



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 6, 2023
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Fall 2023 Idaho Reading Indicator Results Show Steady Improvement Over Previous Years

(BOISE) – Recent three-year cohort data from Idaho’s early literacy test, the Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI), suggests that Idaho students are starting each school year with greater proficiency rates with less evidence of learning loss during summer months.

Each spring and fall, Idaho students in kindergarten through third grade take the IRI as required by Idaho Code 33-1806. This assessment helps Idaho educators better understand the needs of early learners in the areas of phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary and reading comprehension. Fall results are used to identify students who may need additional instruction and interventions to support their learning throughout the school year.

Data shows students who entered kindergarten in fall of 2021 – now in second grade – have improved their fall proficiency by 17 percent the last two years.

Kindergarten, Fall 2021	41 percent proficient
First Grade, Fall 2022	55 percent proficient
Second Grade, Fall 2023	58 percent proficient

Students who were in first grade in the fall of 2021 have improved their fall proficiency by 16 percent.

First Grade, Fall 2021	46 percent proficient
Second Grade, Fall 2022	59 percent proficient

Third Grade, Fall 2023	62 percent proficient
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Improvements are significant because students who finish third grade reading proficiently are much better positioned to succeed in future grades.

“Not only are Idaho kindergarteners arriving to the classroom with increasing levels of proficiency, we’re seeing consistent improvements as those students move through their first three years of instruction,” said Chief Deputy Superintendent Ryan Cantrell. “This tells us that the instruction Idaho teachers are delivering is working, and that kids are retaining more of what they learn over the summer.”

Though spring IRI data was scored by assessment vendor Istation using new data norms, when results are adjusted using the same norming scale used for the 2021 and 2022 assessments, Idaho students show growth in early literacy proficiency.

“This steady increase in proficiency indicates that Idaho’s investment in delivering, rigorous, high-quality early literacy instruction is helping students learn,” said Cantrell. “This, along with evidence that our students are outperforming national averages in early literacy, is good news for our schools, teachers, and most of all, our students.”

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