



**Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools**

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TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.

DATE: January 29, 2018

SUBJECT: Federal Striving Readers' Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) Grant Award

PURPOSE:

To provide information to the State Board regarding Maryland's Grant Award from the Federal Striving Readers' Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) Grant.

BACKGROUND/HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:

Maryland has been awarded \$45 million over three years. Of the 16 SRCL grants awarded by the US Department of Education in 2017, Maryland received the third highest award.

Maryland's award will advance literacy skills for all children from birth through grade 12 and will provide an alignment of state literacy plans from birth through grade 12. Maryland's plan places special emphasis on disadvantaged children, including children living in poverty, English learners, and children with disabilities.

Through the development of local comprehensive literacy plans and needs assessments, local school systems can strategically advance literacy achievement for all students.

Maryland's application can be found at <https://app.box.com/s/jc5806rkd5hotgsnx51qlh5p659izyw>
Additional information regarding the federal SRCL grant can be found
at <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/strivingreaders-literacy/index.html>

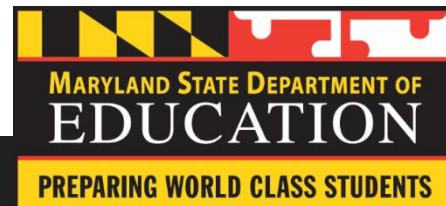
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Maryland has been awarded \$45 million over three years through the Federal Striving Readers' Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) Grant. This grant will advance literacy skills in the state from birth through grade 12.

ACTION:

Information only no action necessary.

Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) Grant



STATE BOARD MEETING
January 30, 2018

Background on Application for the SRCL Grant

- United States Department of Education (US Ed) posted grant in federal register May 16, 2017 with an application due date of July 17, 2017.
- MSDE curriculum and early childhood staff examined grant stipulated requirements; alignment to state literacy objectives, goals and initiatives; and the feasibility of crafting a comprehensive grant application within the short turnaround time from US Ed.
- MSDE assembled a team to conduct a state-wide needs assessment, write a draft state comprehensive literacy plan, and write the grant application. The team included MSDE curriculum, early childhood, and special education staff; University of Maryland professors; and early literacy experts from Ready at Five.
- The Maryland application was submitted to US Ed on July 14, 2017.
- Maryland received notice that it was awarded the SRCL grant on September 20, 2017.

SRCL Enhancements to Maryland's Literacy Program

- State-wide comprehensive literacy plan driven by a needs assessment and aligned from birth to grade 12;
- District literacy plans driven by a local needs assessment and aligned to the state plan;
- Emphasis on disadvantaged children, including children living in poverty, English Learners, and children with disabilities;
- Birth to grade 5 continuum;
- \$45 million over three years to support the state and districts in developing a strategic literacy plan based upon student needs in order to improve literacy achievement.

Requirements of the SRCL Grant

- State must have a State Comprehensive Literacy Plan submitted to US Ed for approval.
- Locals must have a District Comprehensive Literacy Plan aligned to the State Plan before they can apply.
- State and local literacy plans must be based upon a needs assessment that includes assessment and survey data.
- Funding must be applied according to the following:
 - 15% to birth to age 5;
 - 40% to kindergarten to grade 5;
 - 40% to middle and high, distributed equally between the two age bands.
- Other requirements, such as the use of evidence-based strategies and emphasis on disadvantaged children.

The Five Keys of the Maryland Comprehensive Literacy Plan

- Educational Leadership;
- Strategic Professional Learning;
- Continuity of Standards-Based Instruction;
- Comprehensive system of assessments; and
- Tiered-Instruction and Interventions

Local Applications Will Include:

- District Comprehensive Literacy Plan based upon a needs assessment and aligned to the State Plan;
- District and State data;
- Evidence-based strategies and interventions;
- Emphasis on disadvantaged children;
- Strategic professional learning plan; and
- Budget and budget narrative demonstrating the proper distribution of funds by age bands

Partnerships

Local Districts are encouraged to partner with other entities. These may include:

- Partnerships with/among multiple districts;
- Partnerships in early literacy with nonprofit providers of early childhood education, who have a demonstrated record of effectiveness in improving language and early literacy development of children birth to age 5;
- Community-based non-profit organizations, such as libraries or health care providers;
- Institutes of higher education; and
- Other organizations, including national and state organizations with a demonstrated record of effectiveness in improving literacy development and providing professional development in literacy.

Timeline

- July 17, 2017—Initial application sent to the US Ed;
- August-November 2017—Forming and convening of state-wide Stakeholder Workgroup to revise the Maryland State Literacy Plan;
- October/November 2017—Regular conversations with US Ed to guide revisions;
- November 2017—Submission of version 2 of the draft state literacy plan to US Ed for formal review and feedback;
- December 7, 2017—US Ed provided feedback on draft of state literacy plan and granted permission to share draft plan with local school systems;
- December 21, 2017—draft of state literacy plan sent to local school systems, including revisions based upon US Ed feedback of December 7;
- January 8, 2018--Final version of state literacy plan sent to US Ed for final approval (due January 15);
- December 2017/January 2018—Districts are creating a needs assessment and gathering data to create a draft district literacy plan;
- February 5 through March 19, 2018 —With local draft literacy plans in place, districts may begin submitting applications for funding.