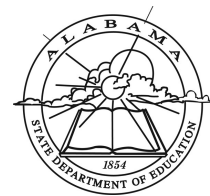




STATE OF ALABAMA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent of Education

January 13, 2026

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** City and County Superintendents of Education

**FROM:** Eric G. Mackey *EGM*  
State Superintendent of Education

**RE:** Fiscal Year 2026 Supporting Struggling Readers Beyond Grade 3  
Implementation Grant and ARI Beyond Grade 3 Peer Coaching Cohort 2  
Grant

In support of literacy attainment, achievement, and acceleration for struggling readers beyond Grade 3, the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), through the Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI), is offering two grant opportunities shown below:

1. Supporting Struggling Readers Beyond Grade 3 Implementation Grant
2. ARI Beyond Grade 3 Peer Coaching Cohort 2 Grant

Grant opportunities align with the structures outlined in the *Alabama Literacy Act* and support continued prevention and intervention efforts for students beyond Grade 3 by strengthening existing systems and practices that improve literacy outcomes. Projects and programs that support struggling readers in Grades 4 and 5 will be given priority for funding.

Applicants should review the [Beyond Grade 3 Grants Guidance](#) document for parameters associated with grant funding prior to completing the application. Grant funds for the Supporting Struggling Readers Beyond Grade 3 Implementation Grant will be provided through Fund Source Code 1775 and will be available for FY 2026 expenditures.

The ARI Beyond Grade 3 Peer Coaching Cohort 2 Grant will provide funding to support expenditures related to co-planning, peer classroom visits designed to strengthen student learning outcomes, co-reflection, and high-quality professional learning aligned with the Science of Reading. Teams will be selected to represent all 11 regional in-service centers across the state. The Cohort 2 project will extend through the 2026–2027 academic year.

Both opportunities are designed to support teachers and schools in strengthening literacy outcomes for students beyond Grade 3, with an emphasis on sustained professional learning, system-level support, and evidence-based instructional practices.

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City and County Superintendents of Education  
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The deadline for submitting the grant application is Friday, February 20, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. Successful submission requires completion of the following three steps.

1. The Curriculum Director or ARI Contact should discuss the proposed grant application with the LEA's Chief School Financial Officer (CSFO).
2. The Curriculum Director or ARI Contact should confirm with school leadership if submitting their name for the ARI-BG3 Peer Coaching Cohort 2.
3. The Curriculum Director or ARI Contact, or other personnel designated by the Superintendent, should complete and submit the application. Notifications of award decisions will be shared as soon as possible.

To apply for one or both grant opportunities, complete the application linked below.

[Supporting Struggling Readers Beyond Grade 3 Implementation Grant \(Section 1\) and ARI-BG3 Peer Coaching Cohort 2 \(Section 2\) Grant Applications](#)

To provide support and address questions related to the use of grant funds, ARI staff members will host virtual office hours. Please click the virtual meeting link below to join on the specified date and times.

[January 21, 2026— 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.](#)

If you have any questions, please contact Mrs. Misty Wilson, ARI Education Specialist, Beyond Grade 3, by telephone at 334-694-4637 or by email at [misty.wilson@alsde.edu](mailto:misty.wilson@alsde.edu).

EGM:BS:AM

cc: City and County Curriculum Directors  
City and County Chief School Financial Officers  
Mrs. Angela Martin  
Dr. Melissa Shields  
Mrs. Bonnie Short  
Mrs. Nancy Smith  
Mr. Brady Vaughn

**FY26-2019**