K-3 LITERACY
A State Policy Overview

September 2, 2020

EDUCATION COMMISSION
OF THE STATES
Your education policy team.

STATE LIAISON

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STATE RELATIONS STRATEGIST

Education Commission of the States

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Who we are.

The essential, indispensable member of any team addressing education policy.

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What we do.

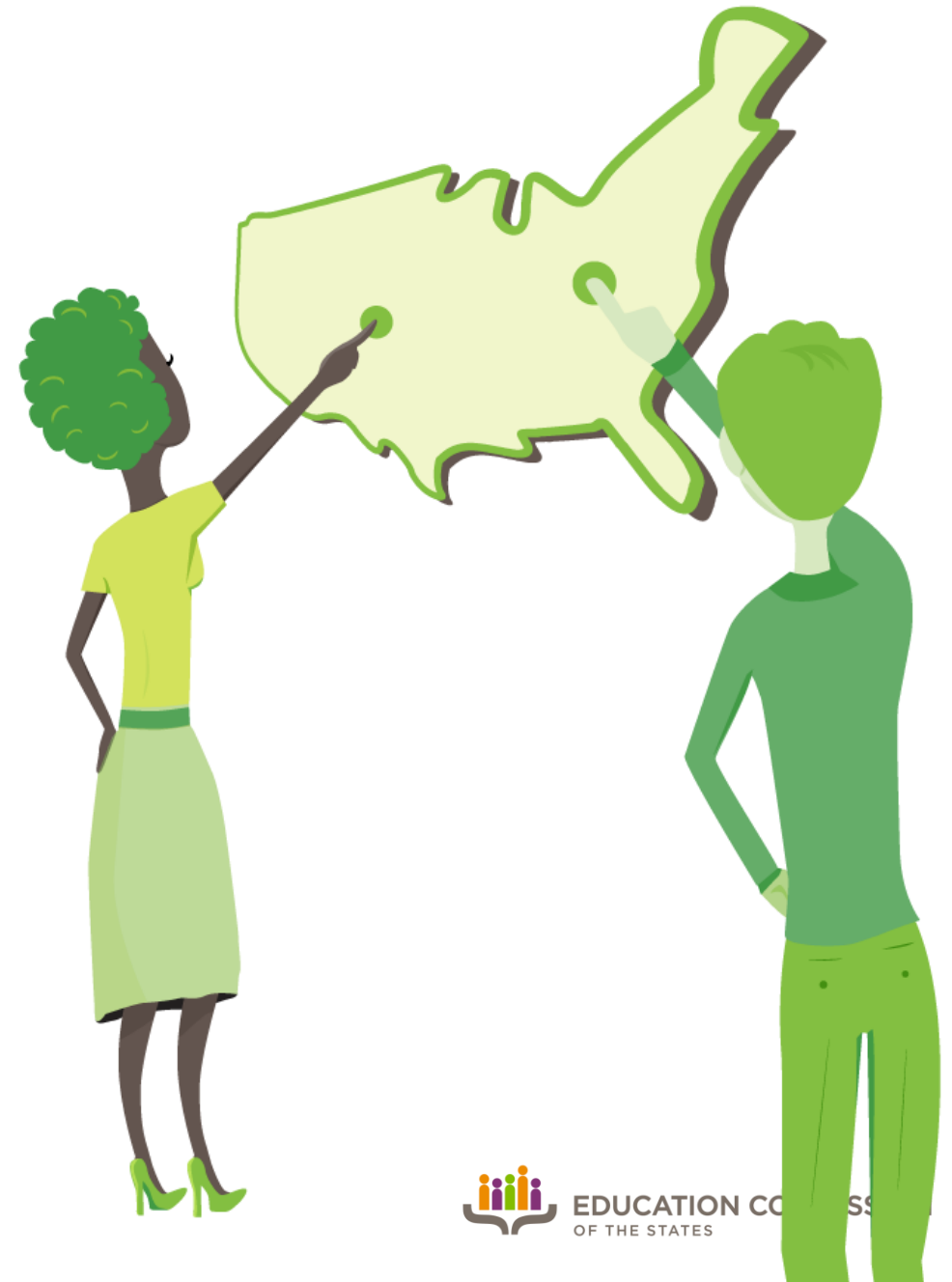We believe in the power of learning from experience and we know informed policymakers create better education policy.

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How we do it.

We research, report, convene and counsel.

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Adrienne Fischer

POLICY ANALYST

Education Commission
of the States

Matt Weyer

POLICY ANALYST

Education Commission
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Tom Keily

POLICY ANALYST

Education Commission
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Agenda

- National context

- Literacy policy components

- State examples

- Policy takeaways

- Current context

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33%
of states

had lower 4th grade
reading scores in 2019

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23%

of below-basic readers

drop out or fail to finish
high school on time

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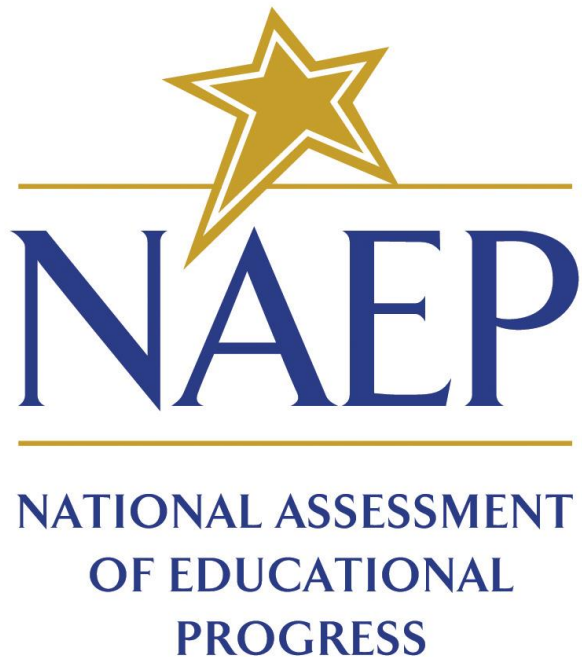
Three achievement levels:
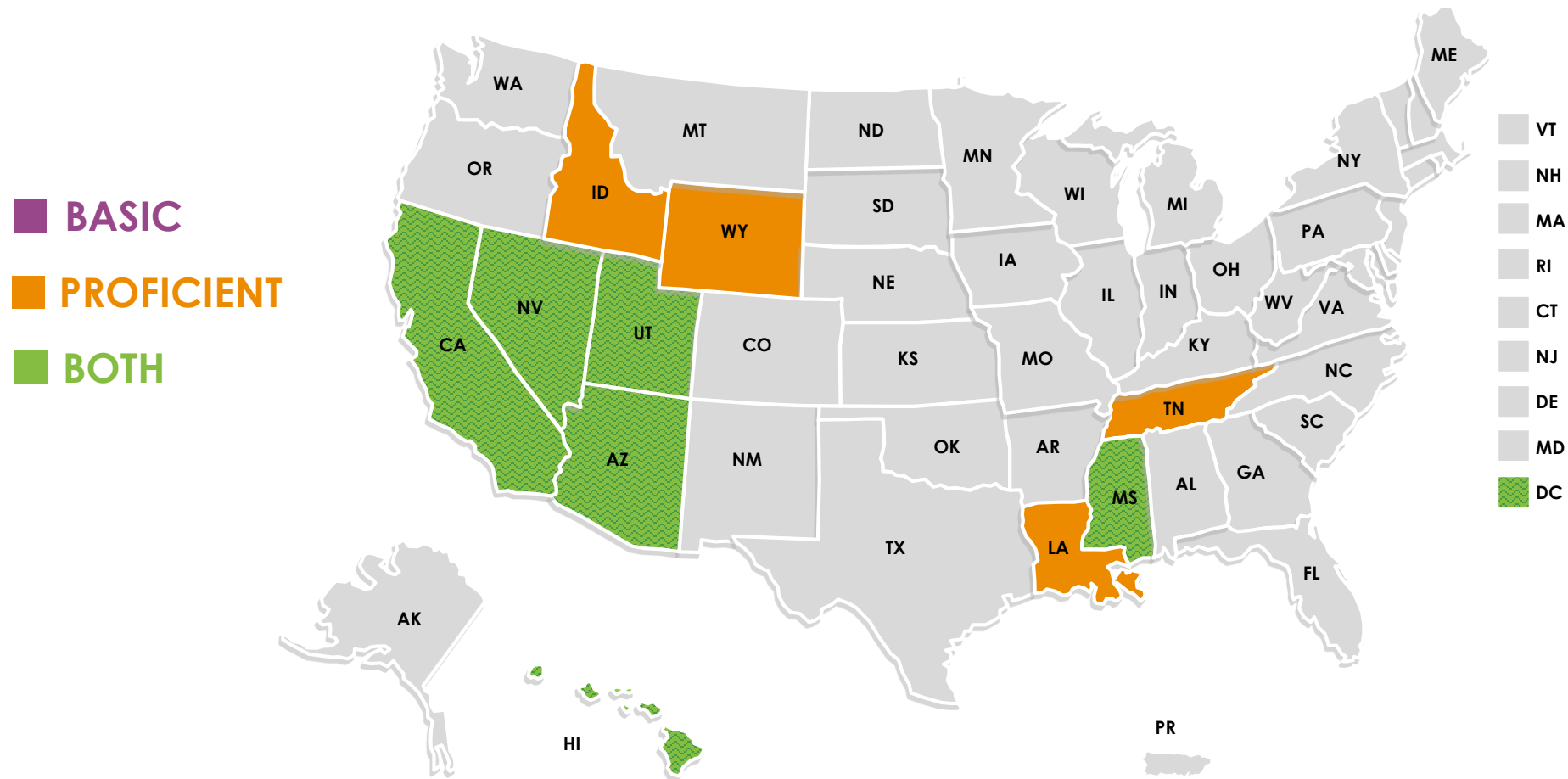
BASIC, **PROFICIENT** and **ADVANCED**

BASIC – partial mastery of prerequisite skills and knowledge

PROFICIENT – subject-matter knowledge, application of such knowledge to real-world situations, and analytical skills

ACHIEVEMENT RATE is the percentage of students within a state reaching a given achievement level.
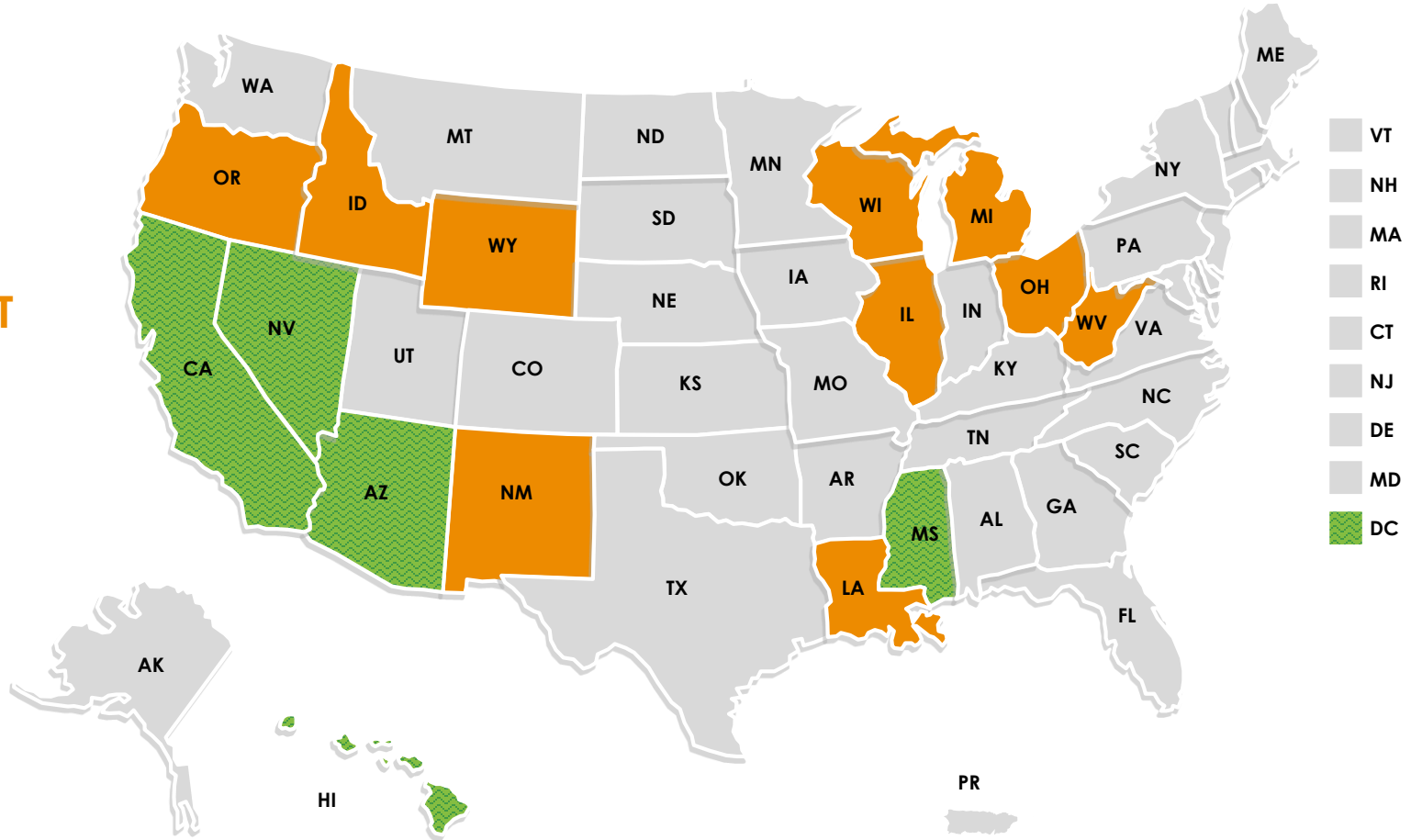
- Map link

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NAEP

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT
OF EDUCATIONAL
PROGRESS

States Increasing NAEP Achievement Rates by 5+ Points, 2009-19

BASIC

PROFICIENT

BOTH

WA, OR, ID, MT, ND, MN, WI, MI, NY, ME, VT, NH, MA, RI, CT, NJ, DE, MD, DC, PA, OH, IN, IL, IA, NE, SD, WY, NV, UT, CO, KS, MO, KY, WV, VA, NC, TN, SC, AZ, NM, OK, AR, MS, AL, GA, TX, LA, FL, CA, AK, HI, PR
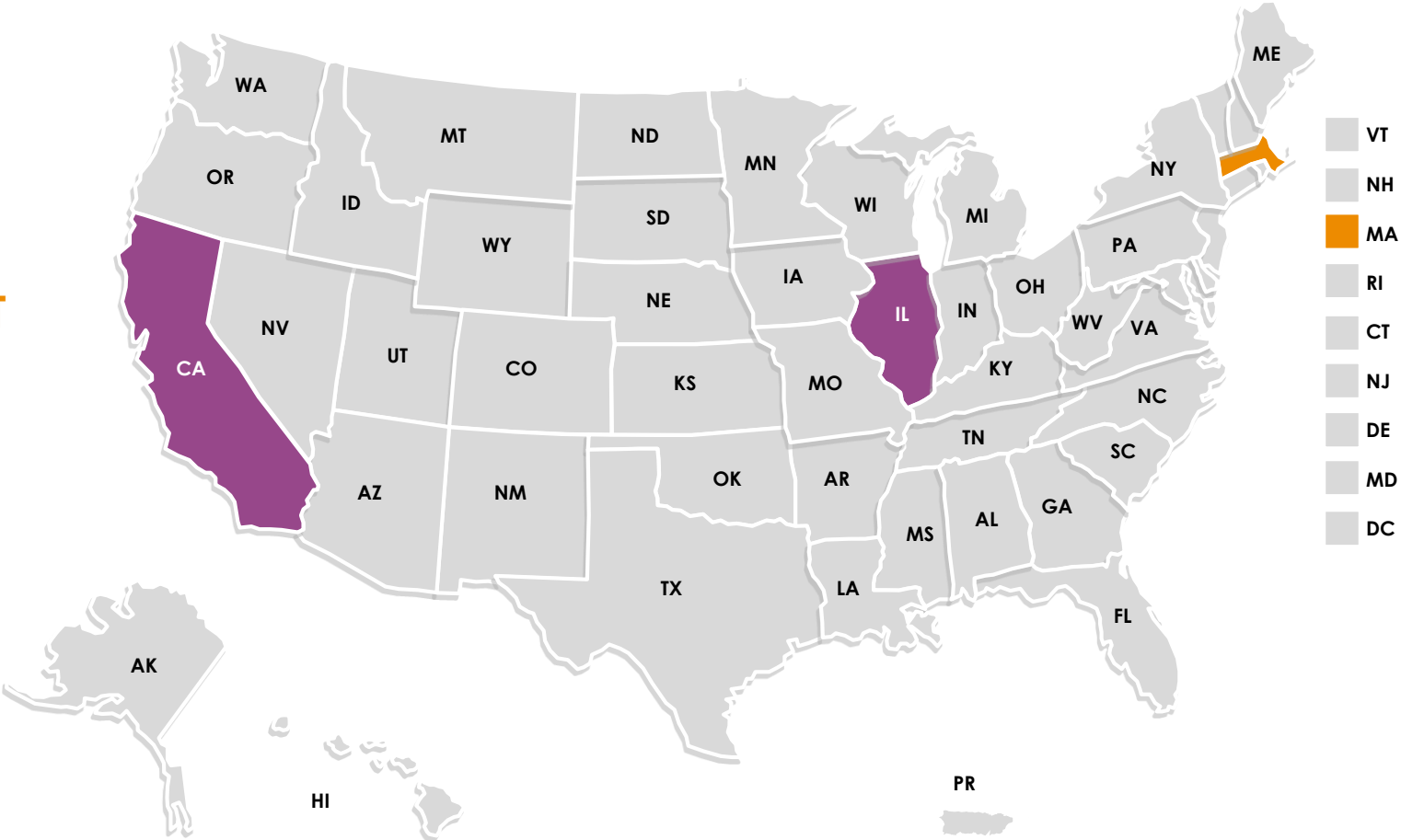
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States Increasing Rates for Students from Lower Income Families

States Reducing Gap for Students from Lower Income Families

BASIC
PROFICIENT
BOTH

PREVENTION

Foundational instruction received by all students, regardless of risk factors or skill level.

- Teacher training – professional development, pre-service coursework, and coaching or mentoring

- Curriculum selection

- Group size or teacher-pupil ratios

STATE SPOTLIGHT

Virginia

Senate Bill 904 (enacted 2020)

Creates a statewide coalition of public universities to gather and share information on the latest research-based approaches to reading instruction.

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INTERVENTION

Identifies individual needs and provides targeted supports for students with reading difficulties.

- Individualized reading plans

- Small group or one-on-one instruction

- Additional instruction outside the classroom or over the summer

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ASSESSMENT

Identifies a student's reading challenges and monitors their progress.

SCREENER — a brief snapshot to assess a particular skill or ability

DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT — targeted to identify and match difficulties with proper supports

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT — an ongoing evaluative process for teachers and students

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT — evaluates student performance against a defined set of content standards

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PREVENTION

ASSESSMENTS
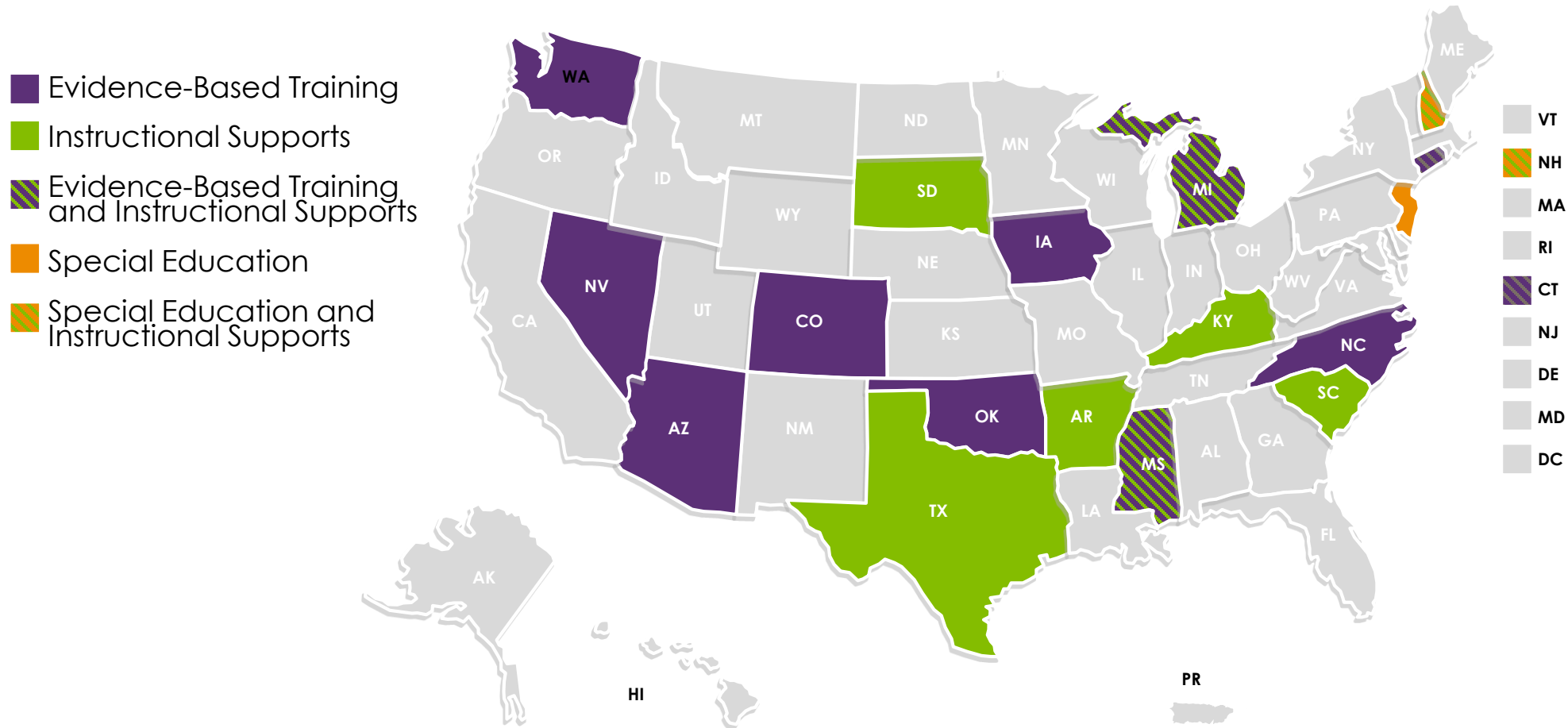
- Screener
- Formative Assessment

INTERVENTION

ASSESSMENTS

- Diagnostic Assessment
- Formative Assessment
- Summative Assessment

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50-STATE COMPARISONS
Policy Components

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Preservice Teacher Preparation in Early Literacy

Legend:
- Evidence-Based Training
- Assessments
- Special Education
- Multiple Categories

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Teacher Professional Development in Early Literacy

Legend:
- Evidence-Based Training
- Instructional Supports
- Evidence-Based Training and Instructional Supports
- Special Education
- Special Education and Instructional Supports
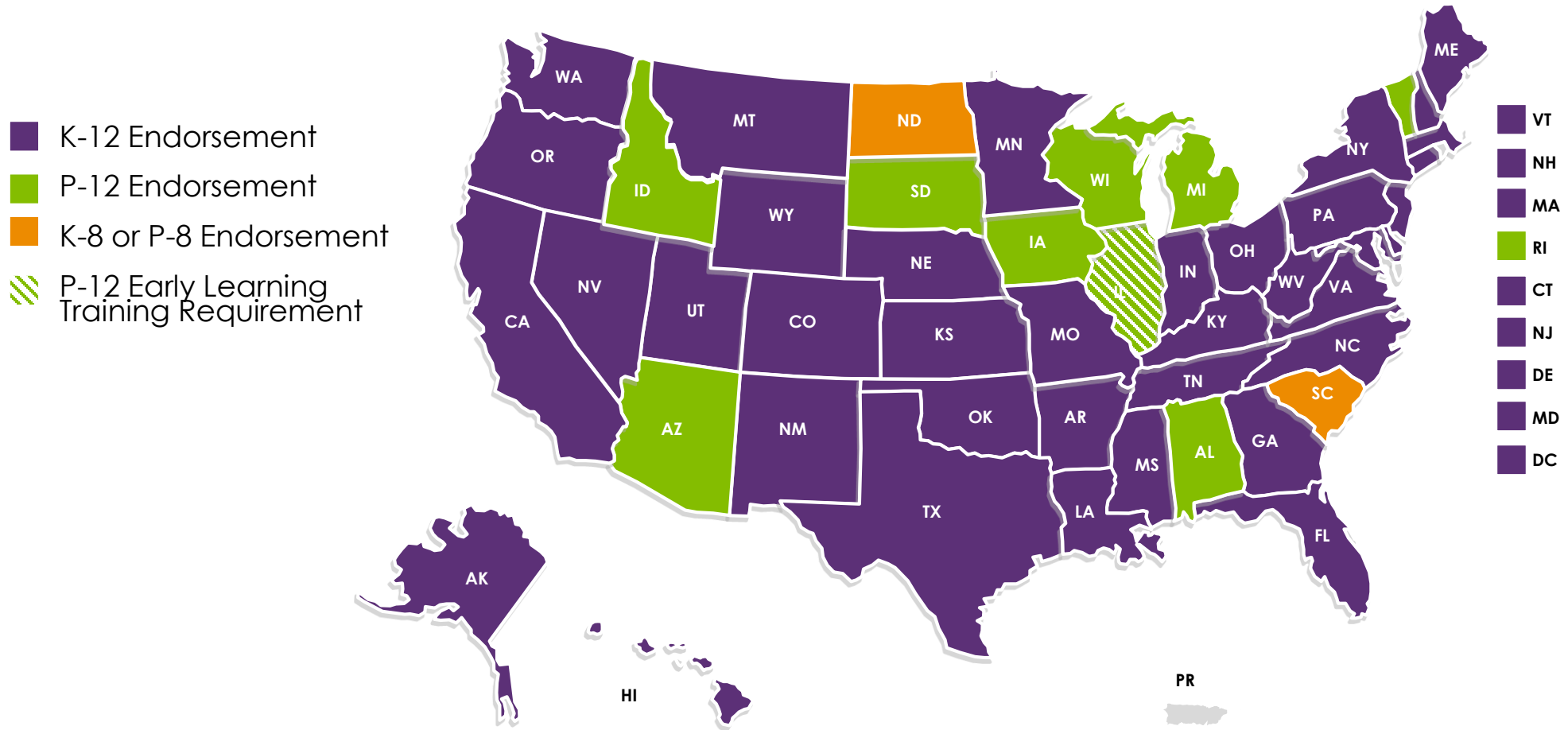
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Teacher Endorsements Specific to Early Learning

Legend:
- Birth-Age 8
- Preschool-3rd Grade
- K-6
- K-12
- B-8 and K-6
- P-3 and K-6

* Special Education also available

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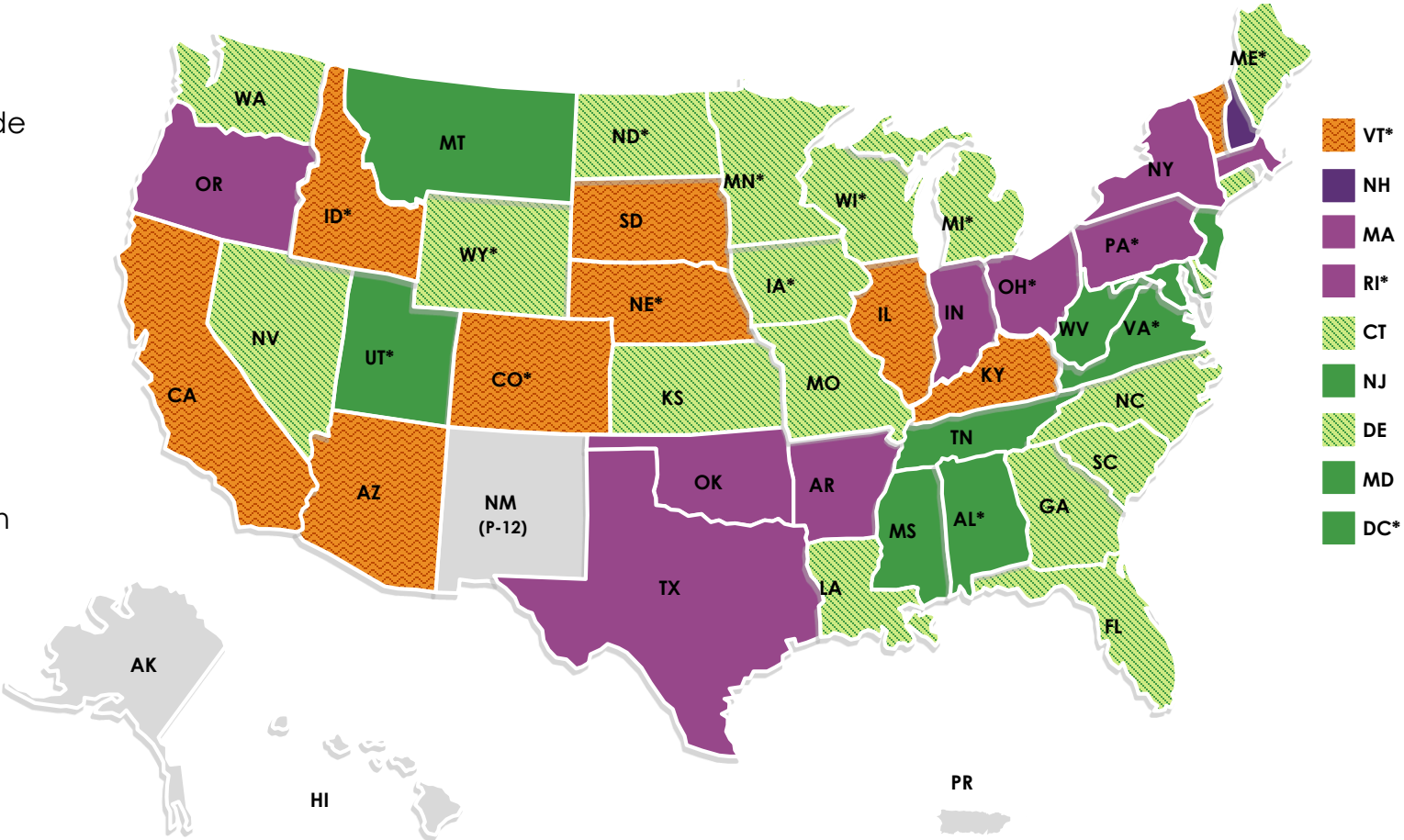
Principal Endorsement Specific to Early Learning

Legend:
- K-12 Endorsement
- P-12 Endorsement
- K-8 or P-8 Endorsement
- P-12 Early Learning Training Requirement

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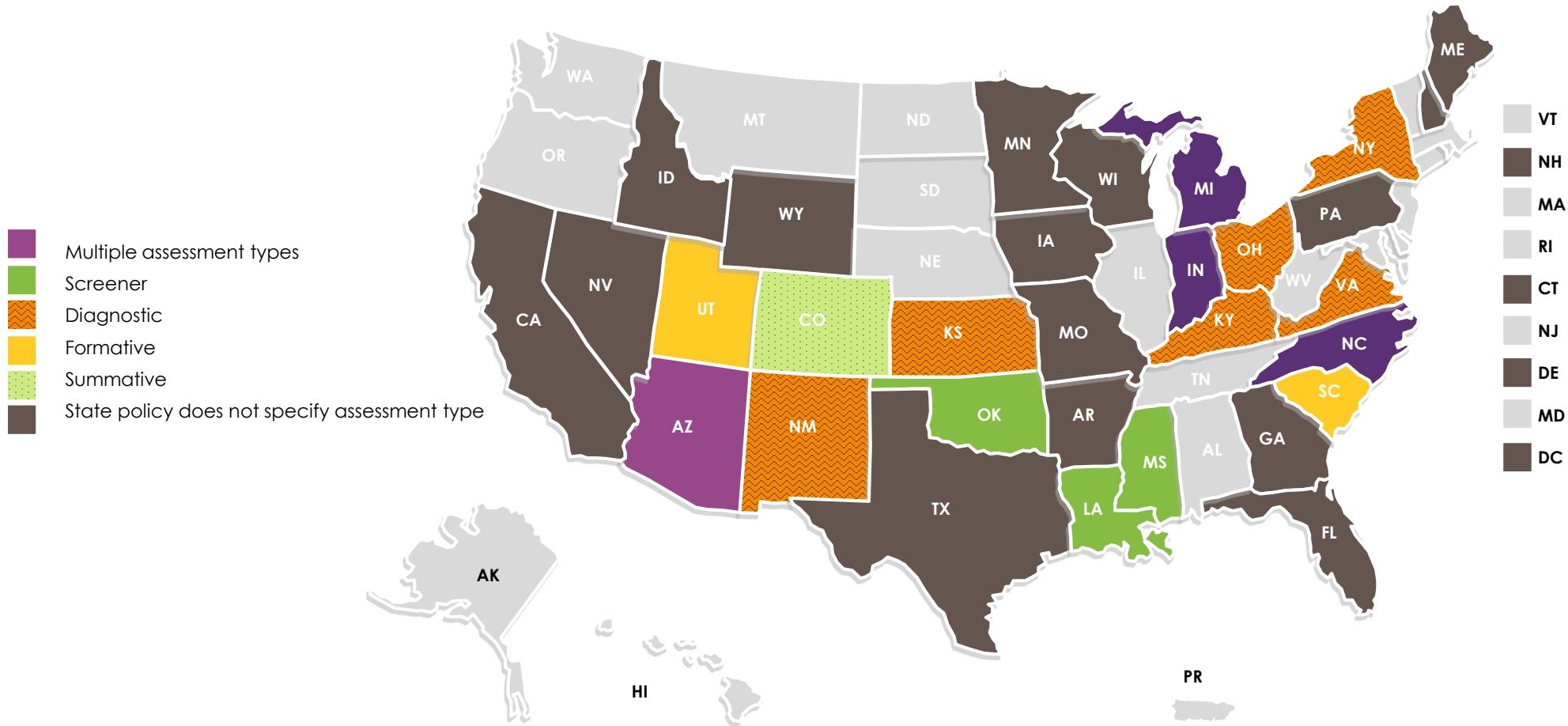# K-3 Teacher-to-Student Ratio Requirement in State Policy

Legend:
- 1:17 or fewer
- 1: 18-20
- 1: 21-25
- 1: +25
- Not specified

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K-3 Maximum Class Size in State Policy

Legend:
- 17 or fewer
- 18-20
- 21-25
- +25
- Not specified

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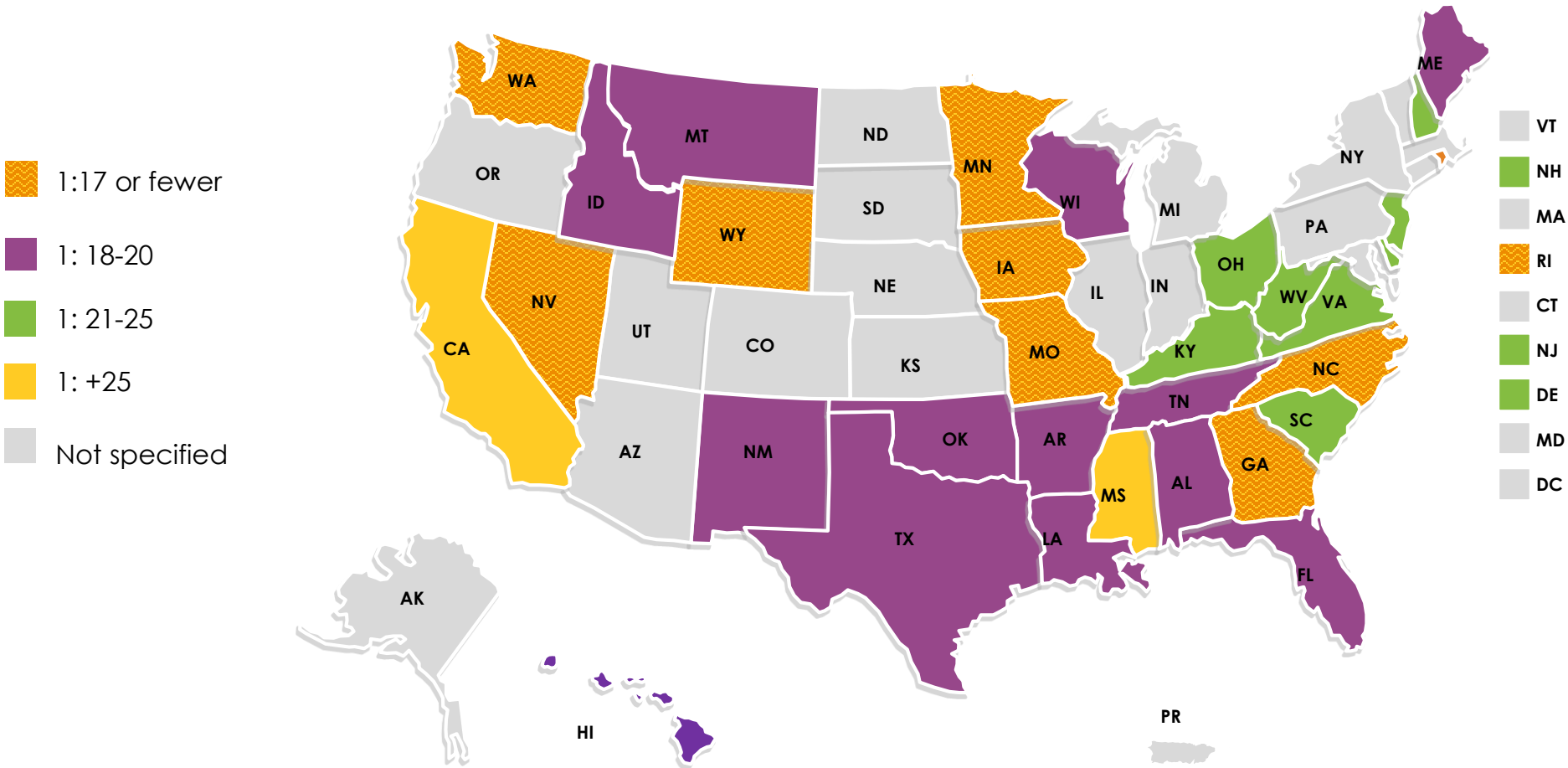
Types of Assessments Required for Grades K-3 that are Identified in State Policy

Legend:
- Multiple assessment types
- Screener
- Diagnostic
- Formative
- Summative
- State policy does not specify assessment type

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Types of Literacy Interventions Identified in State Policy
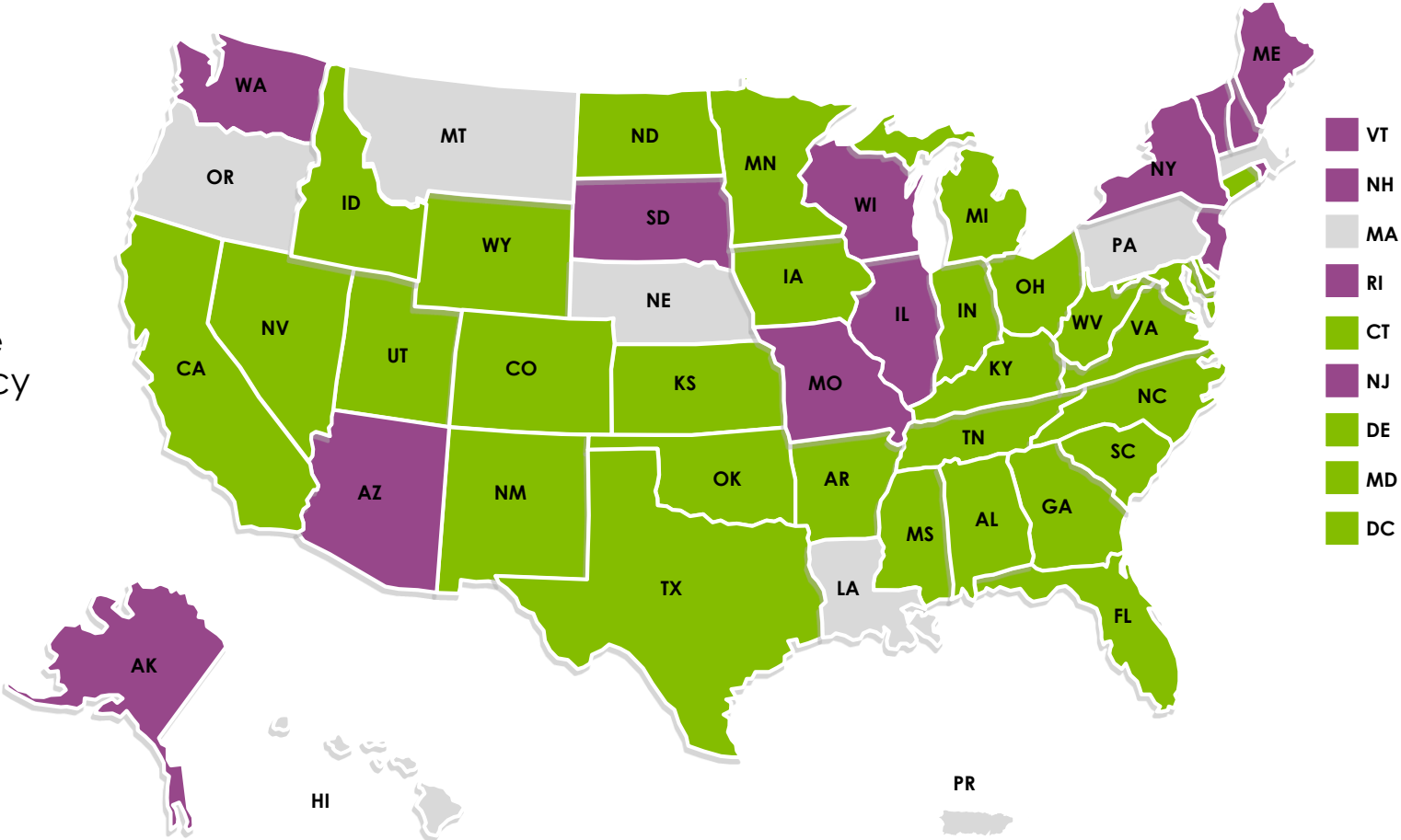
Grade Retention Requirements in State Policy

Legend:
- Retention Required
- Retention is Required with Good Cause Exemptions
- Retention is Allowed

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Parental Engagement Requirements in State Retention Policy

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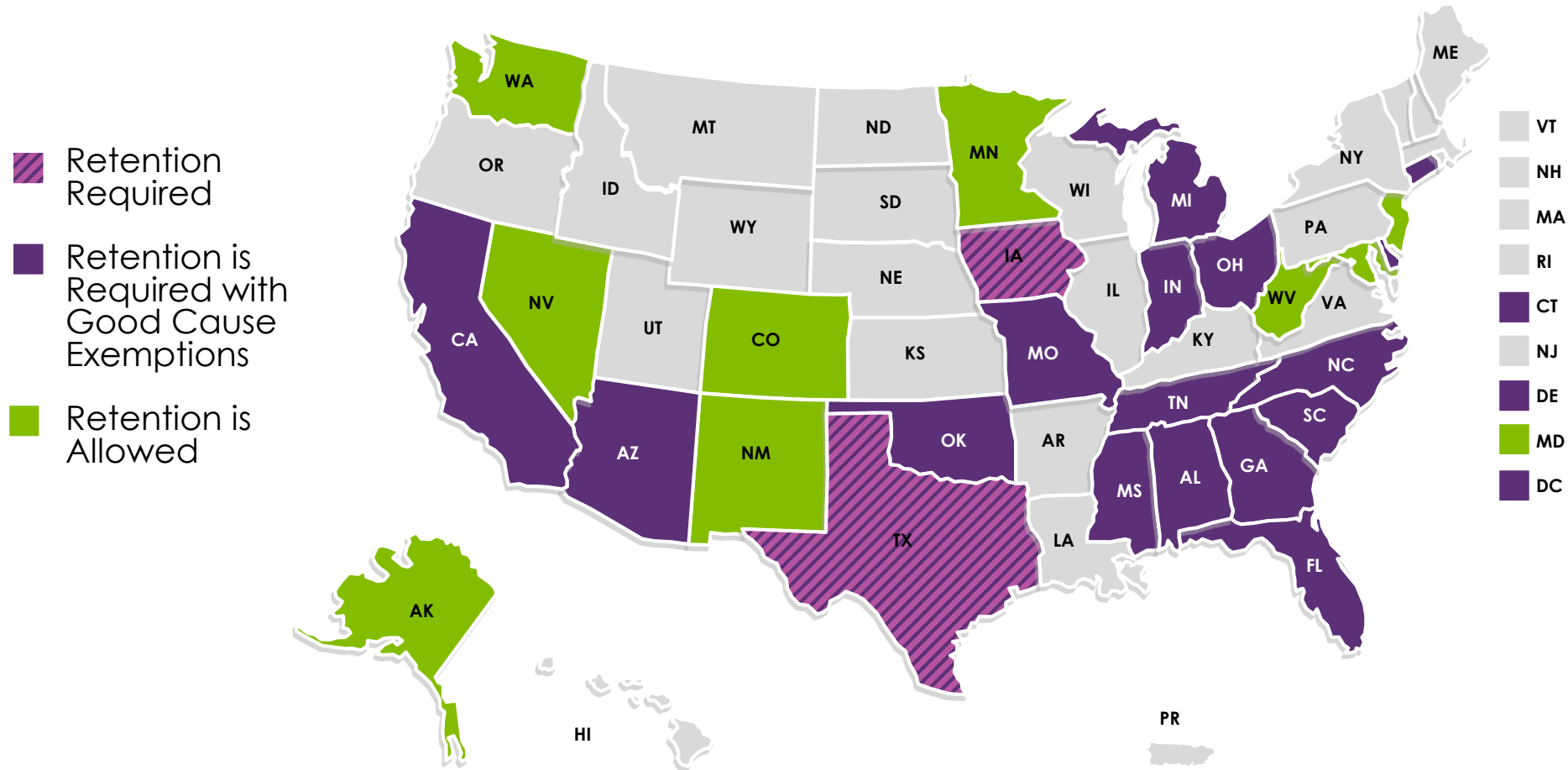
Illinois

Principal Preparation and Certification: required to take coursework in P-12, internship in P-12 and licensure exam with specifics on early childhood education.

K-3 literacy interventions: students that do not meet district standards for grade promotion must receive remedial services, such as a summer bridge program, tutorial sessions, increased or concentrated instructional time and/or modifications to instructional materials.

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STATE SPOTLIGHT

Michigan

Pre-Service Literacy Requirements: candidates must complete a course of study in reading instruction, including diagnosis and remediation of reading disabilities.

In-Service: districts can apply for funds to support a literacy coach to assist in designing instruction and interventions; funds can also be used to support PD and training in administering diagnostic screening and interpreting assessment data

Assessment: state education agency-approved assessments must include screening, monitoring and diagnostic assessments. Additionally, districts must assess reading progress at least 3 times per year in K-3; individualized reading plans developed if deficiencies are identified.

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Mississippi

Assessments: literacy screening assessments selected by state education agency for districts to implement; all K-3 students must be screened within 30 days of start of school year

Parental Engagement in Retention Policy: in addition to a written notice and frequent communication, the principal shall review and discuss the recommendations with the teacher and parent(s) and make a determination to whether or not the student should be promoted.

Pre-service teacher preparation: for initial elementary education licensure, a teacher candidate must earn a passing score on a rigorous test of scientifically-based reading instruction, intervention and data-based decision-making principles.

Literacy-Based Promotion Act ([link])

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Key Policy Takeaways and Considerations

- Focus on the early years

- Prevention, intervention and assessment

- Engage pre-service and in-service educators

- Equity

- Are your vision, goals and system designed accordingly? (How do you measure progress?)

- Are the conditions established by existing policies in the K-3 space creating opportunities to improve literacy outcomes?

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COVID-19 Pandemic Implications

- Assessment and waivers

- Learning loss

- Virtual/distance learning

- Family engagement

- Targeted budget cuts

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Equity Implications

- Financial cuts have historically impacted students in high-poverty districts the most (Great Recession Example; link)

- Digital divide (broadband, tech, internet access (link); remote learning and supports (link)

- NAEP results

- Office of African American Achievement Acceleration (Fresno, CA) (link)

- Opportunity Gap (inputs and outputs); WA Case Study (link)

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Related ECS RESOURCES (2020)

- Early Childhood Education Key Issues Page (link)

- Improving Early Childhood Education Systems (link; blog)

- Exploring New Research on Pre-K Outcomes (link; blog)

- Strengthening the Early Childhood Workforce (link; blog)

- Trends in State Pre-K Policies (link)

- Enhancing STEM in P-3 Education (link)

- Making Sense of Governance in Early Childhood (blog)

- COVID-19 Resources Page (link)

- Strengthening the Early Childhood Education Continuum (link)

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Upcoming RELEASES (2020)

- Building Better K-3 Literacy Systems (Sept. 15)
- 50-State Comparison: K-3 Policies (Sept. 29)
- Improving Pre-K to K Transitions (Oct. 20)
- 50-State Comparison: Birth to Age 8 Governance Structures (Nov. 10)

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