

Evidence Readiness Checklist

Is Your Literacy Program Ready for State Approval?

Strategic evidence-building is essential for curriculum and program developers seeking state approval and market success in English language arts (ELA) and foundational reading spaces. This checklist helps you evaluate your current evidence base, identify critical gaps, and understand the research investments needed to reach your target evidence level based on the 4-tier evidence framework established by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

How to Use This Checklist

Based on WestEd's extensive experience working with assessment, curriculum, and education technology developers across the education landscape, we've identified four strategic areas required to build a strong evidence base that can help your curriculum or program reach its target ESSA level and gain inclusion on state approval lists. To use this checklist across these four areas, move through the following steps:

- **Evaluate Your Current Status:** Answer each question honestly based on your program's existing evidence and documentation.
- **Identify Priority Gaps:** Focus on areas where you answer "no" or "partially" – these represent opportunities for strategic research investment.
- **Plan Your Research Roadmap:** Use your assessment results to prioritize research activities that will have the greatest impact on state approval and market positioning.
- **Consider Expert Partnership:** Complex evidence-building requires specialized expertise in literacy research, study design, and regulatory requirements.



Foundational Evidence

Does your program have a clearly articulated theory of change that maps specific components to student outcomes?

Is your program explicitly grounded in the science of reading and structured literacy research?

Have you documented all essential program components and implementation requirements?

Do you have preliminary evidence that your program is feasible to implement in diverse classroom settings?

Research Design

Have you selected research designs appropriate for your target ESSA evidence level and existing evidence base?

Can you demonstrate adequate statistical power for your planned studies, given the sample size and expected effect size?

Will your research include diverse and representative student populations?

Do you have protocols in place to monitor and measure implementation fidelity?

Are your outcome measures aligned with both program goals and state assessment priorities?

Have you selected the appropriate data analysis approaches, given your data and research goals?

Quality Assurance

Are you partnering with independent evaluators or research organizations?

Have you preregistered your study designs and analysis plans?

Do you have systems to collect multiple measures of both implementation and student outcomes?

Are you prepared to transparently document study limitations and contextual factors?

Strategic Roadmap

Does your research plan build systematically toward higher ESSA evidence levels?

Have you considered state-specific approval requirements and timeline constraints?

Do you have a plan for peer-reviewed publication and other dissemination strategies?

Is your research timeline aligned with state adoption cycles to ensure evidence is available when decisions are made?

Have you budgeted for ongoing research and evaluation efforts?

