



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

# DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: October 1, 2025

To: Local Educational Agency Leads

Route To: Directors of Curriculum and Instruction, Supervisors of Curriculum and Instruction, Early Childhood Supervisors, Preschool through Third Grade (P-3) Education Program Educators

From: Katrina T. McCombs, Assistant Commissioner  
Division of Early Childhood Services

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Division of Teaching and Learning Services

## The New Jersey Literacy Framework: Connections to Preschool

In accordance with [P.L.2024, c.52](#), the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) is committed to supporting coherent and comprehensive literacy instruction from preschool through grade three. As part of this effort, the NJDOE previously released *The New Jersey Literacy Framework: A Guide to Evidence-Based Literacy Practices & Universal Screeners* to provide guidance on implementing evidence-based reading instruction and literacy screening in grades K-3.

To further strengthen coherence and continuity across early childhood and early elementary education, the NJDOE is pleased to announce the release of a companion document: [The New Jersey Literacy Framework: Connections to Preschool](#). This new resource is designed to clarify the connections between the expectations in K-3 literacy legislation and New Jersey's preschool programs. It offers guidance for aligning instructional practices, screening procedures, and developmental progressions beginning in preschool. Early identification of literacy challenges through preschool screening is essential – it enables educators to implement targeted supports during a critical developmental window when children's brains are most receptive to language acquisition, thereby reducing the likelihood of long-term academic struggles.

The document includes:

- Guidance on developmentally appropriate universal screening practices for preschool, aligned with K-3 expectations;
- Clear alignment between the Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards and Scarborough's Reading Rope to demonstrate how early literacy skills develop over time;
- Strategies for leveraging the Preschool Intervention and Referral Specialist (PIRS) and Preschool Instructional Coach (PIC) to support literacy development; and
- Research-based recommendations for strengthening language-rich, culturally responsive instruction in preschool classrooms.

Districts are encouraged to use this document to foster collaboration between preschool and early elementary educators and ensure a strong, developmentally informed foundation for every learner's literacy journey.

### Contact Information

Please email the Office of Learning Equity & Academic Recovery at [LEAR@doe.nj.gov](mailto:LEAR@doe.nj.gov) and the Office of Preschool Education at [Doeearlychild@doe.nj.gov](mailto:Doeearlychild@doe.nj.gov) with questions regarding The New Jersey Literacy Framework: Connections to Preschool and visit [our website](#) for more information.

c: Members, State Board of Education  
NJDOE Staff  
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network  
Garden State Coalition of Schools  
NJ LEE Group