

ARKANSAS

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Arkansas Reading First
District Grant Application

Arkansas Reading First grants are available for improving the reading achievement of students in Arkansas schools in Kindergarten through Third Grade.

Federal ID #: _____

School District: _____

School Name: _____

LEA#: _____ County: _____

Contact Person: _____ Position: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email address: _____

Name of Superintendent: _____

Superintendent Signature: _____

Name of Principal: _____

Grant Amount Requested: _____

Mayor: _____ County Judge: _____

State Representative: _____ State Senator: _____

Application Deadline: Postmarked by March 10, 2006 at 4:30 p.m.

Mail Application To:

Arkansas Department of Education
ATTN: Arkansas Reading First
#4 Capitol Mall, Room 401-B
Little Rock, AR 72201

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ARKANSAS READING FIRST

Local Arkansas Reading First Grant

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Introduction

The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) has received funds through the federal Reading First Initiative for the purpose of improving reading skills of the students with the most need in Arkansas schools in Kindergarten through Grade 3 and K-12 Special Education. According to the requirements of Reading First, the ADE will conduct a competitive process to select and award local reading improvement grants to K-3 schools from eligible districts. The goals of Arkansas Reading First are:

- (1) to ensure that every student can read at grade level or above by the end of Grade 3;
- (2) to provide assistance to local educational agencies in establishing core reading programs in Kindergarten through Grade 3 that are grounded in scientifically based reading research (SBRR);
- (3) to provide assistance to local educational agencies in selecting or developing and implementing effective research-based instructional materials, programs, learning systems, and strategies that address the five essential elements of reading instruction;
- (4) to provide professional development and other support in preparing all K-3 teachers and K-12 Special Education teachers to identify specific reading barriers facing their students and Select the tools to effectively help their students learn to read; and
- (5) to provide assistance to local educational agencies in selecting or administering screening, diagnostic, classroom-based, and evaluation reading assessments.

Local schools will accomplish the goals of Arkansas Reading First through each of the following activities:

- monitoring of site-based grant activities through a **local leadership team** and use of valid, reliable assessments;
- on-site support for implementation of professional development through the services of a **literacy coach** who serves full-time in an Arkansas Reading First school;
- full staff participation in **professional development** based on scientifically based reading research (SBRR) in the five essential elements of reading instruction.

The following pages contain a description of the application process and the requirements for completing an application for funds under the Arkansas Reading First guidelines.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Who may apply for Arkansas Reading First grant funds?

A local educational agency (LEA) that meets both of the following criteria is eligible to apply to the Arkansas Department of Education for Arkansas Reading First funds:

1. The LEA is among the local educational agencies in the State with the highest percentages of students in Kindergarten through Grade 3 reading below grade level, based on the 2005 Primary Benchmark Exams; and
2. The LEA has jurisdiction over at least one of the following:
 - a. a geographic area that includes an area designated as an empowerment zone, or an enterprise community, under part I of subchapter U of chapter I of the Internal Revenue Code;
 - b. at least one school that has been identified for school improvement under Title I, Part A; or
 - c. the highest percentage of children who are counted for allocations under Title I, Part A, in comparison to other LEAs in the State.

May a consortium of local educational agencies apply to the ADE for Arkansas Reading First funds?

Yes. Consistent with Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) requirements, two or more local educational agencies may apply to the ADE as a consortium. Each local educational agency within the consortium must meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the question listed above.

Are there any required priorities for awarding Arkansas Reading First grants?

In making awards to local educational agencies, ADE will give priority to eligible local educational agencies that meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. At least fifteen percent of the students served by the eligible local educational agency are from families with incomes below the poverty line; or
2. At least 6,500 children served by the eligible local educational agency are from families with incomes below the poverty line.

Are there any other priorities for awarding Arkansas Reading First grants?

ADE will award a competitive priority to any LEA that is a recipient of an *Early Reading First* grant. However, failure to meet these criteria will not preclude any LEA from competing for or receiving an Arkansas Reading First grant.

What are the format requirements for the application?

All sections, except the Needs Profile, Action Plan and the Budget, shall be typed using single spacing with no font smaller than 11 point. Pages should be numbered and should have the school and school district included in the header or footer on each page.

How many copies are needed?

An original with signatures in blue ink and three additional copies **must** be provided when submitting the grant application. Grants will NOT be reviewed if the correct number of copies is not provided. The Arkansas Department of Education will not be responsible for making additional copies. Faxed copies will not be accepted. Applications that are incomplete, faxed, or postmarked after **March 10, 2006**, by 4:30 p.m. will not be reviewed. The ADE is not responsible for late delivery from any delivery service. Staple the application rather than using other forms of binding.

Who will make the determination as to what proposals are funded?

The Arkansas Department of Education will name an expert review panel and facilitate their review of the proposals. Each application will be reviewed by a minimum of three members of the panel. Each panel member will award a score based on the scoring rubric. A ranking of the scores will establish a priority list from which recommendations for grant awards will be made. Any sections not completed or missing components will not be rated or will result in minimum point scoring as designated by the scoring rubric. Districts that make the priority list will be visited by the Arkansas Reading First administrative team or designee before the grant award notices are released.

LOCAL ARKANSAS READING FIRST GRANT FUNDING

What is the minimum amount of Arkansas Reading First funds that an LEA may receive?

Based on a K-3 student population of 300-350, the amount of funds available annually for a three-year grant period is approximately \$100,000 (approximate total of \$300,000 for the three years). The number of grants disbursed will be based on the amount of funding available and the districts that successfully compete for the grant.

Each LEA that receives a competitive subgrant will receive at least the same percentage of the State's total Arkansas Reading First subgrant funds as the LEA received of the total Title I, Part A funds received by all LEAs in the State for the preceding fiscal year. For example, if an LEA received 3 percent of the total amount of the State's Title I, Part A funds in FY 2005, that LEA will receive at least 3 percent of the total amount of Reading First funds subgranted in the State in FY 2006.

For how many years may a particular local educational agency or school receive Arkansas Reading First assistance?

The subgrant period is for three years.

On what basis does a State educational agency make continuation awards to local educational agencies?

In making continuation awards to local educational agencies, ADE will assess the progress each local educational agency has made in improving student reading achievement and implementing the project as outlined in its subgrant application during the three-year grant period.

Will the ADE discontinue funding to a local educational agency that is not making substantial progress?

Yes. The ADE may discontinue funding to any local educational agency that is not making substantial progress in improving student reading achievement and implementing the program outlined in its subgrant application.

Are public charter schools eligible to participate in the Arkansas Reading First program?

Yes. Under State law, public charter schools are generally either local educational agencies or public schools within an LEA. As such, public charter schools are eligible for support on the same basis as other public schools or LEAs in the State.

May charter schools that are not local educational agencies apply directly to the ADE for Arkansas Reading First subgrants?

No. Only local educational agencies may apply directly to the ADE for Arkansas Reading First funds. A charter school that is not an LEA under State law may not apply directly to the State for funding.

Are private school children eligible to participate in the Arkansas Reading First program?

Yes. Funds awarded to local educational agencies under Arkansas Reading First are subject to the requirements of Section 9501 of ESEA (Participation by Private School Children and Teachers). The statute requires LEAs to provide private school children and their teachers or other educational personnel with educational services that address their needs related to Arkansas Reading First on an equitable basis with public school children and teachers. LEAs must provide these services in a timely manner.

Funds provided for educational services and other benefits for private school children and their teachers must be equal, taking into account the number and educational needs of the children to be served, to the funds provided for participating public school children.

All services and benefits provided to private school children and their teachers under Arkansas Reading First must be secular, neutral, and non-ideological.

Local educational agencies seeking Arkansas Reading First grants must provide documentation that they have consulted with appropriate private school officials during the design and development of their Arkansas Reading First plans on such issues as determining eligibility of private school children; identifying the children's needs; what services will be offered; how, where, and by whom services will be provided; and how the services will be assessed.

If generic proposals are submitted to the ADE on behalf of different local educational agencies, will the ADE consider such proposals for funding?

While local educational agencies may work with an external service provider or a proposal-writing firm in developing its application for Arkansas Reading First funds, the submission of an “off-the-shelf” proposal without a direct focus on the needs of the LEA is unlikely to address program requirements satisfactorily. The ADE will carefully evaluate the content of such proposals, and will not fund inadequate “off-the-shelf” or generic proposals.

In which schools may a local educational agency use Arkansas Reading First funds?

A local educational agency that receives an Arkansas Reading First grant may only distribute funds to schools within that LEA that are both:

1. among the schools served by the LEA with the highest percentages or numbers of students in Kindergarten through Grade 3 reading below grade level, based on the most current data available; and
2. identified for school improvement under Title I, Part A or have the highest percentages or numbers of children counted for allocations under section Title I, Part A.

May middle schools, junior high schools or high schools receive Arkansas Reading First funds?

No. The purpose of the Arkansas Reading First program is to ensure that every student can read at grade level or above by the end of Grade 3. Only schools that include Kindergarten, Grade 1, Grade 2, or Grade 3 may receive Arkansas Reading First funds. Schools that include additional grades may only use Arkansas Reading First funds for purposes related to Kindergarten through Grade 3 instruction. An exception applies to professional development for K-12 Special Education teachers. LEAs must provide professional development on the essential components of reading instruction to all K-12 Special Education teachers, including those based in middle schools, junior high schools, and high schools.

May pre-kindergarten programs receive Arkansas Reading First funds?

No. Arkansas Reading First funds may only serve students in Kindergarten through Grade 3.

May a local educational agency use Arkansas Reading First funds to cover costs for administrative expenses and technical assistance activities?

Yes. An eligible local educational agency that receives a grant may use up to 3.5 percent of its Arkansas Reading First funds for its own planning and administration purposes.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Local Education Agency (LEA) Arkansas Reading First Plan

What activities must a local educational agency include in its grant application?

An eligible local educational agency must submit an application to the ADE in order to be considered for Arkansas Reading First funding. Applications must demonstrate how the LEA will use Arkansas Reading First funds to carry out the following required activities:

1. *Instructional reading assessments* – ADE will require Arkansas Reading First schools to use the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) for screening and progress monitoring purposes and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills and DIBELS as outcome measures. The Texas Primary Reading Inventory and the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test will be used for diagnostic purposes as needed. These assessments measure progress in the essential elements of reading instruction and identify students who may be at risk for reading failure or who are already experiencing reading difficulty. Schools should select diagnostic and classroom-based instructional reading assessments with proven validity and reliability and describe how information from all assessments will be used to make instructional decisions.
2. *Reading program* – Arkansas Reading First requires the complete implementation of a scientifically based reading program in all K-3 and Special Education classrooms. Applicants should provide descriptions of the core, supplemental, and intervention reading programs the LEA has selected that are based on scientifically based reading research that includes the essential components of reading instruction. If the core program is a published program, the LEA should identify the program by title and publisher. Schools selecting Comprehensive Literacy should identify the published phonemic awareness and phonics program by title and publisher. The instructional program should provide such instruction to children in Kindergarten through Grade 3 and children in K-12 Special Education in the schools served by the LEA, including children:
 - a. with reading difficulties;
 - b. at risk of referral to Special Education based on those difficulties;
 - c. evaluated under section 614 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act but not identified as having a disability (in accordance with IDEA section 614(b)(5) and as defined in section 602);
 - d. served under IDEA primarily due to a specific learning disability related to reading (as defined in IDEA section 602);
 - e. deficient in the essential components of reading instruction;
 - f. identified as having limited English proficiency.

A high-quality reading program that is based on scientifically based research must include instructional content based on the five essential components of reading instruction integrated into a coherent instructional design. A coherent design includes explicit instructional strategies, coordinated instructional sequences, ample practice opportunities, and aligned student materials. The design should also consider the allocation of time, ensuring a protected, dedicated block of time for reading instruction. The LEA must ensure that a daily 2 ½ hour literacy block, with 90 minutes uninterrupted will be implemented in all K-3 classrooms. Schedules should be included in the application package.

LEAs must demonstrate how this reading program will be implemented and that it will not be layered on top of non-research based programs already in use. The scientifically based reading program must also align to State academic and performance standards to ensure that students will be able to reach the proficiency level on State assessments.

3. **Professional development** – LEAs must describe the Professional development for teachers of Kindergarten through Grade 3 and Special Education teachers of Kindergarten through Grade 12 that will provide teachers with a research base and effective instructional strategies with which to provide instruction in the essential areas of reading and in the use of selected instructional materials. Professional development must clearly align with the instructional program, including its research base, as well as with State academic and performance standards and include adequate time for teachers to learn new concepts and to practice what they have learned. Professional development must be an ongoing, continuous activity, and not consist of ‘one-shot’ workshops or lectures. Delivery mechanisms must include the use of literacy coaches who provide feedback as instructional strategies are put into practice. Providers of professional development must base training in reading instruction on scientifically based reading research. Professional development must be delivered by eligible providers and must address:
 - information, instructional materials, programs, strategies and approaches based on scientifically based reading research, including early intervention, classroom reading materials, remedial programs and approaches; and
 - instruction in the use of screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based instructional reading assessments and other procedures that effectively identify students who may be at risk for reading failure or who are having difficulty reading.
4. **Evaluation strategies** – LEAs must plan for the collection and summary of valid and reliable data to document the effectiveness of Arkansas Reading First in individual schools and in the LEA as a whole. The plan should include strategies to stimulate and accelerate improvement by identifying the schools and classrooms that produce significant gains in reading achievement.
5. **Reporting** – LEAs must report data for all students and categories of students described in the State’s adequate yearly progress definition.
6. **Access to reading material** – Plans should demonstrate how the school will promote reading and library programs that provide access to engaging reading material.

Each LEA application must also include the following assurances:

- a. a description of the steps the LEA proposes to take to overcome barriers to equitable program participation, as required under section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act;
- b. the general assurances in section 9306 of the ESEA; and
- c. the lower-tier certification covering lobbying and debarment/suspension under 34 CFR Parts 82 and 85.

There may be additional activities for which an LEA may use Arkansas Reading First funds, provided they are based on scientifically based reading research and align with the LEA's overall Arkansas Reading First plan.

What is the role of the Local Leadership Team?

Implementation of the local Arkansas Reading First grant will be monitored through the utilization of a Local Literacy Leadership Team. Members of the team will include the following: building administrator, a representative of K-3 instructional staff, one Special Education provider, one intervention teacher, the Literacy Coach, the school or public library media specialist, and an English Language Learner (ELL) staff member when available. The Local Leadership Team will meet monthly to discuss the progress of the local Arkansas Reading First project, make decisions regarding adjustments to the plan as necessary, discuss the academic progress of the students and problem-solve issues related to the project.

What is the role of the building administrator?

The building administrator will assume an active and guiding role on the Local Literacy Leadership Team. This administrator will supervise the implementation of all local Arkansas Reading First activities. This will include, but not be limited to:

- observing, monitoring, and evaluating the activities of the coach;
- using the prescribed observation instrument for monitoring and evaluating classroom implementation of the local plan;
- working with the literacy coach and classroom teachers to procure needed instructional material;
- working with literacy teams to monitor the progress of students and plan interventions for those children at-risk; and
- working with the literacy coach to assure that all data is collected and reported to the Arkansas Reading First office as required.

What is the role of the Literacy Coach?

Each qualifying school will use Arkansas Reading First funds to employ a proven, highly skilled master teacher or educator to serve in the capacity of a site-based literacy coach. Arkansas Reading First will provide intensive graduate level training in literacy and language development, assessment of literacy and data analysis, instructional methods and techniques based on scientific research, and coaching techniques. The site-based coaches will then provide the leadership and expertise at the local school level to support improvement in teacher instruction. During the initial

year the literacy coach will work intensively with four teachers, two Kindergarten and two first grade, to fully implement a comprehensive, research-based literacy program in the model classrooms, using the research as a basis for organizational and instructional decisions. The second year, the coach will work intensively with two second grade and two third grade teachers. The coach will also work with the support staff at each grade level. The literacy coach is a site-based employee with expertise in literacy who will provide on-site professional development and staff support through the following:

- implementing a high-quality reading program that is grounded in scientifically based research and includes instructional content based on the five essential components of reading instruction integrated into a coherent instructional design;
- facilitating teacher reflection on current practices in light of the reading research;
- planning and conducting literacy team meetings;
- demonstrating exemplary classroom practices;
- providing sustained mentoring to classroom teachers;
- providing workshops on the comprehensive literacy framework;
- providing assistance with selecting and administering valid, reliable assessments and implementing a well-articulated assessment system;
- procuring needed instructional materials for classroom teachers;
- monitoring students progress and arranging for research based interventions for those students within each class who demonstrate “at risk” status on assessments; and
- collecting, maintaining and reporting data on student performance.

Which professional development opportunities are required and which are optional?

Required for Local Leadership Team

Selected members of the Arkansas Reading First school leadership team must participate in a leadership institute each year of the grant. Prior to the first year of implementation of the grant activities, the Local Leadership Team must participate in the Arkansas Reading First Summer Reading Camp. Schools should budget Arkansas Reading First funds accordingly.

Required for Building Administrator

Arkansas Reading First will provide required quarterly training sessions for building administrators. The building administrator must participate in all local Arkansas Reading First professional development sessions. Schools should budget Arkansas Reading First funds for administrator training expenses and professional materials.

Required for Literacy Coaches

Arkansas Reading First will provide required, graduate-level training for all literacy coaches. This training will focus on how to implement a high-quality reading program that is grounded in scientifically based reading research (SBRR) which includes the five essential elements of reading instruction integrated into a coherent instructional design, assessment of early reading skills, data collection and analysis, and coaching skills. The training will begin during the initial year of implementation and continue throughout the employment of the coach. The coach will be in training approximately eight weeks during the initial year and approximately fifteen days the following year. Training will begin in the summer prior to the implementation of grant activities during the Arkansas Reading First Summer Reading Camp. Schools should budget \$7500.00 the initial year and \$3000.00 the second year for training and professional materials for the coach. After the third year of the grant, ADE will provide approximately six days of professional development per year for the duration of the individual’s employment as a literacy coach.

Required for School Staff

Kindergarten through third grade teachers and K-12 Special Education teachers will be required to attend one week of the Arkansas Reading First Summer Reading Camp during the summer prior to grant implementation. School staff who have not previously attended Early Literacy Learning in Arkansas (ELLA) or Effective Literacy shall enroll no later than the second summer of implementation. School staff will observe in laboratory classrooms and participate in reflective discussions with the literacy coach and other staff members a minimum of twice each year for the duration of the grant.

The literacy coach will provide mandatory on-site professional development for the school staff, including the principal and LEA personnel such as the curriculum coordinator. This will involve demonstrating, observing, coaching, mentoring teachers, and conducting study team sessions with small groups of teachers. The literacy coach will plan, lead, and initiate the study sessions during the initial year of implementation. Team members will lead the literacy team meetings during the following year. The study sessions will provide an avenue through which teachers can learn to do the following:

- use prescribed assessment data to make instructional decisions;
- problem-solve with teachers on appropriate instruction for students experiencing difficulties;
- discuss and share strategies that have been successful with their students; and
- articulate systemic problems in reading and work with outside advisors and ADE/Cooperative Literacy Specialists to develop solutions.

Literacy teams in every Arkansas Reading First school will meet once a year with literacy teams from other participating schools to examine the data, share instructional practices that have been most beneficial in improving student achievement and discuss issues arising from participating in the project. Schools should budget Arkansas Reading First funds to provide for the expenses of this networking opportunity, including travel and substitute pay.

Optional Activities for School Staff

During the second year of funding, Arkansas Reading First schools may provide the opportunity for all teachers to participate in a three-hour graduate level course in literacy development, assessment, and instruction. The courses will be offered by Literacy Specialists or participating university reading educators.

Schools may contract with eligible professional development providers (EPDPs) to provide staff development and technical assistance. Prior approval for the EPDP must be obtained from ADE. Training must be based on scientifically based reading research.

Which student assessments are required in Arkansas Reading First schools?

Arkansas Reading First schools will administer the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) to students in grades K-3 at least three times a year and more often for children experiencing difficulty. Districts must be willing to administer other assessments that may be required by Arkansas Reading First.

Required Components

Each of the following sections must be clearly identified within the grant application. For example, each section should start with the title of the section that is being addressed. Use the attached scoring rubric as a guideline in preparing an application. The reviewers will use the rubric to score each grant. At the top of each page indicate the name of the applicant and the page number.

I.	Cover Page	No Points
II.	Project Abstract (one page)	No Points
III.	Program Narrative should include:	
	A. School Profile	20 Points
	B. District-School Professional Development	15 Points
	C. District-School Technical Assistance Plan	15 Points
	D. Implementation Plan	15 Points
	E. Commitment of District and School Leadership	10 Points
	F. Evaluation of Arkansas Reading First Local Project	10 Points
	G. Coordination with Existing Funds and Resources	5 Points
IV.	Budget and Budget Justification	10 Points
V.	Assurances	No Points
	TOTAL	100 Points
VI.	Competitive Priority:	
	Recipient of an Early Reading First Grant	5 Points

The following rubric will be used to rate each proposal received. Each proposal will be scored based on its merit compared to the rubric, not a comparison with any other proposal.

SCHOOL PROFILE

Eligible LEAs should present achievement data and demographic data with additional information related to the needs of specific schools to be funded using the data form provided. Competitive priority will be awarded to schools who are recipients of an Early Reading First Grant; however, failure to meet this criterion will not preclude any school from competing for or receiving an Arkansas Reading First grant.

Marginal (1 – 6 Points)	Somewhat Rigorous (7 – 13 Points)	Most Rigorous (14 – 20 Points)
<p>The data indicate a high percentage of children reading below grade level based on the results of the 2005 Primary Benchmark Exams.</p> <p>In multi-campus districts, the data indicate that at least one school is identified for school improvement under Title I, Part A.</p> <p>The LEA has a moderate number or percentage of children who are counted for allocations under Title I in comparison to other LEAs in the state.</p> <p>The application contains a profile of each school to be funded that includes little additional demographic information to substantiate need.</p>	<p>The data indicate an extremely high percentage of children reading below grade level based on the results of the 2005 Primary Benchmark Exams.</p> <p>In multi-campus districts, the data indicate that some schools in the LEA are identified for school improvement under Title I, Part A.</p> <p>The LEA has a high number or percentage of children who are counted for allocations under Title I in comparison to other LEAs in the state.</p> <p>The application contains a profile of each school to be funded that includes additional demographic information that further substantiates need.</p>	<p>The data indicate that, among the LEAs in the state, the LEA has the greatest percentage of children reading below grade level based on the results of the 2005 Primary Benchmark Exams.</p> <p>In multi-campus districts, the data indicate that a significant number or percentage of schools in the LEA are identified for school improvement under Title I, Part A.</p> <p>The LEA has the highest number or percentage of children who are counted for allocations under Title I in comparison to other LEAs in the state.</p> <p>The application contains a profile of each school to be funded that includes significant additional demographic information that further substantiates need.</p>

Score _____

Reviewer's Initials _____

Competitive Priority:

Recipient of an Early Reading First grant: _____yes _____no

Additional Points for Early Reading First: _____

DISTRICT-SCHOOL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Eligible LEAs should describe the district-school professional development plan for all personnel including a timeline of events for years one through three and indicate areas of emphasis for each year. Complete the action plan provided.

Marginal (1 – 5 Points)	Somewhat Rigorous (6 – 10 Points)	Most Rigorous (11 – 15 Points)
<p>The proposal includes an incomplete timeline and description of the process for delivery of professional development to K-3 teachers and K-12 Special Education teachers in Reading First and non-Reading First schools.</p> <p>There is little alignment between the content of the plan and the professional development needs identified in the school improvement plan.*</p> <p>The professional development plan includes some of the following activities: (i) essential elements of reading instruction; (ii) implementing scientifically based instructional materials, programs, and strategies; and (iii) screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based instructional assessments using a variety of delivery methods (iv) aligning of local reading standards with state reading standards and assessments.</p> <p>The plan makes reference to the use of individuals highly knowledgeable of SBRR instruction and program implementation to provide professional development.</p>	<p>The proposal includes a general timeline and description of the process for delivery of professional development to K-3 teachers and K-12 Special Education teachers in Reading First and non-Reading First schools.</p> <p>There is some alignment between the content of the plan with the professional development needs identified in the school improvement plan.*</p> <p>The professional development plan includes most of the following activities: (i) essential elements of reading instruction; (ii) implementing scientifically based instructional materials, programs, and strategies; and (iii) screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based instructional assessments using a variety of delivery methods (iv) aligning of local reading standards with state reading standards and assessments.</p> <p>The plan ensures that individuals highly knowledgeable of SBRR instruction and experienced in program implementation will provide professional development.</p>	<p>The proposal includes a detailed timeline and description of the process for delivery of professional development to K-3 teachers and K-12 Special Education teachers in Reading First and non-Reading First schools.</p> <p>There is tight alignment between the content of the plan and the professional development needs identified in the school improvement plan.*</p> <p>The professional development plan includes intensive and focused professional development in all of the following: (i) essential elements of reading instruction; (ii) implementing scientifically based instructional materials, programs, and strategies; and (iii) screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based instructional assessments using a variety of delivery methods (iv) aligning of local reading standards with state reading standards and assessments.</p> <p>The plan identifies individuals highly knowledgeable of SBRR instruction and experienced in program implementation that will provide professional development.</p>

(District-School Professional Development continued)

<p>The plan makes reference to ongoing professional development and support to those serving as literacy coaches.</p> <p>The professional development plan offers experiences that are insufficiently focused and are of insufficient duration to achieve the purposes of the goals of training.</p> <p>The professional development plan provides little evidence that teachers will be provided with adequate time for learning and implementing scientifically based reading instruction, including time for study, observation, practice, application, and evaluation.</p> <p>The professional development plan makes little or no reference to coordination of local professional development with State activities related to improving reading achievement.</p>	<p>The plan includes ongoing professional development and support to those serving as literacy coaches.</p> <p>The professional development plan offers some variety in professional development experiences that are loosely focused and of duration to somewhat achieve the purposes and goals of the training.</p> <p>The professional development plan provides general evidence that teachers will be provided with adequate time for learning and implementing scientifically based reading instruction, including time for study, observation, practice, application, and evaluation.</p> <p>The professional development plan provides general plans for coordinating local professional development with State activities related to improving reading achievement.</p>	<p>The plan specifies how ongoing professional development and support will be given to literacy coaches.</p> <p>The professional development plan offers a varied and full range of professional development experiences that are intensive, focused and of sufficient duration to achieve the purposes and goals of the training.</p> <p>Specific details of the professional development plan provide evidence that teachers will be provided with adequate time for learning and implementing scientifically based reading instruction, including time for study, observation, practice, application, and evaluation.</p> <p>The professional development plan provides specific details regarding the coordination of local professional development with State activities related to improving reading achievement.</p>
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*Arkansas Consolidated School Improvement Plan

Score _____

Reviewer's Initials _____

DISTRICT-SCHOOL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PLAN

Eligible LEAs should describe the district-school plan for monitoring and providing technical assistance to Arkansas Reading First schools in the district.

Marginal (1 – 5 Points)	Somewhat Rigorous (6 – 10 Points)	Most Rigorous (11 – 15 Points)
<p>Professional development plan provides little on-site technical assistance with a vague plan for providing targeted professional development for teachers who need additional assistance improving reading instruction.</p> <p>Proposal demonstrates how LEAs will provide high quality technical assistance related to a few of the following: identifying professional development needs of individual schools, setting goals and benchmarks, and budgeting to participating schools.</p>	<p>Professional development plan provides some on-site technical assistance, providing a general plan for targeted professional development for teachers who need additional assistance improving reading instruction.</p> <p>Proposal demonstrates how LEAs will provide high quality technical assistance related to some of the following: identifying professional development needs of individual schools, setting goals and benchmarks, and budgeting to participating schools.</p>	<p>Professional development plan provides substantial on-site technical assistance, providing a detailed plan for targeted professional development for teachers who need additional assistance improving reading instruction.</p> <p>Proposal demonstrates how LEAs will provide high quality technical assistance related to identifying professional development needs of individual schools, setting goals and benchmarks, and budgeting to participating schools.</p>

Score _____

Reviewer's Initials _____

COMMITMENT OF DISTRICT AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Eligible LEAs should describe the commitment and involvement of the district-school leadership in ensuring the success of the local Reading First plan. LEAs should describe how they will leverage existing reading initiative components for maximum effect within an overall Arkansas Reading First plan.

Marginal (1 – 3 Points)	Somewhat Rigorous (4 – 6 Points)	Most Rigorous (7 – 10 Points)
<p>The proposal does not address the issue of principals and literacy coaches participating in training provided by Arkansas Reading First.</p> <p>The plan makes reference to the employment of a literacy coach who will have sufficient authority to be responsible for implementing the activities listed in the “most rigorous” category.</p> <p>The plan vaguely describes how the LEA will provide mandatory Arkansas Reading First professional development for principals and building leaders in non-Reading First schools.</p> <p>The plan vaguely describes how the LEA and school will ensure continuity of instructional leadership at the school level to the extent possible.</p>	<p>The proposal includes an assurance that principals and literacy coaches will participate in training provided by Arkansas Reading First on the essential components of reading and their application to instructional programs and materials, implementation processes and progress monitoring.</p> <p>The plan ensures that a literacy coach will be employed and have sufficient authority to implement the activities listed in the “most rigorous” category.</p> <p>The plan generally describes how the LEA will provide mandatory Arkansas Reading First professional development for principals and building leaders in non-Reading First schools.</p> <p>The plan describes generally how the LEA and school will ensure continuity of instructional leadership at the school level to the extent possible.</p>	<p>The proposal includes an assurance that principals and literacy coaches will participate in training provided by Arkansas Reading First on the essential components of reading and their application to instructional programs and materials, implementation processes and progress monitoring.</p> <p>The plan ensures that a literacy coach will be employed and have sufficient authority to lead the staff in aligning the reading curriculum to State standards, evaluating LEA and school reading progress, analyzing achievement data, and making real time school and classroom decisions based on continuous progress monitoring of student and teacher data.</p> <p>The plan describes in detail how the LEA will provide mandatory Arkansas Reading First professional development for principals and building leaders in non-Reading First schools.</p> <p>The plan describes specifically how the LEA and school will ensure continuity of instructional leadership at the school level to the extent possible.</p>

Score _____

Reviewer’s Initials _____

EVALUATION OF ARKANSAS READING FIRST LOCAL PROJECT

Eligible LEAs should describe the process the district will utilize to evaluate the impact of Arkansas Reading First on district-school efforts and the results achieved by students. Plan should include use of the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills for project evaluation. LEAs must agree to participate in the Reading First national evaluation.

<p align="center">Marginal (1 – 3 Points)</p>	<p align="center">Somewhat Rigorous (4 – 6 Points)</p>	<p align="center">Most Rigorous (7 – 10 Points)</p>
<p>Proposal provides a plan, including a vague or no timeline and description of administration procedures, for how the LEA will use DIBELS to document the effectiveness of local Reading First activities for individual schools and the LEA as a whole.</p>	<p>Proposal provides a plan, including a general timeline and description of administration procedures, for how the LEA will use DIBELS to document the effectiveness of local Reading First activities for individual schools and the LEA as a whole.</p>	<p>Proposal provides a plan, including a detailed timeline and description of administration procedures, for how the LEA will use DIBELS to document the effectiveness of local Reading First activities for individual schools and the LEA as a whole.</p>
<p>There is a vague plan for assessing the implementation of Arkansas Reading First at the school level that includes the Arkansas Reading First Classroom Observation Protocol.</p>	<p>There is an adequate plan for assessing the implementation of Arkansas Reading First at the school level that includes the Arkansas Reading First Classroom Observation Protocol.</p>	<p>There is a well-articulated plan for assessing the implementation of Arkansas Reading First at the school level that includes the Arkansas Reading First Classroom Observation Protocol.</p>
<p>There is a vague plan for reporting district-school reading achievement with data disaggregated for some of the following: low-income, major racial/ethnic groups, LEP, and Special Education for K-3 students in Arkansas Reading First schools.</p>	<p>There is a generally developed plan for reporting district-school reading achievement with data disaggregated for most of the following: low-income, major racial/ethnic groups, LEP, and Special Education for K-3 students in Arkansas Reading First schools.</p>	<p>There is a clearly developed plan for reporting district-school reading achievement, using valid and reliable assessment instruments, with data disaggregated for all of the following: low-income, major racial/ethnic groups, LEP, and Special Education for K-3 students in Arkansas Reading First schools.</p>
<p>The proposal presents an incomplete plan for how the LEA will make decisions related to their Arkansas Reading First programs based on evaluation outcomes, including intervention with and/or discontinuation of schools not making significant progress.</p>	<p>The proposal presents a general plan for how the LEA will make decisions related to their Arkansas Reading First programs based on evaluation outcomes, including intervention with and/or discontinuation of schools not making significant progress.</p>	<p>The proposal presents a detailed plan for how the LEA will make decisions related to their Arkansas Reading First programs based on evaluation outcomes, including intervention with and/or discontinuation of schools not making significant progress.</p>

Score _____

Reviewer's Initials _____

COORDINATION WITH EXISTING FUNDS AND RESOURCES

Schools should describe how Arkansas Reading First grant funds will coordinate with other sources of funding to support the total school improvement process as it impacts student reading performance.

Marginal (1 Point)	Somewhat Rigorous (2-3 Points)	Most Rigorous (4-5 Points)
No additional sources of funding are identified to support the total reading effort in the school.	Only one source of funds beyond Arkansas Reading First grant funds is committed in the budget.	There is a clear link between the local Arkansas Reading First plan and other funding sources such as Title I, library media, general funds, etc.

Score _____

Reviewers Initials _____

Budget and Budget Justification:

Schools should provide a line item account of the proposed expenditures for the project. A budget form is provided in Appendix B. The budget justification shall provide a detailed summary and justification of the proposed expenditures.

Marginal (1 – 3 Points)	Somewhat Rigorous (4 – 6 Points)	Most Rigorous (7 – 10 Points)
<p>Budget is incomplete or incorrect.</p> <p>Budget items were not discussed within the grant application.</p> <p>A budget justification is not provided on the budget items requested or the budget justification is not aligned with the elements proposed in the grant application.</p>	<p>Budget is complete and correct.</p> <p>Budget items were generally discussed within the grant application.</p> <p>A general budget justification is provided on the budget items requested. The budget justification is somewhat aligned with the elements proposed in the grant application.</p>	<p>Budget is complete and correct.</p> <p>Budget items were thoroughly discussed within the grant application.</p> <p>A detailed budget justification is provided on the budget items requested. The budget justification is aligned with the elements proposed in the grant application.</p>

Score _____

Reviewer's Initials _____

Arkansas Reading First Grant Assurances

Arkansas Department of Education

1. All activities must be correlated with the development of Smart Start goals for children in Grades K-3.
2. The Grantee shall complete proposed activities during the grant period of June 2006-June 2009.
3. The Grantee shall provide the services under the terms of this agreement in accordance with the purposes, goals, objectives, and target groups as stated in the application for funding and any approved addendum.
4. The Applicant possesses the legal authority to apply for this grant; and a resolution or motion has been adopted by the applicant's governing body which authorizes the submission of the application, including all understanding and assurances contained herein, directing and authorizing the "official representative" to act in connection with the application and to provide such additional information as required.
5. The Grantee will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) which states that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which the provider receives financial assistance. Equal opportunity will also be assured in all employment practices.
6. Facilities, program, and services supported through these funds will be located as to be readily accessible and responsible to the needs of the population without discrimination based on sex, creed, race, or duration of residence.
7. Safeguards will be established to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that is or gives the appearance of being motivated by a desire for the private gain for themselves or others, particularly those with whom they have family, business or other ties.
8. The Department of Education, through any authorized representative, will have access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents relating to the grant funding.
9. The applicant understands that awarded funds may be withdrawn if, in the opinion of the Reading First Director and the Department of Education, the applicant fails to establish or operate the funded program in accordance with the terms of the funded application.
10. The Grantee shall provide programmatic reports as requested, at least annually, as well as a final report to the Arkansas Department of Education within 30 days of the end of the grant period or the end of the proposed activities, whichever is sooner.
11. The Grantee shall provide expenditure reports as requested to the Arkansas Department of Education. Failure to submit these reports will delay the processing of payments.
12. The Grantee will participate in all required technical assistance/information sharing opportunities provided through the Arkansas Reading First Project Grant Program.

By signing in the designated area below the applicant agrees to abide by the stipulations of this application and these assurances.

Superintendent

Date

District