

Special Recognition

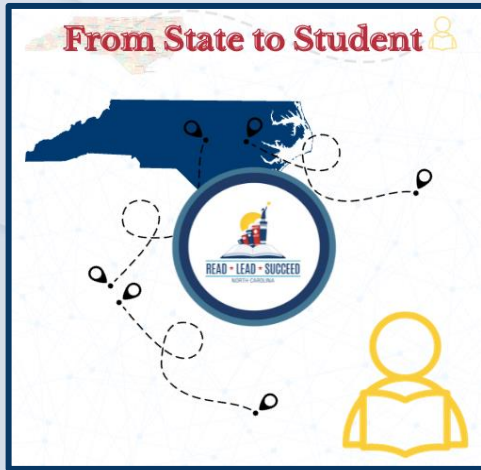


Dr. Michael Maher
Deputy State Superintendent Standards, Accountability and Research

Amy Rhyne, Ed.S
Director, Office of Early Learning



2024 Science of Reading Awards



- ★ True Trailblazer
- ★ Innovative Inspiration
- ★ Champion for Change

True Trailblazer Award:

*For exemplary leadership in guiding a system through a shift to the SoR.
Hands down, no excuses!*

True Trailblazer Award: Person County School District



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North Central Region

- ❖ Created a monthly literacy focus
- ❖ Collect and analyze district literacy walkthrough data to target PD needs
- ❖ Implemented sound walls in all K-2 classrooms
- ❖ Used LETRS spelling screener to determine student needs
- ❖ Implementing new SoR aligned curriculum
- ❖ NCDPI OEL resources used to guide PLCs

"Teachers are continuing to recognize the importance of evidence-based reading instruction methods, specifically as phonics-based approaches, structured literacy, and explicit instruction in decoding skills. These methods are driving the improvement in helping students, especially struggling readers, become proficient in reading. Overall, these positive changes reflect a shift towards a more research-informed and holistic approach to reading instruction, aiming to ensure that all students have the necessary skills and opportunities to become confident and proficient readers."

Dr. Rodney Peterson, Superintendent

True Trailblazer Award: Bertie County School District



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Northeast Region

- ❖ Stepped up to lead the way in Cohort One
- ❖ Implementing new SoR aligned curriculum
- ❖ Created aligned strategic district literacy plan
- ❖ Reviewed/evaluated assessments to ensure alignment to instruction/intervention
- ❖ 22-23 EOY 3rd grade EOY DIBELS 8 growth is highest among the state
- ❖ All subgroups were at or above state growth

“The science of reading has opened dialogue in our schools about how science and research were missing when planning lessons. Since completing my training, I’ve become more connected with my students in utilizing reading passages, providing layered phonetic work by using hands-on resources that provide extensions into writing, and setting up explicit routines for the literacy block. I now see more than ever the importance of intentional instruction and how it will strengthen the foundational components and solidify that all children will learn how to read.

Mrs. Tanisha Newkirk, Kindergarten Teacher

True Trailblazer Award: Asheboro City Schools



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- ❖ District coaches began K-5 LETRS PD prior to teachers and created an Implementation Team to be strategic with fidelity
- ❖ Adopted new elementary core literacy curriculum
- ❖ Completed an inventory of intervention resources to purchase what was lacking
- ❖ Used LETRS Admin course to develop common literacy schedules across the district
- ❖ Sought local school board approval for additional PD days
- ❖ Used NCDPI OEL resources to create professional learning and coaching schedules for each school

"We have teachers who have fundamentally changed the way they teach, and that takes guts, that takes commitment, and that takes dedication to learning. Our teachers have done the hard work to support student learning and we are seeing results. We couldn't be more proud of our teachers and the literacy work they are doing."

Deanna Wiles, ACS Director of K12 Curriculum & Instruction

Piedmont Triad Region

True Trailblazer Award: Pinehurst Elementary School Moore County



- ❖ Principal Ciccone had the foresight to lead her entire school in LETRS PD before the state cohorts.
- ❖ Not only increased professional content knowledge but also shifted the school's culture!
- ❖ 2022-23 EOY DIBELS 8 data - ALL grade levels above state
 - K&1 - 90%; Grade 2 - 86%; Grade 3 - 84%; K-3 - 88%
- ❖ 21-22 and 22-23 EOG: Exceeded growth in reading EOG

"Literacy instruction at Pinehurst Elementary School has been transformed as a result of our LETRS training that began in 2020-21. Our implementation of the science of reading has created an intense focus on the research-based best practices that support all students as readers. Since implementation began, we are now seeing fewer students requiring reading intervention and fewer students requiring referrals for special education. As educators, our team is truly now empowered to ensure every student will become a proficient reader."

Ashley Ciccone, Principal

Sandhills Region

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Innovative Inspiration Award:

For exemplary leaders who have guided in unique or innovative ways to shift the system culture to support SoR implementation and sustainability.

Innovative Inspiration Award: Wilkes County School District



- ❖ Developed intentional LETRS completion plan
- ❖ Implemented new aligned SoR curriculum
- ❖ Examined fidelity of implementation of existing curricula
- ❖ Completed data dives and developed a detailed plan of action to support schools
- ❖ Assigned ELA specialists to all schools - work closely with ELS to provide aligned PLC guidance focused on data and PD
- ❖ Celebrated LETRS completion - movie theater rental, Gerry Brooks personalized message, popcorn, drinks, shirts, bags
- ❖ DIBELS 8 data - higher growth than NC in each grade level

Northwest Region



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"For years, I felt a literacy disconnect between teaching phonics and using leveled readers in kindergarten. LETRS training helped me understand that phonics instruction needs to be systematic and sequential with ample opportunities to practice the newly learned phonic skills using decodable texts. LETRS has made me a better teacher by improving my literacy instruction for all of my students."

Kim Redding, Kindergarten Teacher

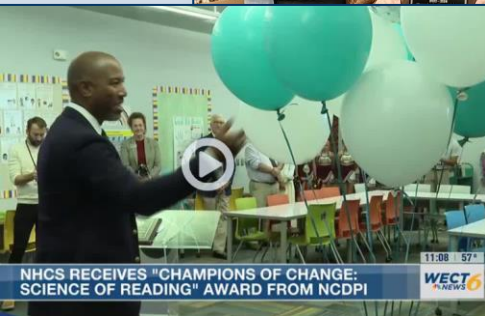
Champion for Change Award:

For exemplary leaders of systems who have used data to align literacy strategies that are impacting exemplary student outcomes.

Champion for Change Award: New Hanover School District



- ❖ Maintained a laser focus on successful implementation and a dedication to achieving the high proficiency goal they set!
- ❖ Performed at or above state percentages on DIBELS 8 assessments in all grades levels.
- ❖ Implementation of a clear communication plan for educators, AND the community
- ❖ Development of literacy support documents for parents
- ❖ Strongly aligned curriculum
- ❖ District and school data profiles
- ❖ LETRS facilitator support kits for sustainability



Southeast Region

"The Science of Reading introduced me to Scarborough's Reading Rope and how word recognition and language comprehension are woven together. I have seen my students develop into skilled readers who are able to use decoding skills along with comprehension skills to become fluent readers! My literacy groups have changed significantly to include decoding skills, as well as exposure to decodable texts to highlight comprehension skills." Ally Waters, 1st Grade Teacher

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Champion for Change Award: Mooresville Graded School District



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- ❖ Examined/evaluated core curriculum programs and processes
- ❖ Aligned literacy walk-throughs to include a SoR
- ❖ Facilitated extensive pre-work to prepare for the transition from Balanced Literacy to SoR
- ❖ Redefined data analysis protocol to make actionable instructional decisions
- ❖ Championed vital changes in classroom literacy instruction
- ❖ At or above the state level in 7 out of 10 assessed foundational literacy skills
- ❖ All subgroups are at or above the state level in all assessed foundational literacy skills.

Southwest Region

“Through the LETRS professional development, our teachers have gained a deeper understanding of the science of reading and the strategies to address the foundational components of literacy. LETRS has emphasized practical application, which in turn has encouraged our teachers to apply their learning directly to their classroom. Collaboration through our professional learning communities (PLCs) has also enabled teachers to share insights and identify areas in the curriculum that may need adjustment. By working together, our K-5 elementary team (teachers, specialists, administration, etc) has been able to respond more effectively to the specific needs of our MGSD students.

Jemma Conley, Director of Elementary Instruction

Champion for Change Award: Hayesville Primary School Clay County



- ❖ Principal Heather Plemmons and Instructional Coach Breeze Raxter created an enabling environment focusing on data-driven decisions to support instructional shifts and student success
- ❖ Intentional use of data to support process improvement
- ❖ Targeted school and grade-level core data trends
- ❖ Strategic focus on aligned, systematic, evidence-based core instruction for all students
- ❖ Implemented school-wide science of reading approach to vocabulary instruction
- ❖ Curriculum coach hired with a focus on fidelity of instruction
- ❖ Stepped up to participate in the first statewide LETRS Cohort
- ❖ Exceeded state growth in 22-23 DIBELS data in every grade level



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“The science of reading is a game changer for early literacy instruction. It is quite literally a road map of critical reading practices and brain based implementation strategies. Applied properly and systematically, results prove to be immediate and staggering.”

Mrs. Kim Staten, 22-23 Teacher of the Year

Western Region

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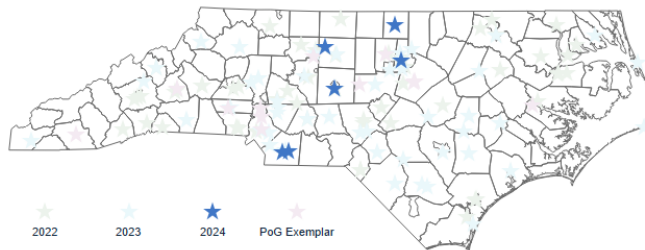
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