

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STAFF NOTE REVIEW ITEM

Topic: Statewide Literacy Coaching Model Update

Date: August 6-7, 2025

Held In: Full Board State Schools United We Learn

SUMMARY OF PRESENTATION:

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) is pleased to provide an update on the implementation of Senate Bill (SB) 9 (2022), the *Read to Succeed Act*. As part of this legislation the KDE is required to establish teacher academies or coaching models focused on evidence-based reading instruction, instructional materials, and assessments for teachers of students in prekindergarten through grade 3, (KRS 158.305(10)). These efforts are supported through the Read to Succeed Fund established in KRS 158.806 and are being led by the Division of Early Literacy in the Office of Teaching and Learning.

A key component of this work is the launch of Kentucky's state literacy coaching model, which began in the 2024–2025 school year. This initiative places school-based literacy coaching specialists in 33 partnership schools across the state, with 20 schools continuing into their second year of the partnership and 13 new schools joining in 2025–2026. The model is supported by five State Regional Literacy Directors (SRLDs), who provide school- and district-level leadership, and a team of 36 State Literacy Coaching Specialists. Together, they deliver coaching cycles that strengthen the implementation of high-quality instructional resources (HQIRs) and promote student-centered literacy practices.

Data from the 2024–2025 school year show strong progress of the effectiveness of this initiative with over 60% of observed lessons demonstrated high levels of HQIR implementation integrity by the end of the year, and an increase of the use of grade-level texts from 57% in September to over 80% in April.

Professional learning through the Kentucky Reading Academies continues to be a major investment in educator development. To date, more than 6,000 Kentucky educators and administrators have participated in Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) across three cohorts. Cohort 4 registration opened in May 2025, with over 800 educators currently enrolled. A third-party evaluation of the program conducted by ICF revealed that participants reported increased confidence in their literacy knowledge and greater intentionality in instructional practices. Educators also shared that participation in the LETRS training also improved their ability to implement evidence-based literacy strategies and increased the effective implementation of district-approved HQIRs.

To support this work statewide, KDE hosted the second annual KY Reads to Succeed Summer Conference in June 2025. The event brought together over 1,700 participants representing 142 school districts across Kentucky. The conference featured 42 sessions, a preconference hosted by Lexia, and keynotes from Dr. Anita Archer and Representative James Tipton, highlighting the collective effort to improve literacy outcomes in Kentucky.

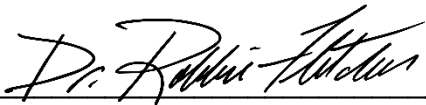
In addition, the Kentucky Early Literacy Leadership Network (KyELLN) continues to strengthen district capacity to implement effective, HQIR-aligned K–5 literacy instruction. Thirty-three districts participated in Cohort 1, and KDE is expanding the network by inviting 23 additional districts to join Cohort 2. The KyELLN is supported by eight Regional Principal Support Leaders (RPSLs), who provide coaching to school leaders and help ensure alignment to the provisions of the *Read to Succeed Act*.

The Office of Teaching and Learning (OTL) Division of Early Literacy is responsible for leading Kentucky's early literacy initiatives. The division includes a director, two assistant directors, five State Regional Literacy Directors, eight Regional Principal Support Leaders, and 36 State Literacy Coaching Specialists. Together, they are working to ensure that every Kentucky student has access to high-quality reading instruction grounded in evidence-based reading instruction.

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