

Identifying Nevada's Read by Grade 3 (RBG3) Alternative Assessment

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Agenda

Opening & Relevant RBG3 Statute

- Timeline
- NRS 392.780

RBG3 Instructional Priorities

- Review of Research
- Nevada's Emerging Literacy Vision
- Alignment of Instruction, Materials & Assessment

Alternate Assessment Considerations

- Potential Passing Scores
- Uniform Assessment: iReady and NWEA MAP
- Other States' Alternative Assessments
- Nevada's Alternative Assessment Opportunities

Possible Approach to Identify an Alternative Assessment

- Review NRS 392.780(5)
- Review Potential Approach and Options

Phase 2: Identify & Approve the Alternative Assessment

September 2026 - May 2027

Determine Alternative Assessment	
Topic/Focus:	Date:
Conduct the process to determine the Alternative Standardized Reading Assessment	May 2026 - May 2027
Explanation	
The alternative standardized reading assessment for students who do not meet the passing score on the uniform examination must be approved by the Nevada State Board of Education (SBE). We anticipate this process to take approximately 6 months.	
Decision, Deliverable, or Next Steps	
The SBE reviews the process and provides feedback. Stakeholder input collected and considered throughout the process. A list of assessment options reviewed and the Alternative Standardized Reading Assessment will be approved.	

Timeline & Updates

2026				2027				2028				2029			
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
SBE approves the alternative standardized reading assessment & the passing scores for the uniform examination and alternative standardized reading assessment, NDE finalizes communication & support strategy for retention, including good-cause exemptions.															
								LEA's test drive uniform & alternate assessment passing scores & good-cause exemptions.							
												NRS 392.780 required retention process commences*			
												First 3rd grade cohort retained			

RBG3 Retention Law: NRS 392.780

NRS 392.780(5): The State Board shall prescribe by regulation:

- (a) A **uniform examination** for administration in kindergarten and grades 1, 2, and 3 to measure the proficiency of pupils in the subject area of reading;
- (b) The score which a pupil enrolled in grade 3 must obtain in the subject area of reading on the uniform examination administered pursuant to paragraph (a) to be promoted to grade 4 without a good-cause exemption; and
- (c) An alternative examination for administration to pupils enrolled in grade 3 who do not obtain the passing score in the subject area of reading on the uniform examination administered pursuant to paragraph (a) and the passing score such a pupil must obtain on the alternative examination to be promoted to grade 4 without the approval for a good-cause exemption pursuant to NRS 392.785.

RBG3 Retention Law: NRS 392.780

NRS 392.785(2): A good-cause exemption must be approved for a pupil who previously was retained in grade 3. Any other pupil is eligible for a good-cause exemption if the pupil:

- (a) Demonstrates an acceptable level of proficiency in reading on an alternative standardized reading assessment approved by the State Board;
- (b) Demonstrates, through a portfolio of the pupil's work, proficiency in reading at grade level, as evidenced by demonstration of mastery of the academic standards in reading for grade 3;
- (c) Is an English learner and has received not less than 2 years of instruction in a program of instruction that teaches English as a second language;
- (d) Received intensive remediation in the subject area of reading for 2 or more years but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading and was previously retained in kindergarten or grade 1 or 2 for a total of 2 years;

RBG3 Retention Law: NRS 392.780 continued

NRS 392.785(2):

- (e) Is a pupil with a disability and his or her individualized education program indicates that the pupil's participation in the uniform examination administered pursuant to paragraph (a) of subsection 5 of [NRS 392.780](#) is not appropriate; or
- (f) Is a pupil with a disability and:
 - (1) He or she participates in the uniform examination administered pursuant to paragraph (a) of subsection 5 of [NRS 392.780](#);
 - (2) His or her individualized education program or plan developed in accordance with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794, documents that the pupil has received intensive remediation in reading for more than 2 years, but he or she still demonstrates a deficiency in reading; and
 - (3) He or she was previously retained in kindergarten or grade 1, 2 or 3.



Instructional Priorities

Research tells us that if you are not reading successfully by 3rd grade, your chances of catching up are extremely low.

Students who are not proficient in 3rd grade are 4 times less likely to graduate on time.

- Hernandez 2011

3rd grade scores are predictive of 8th grade scores, high school, & college enrollment.

- Lesnick et al 2010

74% of 3rd graders who read poorly will still be struggling in 9th grade.

- Fletcher and Lyon 1998

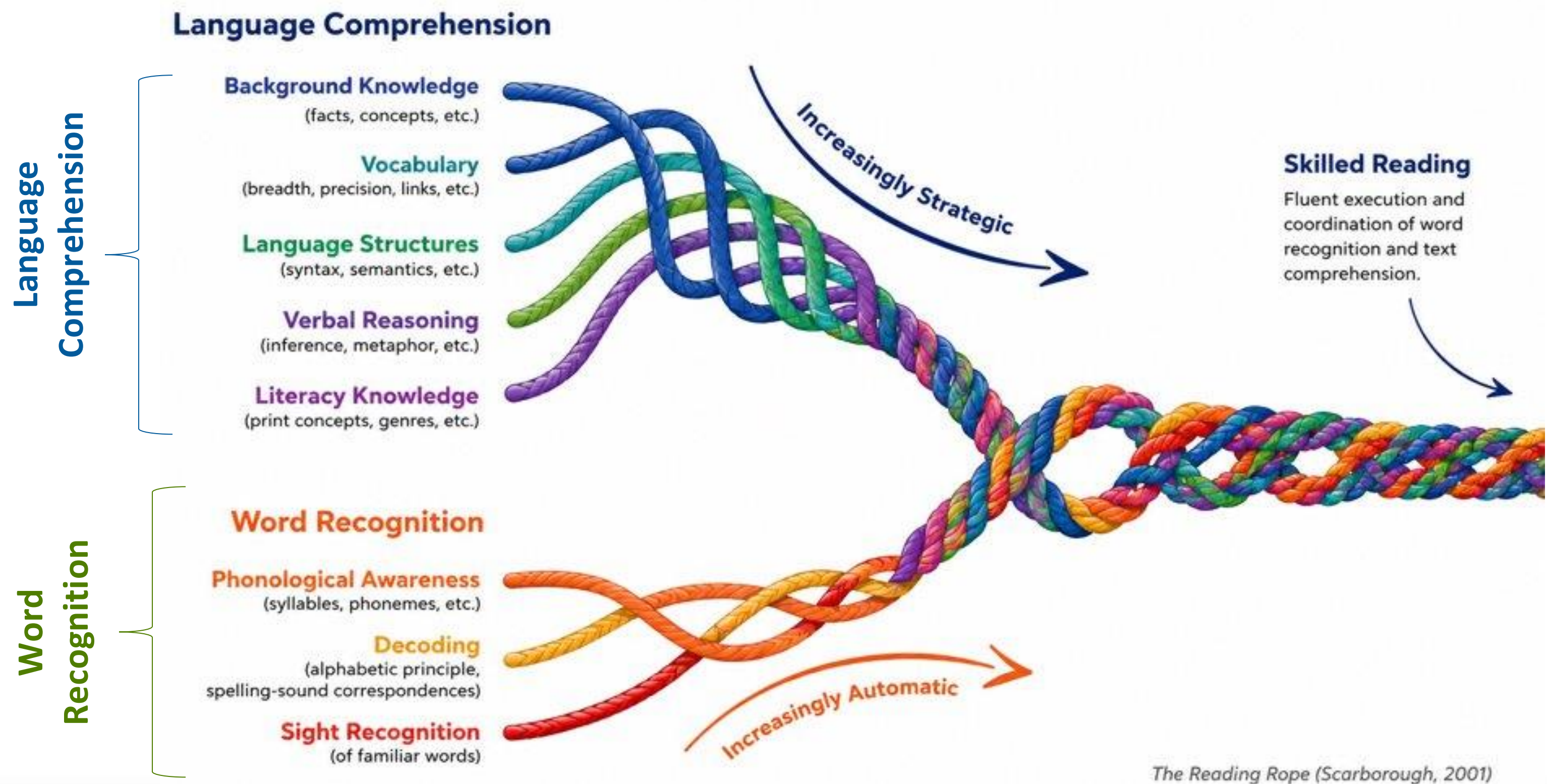
“A person who is not at least a modestly skilled reader by the end of third grade is quite unlikely to graduate from high school.”

- Snow et al 1998

1st grade reading scores are a “reliable predictor of later reading scores.”

- Juel 1988

Review: Scarborough's Reading Rope



The Reading Rope (Scarborough, 2001)

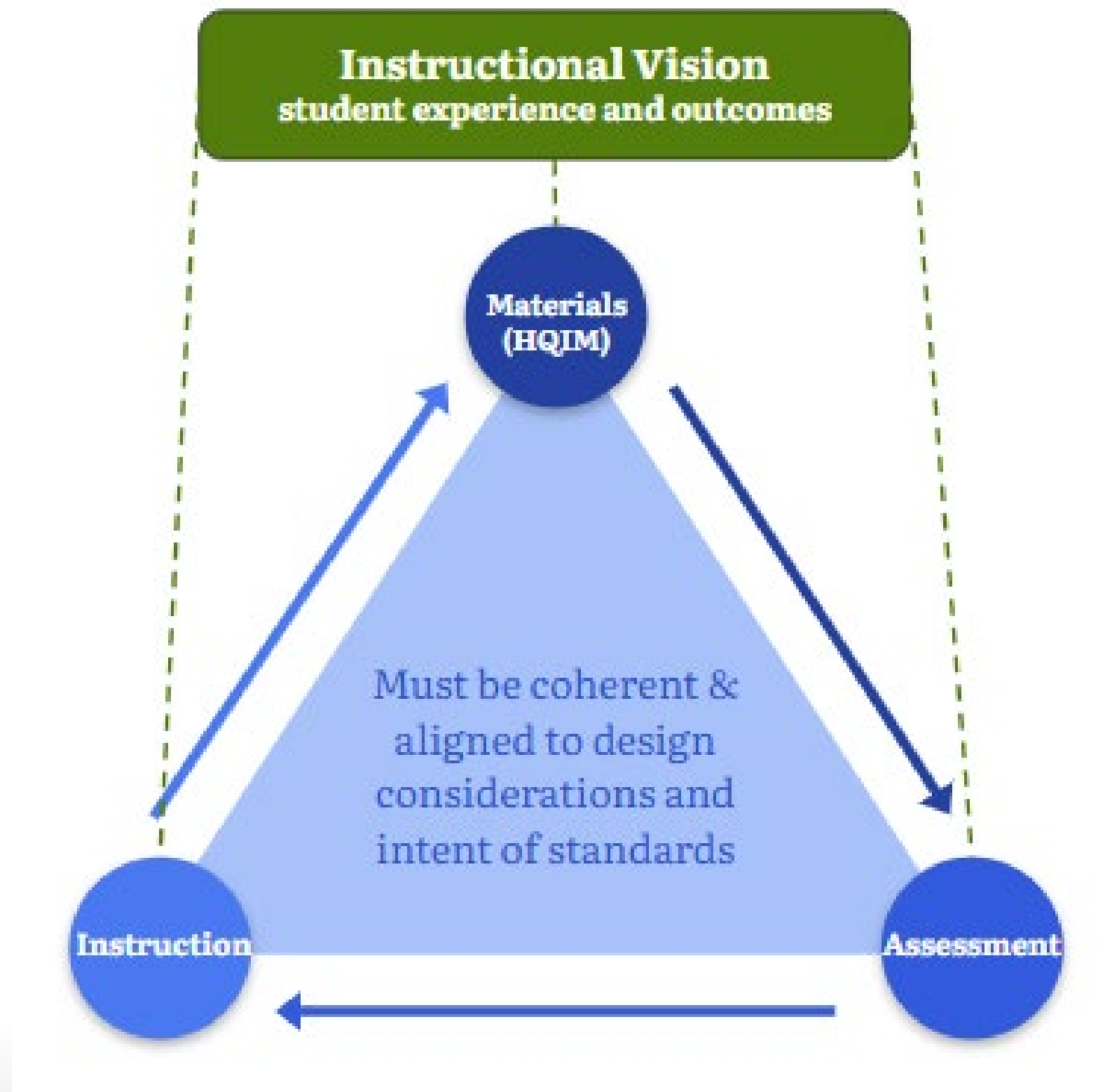
We have a responsibility to prioritize and align statewide instructional supports to the research and NVACS.

Nevada's *Emerging* Vision of Literacy Instruction

Our students achieve grade-level proficiency and build confidence as readers, writers, and communicators in ELA and across content areas by:

- Word Recognition**
 - Developing foundational literacy skills through systematic and explicit instruction in the early grades and targeted skills with adolescent readers [RF 1-4]
- Language Comprehension**
 - Actively reading grade-level, high-quality, complex text (read aloud in early grades) across genres [RI/RL 10]
 - Expanding their knowledge and vocabulary through content-rich texts [RI 9; RI/RL 4; L4-5]
 - Building and demonstrating understanding of text through discourse and writing [RI/RL 1; RI/RL 2; RI/RL 3; RI/RL 5; RI/RL 6; RI/RL 7; RI/RL 8; W1-4; SL 1-3]

Nevada's emerging vision of literacy instruction should drive alignment of resources and support.



“When systems are aligned, instructional coherence becomes sustainable, student experiences become more unified, and learning accelerates, especially for students who need the most support.”

- Coherence by Design: Building Instructional Systems That Help Students Catch Up
- TNTP, 2026

Instructional Alignment

**NEVADA**
Department of
Education

IN COLLABORATION WITH
Nevada INSTRUCTION
PARTNERS

**NEVADA'S STATEWIDE
K-5 LITERACY
CONVENINGS****PURPOSE & GOALS**
Nevada's Statewide K-5 Literacy Convenings will bring together district, school, and classroom leaders to translate Nevada's emerging statewide literacy vision into concrete actions to strengthen implementation across local contexts.

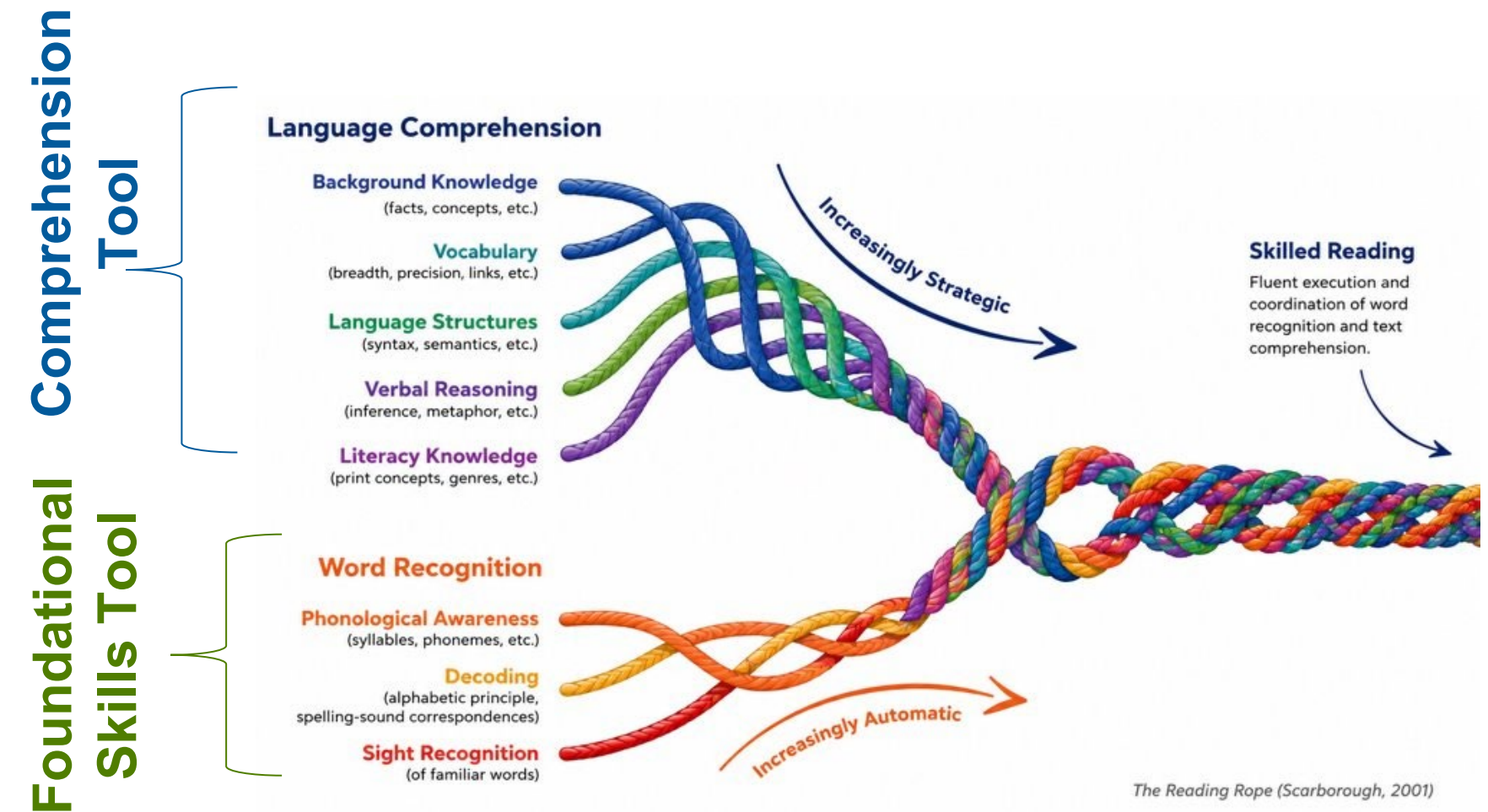
- ▶ Build shared understanding of Nevada's emerging statewide literacy vision and strong K-5 literacy instruction.
- ▶ Explore tools and practices that support strong implementation of K-5 literacy.
- ▶ Connect across roles and districts to share learnings and advance Read by Grade Three goals.

AUDIENCE
Convenings will bring together vertical teams of leaders who support literacy implementation. Districts are asked to select teams of 8-15 participants, including:

- District Instructional Leaders
- District Literacy Experts
- School Administrators
- Literacy Strategists
- Classroom Teachers

REGIONAL DATES
Regional convenings will include the same core topics with opportunities for application in local contexts.

October 6th	Las Vegas, NV
October 21st	Reno, NV
October 26th	Elko, NV

 **REGISTER BY SEPTEMBER 25TH**
[Team Registration Form](#) **QUESTIONS:**
Aliy Bossert - Teach For America
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Content specific observation & coaching grounded in HQIM can advance strong instruction.

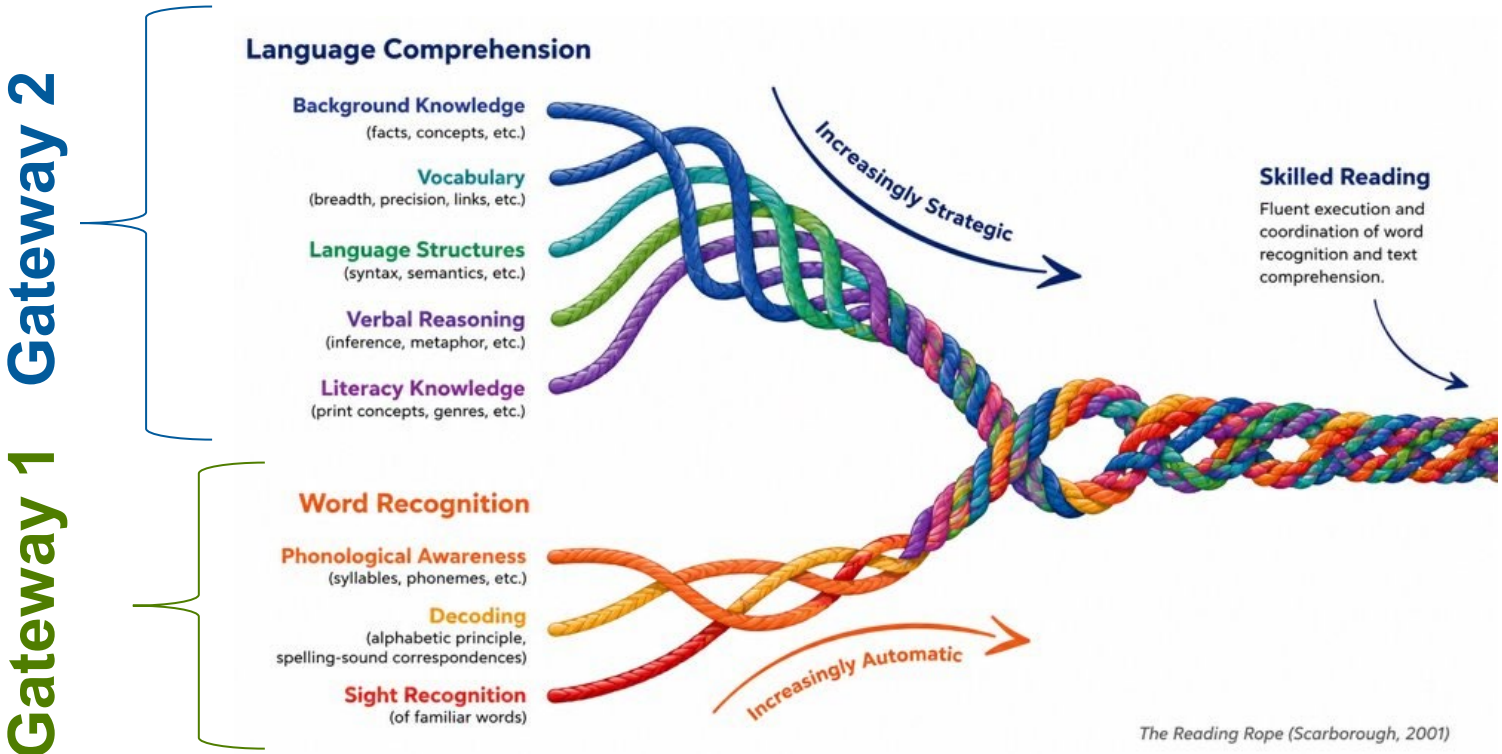
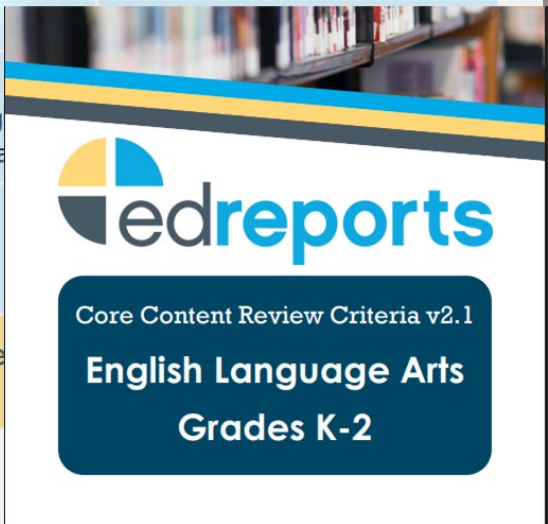
Materials Alignment

Figure 1: Gateways for Review of ELA Materials Based on Program Format

FS Supplemental	K-2 Comprehensive	3-5 Comprehensive	6-12 Comprehensive
Gateway 1*: Alignment to Research-Based Practices and Standards for Foundation Skills Instruction	Gateway 1: Alignment to Research-Based Practices and Standards for Foundation Skills Instruction (if applicable)	Gateway 1: Alignment to Research-Based Practices and Standards for Foundation Skills Instruction (if applicable)	N/A
N/A	Gateway 2: Comprehension Through Texts, Questions, and Tasks	Gateway 2: Comprehension Through Texts, Questions, and Tasks	
Gateway 3**: Teacher and Student Supports	Gateway 3: Teacher and Student Supports	Gateway 3: Teacher and Student Supports	
MLL Review <i>in Development</i>	Integrated MLL Review	Integrated MLL Review	

*Gateway 1 indicators are consistent across all review tools.

**Gateway 3 differs for Foundational Skills Supplemental reviews.



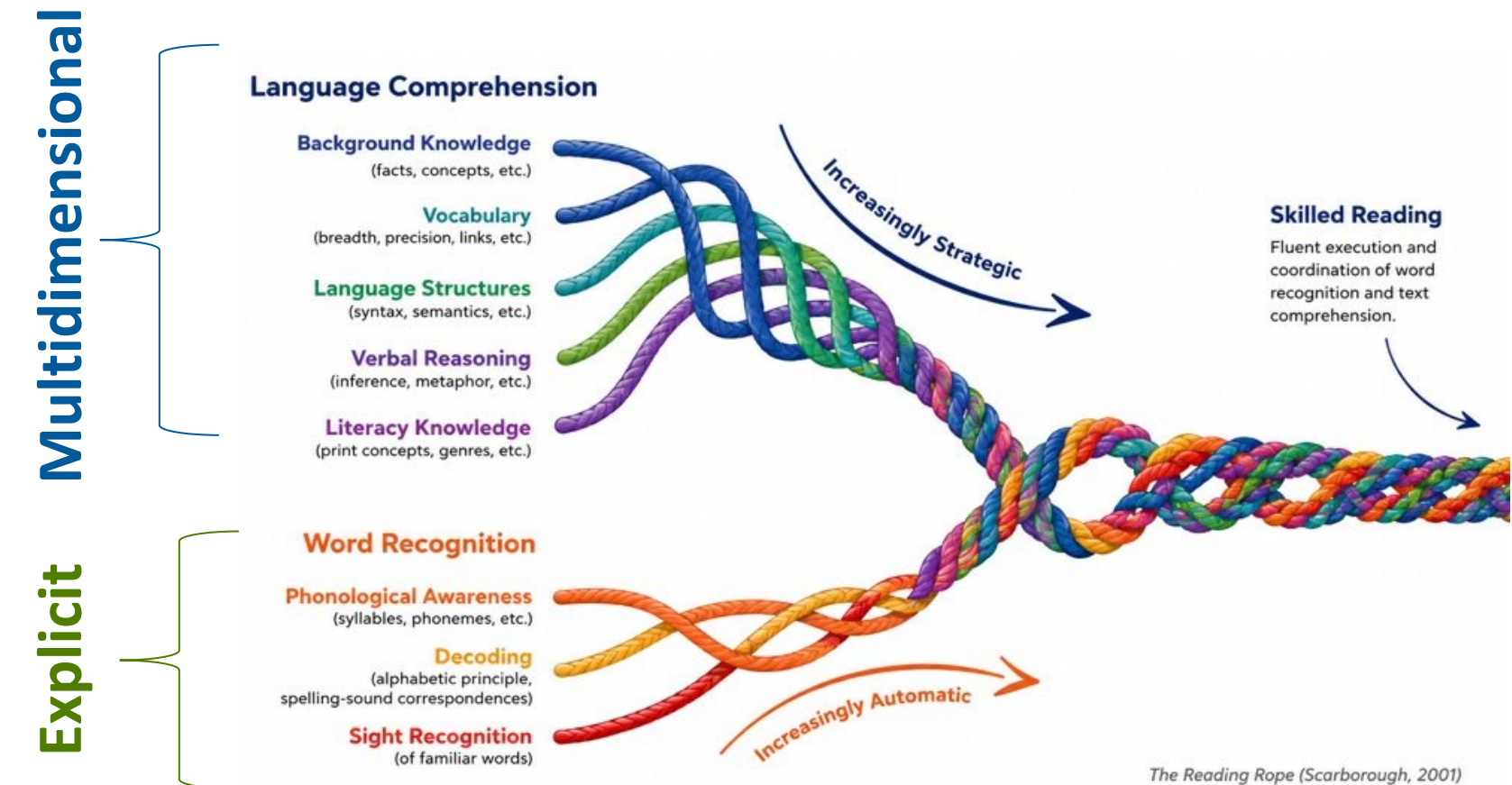
High Quality Instructional Materials clearly distinguish between Word Recognition (Gateway 1) and Language Comprehension (Gateway 2).

Assessment Alignment

Since *reading* may refer to one's ability to recognize or decode words or one's understanding of printed texts, it can be especially confusing to interpret students' poor performance on high-stakes reading tests that assess word recognition and reading comprehension.

Poor performance could be due to difficulties in word recognition, comprehension, or both.

Rethinking Reading:
Differentiating Comprehension from the Components of Reading



In the early grades differentiating word reading and comprehension in assessments is important for correctly identifying gaps. This differentiation is necessary for providing effective instruction and intervention based on students' specific word recognition and comprehension abilities.



Alternate Assessment Considerations

In July the SBE considered possible passing scores.

RBG3 Assessments Predictions of Smarter Balanced Performance			
Smarter Balanced ELA 3 rd Grade			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Minimal Understanding	Partial Understanding	Proficient	Advanced
≤2366	2367-2431	2432-2489	≥2490
i-Ready Reading Scale Score Ranges			
100-495	496-534	535-564	565-800
Approximate Percentile Ranges			
1-28	28-53	54-75	75-99
MAP Growth Reading			
100-187	188-198	199-208	209-350
Percentile Ranges			
1-36	37-60	61-79	80-99



The Uniform Assessment: iReady & NWEA MAP

Strengths	Limitations
• Adaptive assessments that adjust in difficulty based on how a student responds to each question • Reliable tools for measuring general academic growth over time • Can be administered in a single setting to the entire class	• Does not measure oral reading fluency (ORF), accuracy, or prosody—critical indicators of third-grade literacy development. • Direct observation and/or one-on-one screener tools can more accurately identify the cause of reading gaps

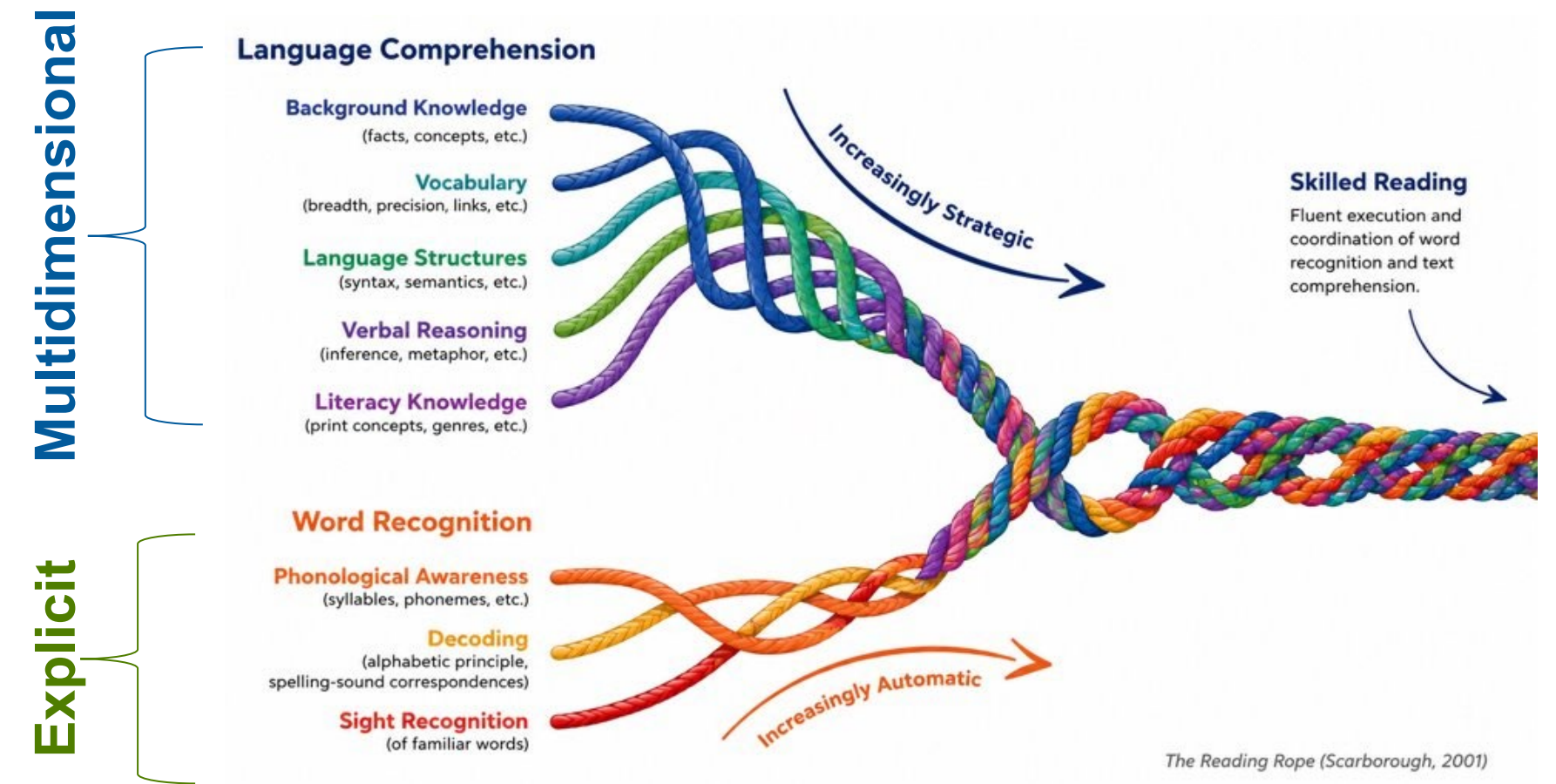
Other States' Third Grade Alternative Assessment

State	Alternative Assessment	
Florida	• SAT-10 • Terra Nova • Star Reading • I-Station	• Achieve 3000 • Amira • NWEA MAP • iReady
South Carolina	• MAP • STAR Reading • iReady	• DRC Beacon • MVPA
Ohio	• iReady Assessment • NWEA Map Growth • Star Reading Third Grade Proficiency	• Terra Nova Achievement Test • The Iowa Assessment

Many of these states' Alternative Assessment essentially measure and report the same thing as the Uniform Assessment.

Nevada's Alternative Assessment Opportunity

The selection of the Alternative Assessment is an opportunity to provide Nevada educators with a tool that both measures reading proficiency and more accurately identifies the root cause of reading gaps, so that students are better supported.



Nevada's *Additional* Early Literacy Assessment Inventory

Nevada's RBG3 Program Lead Meeting were surveyed at the September 2026 RBG3 Meeting. They reported using the following *Additional* Assessments:

- Curriculum Associates i-Ready Literacy Tasks and Monitoring Tools
- STAR Reading
- UFLI Progress Monitoring
- EasyCBM_ AIMSweb
- SIPPS
- 95 Phonics
- Heggerty
- Bridge the Gap
- Phonics for Reading
- CORE Phonics Survey
- DIBELS
- WIDA, LASLINKS
- Fastbridge
- DRA

Some of these assessments are standardized, early literacy assessments that assess third grade proficiency, and distinguish between language comprehension and word recognition. And some are open source.

Many are used as a part of districts' MTSS process.



Possible Approaches

For the Selection of the Alternative Assessment

Review of Statute

NRS 392.780(5): The State Board shall prescribe by regulation:

(c) An alternative examination for administration to pupils enrolled in grade 3 who do not obtain the passing score in the subject area of reading on the uniform examination administered pursuant to paragraph (a) and the passing score such a pupil must obtain on the alternative examination to be promoted to grade 4 without the approval for a good-cause exemption pursuant to NRS 392.785.

Possible Approach for Identifying Alternative Assessment

NDE assembles a 2026-27 RBG3 Task Force to examine these three options:

Option 1:

Identify MAP or iReady as the alternative assessment (based on the assessment already in use in the district.)

Option 2:

Identify SBAC (or state assessment) as the alternative assessment to iReady or MAP.

Option 3:

1. Scan current *additional* assessments in use

2. Identify assessments that are:

- Standardized
- Measure Third Grade Proficiency
- Accurately distinguish gaps between word recognition and language comprehension
- Inexpensive/Open Source/Already in Use

3. Make recommendations for consideration.

In order to inform a recommendation to the SBE for the Alternative Assessment.



Questions & Discussion
