environment that promotes innovation and excellence. Staff members are included in decision-making and feel confident and comfortable with new learning.

Indicator A2 Action Plan

Current Status	<input type="radio"/> Emerging	<input type="radio"/> Progressing	<input type="radio"/> Excelling
Evidence/Notes			

Indicator A2 Action Steps

What specific steps, key checkpoints will be taken to reach the next status?

A3. How are literacy goals set and used to improve student outcomes?

- ☐ **Emerging:** Organization has developed goals that lack SMART goal elements or literacy goals have not yet been developed.
- ☐ **Progressing:** Organization has developed goals that have most of the elements of a SMART goal, but not all.
- ☐ **Excelling:** Organization has developed goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timebound (SMART).

Indicator A3 Action Plan

Current Status	<input type="radio"/> Emerging <input type="radio"/> Progressing <input type="radio"/> Excelling
Evidence/Notes	

Indicator A3 Action Steps

What specific steps, key checkpoints will be taken to reach the next status?

A4. How is data used to guide decision-making and drive instructional practices?

- ☐ **Emerging:** Program has a limited or underdeveloped data-based decision-making system, with irregular scheduling of data team meetings. Data is frequently limited to composite score levels, and its use for instructional purposes and student improvement is minimal or ineffective.
- ☐ **Progressing:** Program has a data-based decision-making system in place, but scheduling of data teams meetings may be inconsistent. Data is used to inform instruction but may not be pinpointing specific student skill deficits. Efforts to improve student outcomes are ongoing.
- ☐ **Excelling:** Program has a robust data-based decision-making system, with consistent scheduling of data team meetings. Data is effectively utilized to drive instruction and continuously improve student outcomes.

Indicator A4 Action Plan

Current Status	<input type="radio"/> Emerging <input type="radio"/> Progressing <input type="radio"/> Excelling
Evidence/Notes	

Indicator A4 Action Steps

What specific steps, key checkpoints will be taken to reach the next status?

A5. To what extent are teachers able to access, interpret, and use student data to inform instruction and lesson planning?

- ☐ **Emerging:** Teachers have limited knowledge of how to access and analyze data.
- ☐ **Progressing:** Teachers can access data but may not fully understand or apply it to instruction and lesson planning.
- ☐ **Excelling:** Teachers consistently access, interpret, and apply data to inform instruction, adjust lesson plans, and monitor student progress.

Indicator A5 Action Plan

Current Status	<input type="radio"/> Emerging <input type="radio"/> Progressing <input type="radio"/> Excelling
Evidence/Notes	

Indicator A5 Action Steps

What specific steps, key checkpoints will be taken to reach the next status?

Instruction and Professional Learning:

Instructional Practices, Data Use, Intervention Supports, and Professional Development that Drive Continuous Improvement

B1. Is a core curriculum being used that provides structured, evidence-based teaching of early literacy skills for all students?

- ☐ **Emerging:** Literacy is inconsistently addressed in the classroom, and when it is, practices may not fully align with current research on language and literacy development. Outdated methods are sometimes used, and updates are infrequent. Teachers may have limited access to high-quality, research-aligned literacy materials.
- ☐ **Progressing:** Instructional practices generally reflect current research, though implementation may vary. Efforts are made to update methods, but they are inconsistent. Teachers have access to some research-aligned materials, though they may still need to adapt or create additional resources to support literacy learning.
- ☐ **Excelling:** Instruction is fully aligned with the latest research. Teachers have access to high-quality, research-aligned curricular resources, eliminating the need to create their own materials.

Indicator B1 Action Plan

Current Status	<input type="radio"/> Emerging	<input type="radio"/> Progressing	<input type="radio"/> Excelling
Evidence/Notes			

Indicator B1 Action Steps

What specific steps, key checkpoints will be taken to reach the next status?

B2. Are systems in place to provide individualized support and differentiated instruction for students?

- ☐ **Emerging:** Teachers demonstrate limited understanding of meeting individual student needs, including those of students with disabilities, students of various cultures, and multilingual students, and how to effectively differentiate instruction. The LEA is in the process or planning stages of developing systems and professional development opportunities for teachers in these critical areas.

- ☐ **Progressing:** Teachers show some understanding of meeting individual student needs, including those of students with disabilities, students of various cultures, and multilingual students, through differentiated instruction. Differentiated instruction strategies are utilized to some extent, but their effectiveness in meeting diverse learning needs may vary.
- ☐ **Excelling:** Teachers demonstrate comprehensive knowledge and understanding of meeting individual student needs, including those of students with disabilities, students of various cultures, and multilingual students, through effective differentiated instruction, consistently and effectively employed. Support and differentiation for students are well documented and follows the student.

Indicator B2 Action Plan

Current Status	<input type="radio"/> Emerging	<input type="radio"/> Progressing	<input type="radio"/> Excelling
Evidence/Notes			

Indicator B2 Action Steps

What specific steps, key checkpoints will be taken to reach the next status?

B3. Does literacy instruction support vertical alignment and smooth transitions?

- ☐ **Emerging:** Literacy instruction provides incomplete coverage of essential skills across the PK–12 continuum, which may result in students entering the next grade level without adequate preparation. Systems for aligning instruction vertically and ensuring smooth transitions between early childhood, elementary, middle, and high school are limited or inconsistent.
- ☐ **Progressing:** Literacy instruction addresses key literacy skills across the PK–12 continuum to some extent, but coverage is inconsistent and may not fully ensure that all students develop mastery in each area or are fully prepared for smooth transitions between early childhood, elementary, middle, and high school.
- ☐ **Excelling:** Literacy instruction is comprehensive and consistently addresses all essential skills. Instruction is intentionally aligned across the PK–12 continuum, ensuring students are well-prepared for each transition, from early childhood through high school and beyond..

Indicator B3 Action Plan

Current Status	<input type="radio"/> Emerging	<input type="radio"/> Progressing	<input type="radio"/> Excelling
Evidence/Notes			

Indicator B3 Action Steps

What specific steps, key checkpoints will be taken to reach the next status?

B4. How is professional development designed to ensure a high rate of classroom implementation?

- ☐ **Emerging:** Professional development is mostly limited to outside-the-classroom sessions that present theory and demonstrate practices with minimal opportunities for feedback. This approach leads to increased teacher knowledge but does not significantly impact classroom practice. Or there may be a lack of professional development opportunities overall.
- ☐ **Progressing:** Professional development primarily consists of outside-the-classroom sessions focusing on theory, practice demonstrations, and feedback. While this approach improves teacher knowledge, it has limited impact on actual classroom practice, and in-classroom coaching is implemented sporadically, leading to some improvement in practice implementation with students.

- ☐ **Excelling:** Professional development includes a balanced combination of outside-the-classroom sessions that present theory, demonstrate practices, and offer feedback opportunities, alongside robust, ongoing in-classroom coaching. This approach ensures that teachers not only gain knowledge but also effectively implement new practices with students, leading to significant improvements in classroom practice and student outcomes.

Indicator B4 Action Plan

Current Status	<input type="radio"/> Emerging	<input type="radio"/> Progressing	<input type="radio"/> Excelling
Evidence/Notes			

Indicator B4 Action Steps

What specific steps, key checkpoints will be taken to reach the next status?

B5. How do program leaders ensure professional development is aligned with the organization's data and goals?

- ☐ **Emerging:** PD activities show some alignment with the organization's data and goals, but this alignment is inconsistent. There is little evidence of PD's impact on student achievement or staff performance, no formal measurement system exists, and/or stakeholder involvement in the planning and evaluation process is minimal.
- ☐ **Progressing:** PD activities are generally aligned with the organization's data and goals, though there may be occasional gaps. Mechanisms exist to monitor the impact of PD, but results may be variable and not consistently analyzed. Some stakeholders are involved in the planning process, though their input may be limited.
- ☐ **Excelling:** PD activities are consistently and comprehensively aligned with the organization's data and goals, with regular reviews ensuring continued alignment. There is a robust system in place that measures the significant positive impact of PD on student achievement and staff performance, with all relevant stakeholders actively involved in planning and evaluation.

Indicator B5 Action Plan

Current Status	<input type="radio"/> Emerging <input type="radio"/> Progressing <input type="radio"/> Excelling
Evidence/Notes	

Indicator B5 Action Steps

What specific steps, key checkpoints will be taken to reach the next status?

B. Family and Community Partnerships:**Collaboration with Families, Communities, and Partners to Support Student Success****C1. Does the organization establish effective partnerships, collaboration, and communication internally among departments and teams?**

- ☐ **Emerging:** Collaboration between departments and teams is sporadic, often driven by immediate needs rather than strategic planning. Communication is inconsistent, possibly leading to misunderstandings and misalignments in literacy instruction. Partnerships are in the early stages, with teams working independently and goals not yet fully aligned.
- ☐ **Progressing:** Teams collaborate regularly, though it may be informal or less structured. Communication is generally effective, but occasional gaps or inconsistencies exist. Partnerships are developing, with increasing alignment and shared goals, though full coordination is still in progress.
- ☐ **Excelling:** Teams consistently collaborate across departments, with clear, frequent communication involving all stakeholders. This strong partnership results in a cohesive, aligned approach to literacy instruction and measurable improvements in student outcomes.

Indicator C1 Action Plan

Current Status	<input type="radio"/> Emerging <input type="radio"/> Progressing <input type="radio"/> Excelling
Evidence/Notes	

Indicator C1 Action Steps

What specific steps, key checkpoints will be taken to reach the next status?

C2. Does the organization establish partnerships with community organizations?

- ☐ **Emerging:** The program's efforts to partner with community organizations have been limited or sporadic. While there are occasional collaborations with community organizations, they are not consistently developed or sustained over time.
- ☐ **Progressing:** The program is actively expanding its partnerships with community organizations, with some initial collaborative efforts already in place, such as occasional joint events or shared resources.
- ☐ **Excelling:** The program consistently establishes and maintains robust partnerships with diverse community organizations, including the local public library, community centers, after-school programs, cultural institutions, local colleges or universities, and other relevant entities. These partnerships result in collaborative programs and initiatives that benefit students, such as joint educational workshops, literacy programs, and extracurricular activities.

Indicator C2 Action Plan

Current Status	<input type="radio"/> Emerging <input type="radio"/> Progressing <input type="radio"/> Excelling
Evidence/Notes	

Indicator C2 Action Steps

What specific steps, key checkpoints will be taken to reach the next status?

C3. Does the organization effectively communicate with caregivers in the preferred language of families?

- ☐ **Emerging:** Information for parents on supporting their child or navigating interventions is inconsistent, not readily available, or difficult to understand, and/or communication is only in English. Efforts to enhance family involvement in literacy are underway, but resources and clarity remain limited.
- ☐ **Progressing:** Communication channels for informing parents about student challenges are developing. Access to information on supporting their child or navigating interventions may be inconsistent or difficult for parents to understand, and not all community languages are covered. There is an ongoing effort to improve family involvement in literacy.
- ☐ **Excelling:** When students encounter challenges, parents are promptly informed through effective communication channels, and they have easy access to information on how to support their child and navigate the intervention process within the school/district.

Indicator C3 Action Plan

Current Status	<input type="radio"/> Emerging <input type="radio"/> Progressing <input type="radio"/> Excelling
Evidence/Notes	

Indicator C3 Action Steps

What specific steps, key checkpoints will be taken to reach the next status?

C4. Does the organization inform caregivers and community members on their literacy strategies, progress, and goals?

- ☐ **Emerging:** Information about the program's literacy strategies, progress, and goals is sporadic or not shared with parents and community members. Opportunities for providing feedback are minimal or nonexistent.
- ☐ **Progressing:** Parents and community members are informed of the program's literacy strategies, progress, and goals through periodic updates. There are some opportunities for feedback, but these may not be consistent or widely promoted.
- ☐ **Excelling:** Parents and community members are regularly informed of the program's literacy strategies, progress, and goals through multiple channels. There are structured opportunities for them to provide feedback and actively participate in literacy planning and initiatives.

Indicator C4 Action Plan

Current Status	<input type="radio"/> Emerging	<input type="radio"/> Progressing	<input type="radio"/> Excelling
Evidence/Notes			

Indicator C4 Action Steps

What specific steps, key checkpoints will be taken to reach the next status?

C5. Does the program create meaningful opportunities for family engagement through literacy activities?

- ☐ **Emerging:** Literacy enrichment activities for families are repetitive, limited in scope, or nonexistent, lacking variety or adaptation to diverse family needs.
- ☐ **Progressing:** The range of literacy enrichment activities offered to families is somewhat limited, potentially limiting engagement effectiveness.
- ☐ **Excelling:** Meaningful opportunities for family engagement in literacy activities are established through events, workshops, community partnerships, and other events or activities at school or in the community.

Indicator C5 Action Plan

Current Status	<input type="radio"/> Emerging <input type="radio"/> Progressing <input type="radio"/> Excelling
Evidence/Notes	

Indicator C5 Action Steps

What specific steps, key checkpoints will be taken to reach the next status?

Goals

This section presents the goals that guide the literacy plan. Each goal is designed to be **Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Realistic, and Time-bound (SMART)** and reflects priorities identified through the needs assessment process, including self-assessment results.

Goals may focus on student outcomes, educator and staff development, program-level improvements, or addressing factors that contribute to literacy underachievement. Collectively, these goals establish a clear direction for strengthening literacy outcomes and sustaining progress over time.

Resources:

- [Poudre School District](#)
- [Out of State Example- Central Square NY](#)
- [Thompson School District Strategic Plan Student Achievement Goals](#)

Goals
1.
2.
3.

Literacy Instruction

This section describes how the organization uses evidence-based practices and interventions to help learners build essential literacy skills that prepare them to become successful readers and writers. The following guiding questions can be used to frame the description and highlight key practices.

- What evidence-based practices are used to develop students' essential literacy skills?

- How does instruction support the development of foundational literacy skills, such as phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension?

- What interventions or supports are provided for students who need additional help to develop both foundational and advanced literacy skills?

- How does the organization ensure that instructional practices are culturally and linguistically responsive to the learners it serves?

- How does the instructional approach help prepare students for successful transitions to middle school, high school, and beyond?

Examples:

- [Cherry Creek Literacy Plan 2023-2027](#)
- [Detroit Public Schools](#)

Resources:

- [CO Statewide Literacy Plan](#)

- [Illinois State Literacy Plan](#)
- [Colorado Academic Standards](#)
- [Curriculum Evaluation Guidelines](#)

Use of Data

This section explains how the organization uses data to guide instruction and decision-making. It highlights how the organization/district builds capacity to interpret data, identify trends, and apply findings to strengthen instruction, interventions, and overall literacy outcomes. The following guiding questions can be used to frame the description and highlight key practices.

- What assessments are being used?

- How often is progress monitoring conducted?

- How often do you provide time for staff to review site-based data together?

- How are professional learning communities using this data to inform instruction and support each student's skill development?

- What data protocol are you using?

- What systems are in place to adjust instruction based on assessment findings?

- How is data used to evaluate the effectiveness of professional development or curriculum changes?

- How is progress toward career and college readiness or transition goals tracked and communicated?

- Is there a system in place that ensures each student's language and literacy data is shared across grade levels, from elementary through middle and high school?

- How is data shared with families to support students' learning at home?

Resources:

- [Cherry Creek Literacy Plan \(p. 50\)](#)
- [Minnetonka Public Schools \(p. 12\)](#)
- [Data Driven Instruction Strategy Guide](#)
- [Center of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support](#)

Leadership

This section describes how district or organizational leaders support, guide, and sustain high-quality literacy instruction. It emphasizes that leadership is intentional, coordinated, and accountable for literacy outcomes. The section might include:

- Clear roles and responsibilities for leaders, coaches, and staff involved in literacy initiatives.

- Decision-making and policy alignment that ensures resources, staffing, and procedures support literacy goals.

- Data-informed leadership to monitor implementation, guide instruction, and adjust supports as needed.

- Professional learning and support strategies for educators and staff, including coaching, mentoring, and ongoing development.

Resources:

- [Edina’s PreK-12 Comprehensive Literacy Plan \(Leadership Roles p.26\)](#)
- [Cherry Creek Literacy Plan 2023-2027 \(p. 5\)](#)
- [Naugatuck Public Schools \(CT\)](#)

Professional Development

The Professional Development section describes how staff and educators will be supported to implement high-quality, evidence-based literacy instruction. It ensures that professional learning is purposeful, ongoing, and aligned with the district or organization’s literacy goals. Key elements may include:

- Clear connection between professional learning and the district or organization’s literacy vision, goals, and instructional priorities.

- Alignment with evidence-based literacy practices and state literacy standards.

- Identification of staff or roles who will receive training, with differentiated learning based on experience, role, or needs.

- Topics covered, such as foundational literacy skills, vocabulary development, writing instruction, assessment use, multilingual learner support, or understanding features of dyslexia.

- Delivery methods, including PLCs, coaching, peer learning, online modules, or classroom modeling.

- Structures for ongoing support, such as coaching cycles, professional learning communities, or mentoring.



- Opportunities for feedback, reflection, and application of learning in practice.

- Systems for monitoring participation, engagement, and impact on instruction.

- Use of data to refine and improve professional learning over time.

Resources:

- [Professional Learning Communities Strategies Guide](#)
- [Robbinsdale Area Schools Minnesota Example](#)
- [Foundational Skills Observation Tool](#)
- [K-2 Reading/Listening Comprehension Observation Tool](#)
- [3-12 Literacy Observation Tool](#)

Family Involvement

Family engagement is a critical component of supporting literacy development and ensuring student success. This section outlines how families are actively involved in literacy initiatives, how they are informed and empowered to support learning at home, and how their perspectives help shape literacy programming. Effective family involvement includes clear communication, accessible resources, and opportunities for collaboration with educators and community partners. Key elements may include:

- Clear communication with families about literacy goals, expectations, and student progress.

- Providing accessible resources and guidance for supporting literacy at home.

- Opportunities for families to participate in school- or organization-based literacy events and activities.

- Mechanisms for families to share input and feedback on literacy programs and initiatives.

- Collaboration with educators and community partners to support consistent literacy practices.

-
- Strategies to engage families from diverse linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

-
- Celebrating student achievements and milestones in literacy development.

-
- Training or workshops for families to understand evidence-based literacy practices.

Resources:

- [Family-School-Community Partnerships Strategy Guide](#)
- [Cherry Creek Literacy Guide for Families](#)
- [Read, Lead. Learn Colorado](#)

Partnerships

Strong partnerships extend the reach and impact of literacy initiatives. This section outlines how the district or organization collaborates with community organizations, local businesses, higher education institutions, libraries, and other stakeholders to support literacy development. Effective partnerships leverage resources, expertise, and networks to enhance instruction, provide additional learning opportunities, and engage families and the broader community in literacy efforts. Key elements may include:

- Identifying community organizations, agencies, and institutions that can support literacy goals.

- Clear roles and responsibilities for each partner in supporting instruction, programs, or events.

- Collaboration on programs, tutoring, mentoring, or enrichment opportunities for students.

- Sharing resources, expertise, or facilities to strengthen literacy initiatives.

- Communication strategies to coordinate efforts and align goals between partners and the district/organization.

- Mechanisms to evaluate partnership effectiveness and impact on student literacy outcomes.

- Strategies for sustaining long-term partnerships and expanding networks over time.

Resources:

- [Family-School-Community Partnerships Strategy Guide](#)