



Adolescent Literacy Initiative Summary of Federal Policy Recommendations

1. Fund Striving Readers at \$200 million for FY2006.

Striving Readers is a demonstration program that will support school districts in implementing research-based reading interventions for struggling middle and high school readers.

In FY2005 the Striving Readers program was funded at \$24.8 million. President Bush requested \$200 million for Striving Readers for FY2006. The Alliance for Excellent Education urges that Congress appropriate funds at the President's requested level.

2. Strengthen the Reading First program by adding an adolescent literacy program in the next reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Funds would provide a literacy specialist for every high-need middle and high school. The specialist would train teachers in every subject area to improve reading and writing skills.

Funds would also provide diagnostic assessments, research-based curricula, release time for teachers to participate in professional development, and additional literacy specialists.

3. Ensure federal funding for adolescent literacy is structured to improve achievement for students who need it the most.

To ensure programs effectively raise student achievement, require funded programs to execute a rigorous evaluation and to address the 15 research-based elements of an effective literacy intervention detailed in *Reading Next: A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy*.

Table 1. Key Elements in Programs Designed to Improve Adolescent Literacy Achievement in Middle and High Schools

Instructional Improvements	Infrastructure Improvements
1. Direct, explicit comprehension instruction	10. Extended time for literacy
2. Effective instructional principles embedded in content	11. Professional development
3. Motivation and self-directed learning	12. Ongoing summative assessment of students and programs
4. Text-based collaborative learning	13. Teacher teams
5. Strategic tutoring	14. Leadership
6. Diverse texts	15. A comprehensive and coordinated literacy program
7. Intensive writing	
8. A technology component	
9. Ongoing formative assessment of students	

Source: Biancarosa, G., and Snow, C. E. (2004.) *Reading Next—A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy: A report to Carnegie Corporation of New York.* Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education.