



Early Literacy Initiatives

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*“BE IT RESOLVED, the Kentucky Board of Education encourages education leaders across the Commonwealth to **examine policies, procedures and funding decisions** to ensure children of every race have equal access to educational opportunities. We urge district leaders **to think unconventionally and innovatively to serve all students because conventional methods clearly have not yielded the results we need**, dismantle racism in our schools and ensure that **educational equity becomes reality** for every Kentucky learner in every Kentucky classroom.”*

Why Early Literacy?

Kentucky Performance Rating for Educational Progress (K-PREP) Grade 3 Reading Results

Year	Percent Proficient and Distinguished
2015	54.3%
2016	53.7%
2017	55.8%
2018	52.3%
2019	52.7%

Over the past five years, approximately 118,000 Kentucky students in grade 3 were not proficient readers.

Kentucky Department of Education. (2019). Kentucky School Report Card. Retrieved from: https://www.kyschoolreportcard.com/organization/20/academic_performance/assessment_performance/state_assessments_accountability?year=2019

Why Early Literacy?

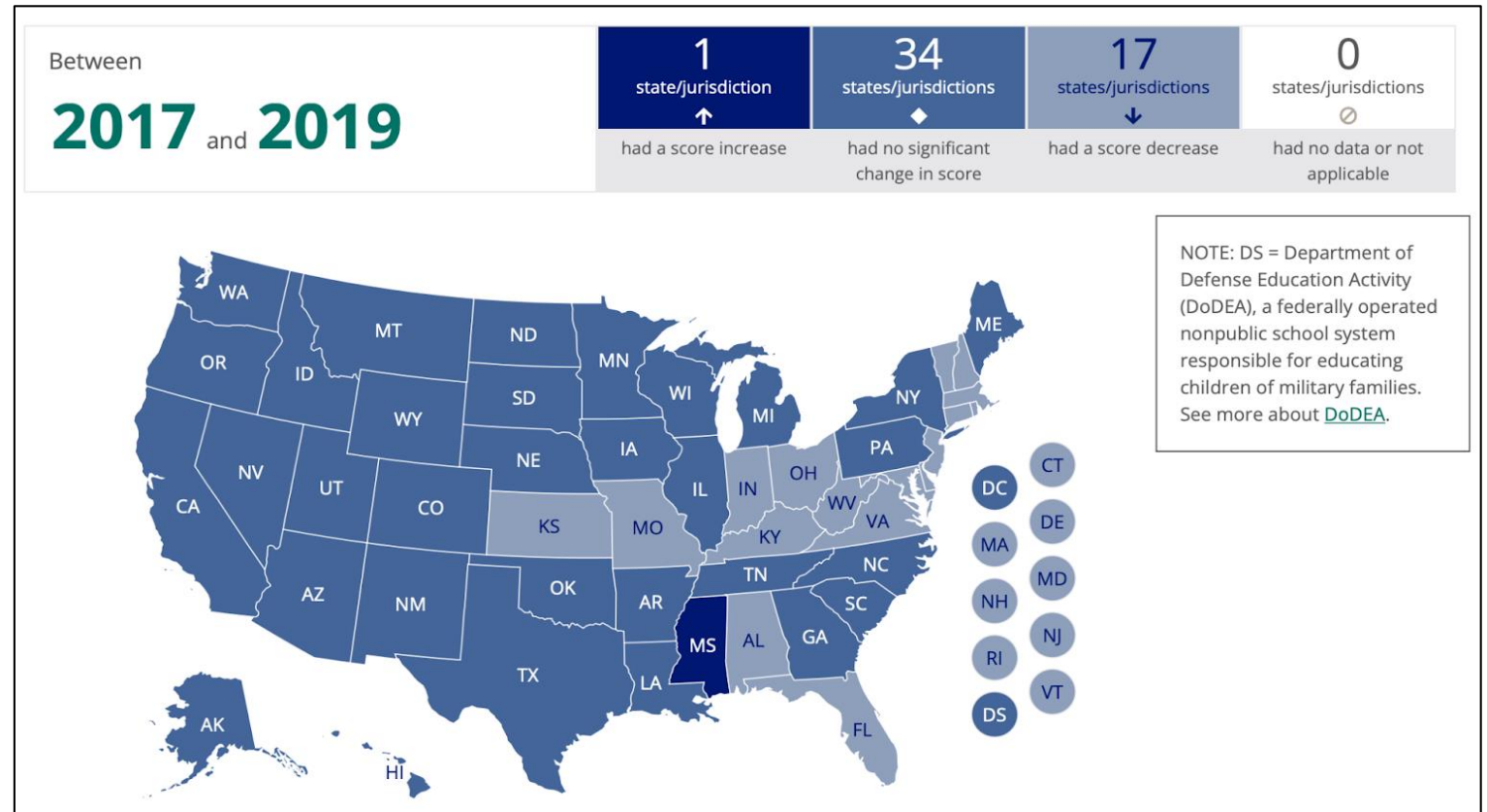
- A total of **47.3%** of Kentucky's grade 3 students did not meet proficiency on the 2019 K-PREP reading assessment.
- Kentucky's struggling readers transcend demographics, but historically underrepresented communities are impacted most.

Grade 3 K-PREP Reading Scores by Student Demographics for 2019			
Subgroup	Percent novice	Percent apprentice	Total percentage below proficiency
Black	45.1%	25.2%	70.3%
Economically Disadvantaged	29.5%	26.1%	55.6%
Hispanic	32.8%	27.9%	60.7%
English Learners	39.2%	31%	70.2%

Kentucky Department of Education. (2019). Kentucky School Report Card. Retrieved from: https://www.kyschoolreportcard.com/organization/20/academic_performance/assessment_performance/state_assessments_accountability?year=2019

Change in average NAEP scores between 2017 and 2019 in grade four reading

- The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) state data for the Kentucky School Report Card also revealed a downward trend continuing into grade 4.
- Based on 2018-2019 data, Kentucky ranked 23rd in the nation.
- A third of students scored below basic on the grade 4 reading assessment.



The Nation's Report Card. (2019). NAEP Data Explorer. Retrieved from: <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading/states/scores/?grade=4>

What's the larger impact?

Significance of third-grade reading proficiency

- More likely to have continued academic success
- Less likely to have problems with attendance, dropout rate and juvenile crime
- More likely to feel higher self-esteem and feelings of adequacy
- More likely to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty

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Optional Statewide PL - Federal ARP funding

- *Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS)*
- Demonstrated success on a national scale; external evaluations
- Offered in three phases 3 Phases; available to K-3/K-5 general educators, special educators, reading specialists, those who teach English Learners (EL), those in Title 1 schools, and administrators.

What is LETRS?

LETRS Strengthens Teacher Knowledge...and Enhances Teacher Success

- Determine **WHAT** to teach to increase student success
- Recognize the reasons **WHY** some students struggle
- Know and understand **HOW** students learn to read and write
- Address the structures of English and cognitive processes of learning to read
- Enhances understanding of the complexities of language
- Treats phonemic awareness and phonics with clarity, depth, and practical guidance

What does LETRS look like?

Volume 1 - Year 1	
Unit 1	The Challenge of Learning to Read
Unit 2	Speech Sounds of English
Unit 3	Teaching Beginning Phonics, Word Recognition, and Spelling
Unit 4	Advanced Decoding, Word Recognition and Spelling

Volume 2 - Year 2	
Unit 5	The Mighty Word: Oral Language and Vocabulary
Unit 6	Digging for Meaning: Understanding Reading Comprehension
Unit 7	Text-driven Comprehension Instruction
Unit 8	The Reading-Writing Connection

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Grant Programming

Kentucky Comprehensive Literacy (KyCL) Grant - Federal

- Four-year grant
- Focus on professional learning related to the teaching of reading and writing (up to 60 hours required per year depending on cohort)
- All certified teachers, preschool to grade 12, every content area
- 30 districts; 140 K-12 schools; 58 partner daycares/preschools
- Funding amount based on student population

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Grant Programming

FY22 Read to Achieve (RTA) Request for Application (RFA) – State

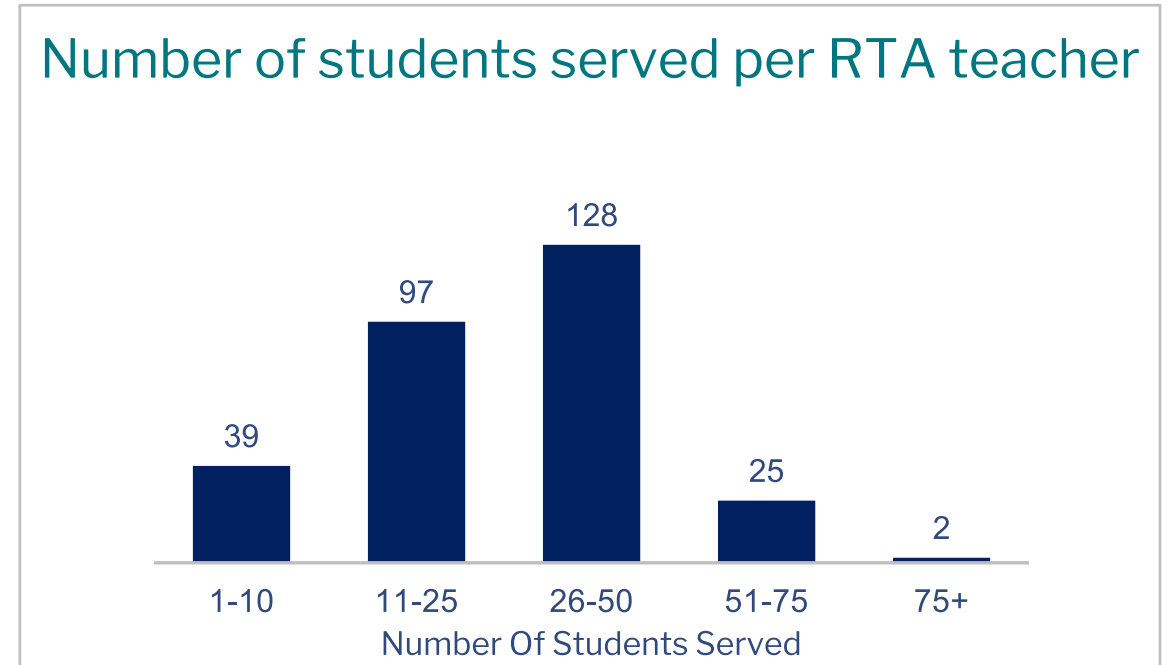
- Two-year, renewable grant (four-year cycle)
- Focus on four areas of professional learning over four years:
 1. Building knowledge in the science of reading
 2. Implementing the essential components of reading (phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension)
 3. Implementing high-quality, grade-level instruction and assignments aligned to the *KAS for Reading and Writing*:
 - a. Foundational Skills Strand
 - b. Reading Literature, Reading Informational Text, Composition and Language Strands
 4. Evidence-based instructional practices to support the reading-writing acquisition connection
- K-3 reading instructional staff, including classroom teachers, reading interventionists, special education teachers, library/media specialists and other staff who assist in addressing the diverse learning needs of young readers; and an administrator

Takeaways: 2017-2021 Read to Achieve (RTA) Grant Cycle

Unable to serve every student in need.

Percentage reporting difficulties in serving all eligible students	
2017-18	2018-19
67.87% of RTA interventionists reported not being able to serve 1-50 students	71% of RTA interventionists reported not being able to serve 1-50 students

UK College of Education Evaluation Center, *Read to Achieve 2017-2018 Report*, Lexington, KY: 2018.
UK College of Education Evaluation Center, *Read to Achieve 2018-2019 Report*, Lexington, KY: 2019.



UK College of Education Evaluation Center, *Read to Achieve 2020-2021 Report*, Lexington, KY: 2021.

High-quality professional learning is needed to equip more K-3 teachers and staff with the support they need to serve more students.

- RTA annual reports recommend more professional learning:
 - 2017-2018 recommended an increased focus on professional learning for RTA teachers **as well as regular classroom teachers**.
 - 2018-2019 RTA team members asked for **more training/PL topics**, particularly related to dyslexia, phonics and writing.
 - 2019-2020 report encouraged +1 teachers to participate in additional professional development opportunities beyond KRP or KRP4RTA.
- +1 initiative is seen as having a positive impact on building **literacy capacity**.
- Teachers want **consistent literacy instruction** for students.