

Dear Board Members,

I first wanted to thank you for always being so supportive of our Kentucky teachers and students. In education, we always find that there is a great need for interventions and extra support to those students who tend to struggle. We are finding that the need is at an all time high the past two years due to a pandemic that our country has faced. We have situations where we have had to stop in class instruction and students are at home and the student who struggles falls further behind. We are seeing on a daily basis the students have a much larger gap of things that they did not master in one grade level before moving on to the next. Please take urgent notice in the importance for our RTA grant to stay in schools and assist classroom teachers in this great time of need.

I am writing to let you know that the Read to Achieve grant application for the 2022-2026 round of grants was posted recently. I am very concerned that the focus on direct intervention services to children who struggle with learning to read has been shifted to a focus on classroom reading models. Some major concerns include the following:

- The major focus of the Reading Diagnostic and Intervention Grant Fund (SB19) has shifted away from direct intervention services to children who struggle with learning to read to professional learning around comprehensive classroom reading programs for all teachers in the school. 50-100% of grant funding shall now be used to pay for this professional learning
- While intervention services are still an allowable expenditure, only 25% or \$15,000 may be spent on the salary of an interventionist, leaving the remainder to come from the school. In addition, the school must match the grant IF it should receive it. Most schools will not have the funds to compensate for this loss of salary or funding.
- This will devastate my school. We are faced with more struggling readers than ever before because of a Pandemic. Students are at the lowest we have ever seen. Parents and teachers are overwhelmed. The position that I currently hold as the schools RTA intervention teacher is an additional support that they very much need. I am seeing students coming into my classroom that can't show you the cover of a book because they haven't

ever been read to and simply don't know how to turn a page. So to read a story is unspeakable. I have currently grown my Reading Recovery students 6 to 8 text reading levels in just 9-10 weeks. The Reading Recovery program is an amazing program and for it to be lost is devastating. Yes, I don't want to lose it for I love teaching it but I worry about my students and the support it provides. I worry about the classroom teachers and the help it provides. I worry about the parents at home and they struggle with just providing basic needs and to add the stress of trying to catch their child up who is behind his/her peers, I worry about all the other Reading Recovery teachers that I have become so close with and how it will affect their students and schools. It just makes me sad that a grant that I believe in so much has now been written to just seem to be a professional development grant. Our students need support and teachers helping them. Please help in getting this grant revised to provide for our students in the way that it should be. Your support is greatly appreciated!

Sincerely,
Teresa Cope