

**ESSEX ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING  
EES MEDIA CENTER  
THURSDAY, MARCH 9, 2023 7:00pm**

**F.O.I. Compliance** – Subject to BOE approval at a future meeting

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Seidman called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**VERBAL ROLL CALL FOR BOE MEMBERS**

**Attendance: Essex BOE**

Lon Seidman

Marjorie Russell

Nancy Johnston

Cassandra Sweet

Justin Pillion

Mark Watson(7:12pm Arrival)

Other attendees: Kelley Frazier, Clerk

**Administration:**

Brian White

Jennifer Tousignant

Bob Grissom

Sarah Brzozowy

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Upon a motion duly made by Nancy Johnston and seconded by Marjorie Russell on the Essex Board of Education unanimously **VOTED** to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on January 19, 2023, minutes from Budget Workshop I of February 01, 2023, minutes from Budget Workshop II of February 15, 2023 and the Accounts Payable report as written.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No Comment.

**Superintendent's Report**

**District Update – Information and Communication**

Mr. White did not have a report.

**Assistant Superintendent's Report**

**General Update**

Dr. Brzozowy did not have a report.

**Financial Status Updates**

**Current Year to Date Financial Status Update**

Mr. Grissom gave an update on the financial status. All financial obligations are expected to be met. The current committed budget is 98% of the budget.

**Cafeteria Fund Update**

This report is through the end of January. There have been 22,475 meals served. The free meal program will resume March 1, 2023. Capital purchases are being discussed. Salaries and benefits will be reported as requested.

**Medical Reserve Tracking**

Net favorable results have been realized this year. The reserve is funded adequately.

**Grants**

No Update.

**Principal's Update**

Ms. Tousignant briefly discussed the events happening at EES.

**Other Items****Discussion and possible VOTE to approve the proposed 2023-24 budget for presentation to the Town of Essex**

Upon a motion made by Nancy Johnston and seconded by Marjorie Russell the Essex Elementary Board of Education unanimously **VOTED** to approve the proposed 2023-24 budget in the amount of \$8,378,172 which is a 2.87% increase for presentation to the Town of Essex.

**The Science of Reading**

Dr. Brzozowy discussed the Science of Reading and the Connecticut K-3 Literacy Waiver.

**Committee Reports****Curriculum**

No Update.

**Finance**

No Update.

**Policy**

Several Policies are in the initial stages of review. How policies are adopted was discussed. Research will be done on whether Boards can vote on policies that pertain to their Board. Questions should be directed to Mr. Seidman.

**Supervision District Committee Updates**

Budget is finalized.

**Other Committee Reports****LEARN Committee Update**

No Update.

**Discussion Regarding any Pending Policy for all BOE's**

No Action taken.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No Comments.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Present Proposed Essex BOE 2023-24 Budget to Essex BOE/BOS March 22, 2023 @7:00pm
- Joint BOE Meeting Thursday, April 6, 2023 @7:00pm @ JWMS Library
- Present proposed Essex BOE 2023-24 Budget April 30, 2023 at Public Hearing @7:30pm
- Joint BOE Retreat Saturday May 6, 2023 from 9:00am-Noon JWMS Library
- Essex Town Budget Vote May 8, 2023 @ 7:30pm.
- Essex BOE Next Regular Meeting May 11, 2023 @7:30pm

**ADJOURNMENT**

On motion duly made and seconded the Board unanimously **VOTED** to adjourn at 8:22p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Kelley Frazier Clerk**



# **2023-2024 Budget Presentation To Board of Education for VOTE to Approve for Presentation to Town**

March 9, 2023

# Proposed Essex Elementary School 2023-2024 Budget

## \$8,378,172

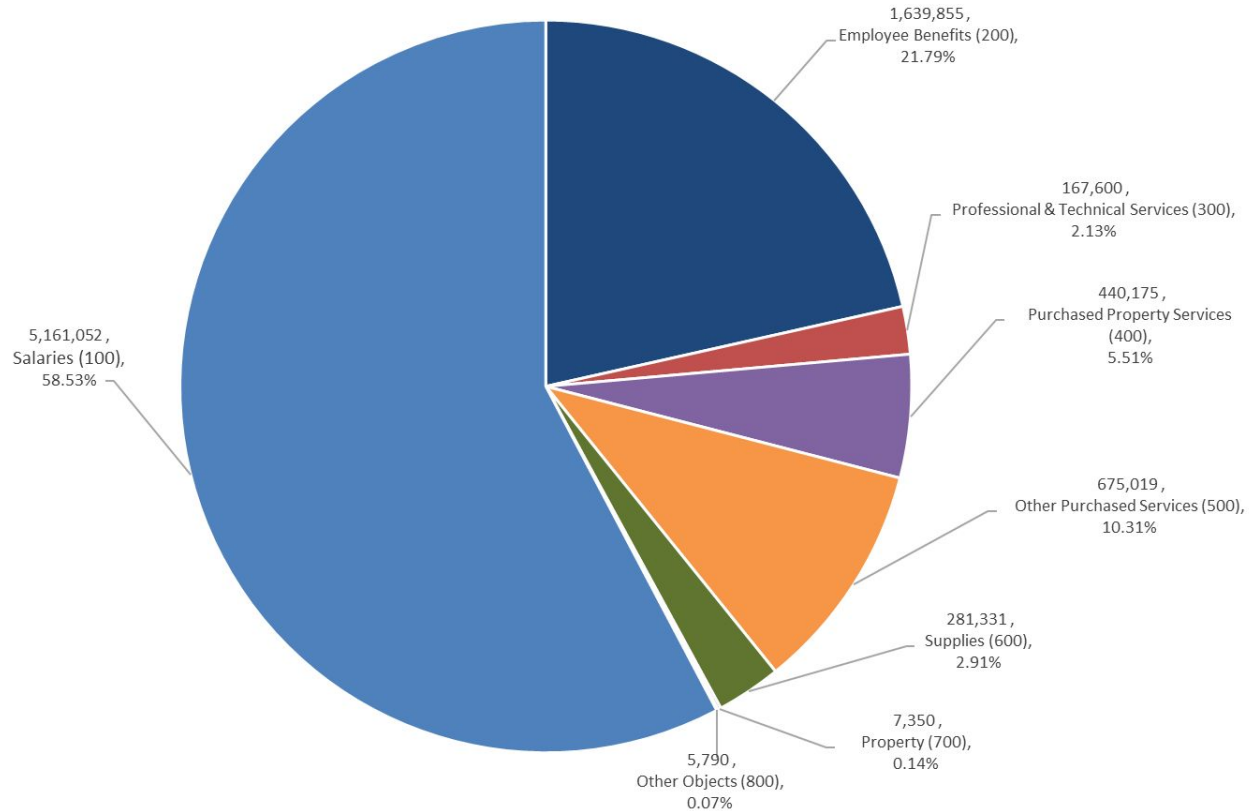
## 2.87%, or \$233,529

## Decrease of (\$127,895), or (1.57%) since Workshop #2

<i>Description</i>	<i>Amount Presented 2/9/2023</i>	<i>Revised Amount 3/9/2023</i>	<i>Difference</i>
Supervision District Salaries (5198)	\$1,712,405	\$1,651,099	(\$61,306)
Health Insurance (5210)	\$918,273	\$883,244	(\$35,029)
Supervision District Emp Benefits (5298)	\$510,048	\$486,850	(\$23,198)
Supervision District Purch Serv (5398)	\$83,540	\$80,187	(\$3,353)
Supervision District Transport (5598)	\$300,196	\$295,928	(\$4,268)
Supervision District Supplies (5698)	\$32,063	\$31,322	(\$741)

# Proposed Essex Elementary School 2023-2024 Budget

Total Budget Request: \$8,378,172



# Essex Elementary School - Capital Requests

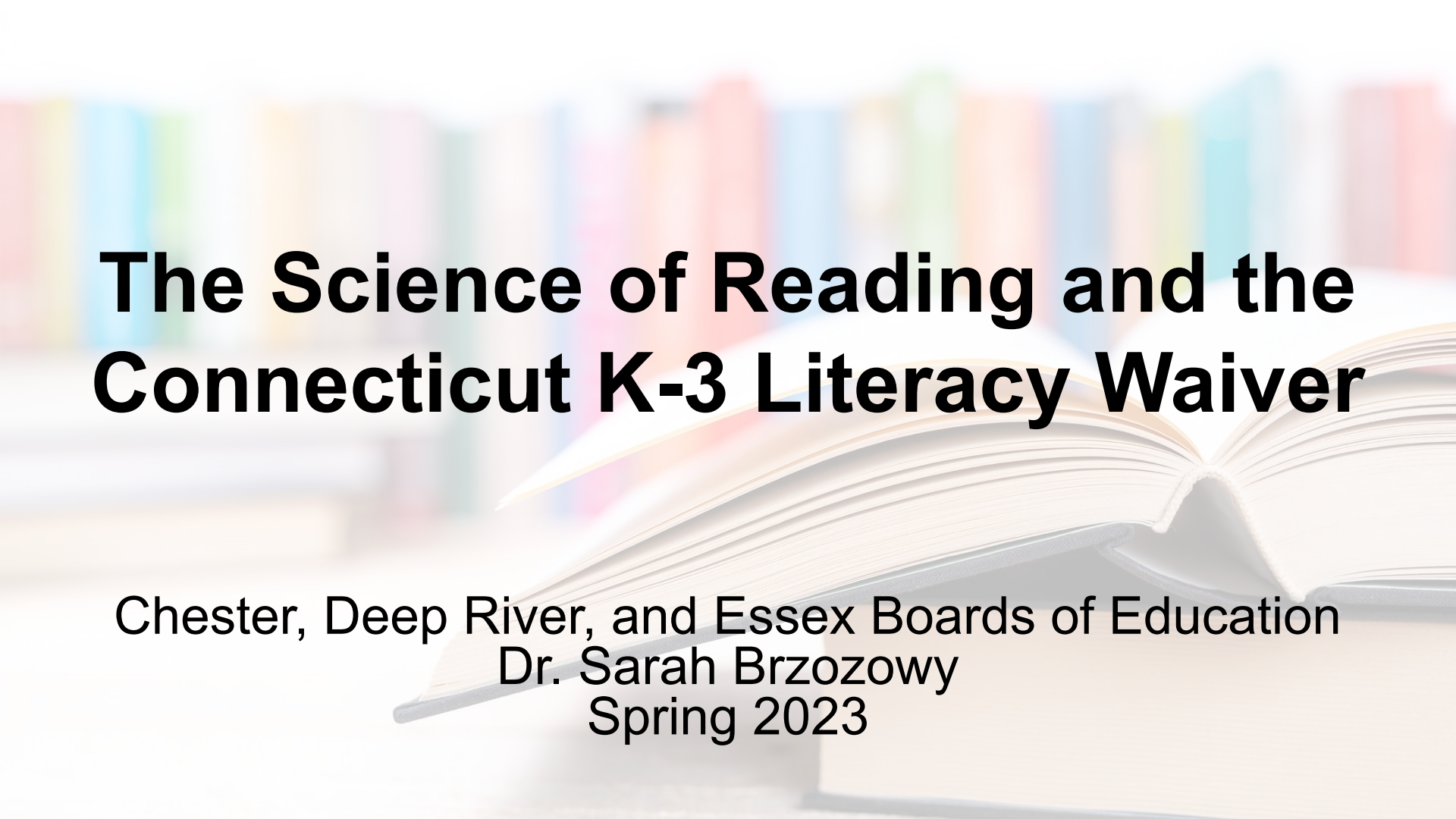
Updated 1/23/2023

<b><i>Amount Requested:</i></b>	<b><i>Object</i></b>	<b><i>School Year 2023-2024</i></b>
Replace Furniture Quote #1 = \$3,876 Quote #2 = \$6,767	5730	5,000
Keri Badge System Quote #1 = \$15,000 Quote #2 = \$15,000	5730	15,000
Replace Security System Quote #1 = \$15,000	5730	15,000
Two Back Pack Vacuums Quote #1 = \$4,522 Quote #2 = \$3,326 Quote #3 = \$4,095	5730	5,500
<b>Total</b>		<b>40,500</b>

# Essex Budget Timeline and Next Steps

- **March 9, 2023 (Tonight)** - Essex BOE Meeting - Vote to Approve 2023-2024 Essex Budget for Presentation to Town
- **March 22, 2023** - Present Essex BOE 2023-2024 Budget to Essex BOF/BOS
- **April 20, 2023** - Present Essex BOE 2023-2024 Budget at Public Hearing at Town Hall
- **May 8, 2023** - Essex Town Budget Vote
- **May 11, 2023** - Essex BOE Meeting





# **The Science of Reading and the Connecticut K-3 Literacy Waiver**

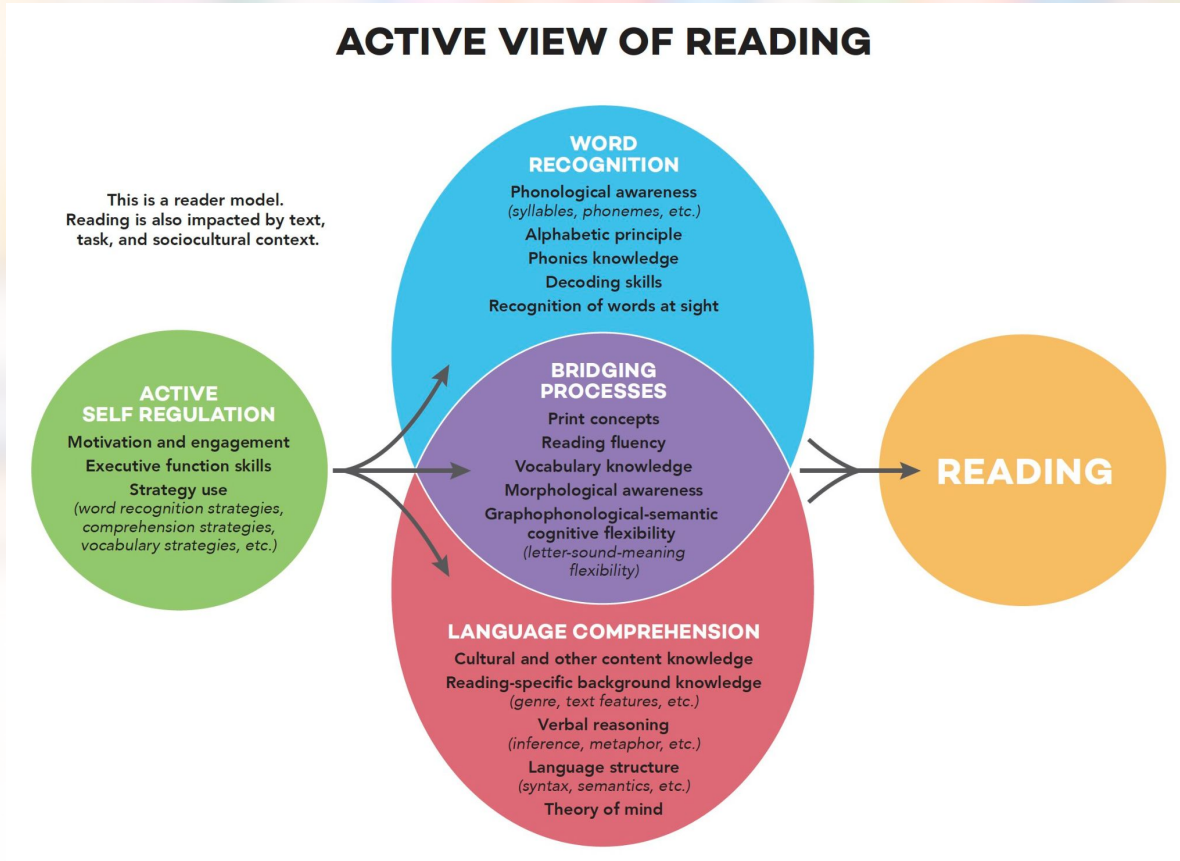
Chester, Deep River, and Essex Boards of Education  
Dr. Sarah Brzozowy  
Spring 2023

# What is the science of reading?

- A body of knowledge and research
- In 2017, neuroscientists finally agreed on what adult skilled readers do (our eyes track/flicker left to right the entire time, we look at every single part of every single word)



# What is the science of reading?



# What is the science of reading?

## Language Comprehension

- Background Knowledge
- Vocabulary Knowledge
- Language Structures
- Verbal Reasoning
- Literacy Knowledge

Increasingly  
Strategic

## Skilled Reading

Fluent execution and coordination of word recognition and text comprehension.

## Word Recognition

- Phonological Awareness
- Decoding (and Spelling)
- Sight Recognition

Increasingly  
Automatic

Scarborough, H. 2001. Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis)abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice. Pp. 97-110 in S. B. Neuman & D. K. Dickinson (Eds.) *Handbook of Early Literacy*. NY: Guilford Press.



# What is the science of reading?

## A Brief History of Reading Instruction

*by literacy expert  
Adrienne Gear*

	METHOD	APPROACH	TEXTS	CONCERNS
1960'S-1970'S	Whole Word	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Students learn 30-50 sight words and read books consisting mostly of these words</li><li>Phonics workbooks</li><li>SRA Kits</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Repetitive text</li><li>Intentional sequence of simple sight words.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Texts were contrived, unnatural, not relatable</li><li>Lack of diversity in characters</li></ul>
1980'S-1990'S	Whole Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Immersing students in "real" literature and engage in text through personal connections</li><li>Phonics is embedded</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Authentic literature shared through class read-alouds</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Phonics not taught directly</li><li>Many students did not learn how to decode</li></ul>
1990'S-2000'S	Balanced Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A "balance" between authentic literature AND explicit instruction</li><li>MSV cueing system</li><li>Small group and whole class instruction</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Authentic literature</li><li>Levelled texts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>MSV method</li><li>"Guessing" words rather than decoding them</li></ul>
2000 - 2020 (beginning research to classroom practice)	Science of Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Students are taught through a systematic phonics program AS WELL AS</li><li>Phonological awareness, Phonics, Vocabulary, Fluency, Comprehension</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Decodable books</li><li>Authentic literature</li><li>Levelled texts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To be determined!</li></ul>

# What is the science of reading NOT?

- **A program**
- A belief system



# The “How” of Structured Literacy

- Through Structured Literacy (SL), teachers implement methods that are appropriate for all students and particularly necessary for students with learning differences or initial skill resistance. SL supports instruction that is ***explicit, sequential, systematic, prescriptive, diagnostic, and cumulative***.
- Instruction is assessment-driven. The diagnostic aspect of SL requires continued progress monitoring to measure outcomes and guide differentiation. We must know where students are with literacy acquisition skills and move them forward.
- Students are provided repeated opportunities with decodable text that have ample representations of the phonetic elements for code-emphasis. Through regular dictation of words and sentences containing the phonetic concept, students become skilled in spelling words within and outside of the text.



# Right to Read Legislation

- Implement a coordinated statewide reading plan for K-3.
- Research and develop a birth-to-12 reading success strategy, in collaboration with the Office of Early Childhood.
- All districts are required to implement early literacy reading curricula that are evidence-based and approved by state Literacy Center
- Support local boards of education and district leadership in improving reading outcomes for K-3 students.
- In June 2021, the Connecticut legislature passed the “Right to Read” legislation in Sections 394-404 of the Budget Implementer Bill, [Public Act No. 21-2](#).



# Why the Science of Reading and What it means for:

## Boards of Education:

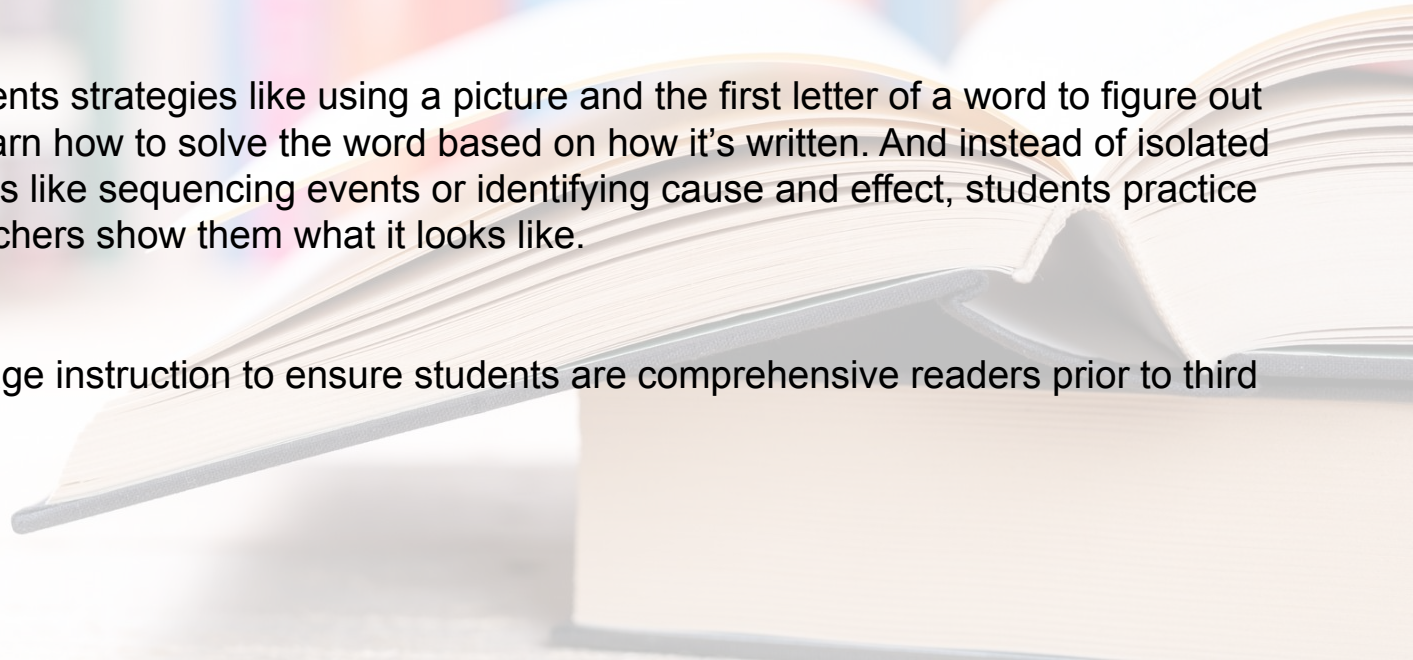
Updating texts, approving new materials, and supporting shifts in reading practices in alignment with new research and information to promote success for all learners.

## Teachers:

Instead of teaching students strategies like using a picture and the first letter of a word to figure out what it says, students learn how to solve the word based on how it's written. And instead of isolated comprehension strategies like sequencing events or identifying cause and effect, students practice mindful reading, and teachers show them what it looks like.

## Students:

Receiving explicit language instruction to ensure students are comprehensive readers prior to third grade.



# To Implement would require

- An Assessment Audit and Potential Shift
- All new curriculum, materials, and programs  
(Bridges implementation took time, Professional Development, coach support, and materials)
- Professional development prior to implementation
- Ability to pilot programs this Spring
- Multi-year implementation with significant training implications
- Upfront costs, hidden costs, ongoing costs
- Coordination across three towns, three schools, three boards

# Challenges

- Canned “one size fits all” approach
  - American Reading Company – ARC Core (K-3), (2020);
  - Amplify Education Inc. – Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA, 2022);
  - Houghton Mifflin Harcourt – Into Reading;
  - Imagine Learning – EL Education Grades K-3, (2017);
  - McGraw Hill Education – Wonders, (2020);
  - Open Up Resources – EL Education, (2017); and
  - Savvas Learning Company – myView Literacy, (2020).
- Many scripted programs
- Belief that the best approach is a varied approach
- Sweeping changes to current practices
- Ongoing research regarding approved programs



# Waiver Application

Sent on February 24, 2023 from the Assistant Superintendent's Office to CSDE.

Opted for the waiver because:

- Implementation of a new program would require: financial commitment, training, professional development, curricular materials
- The extension requires districts to choose a program by July 1, 2024 to implement
- Allows the district to review practices and make incremental changes

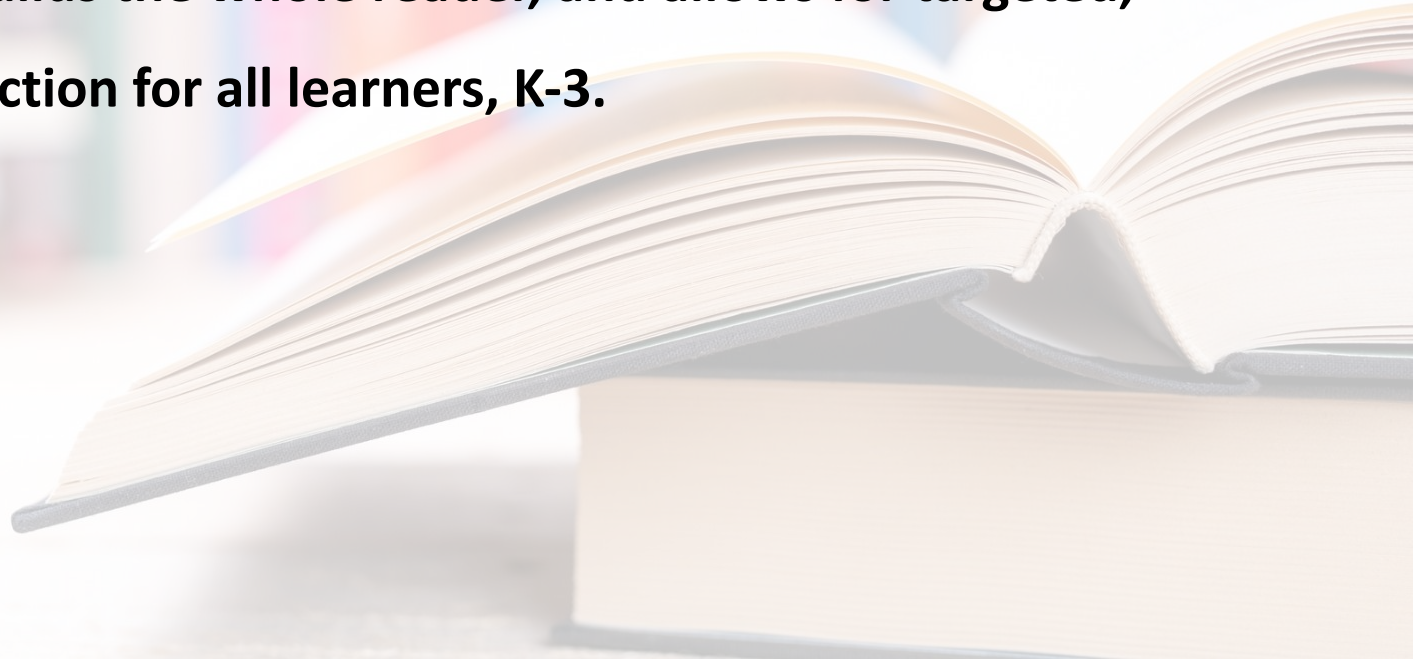
# **PRIORITY SHIFT 1**

**Universal understanding and application of aligned, sequential instruction, scheduled/timely progress monitoring, and an assessment system that aligns to SoR for readers at all stages of K-3 literacy.**



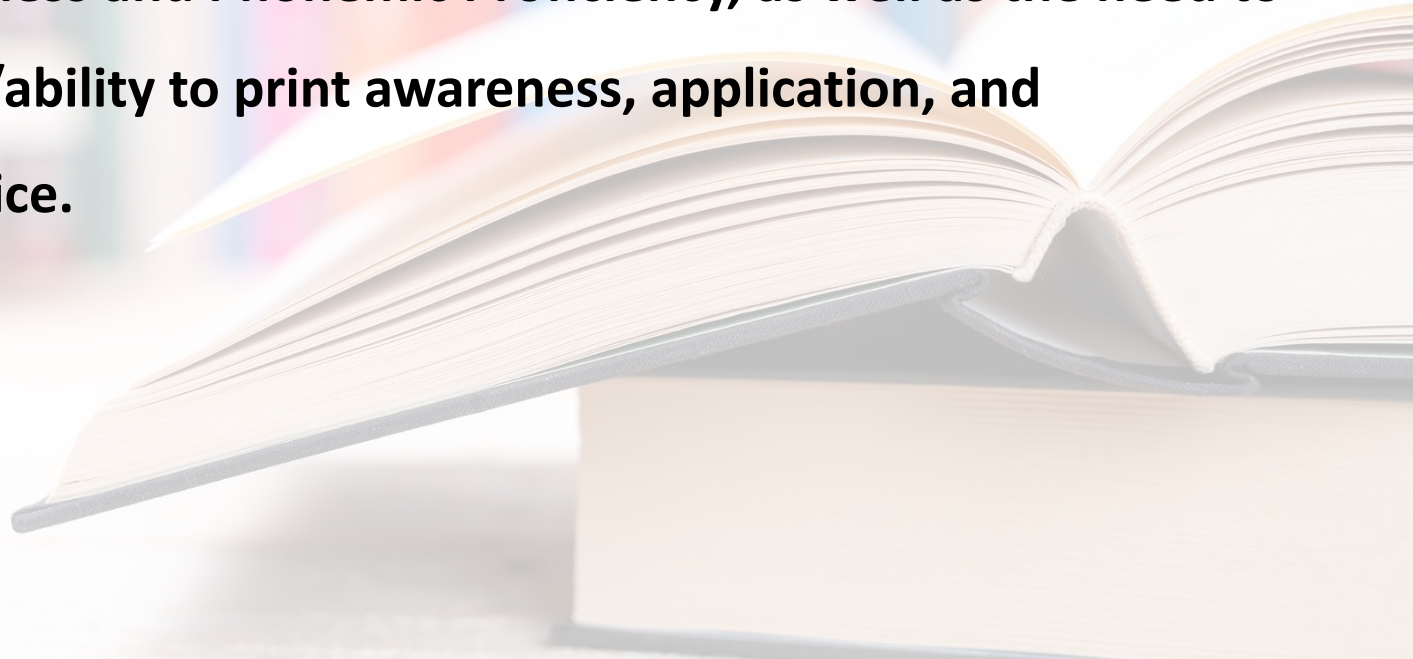
## **PRIORITY SHIFT 2**

**Universal understanding and application of the SoR-aligned skill trajectory that builds the whole reader, and allows for targeted, sequential instruction for all learners, K-3.**



## **PRIORITY SHIFT 3**

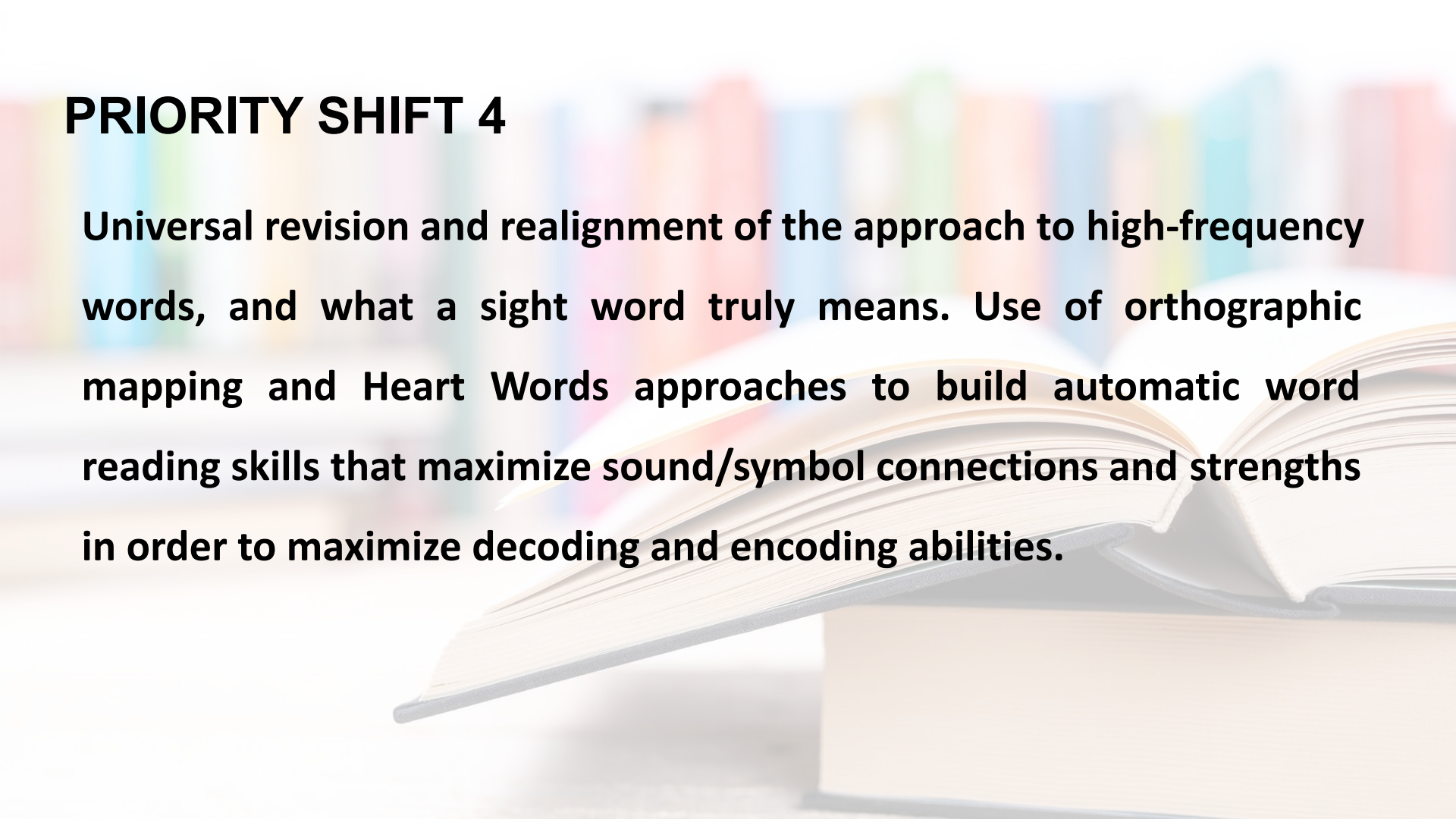
**Universal understanding and application of the importance and role of Phonemic awareness and Phonemic Proficiency, as well as the need to connect this skill/ability to print awareness, application, and meaningful practice.**





## **PRIORITY SHIFT 4**

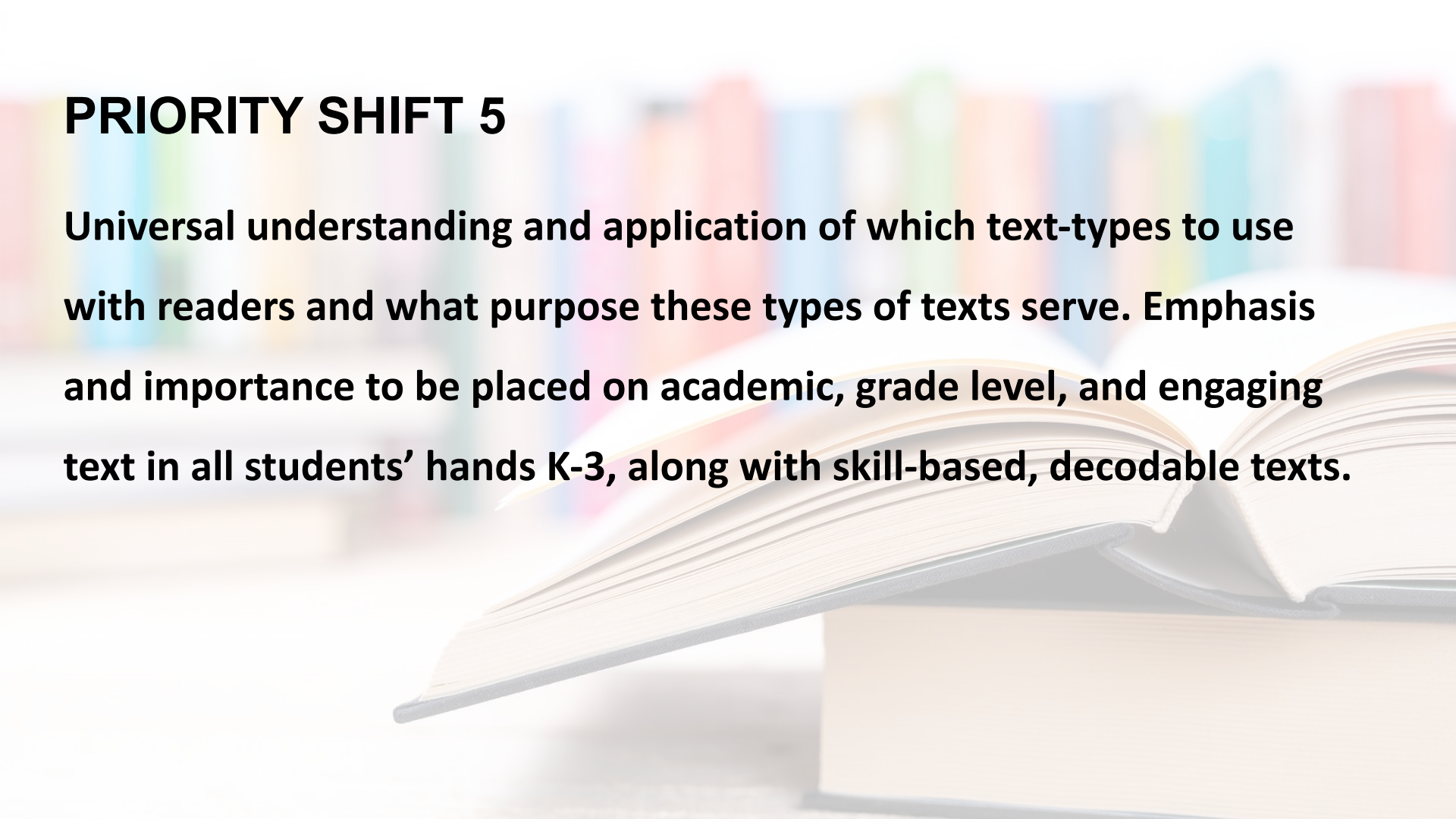
**Universal revision and realignment of the approach to high-frequency words, and what a sight word truly means. Use of orthographic mapping and Heart Words approaches to build automatic word reading skills that maximize sound/symbol connections and strengths in order to maximize decoding and encoding abilities.**

The background of the slide features a soft-focus image of an open book in the foreground, with its pages slightly curved. Behind it, a row of colorful books is visible on a shelf, creating a library-like atmosphere. The overall lighting is bright and even.



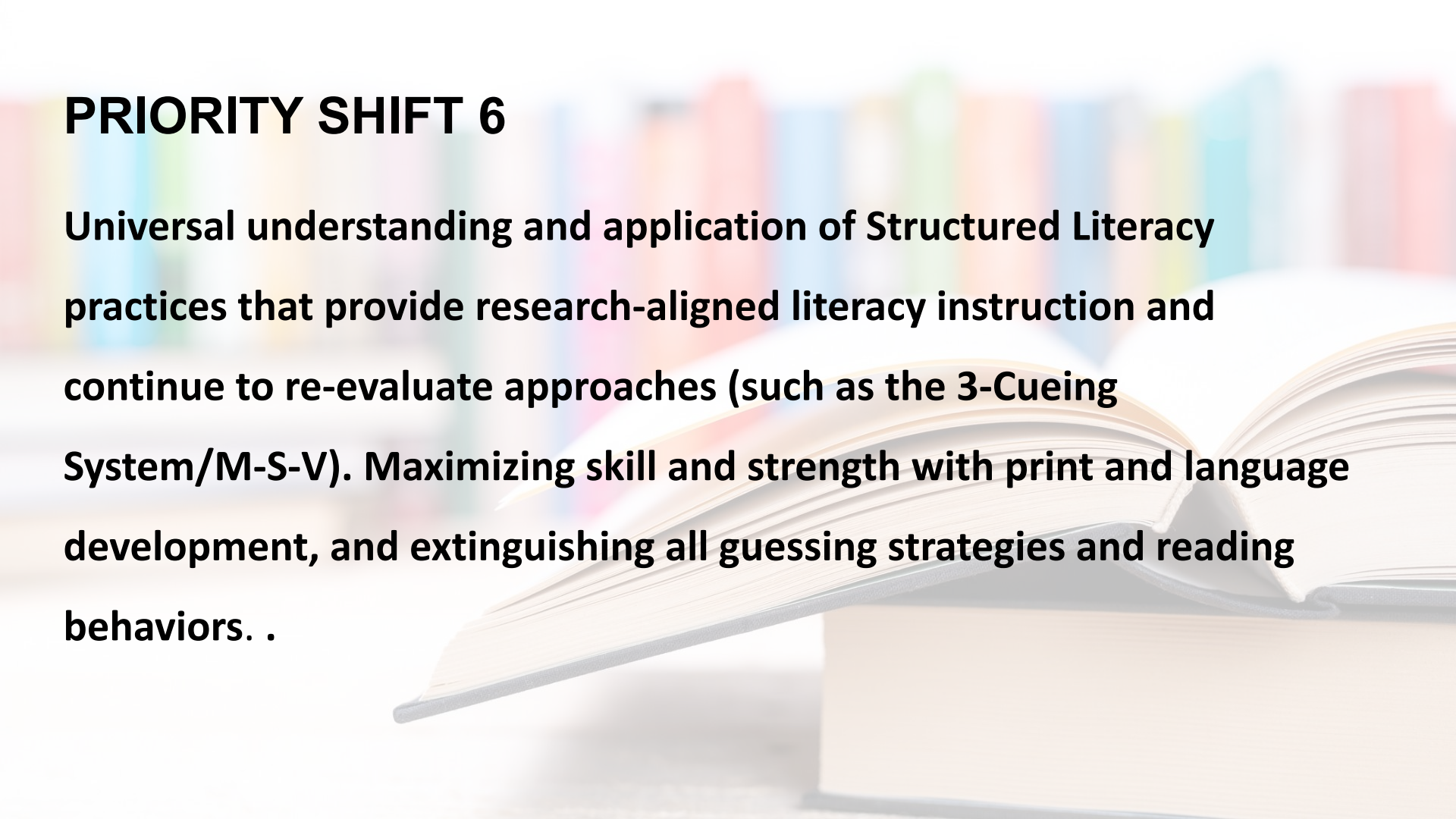
## **PRIORITY SHIFT 5**

**Universal understanding and application of which text-types to use with readers and what purpose these types of texts serve. Emphasis and importance to be placed on academic, grade level, and engaging text in all students' hands K-3, along with skill-based, decodable texts.**

The background of the slide features a soft-focus image of a library or study area. In the foreground, an open book is visible, its pages slightly curved. Behind it, a row of colorful books stands on a shelf, their spines blurred. The overall lighting is bright and even, creating a clean, professional look.

## **PRIORITY SHIFT 6**

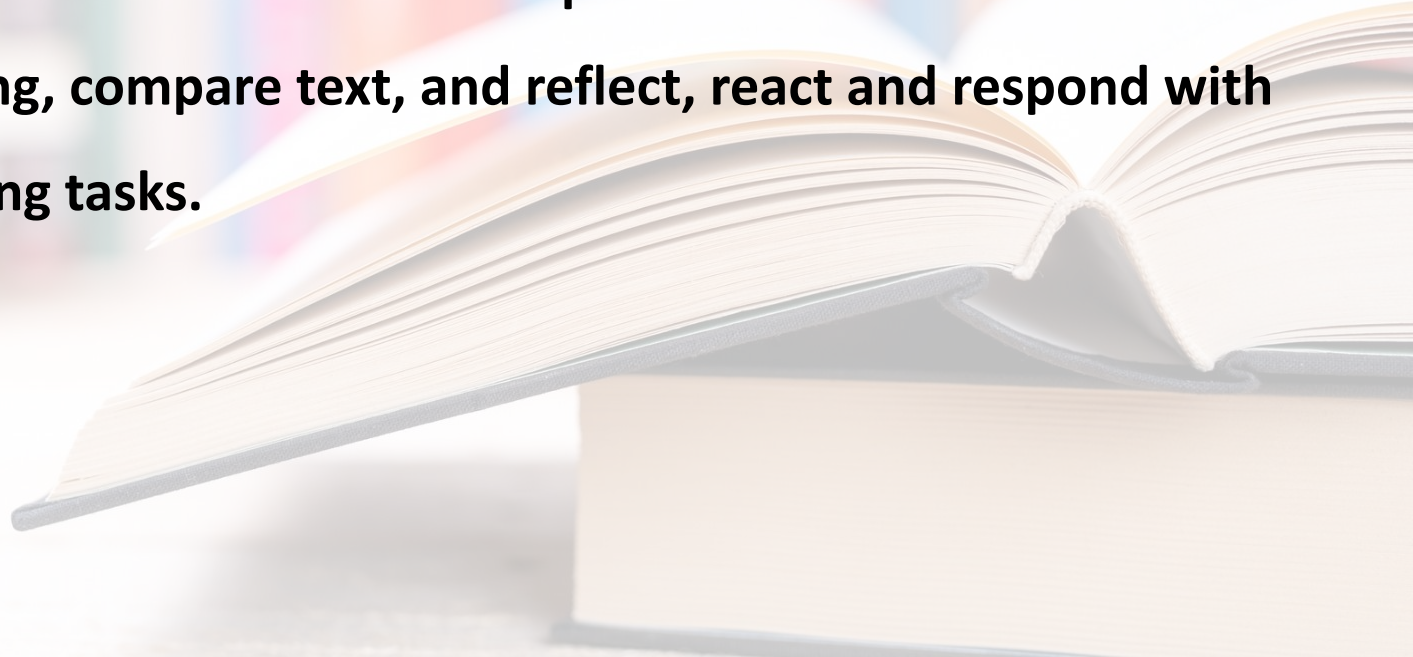
**Universal understanding and application of Structured Literacy practices that provide research-aligned literacy instruction and continue to re-evaluate approaches (such as the 3-Cueing System/M-S-V). Maximizing skill and strength with print and language development, and extinguishing all guessing strategies and reading behaviors. .**

The background of the slide features a soft-focus image of a library or study area. In the foreground, an open book is visible, its pages slightly curved. Behind it, a row of colorful books stands on a shelf, their spines blurred. The overall lighting is bright and even, creating a clean, professional aesthetic.

# **PRIORITY SHIFT 7**

**Universal understanding that comprehension drives all SoR work.**

**Automatic, fluent readers maximize comprehension and are able to apply new learning, compare text, and reflect, react and respond with reading and writing tasks.**



## Next Steps:

If we get the waiver?

We will continue to analyze our practices to ensure we are providing the best opportunities for all learners to be readers prior to grade 3

If we don't?

We will continue to review our practices

- Time for Exploration
- Additional Training (***ALL elementary staff received SoR training on 3/8/23***)
- Financial Implications



