

LETRS Implementation in Kentucky:

Analysis of Teacher Training and Student Literacy Outcomes

Across Kentucky, improving early literacy outcomes remains a central focus of education efforts. A statewide analysis of **Lexia® LETRS® (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling)**—a professional learning course for instructors of reading, spelling, and related language skills—offers promising evidence. The study examined whether participation in LETRS among teachers and school administrators is associated with **improved student reading outcomes**.



Since Fall 2022
7,000+

Kentucky educators and administrators have participated in the LETRS professional learning opportunity.



574
schools



135
districts



2021-
2025

Analysis of data from 574 general education elementary schools across 135 Kentucky districts between the 2021-2022 and 2024-2025 academic years, using **Kentucky Summative Assessment (KSA)** reading results.

Key Outcome: Significant Growth in “Proficient” Students

Schools with more LETRS-trained teachers experienced stronger growth in the share of students reaching the “Proficient” level.

More trained teachers = more proficient readers.

Schools with higher percentages of LETRS-trained teachers consistently had higher percentages of students scoring “Proficient” in reading. This relationship held even when accounting for other school factors and prior performance.

Schools with more trained teachers saw stronger growth.

When schools were divided into two groups—those above the state average for LETRS-trained teachers and those below—the difference was noticeable.

- Schools above the average saw 4.26% growth in “Proficient” readers from 2023 to 2025.
- Schools below the average saw 2.90% growth during the same period.

While both groups improved, schools with more LETRS-trained teachers improved significantly more.



Read the full report at kyreadingresearch.org/2026LETRSanalysis

The Kentucky Reading Research Center is a partnership between the University of Louisville and the Kentucky Department of Education. Established through Kentucky Revised Statute 164.0207, the center supports educators in implementing evidence-based reading programs and promotes literacy development across the Commonwealth.



Kentucky Department of
EDUCATION

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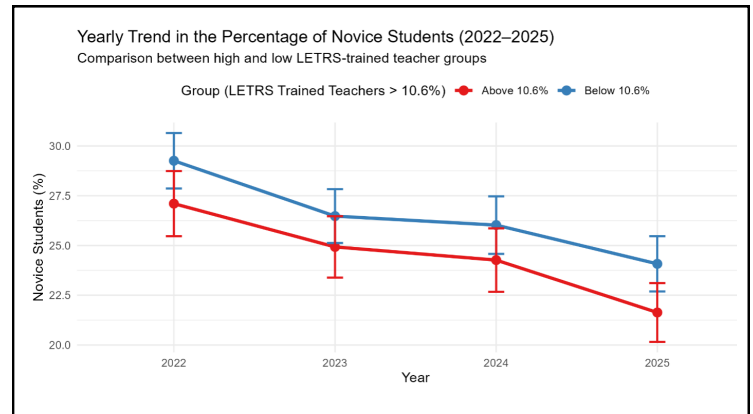
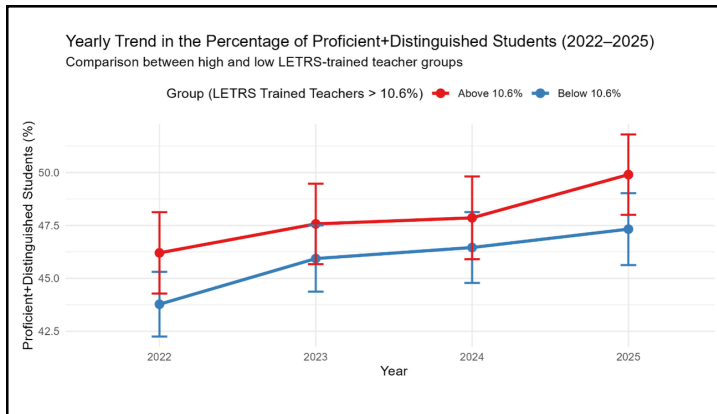
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Impact on struggling readers

The overall pattern of results indicates that LETRS training appears to:

- Move more students toward the **“Proficient”** level
- Reduce the number of students at the **“Novice”** level

This suggests LETRS may be most effective at strengthening foundational reading skills and **helping students reach grade-level expectations**, rather than primarily increasing the number of top-performing students.



What this means for Kentucky

The takeaway is straightforward: **LETRS training is helping move students into reading proficiency**. This matters because the “Proficient” level represents students who are reading at grade level and prepared for future academic success. Even modest percentage gains translate into **thousands of additional students reading on grade level** across the state.

Opportunities for future research

Further research could strengthen understanding of LETRS effectiveness by focusing on:

- Classroom-level implementation
- How teachers apply LETRS instructional strategies
- Connections between specific literacy practices and student reading development

Recommendations for decision-makers



Expand access to LETRS professional learning. Many schools and districts still report 0% of educators trained in LETRS.



Encourage instructional alignment and support from school leadership to sustain literacy initiatives, align instruction, and build school-wide reading culture.



Invest in data systems to track teacher training participation, measure classroom-level impacts, and strengthen future program evaluations.