# Appendix A Planning and/or implementation

# SELECTED EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE PRIORITIZED STRATEGIES

**CO-TEACHING / INCLUSION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND ENGLISH LEARNERS**

In inclusive settings, educators representing general education, special education, and English learner education work closely together to create instructional plans that are rigorous and purposeful and meet the needs of all students. The goal of this collaboration is to intentionally design, develop, and deliver instruction and supports matched to student strengths and needs. Inclusion is supported by inclusive practice, focused on universal design, with an emphasis on access and equity within the academic, social/emotional, and behavioral domains.

**Prioritized Implementation Strategies for Grant Funding:**

1. Developing school schedules that incorporate co-teaching models and provide ample time for co-teachers to build relationships, clearly define roles, and work collaboratively (e.g. through embedded common planning time).
2. Delivering Professional Development (PD) responsive to the specific needs of students with disabilities and language learners, anchored in a shared commitment to providing the least restrictive environment for students while ensuring equitable access to specialized instruction that is grade-level or beyond.
3. Implementing targeted instruction, intervention, and supports that are evidence-based[, high-leverage specialized practices](https://highleveragepractices.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/HLPs-and-EBPs-A-Promising-Pair.pdf), culturally and linguistically sustaining, and universally designed.
4. Establishing systems to support ALL teachers to deliver robust co-teaching and inclusive practices, such as providing regular access to academic coaches who specialize in supporting English Learners (including a deep understanding of the [WIDA Standards](https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/WIDA-ELD-Standards-Framework-2020.pdf)) and/or coaches who specialize in special education. With an eye toward impactful districtwide implementation, coaches should regularly support teachers through activities such as coaching cycles, observation and feedback, and collaboration.

**RESEARCH-BASED EARLY LITERACY PROGRAMS IN PRE-KINDERGARTEN AND EARLY ELEMENTARY GRADES**

Statewide assessment scores in 2022 show overall declines in English Language Arts (ELA) with a particular decline in writing scores. These declines emphasize the urgency around effective early literacy instruction. Researchers believe that it is possible for over 90 percent of children to become skillful readers, if they receive appropriate instruction and support ([Castles, Rastle, and Nation, 2018](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1529100618772271); [Foorman, 2001](http://www.fcrr.org/publications/publicationspdffiles/critical_elements.pdf%22%20/t%20%22_blank%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)).  Research suggests that reading and writing instruction should be taught simultaneously to support overlapping skills with 70% of reading and writing abilities being shared ([Shanahan, 2017](https://www.landmarkoutreach.org/strategies/the-reading-and-writing-connection/#:~:text=Literacy%20experts%20and%20relevant%20research%20suggest%20that%20reading,variation%20in%20reading%20and%20writing%20abilities%20are%20shared.%E2%80%9D)). Providing such instruction to meet the needs of all diverse learners in a school requires a suite of instructional practices that enable teachers to provide high-quality, differentiated, and culturally responsive instruction. These practices include but are not limited to: adoption of high-quality instructional materials, use of valid assessments, provision of targeted interventions to students who need them, and ongoing professional development and learning for teachers.

**Prioritized Strategies for Grant Funding:**

1. Supporting districtwide adoption of high-quality literacy curricular materials that integrates reading and writing instruction and are aligned to literacy standards and effective instructional practices for [foundational skills, engaging with complex text and oral language](https://www.doe.mass.edu/massliteracy/literacy-block/).
2. Procurement of [high-quality core curricular materials](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/impd/default.html) and/or intervention materials
3. Professional development for instructional staff to support equity driven, evidence-based, inclusive, and culturally responsive implementation of high-quality core and/or intervention materials
4. Supporting districtwide adoption of a valid and reliable [early literacy screening assessment](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/screening-assessments.html) approved by DESE
5. Procurement of a valid and reliable, DESE-approved early literacy screening assessment
6. Professional development for instructional staff to effectively use data to plan instruction and implement a tiered system of support in literacy
7. Establishing a supplemental tutoring program to support students’ accelerated literacy learning
8. Partnering with or creating a high-dosage tutoring program aligned to research-based instructional practices
9. Establishing systems for the recruitment, retention, and robust training of interventionists and reading specialists
10. Tuition-reimbursement for in-service teachers to obtain a master’s degree in reading and reading specialist licensure\*
11. Para-to-interventionist or para-to-tutor pipeline programs

\*This strategy could also be applied in the EBP to Recruit and Retain Educators in Hard-to-Staff Positions and Schools, should you select that EBP.

**STRATEGIES TO RECRUIT, SELECT, & RETAIN EDUCATORS/ADMINISTRATORS IN HARD-TO-STAFF SCHOOLS & POSITIONS**

The teachers and administrators in front of our students have great potential for disrupting patterns of inequity in our society. As noted in DESE’s [Guidebook on Recruitment, Selection, and Retention Strategies for a Diverse Massachusetts Teacher Workforce](https://www.doe.mass.edu/csi/diverse-workforce/guidebook.html), a range of research points to the value of a racially and ethnically diverse teaching staff for *all* students, particularly students of color. As MA schools and classrooms open their doors to more new and diverse educators than ever before ([Bacher-Hicks, et al., 2021](https://wheelockpolicycenter.org/effective-teachers/covid-19-and-ma-teacher-workforce/)), they have the opportunity to fundamentally shift the way novice teachers and leaders are supported, sustained, and positioned to thrive. This is particularly important as districts continue to face hiring and retention challenges.

As a focus of the Student Opportunity Act, districts may implement strategies to recruit and retain diverse and effective educators and/or administrators in hard to fill positions and in schools needing support and assistance. Therefore, ***districts may elect to focus on creating the conditions and systems that place the most effective teachers with students who need and will benefit from them most***.

**Prioritized Implementation Strategies**\* **for Grant Funding:**

1. Investing in pre-service pipeline programs (e.g., teacher apprenticeships, residency models, [Grow Your Own](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northwest/pdf/strategies-for-educators.pdf) models) in partnership with [approved sponsoring organizations](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/search/search.aspx?leftNavId=11238), with a focus on:
	1. High school to college pathways
	2. Paraprofessional supports and pipeline programs
	3. Supports for emergency licensed educators to advance to provisional or initial licensure
2. Establishing a robust induction, mentoring, and feedback program for new teachers and/or novice principals with a focus on:
	1. Training and supports for high quality mentors to ensure sufficient capacity and expertise
	2. Differentiation per individual educator needs (i.e., role-alike supports, mentoring for emergency or provisionally licensed educators)
	3. Intentional scope and sequence aligned to [Standards for Effective Teaching](https://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr35.html?section=03) and [Leading](https://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr35.html?section=04), including antiracist leadership competencies (see DESE [Model Handbook for Principal Induction & Mentoring](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/mentor/principal.html))
3. Establishing data-driven systems for the recruitment, selection, retention, and robust training of instructional staff.

\* Priority given to districts that identify strategies (a) with explicit diversity goals, and (b) that focus on high needs subject areas.

**EXPANDED LEARNING TIME (ELT) IN THE FORM OF A LONGER SCHOOL DAY OR SCHOOL YEAR**

There is a body of research supporting the efficacy of Expanded Learning Time (ELT) in [accelerating student achievement](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0013124513495275) and closing gaps. In particular, the research points to ELT as a valuable resource to better serve students. In particular, studies show that, “[ELT is especially beneficial for students from low-income families and students who are academically behind](https://restart-reinvent.learningpolicyinstitute.org/provide-expanded-learning-time)” as it provides access to academic support, engaging enrichment opportunities, and high-quality instruction by teachers who regularly participate in meaningful collaboration.

Additional time will be calculated by the district based on student need, long-term sustainability, and contractual negotiations. ***Requirements around the amount of time and use of time will be far more flexible than in previous models***, allowing districts to create innovative models designed to bolster student engagement, close gaps, and create meaningful and equitable learning experiences for all students.

**Prioritized Planning and Implementation Strategies for Grant Funding:**

*PLEASE NOTE: During FY23, ELT will be administered as a planning grant with implementation years to occur in FY24 and FY25.*

***For all students within the school day. . .***

1. The school day/year is creatively reorganized to increase the amount of time students spend on core academics and supports. Academic time is maximized with the use of high-quality instructional materials.
2. Common planning time (CPT) is prioritized. Staff receive ample time and resources to implement CPT and receive robust, ongoing training and support in effective team processes, protocols, and effective data use to engage in a continuous cycle of inquiry and to inform and improve instruction for all students.
3. The school offers students a variety of embedded enrichment programming (e.g. athletics, art, academic-based courses). Students have input into enrichment programming to ensure that offerings appeal to student interest and need and promote engagement in learning.

**DISTRICT DETERMINED EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS**

Although this funding opportunity is focusing support for the specific strategies in the above EBPs, districts may find that its unique needs are better met through a different EBP or by one that they have begun implementing but require additional time and funding to adopt with fidelity and embed in district and school systems. Should a different EBP better meet the needs of the students in your schools/district, you may apply for funding through this three-year grant to support that program. Any district applying for an EBP not listed above, must commit to the same parameters and requirements as grantees choosing from the provided EBPs. These requirements include, but are not limited to, participation in DESE-sponsored evaluation activities to measure the impact of the grant on student outcomes. the grant submission must contain clear evidence through comprehensive data analysis that the selected EBP has the ***most potential to close gaps*** in your district. If a district is hoping to use grant funding to enhance work already begun in a chosen EBP, it must include compelling documentation that the district determined EBP has the most potential to close identified gaps.

**Prioritized Implementation Strategies for Grant Funding:**

1. Applicants will make selections from the [Student Opportunity Act (SOA) Evidence-Based Program areas guidance](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.doe.mass.edu%2Fsoa%2Fevidence-based-program-area.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) as well as the district’s SOA plan and amendment. From there, strategies may be selected from a variety of [indicators listed under each EBP](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.doe.mass.edu%2Fsoa%2Fimplementation-indicators.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) and districts will be asked to focus on those that best address challenges identified through careful data analysis.

**Projected Three-Year Timeline and Suggested Activities – *CO-TEACHING & INCLUSION, EARLY LITERACY, RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF EDUCATORS, AND DISTRICT-DETERMINED EBP*:**

**Projected Three-Year Timeline and Suggested Activities – *EXPANDED LEARNING TIME ONLY*:**

Because ELT will begin with planning during the 2022-2023 academic year, the following timeline reflects that in FY23 and the suggested activities this year are specific to ELT but can be adapted to any of the other EBPs listed above.