



# Improving Adolescent Literacy in Kentucky: A Joint Position Statement



Kentucky Department of Education



Kentucky Reading Association

Kentucky Board of Education

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- ❖ Create capacity for in-service teachers through ongoing, job-embedded professional development in literacy and content literacy.

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- ❖ Require schools to use diagnostic and formative assessments, including determining students' reading levels in content areas, to inform instruction.
- ❖ Use data (including EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT -- EPAS) to determine interventions needed for students, including those not meeting college readiness standards.
- ❖ Use Individualized Learning Plans (grades 6-12) to differentiate instruction and meet individual learning needs and goals.

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## Executive Summary

Not many years ago, a high school dropout in Kentucky could get a job on the family farm or in a factory in town and be assured of a middle-class living. A high school graduate needed to be able to read and write on a merely functional level to live a middle-class life. But, our world and our state have rapidly changed, and we are now living in what Thomas Friedman, author of *The World is Flat*, calls a “knowledge economy.” In a knowledge economy, remedial jobs no longer lead to a middle class lifestyle—and achieving only basic literacy skills is just not good enough. “The issue is not that U.S. education quality has declined,” write Murnane and Levy in *Teaching the New Basic Skills*, “but the economy is changing much faster than the schools have improved. Many people – including roughly half of the recent graduates - have an education that is no longer in demand.”

Unfortunately, Kentucky data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the ACT show that Kentucky high school students are no more ready for these new literacy demands than other teens in the country. According to these assessments, at least 70 percent of our Kentucky secondary students will not be college-ready because they cannot read and understand higher-level materials -- and are not on track to do so. These same students may have done just fine in primary reading, but after 4th grade, as the books get harder, reading demands get higher and students receive little to no instruction in how to read more difficult texts, many of them fall farther and farther behind. Research from NAEP and ACT is beginning to show that even if students are on track in 4th and 8th grade, they often lose ground before graduating from high school.

What has caused this grade-level achievement gap? There are several reasons. Most teachers of adolescents were not required to take reading courses in college, and they have had few professional development opportunities to learn how to help students succeed in reading science, social studies, literature and math texts. In order for students to succeed in those areas, teachers have to know how to teach the literacy skills needed in science or math, and students have to be able to read to understand the material and think critically about it — as well as be able to fully comprehend the tests they take each spring to score at proficient levels. Also, there have been few opportunities for students in grades 4-12 to receive specialized interventions to help them catch up in reading skills.

Adolescents deserve teachers who are prepared to help them read at high levels in all subject areas, and they also deserve interventions if they need extra help in basic reading skills to get caught up.

Organizations such as the National Governors Association (NGA) and the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) are urging the importance of higher literacy development for students in grades 4-12. At least 20 national policy statements on adolescent literacy development have been published in the last three years, and adolescent literacy development is a key focus in the draft reauthorization of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, with a Striving Readers Act introduced by Congressman John Yarmuth (D-KY). The realization of the problem at the national level has caused a flurry of reaction.

We cannot afford to ignore increased adolescent literacy development if Kentucky is going to send more students to college and boost our economy with skilled workers. Kentucky has made a few steps in the right direction with isolated literacy initiatives for grades 4-12. Governor Steven Beshear included a focus on basic reading and writing skills in his campaign platform, and the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) has made adolescent literacy a priority issue, but a comprehensive state plan is needed for real success.

In April 2007, NASBE invited Kentucky to become part of an Adolescent Literacy Network. Kentucky was one of ten states chosen to become part of this network because of the commitment to adolescent literacy development the state has already shown in its present initiatives and its readiness to take this commitment to a higher level. Kentucky was also one of five states from this network to receive an adolescent literacy grant from NASBE. On September 20, 2007, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), the Kentucky Reading Association (KRA) and the KBE held an Adolescent Literacy Forum in Lexington, Kentucky. The purpose was to discuss adolescent literacy in Kentucky and develop ideas for a comprehensive literacy plan to help readers and writers in grades 4-12 achieve. Various role groups consisting of teachers, administrators, business representatives, government agencies and youth organizations participated in the Adolescent Literacy Forum. The KBE, KRA and KDE then collaborated to develop a

state Adolescent Literacy Task Force to create this position statement and articulate the need for a comprehensive adolescent literacy plan for the state of Kentucky.

This position statement shares with state policymakers what we need to do to ensure students in grades 4-12 can meet the literacy demands required in a knowledge economy and graduate college-ready. This is a necessary task. Will we be ready to take on the challenge and provide adolescents with the literacy education they deserve?

## Literacy Development in Grades 4-12

Since 1999, the U.S. has emphasized basic reading development in grades K-3 with evidence of success (NAEP, 2007). The prevailing thought was that if students were reading on grade level by the end of 3rd grade, they would be readers on grade level for life. However, the fact is that many students who were reading on grade level at the end of primary are no longer proficient readers by middle and high school (Torgeson, 2007).

There are several reasons for this regression in scores at the national level. Fourth-grade reading materials are much more difficult — causing a “4th-grade slump” where achievement traditionally begins to decline. Most teachers of students in grades 4-12 have had little professional development in reading, compared to primary teachers. University requirements vary in the number of literacy courses required, with many middle and high school pre-service teachers required to take no courses in reading. Access to engaging reading materials declines in most middle and high schools. Time to read independently and visit the library in secondary schools is almost non-existent. Students who were struggling readers in primary have little opportunity to be taught by trained reading specialists after 4th grade. And, adolescents who are English Language Learners face a double challenge as they learn to speak a second language and read and write in academic areas.

Recent research in the adolescent literacy field points to the fact that high school students need to graduate with higher-level literacy skills that make them workplace- and college-ready in order to succeed in a knowledge economy.

### What is unique about Adolescent Literacy?

*“In middle and high school, students encounter academic discourses and disciplinary concepts in such fields as science, mathematics, and the social sciences that require different reading approaches from those used with more familiar forms such as literacy and personal narratives (Kucer, 2005). These new forms, purposes, and processing demands require that teachers show, demonstrate, and make visible to students how literacy operates within the academic disciplines (Keene & Zimmermann, 1997; Tovani, 2000).”*

*A Call to Action: What We Know About Adolescent Literacy and Ways to Support Teachers in Meeting Students Needs, NCTE 2004.*

## Defining Adolescent Literacy

The definition of literacy established by the Kentucky Literacy Partnership in 2002 states, “**Literacy includes reading, writing, and the creative and analytical acts involved in producing and comprehending text.**” Note that the emphasis is not just on reading and writing, but the thought processes necessary to comprehend text and ideas. In the Kentucky *Program of Studies*, which is the minimum required curriculum for schools, **literacy strands** include **reading, writing, speaking, listening and observing**, and all content areas also are required to address **inquiry** and **technology**. In addition, all content areas have literacy skills embedded in the standards.

In NCTE’s *Toward a Definition of 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Literacies*, literacy takes on a broad definition:

Literacy has always been a collection of cultural and communicative practices shared among members of particular groups. As society and technology change, so does literacy. Because technology has increased the intensity and complexity of literate environments, the twenty-first century demands that a literate person possess a wide range of abilities and competencies, many literacies. These literacies—from reading online newspapers to participating in virtual classrooms—are multiple, dynamic, and malleable. As in the past, they are inextricably linked with particular histories, life possibilities and social trajectories of individuals and groups. Twenty-first century readers and writers need to

- Develop proficiency with the tools of technology
- Build relationships with others to pose and solve problems collaboratively and cross-culturally
- Design and share information for global communities to meet a variety of purposes
- Manage, analyze and synthesize multiple streams of simultaneous information
- Create, critique, analyze, and evaluate multi-media texts
- Attend to the ethical responsibilities required by these complex environments  
(NCTE 2008)

It is clear that literacy is much more than reading and writing, and being literate is a complex set of skills that young adults must master in order to meet the many demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

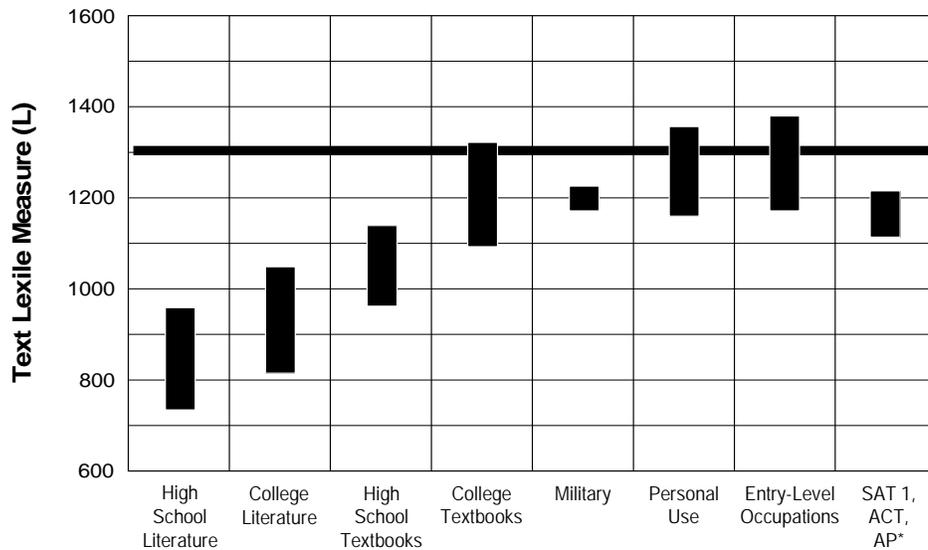
Text Demands

Research shows that students who read at higher levels perform better on assessments in all subject areas and graduate from high school college-ready and workplace-ready (ACT, 2006). Higher literacy levels do not just guarantee higher test scores; higher literacy levels pave the way to a middle-class lifestyle in our country. In fact, a 2006 study by Wagner and Keenan concluded this harsh reality, “An eighteen-year-old who is not college-ready today has effectively been sentenced to a lifetime of marginal employment and second-class citizenship.” This is a severe sentence indeed for the large percentage of high school students who will not graduate college- or workplace-ready and early adolescents who are not on track to do so.

When we take a close look at everyday reading, as measured by Lexile scales (Metametrics, 2006), there is really little difference between being college-ready and workplace-ready. Practical materials (like auto repair manuals and DVD instructions), the reading expected in entry-level positions and college textbooks require about the same reading levels. The following table shows the level of reading materials that adolescents will face in college or the workplace.

**2005-06 Lexile Framework<sup>®</sup> for Reading Study  
Summary of Text Lexile Measures**

Interquartile Ranges Shown (25% - 75%)



\* Source of National Test Data: MetaMetrics

## Literacy Across the Curriculum

The Council of Chief State School Officers (2007) suggests that **to meet academic literacy demands across all content areas, adolescents should be able to read, write, listen/view, discuss/present, think critically and creatively, and use language and vocabulary to read and comprehend text to support the learning of content.** This definition seems to match most of the definitions of the national organizations. If the nation is to thrive economically and for citizens to lead productive and well-rounded lives, U.S. adolescents must be able to meet high-level academic literacy demands.

**Content area literacy instruction must be a cornerstone of any movement to build high-quality secondary schools.**

*Literacy Instruction in the Content Areas, Alliance for Excellent Education, 2007.*

For students to be truly prepared for workplace and college literacy, a modest level of proficiency in reading and writing is not acceptable. Rather, they will need to develop advanced literacy skills required in order to master the academic content areas — especially math, science, English and social studies (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2007). Content literacy instruction — reading and writing in every content area — has been called the “cornerstone of any movement to build the high quality secondary schools that young people deserve and on which the nation’s social and economic health will depend” (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2007). For students to progress in all content areas, their content teachers will need to understand the importance of teaching reading and writing strategies within their classes and be provided with the professional knowledge and skills to do so. Content area teachers should not be expected to be reading teachers, but they should be expected to teach the specific literacy skills necessary for achievement in their own subject area.

## Need for Intervention

Given the fact that national data shows that 68 percent of 4th-grade students and 70 percent of 8th-grade students are reading at or below basic levels, it stands to reason

there are struggling readers in most schools. These students struggle for a variety of reasons, including word identification, fluency, low vocabulary, comprehension, motivation and/or a combination of several of factors. They also perform at a variety of levels, from slightly below level to several grade levels below average. In addition, these students are expected to comprehend grade-level material in order to learn content area concepts. The Center for Instruction (2007) says, "...a guiding principle is that interventions [for adolescents] will be most effective if they focus on the critical dimensions of reading skill that interfere with a student's ability to comprehend grade-level text. Some students will need a great deal of instruction to improve their reading accuracy and fluency, while others will profit most from tutoring in the flexible use of comprehension strategies; still others will need a broad course of intensive intervention that integrates instruction in both word-level and comprehension skills and knowledge" (Torgeson, 2007). Adolescents who are struggling readers need to have their reading needs diagnosed and then met through appropriate interventions. Vaughn (2007) recommends that states should make "resources available to provide interventions for students with significant reading problems, classes for students with mild to moderate reading problems in which they can 'catch up' with peers in reading in one to two years (approximately 50 minutes per day)...[and] resources to provide more intensive reading remediation for students with significant reading problems (moderate to severe reading problems) so that they can read and learn from grade-level text within two to three years (approximately 50-100 minutes a day)" (Torgeson, 2007).

## **Adolescent Literacy: The National Picture**

### National Data on Adolescent Literacy Development

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) tests students in reading and math in all 50 states, plus the District of Columbia and the Department of Defense schools every two years. Scores are reported as "at or above" Basic, Proficient and Advanced and also show the results of disaggregated populations. Recent results are not encouraging for adolescents.

The 2007 national NAEP results in grades 4 and 8 in reading show that 4th-graders scored higher than in all previous assessment years, with higher percentages of

4th-grade students performing at or above the Basic and Proficient levels. Although the report has critics, many point to the emphasis on primary reading skills to explain increases on the 4th-grade assessment.

Eighth-grade NAEP reading scores were only up one point since 2005 and three points since 1992, but results were not consistent across the assessment years. The percentage of 8th-graders in 1992 and 2005 that achieved at Basic level increased in 2007, but there was no significant change in the percentage of students at or above the Proficient level.

The last administration at the 12th-grade level was in 2005. Twelfth-grade scores on the 2005 NAEP assessment show a decline from the scores in 1992, but the scores were not significantly different from the scores in 2002. Scores declined across most of the performance distribution, with the exception of students scoring at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile. Student scores decreased in the “at or above Basic” category, from 80 percent in 1992 to 73 percent in 2005. “At or above Proficient” also decreased, from 40 to 35 percent. This means that nationally, approximately 27 percent of students who are still in school in 12th grade cannot read at a Basic level, and 65 percent cannot read at a Proficient level — the standard for college and workplace readiness.

#### NAEP Grade 12 Table

| Students                 | Year | Jurisdictions         | Average Scale Score | Standard Error |
|--------------------------|------|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| All students<br>Grade 12 | 1992 | <sup>1</sup> National | 292                 | ( 0.6)         |
|                          | 1994 | <sup>1</sup> National | 287                 | ( 0.7)         |
|                          | 1998 | National              | 290                 | ( 0.6)         |
|                          | 2002 | National              | 287                 | ( 0.7)         |
|                          | 2005 | National              | 286                 | ( 0.6)         |

It is estimated that 70 percent of our nation’s high school students need some sort of remediation in reading to be able to meet the coming workplace demands.

#### National Policy Recommendations

In the last few years, at least 20 national policy or recommendation statements have been published focusing on the crisis in adolescent literacy development from a

variety of organizations. Major organizations that have published concerns and possible solutions regarding national shortfalls in adolescent literacy include the Alliance for Excellent Education, Council of Chief State School Officers, International Reading Association, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Association of State Boards of Education, National Governors Association, National School Boards Association and Southern Regional Education Board.

An overview of the 2006 and 2007 national policy statements on adolescent literacy shows that they are similar in their recommendations for improvement of reading and writing in grades 4-12. Most include:

- a description of major literacy skills that adolescents need to master in all subject areas
- recommendations for articulated literacy standards across the curriculum
- a call for higher education preparation for pre-service teachers
- resources and support for professional development for in-service teachers in all subject areas
- mandates for school and district literacy report cards
- use of data to plan for state, district and school infrastructure
- an assessment plan that measures adolescent literacy progress
- interventions for older students who need remediation

### **What helps middle and high school students to become better readers?**

15 program elements known to make a difference:

1. Direct, explicit instruction in reading comprehension
2. Reading instruction focused on academic content
3. Attention to student motivation and self-directed learning
4. Collaborative learning
5. Strategic tutoring
6. Opportunities for students to read diverse, high-level texts
7. Intensive instruction and practice in writing
8. A technology component
9. Ongoing assessment of students' skills and needs
10. Periodic assessment of students' mastery of standards
11. Extensive time reserved for literacy learning
12. Professional development opportunities for teachers
13. Opportunities for teachers to work in teams
14. Strong leadership
15. Comprehensive and coordinated planning

The position statement from NASBE (2007) perhaps gives the most focused recommendations for state policymakers. The group's recommendations state that to implement a comprehensive, state-local approach to improving adolescent literacy instruction, policymakers should:

1. develop coordinated state leadership to set the vision and ensure coherence of goals for improving adolescent literacy statewide
2. design a state literacy plan that builds instructional capacity and sustains continuous improvements in adolescent literacy
3. create literacy standards for students and teachers — raising literacy expectations across the curriculum for all students in all grades
4. ensure comprehensive assessment and alignment with anchor literacy standards and core curricula
5. provide flexibility and supports at the district level to localize the initiative
6. invest in teachers by ensuring that they have the preparation, professional development and supports to provide effective, content-based literacy instruction

State literacy plans should include guidance for districts and schools on providing time, resources and tools to build the capacity of educators to:

- identify struggling readers early and provide interventions and supports
- infuse literacy instruction throughout the curriculum
- ensure the necessary training and supports to help teachers gain the knowledge and skills to provide effective, content-based literacy instruction
- provide resources and dedicated staff at district and school levels (leadership teams, literacy coaches)

Several states, including Vermont, Washington, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut and Texas have recently published comprehensive adolescent literacy plans for their states. *See Appendix A for a complete list of national and state policy statements and information about how to access the reports.*

### Current National Initiatives

One national adolescent literacy initiative currently exists. The Striving Readers grant is a line item of \$25 million in the national budget that funds eight research sites on middle school and high school reading in the United States. Research sites are funded in Kentucky (the Kentucky Content Literacy Consortium, consisting of 21 middle and high schools in seven rural school districts in partnership with KDE, the Collaborative for Teaching and Learning, the University of Louisville and the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development); Memphis, Tennessee; Ohio Department of Youth Services; Springfield, Massachusetts; Portland, Oregon; San Diego, California; Newark, New Jersey; and Chicago, Illinois.

In March 2007, Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-AL) and Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) introduced a U.S. Senate bill called the “Striving Readers Act.” In May 2007, Rep. John Yarmuth (D-KY) and Rep. Todd Platts (R-PA) introduced a House version of the Striving Readers Act. These bills seek to increase funding and provide a funding stream to states to improve adolescent literacy achievement and increase graduation rates.

## **Adolescent Literacy in Kentucky**

### Kentucky CATS Data

*Reading Data:* According to the Kentucky Core Content Tests (KCCT), while middle schools and high schools are improving, they are not reaching proficiency rates in reading and writing as quickly as elementary schools. Additionally, schools are performing better in reading than writing. As indicated in the charts below, the KCCT scores indicate that elementary students scoring **below** proficient in reading have improved from 2000 to 2006 by 11.54 percent. Middle schools improved 12.12 percent, while high schools improved 12.93 percent.

## KCCT Reading

### Percent of Students Scoring Below Proficient

| Level      | 2000  | 2001  | 2002  | 2003  | 2004  | 2005  | 2006  |
|------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Elementary | 42.87 | 41.60 | 39.76 | 37.62 | 33.33 | 32.50 | 31.33 |
| Middle     | 49.12 | 47.11 | 43.27 | 42.71 | 40.29 | 38.19 | 37    |
| High       | 72.50 | 70.60 | 71.23 | 69.08 | 66.05 | 61.46 | 59.57 |

Although all areas have shown increases in reading proficiency, when comparing the percentage of students scoring **at proficient levels or above**, the elementary schools exceed middle and high schools, with 69.67 percent at or above proficiency compared to 63 percent at the middle schools and 40.43 percent at the high school level.

*Writing Data:* According to the KCCT scores (as shown below), students are reaching proficiency in writing at higher rates at the elementary level than at the middle and high school levels. Elementary students improved 27.20 percent, while middle school students improved 16.85 percent and high school students improved 10.68 percent.

## KCCT Writing

### Percent of Students Scoring Below Proficient

| Level      | 2000  | 2001  | 2002  | 2003  | 2004  | 2005  | 2006  |
|------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Elementary | 80.11 | 76.42 | 74.71 | 65.09 | 61.28 | 56.72 | 52.91 |
| Middle     | 89.51 | 87.68 | 86.30 | 81.76 | 80.38 | 79.50 | 72.66 |
| High       | 79.17 | 76.80 | 74.77 | 70.98 | 71.19 | 67.42 | 68.49 |

Again, although all areas have shown increases in writing proficiency, when comparing the percentage of students scoring **at proficient levels or above**, the elementary schools exceed middle and high schools, with 47.09 percent **at or above** proficiency compared to 27.34 percent at the middle schools and 31.51 percent at the high school level.

The improved reading scores at the elementary level are a result of several strategies implemented by schools. An instructional framework, which includes explicit reading instruction, exists in the elementary level that supports substantial reading gains. The Kentucky Primary Demographic Survey 2005-2006 indicates that 80 percent of Kentucky elementary schools set aside a 90-120 minute literacy block in the morning,

when students are at their peak. Reading First-funded schools are required to have an uninterrupted block of reading instruction for at least 90 minutes. Research-based efforts in the teaching of reading have been implemented across schools in Kentucky, and data-driven instructional decisions are determined by school-based decision making councils. Professional development has provided teachers with understanding of the reading process and incorporating all elements of reading instruction: phonemic awareness; phonics; fluency; vocabulary; comprehension; writing; and motivation to read. Schools have provided teacher awareness and professional development in the teaching of reading across Kentucky. This literacy instructional framework is not often found at the middle and high school levels.

Possible reasons for improvement of writing at the elementary level cited by KDE include: research-based reading programs that emphasize the importance of scheduling blocks of time to implement research-proven writing skills on a daily basis; reading and writing (literacy skills) implemented coherently across initiatives or content areas; and KCCT assessment focused on writing portfolios and on-demand writing.

#### Kentucky NAEP Results

In 2007, Kentucky's 4th-grade NAEP average scale scores were higher than in 1992, but not significantly different from the 2005 results. Kentucky's average 4<sup>th</sup>-grade score in 2007 was higher than that of the nation's public schools. The percentage of 4th-grade Kentucky students who performed "at or above Proficient" was 33 percent in 2007. This percentage was not significantly different from 2005 and was higher than in 1992. Kentucky data was not significantly different from the national data in the "at or above Proficient" category. The percentage of Kentucky students who performed in the "at or above Basic" NAEP category in 2007 was 68 percent. This percentage was not significantly different from that in 2005 (65 percent) and was greater than 1992 (58 percent). On the 2007 assessment, Kentucky's 4th-grade male students were seven points lower than females; black students were 17 points lower than white students; and students eligible for free/reduced meals were lower by 19 points than those not eligible for free/reduced meals.

The 2007 Kentucky 8<sup>th</sup>-grade NAEP average scale scores were not significantly different than those in 2005 or 1998. Kentucky's average 8<sup>th</sup>-grade score in 2007 was not significantly different from that of the nation's public schools. The percentage of students in Kentucky who performed at or above the NAEP Proficient level was 28 percent in 2007, which was not significantly different from 2005 (31 percent) or 1998 (30 percent). The percentage of 8<sup>th</sup>-grade Kentucky students who scored at or above Basic was 73 percent in 2007. This percentage was not significantly different from that in 2005 (75 percent) or 1998 (74 percent).

#### READING SCALE SCORES – TRENDS SINCE 1998

|             | KENTUCKY 4 <sup>TH</sup> -GRADE SCALE SCORE | NATIONAL AVERAGE 4 <sup>TH</sup> -GRADE SCALE SCORE | KENTUCKY 8 <sup>TH</sup> -GRADE SCALE SCORE | NATIONAL AVERAGE 8 <sup>TH</sup> -GRADE SCALE SCORE |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|
| 1998        | 218   | 213   | 262   | 261   |
| 2002        | 219   | 217   | 265   | 263   |
| 2003        | 219   | 216   | 266   | 261   |
| 2005        | 220   | 217   | 264   | 260   |
| <b>2007</b> | <b>222</b>                                  | <b>220</b>  | <b>262</b>                                  | <b>261</b>  |

#### READING SCALE SCORES BY FREE OR REDUCED MEAL ELIGIBILITY

|             | 4 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE ELIGIBLE-KENTUCKY (NATION) | 4 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE NOT ELIGIBLE - KENTUCKY (NATION) | 8 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE ELIGIBLE-KENTUCKY (NATION) | 8 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE NOT ELIGIBLE - KENTUCKY (NATION) |
|-------------|--|--|--|--|
| 1998        | 206 (195)  | 227 (226)  | 251 (245)  | 270 (268)  |
| 2002        | 209 (202)  | 229 (229)  | 253 (249)  | 273 (271)  |
| 2003        | 209 (201)  | 229 (229)  | 257 (246)  | 273 (271)  |
| 2005        | 212 (203)  | 228 (230)  | 256 (247)  | 271 (270)  |
| <b>2007</b> | <b>212 (205)</b>                                 | <b>234 (232)</b>                                       | <b>252 (247)</b>                                 | <b>271 (271)</b>                                       |

#### READING SCALE SCORES BY GENDER

|             | 4 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE MALE-KENTUCKY (NATION) | 4 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE FEMALE - KENTUCKY (NATION) | 8 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE MALE-KENTUCKY (NATION) | 8 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE FEMALE - KENTUCKY (NATION) |
|-------------|--|--|--|--|
| 1998        | 216 (210)                                    | 219 (215)  | 256 (253)                                    | 269 (268)  |
| 2002        | 215 (214)                                    | 224 (220)  | 261 (258)                                    | 270 (267)  |
| 2003        | 215 (213)                                    | 223 (220)  | 261 (256)                                    | 272 (267)  |
| 2005        | 218 (214)                                    | 222 (220)  | 258 (255)                                    | 270 (266)  |
| <b>2007</b> | <b>219 (216)</b>                             | <b>226 (223)</b>                                 | <b>257 (256)</b>                             | <b>269 (269)</b>                                 |

### READING SCALE SCORES BY RACE

|             | 4 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE<br>WHITE-<br>KENTUCKY<br>(NATION) | 4 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE<br>AFRICAN<br>AMERICAN -<br>KENTUCKY<br>(NATION) | 8 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE<br>WHITE-<br>KENTUCKY<br>(NATION) | 8 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE<br>AFRICAN AMERICAN<br>- KENTUCKY<br>(NATION) |
|-------------|---|--|---|---|
| 1998        | 220 (223)   | 199 (192)  | 264 (268)   | 246 (242)   |
| 2002        | 222 (227)   | 199 (198)  | 267 (271)   | 248 (244)   |
| 2003        | 221 (227)   | 202 (197)  | 269 (270)   | 245 (244)   |
| 2005        | 222 (228)   | 203 (199)  | 266 (269)   | 248 (242)   |
| <b>2007</b> | <b>225 (230)</b>  | <b>203 (203)</b>   | <b>264 (270)</b>  | <b>247 (244)</b>  |

Obviously, the Kentucky 8<sup>th</sup>-grade data is following the national pattern, with 72 percent below Proficient on the NAEP assessment.

#### Kentucky ACT Data

Kentucky recently adopted and is implementing the Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS). Schools will receive information on how their students perform on the EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT assessments. According to the 2006 EXPLORE results, 65 percent of Kentucky’s 8th-graders scored below the benchmark of 15 in reading. A total of 59 percent of Kentucky students scored below the benchmark of 17 on the PLAN in 2006. Beginning in 2008, state law mandates that all 11th-graders take the ACT. Approximately 77 percent of Kentucky high school students already take the ACT voluntarily, and based on those results, Kentucky’s average composite score for reading is 21.2 (compared to the national average of 21.5). The college-readiness benchmark is 21, which is not met by about 50 percent of students.

#### Existing Strengths, Resources and Initiatives

Kentucky has several systems and policies already in place and is in a sound position to advance adolescent literacy policy rapidly. The KBE has established literacy as a priority. The Kentucky Literacy Partnership established eight conditions of literacy success in order to guide the improvement of literacy performance of Kentucky students. The *Conditions of Literacy Success* were the result of the Governor’s Literacy Summit of 2002, a state summit that brought together educators, legislators, business representatives and community and state agencies to determine criteria for literacy work in Kentucky. These conditions should guide all adolescent literacy initiatives and plans for the state.

### **Conditions of Literacy Success**

1. Supportive, participating families that value literacy.
2. Early diagnosis and evaluation with appropriate individual intervention for students who struggle with literacy at all levels.
3. Content area reading and writing instruction in all academic areas.
4. Acknowledgement and ownership by communities of the importance of reading and writing that leads to literacy attainment as a means to improve economic development and the quality of life.
5. Adequate time devoted to the teaching of reading and writing.
6. Engaging instruction in a supportive environment that will motivate students to achieve and to value education.
7. Well-prepared and supported teachers at all levels who have a deep understanding and knowledge of the latest research and processes needed to teach students to read and write in all content areas.
8. Leadership and policy direction at all levels that support reading and writing and lead to high literacy attainment for all Kentuckians.

Two Kentucky initiatives focused on adolescent literacy are gaining national prominence. The first initiative, the Adolescent Literacy Coaching Project (ALCP), is a literacy coach professional development project mandated by the state legislature through the Teacher's Professional Growth Fund. The ALCP provides funding to schools for intensive professional development focused on literacy and graduate coursework for literacy coaches, grades 4-12. The second initiative, the Kentucky Content Literacy Consortium (KCLC), is a Striving Readers grant funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The KCLC Project provides professional development training to content-area teachers in 21 middle and high schools across Kentucky in a schoolwide model for content literacy. The KCLC also provides literacy training for the coaches in an intensive intervention model for struggling readers and coaching concepts for working with content area teachers.

KDE has a strong commitment to supporting adolescent literacy. KDE has designed and is implementing professional development in reading strategies for content-

area teachers in grades 5-8 and in grades 9-12. KDE has a strong support partnership with the ALCP and the KCLC Striving Readers grant. Approximately 74 Reading First grants were funded in Kentucky, and those provide K-3 teachers with a minimum of 80 hours of professional development annually, a research-based curriculum and a school reading coach. Kentucky's Reading First grant funds provide literacy professional development for teachers in grades 5-8 for struggling readers and in grades 9-12 for content area teachers.

KDE also has developed *Literacy PERKS (Program Effectiveness Review for Kentucky Schools)* (see Appendix B) as a way for schools to review school programs and use the results to develop a schoolwide literacy plan. Its nine elements relate to the standards in Kentucky's *Standards and Indicators for School Improvement*.

A joint partnership between KDE and Kentucky Educational Television has led to literacy CDs and DVDs available to Kentucky educators: *Reading Strategies in Action*

#### **9 Elements of Literacy PERKS**

1. Aligned Curriculum
2. Multiple Assessments
3. Instruction and Targeted Intervention
4. Literate Environment
5. Partnership (Family, School, and Community)
6. Professional Development
7. Literacy Team
8. Valuable Resources
9. Literacy Plan

and *More Reading Strategies*. These CDs are designed to build teacher knowledge about the most effective reading strategies to use with middle and high school students in the context of everyday classroom instruction and have been disseminated to every Kentucky public school and university. New DVDs, *Literacy Without Limits: Helping the Struggling Student, Grades 4-12*, and a writing DVD, *Teaching*

*the Writer: What Students Need*, were released in the fall of 2007. For release in the summer of 2008 is *Literacy Leadership: Stories of Schoolwide Success*, a DVD for administrators and literacy leaders on strategic planning for literacy. Follow-up to these materials will include professional development to support classroom literacy instruction.

The Kentucky Special Education Regional Cooperatives and KDE provide 12 full-time special education literacy consultants who offer professional development and support to schools in their regions, including the grades 5-8 and 9-12 professional development opportunities on struggling readers and content literacy mentioned above.

It is apparent that statewide support is needed to pull all these initiatives together and fill in the gaps identified by research to create a comprehensive adolescent literacy plan for Kentucky.

#### Existing Statutes and Regulations

Kentucky already has several statutes and regulations regarding literacy education in place. Many of these statutes specifically address primary or elementary literacy, such as KRS 158.791 (Legislative Findings and Intent Regarding Reading), which states:

*(1) The General Assembly hereby finds that reading proficiency is a*

*gateway skill necessary for all of Kentucky students to achieve the academic goals established in KRS 158.6451.*

*(2) It is Kentucky's goal that all children learn to read well before exiting the **primary program**. It is the intent of the General Assembly that every **elementary school**:*

- (a) Provide a comprehensive schoolwide reading program;*
- (b) Provide diagnostic reading assessments and intervention services for those students who need them to learn to read at the proficient level;*
- (c) Ensure quality instruction by highly trained teachers; and*
- (d) Provide high quality library media programs.*

This statute only addresses student reading achievement at the elementary level. KRS 158.792 establishes the “Read to Achieve” grant program to address reading intervention at the primary level. Other statutes and regulations better address adolescent readers.

#### **Approaches to Improving Adolescents' Literacy Learning**

*What approaches respond to the unique needs of adolescent learners?*

- Demystify content-specific literacy practices
- Motivate through meaningful choice
- Engage students with real-world literacy practices
- Affirm multiple literacies
- Support learner-centered classroom environments
- Foster social responsibility through multicultural literacy

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| <b>Kentucky Statute</b>  | <b>Relation to Adolescent Literacy</b>   |
|--|--|
| KRS 158.6453 Assessment of Achievement Goals   | developing and using continuous assessment strategies, including diagnostic assessment at all levels   |
| KRS 158.6463 Assessment of achievement goals -   | 5 <sup>th</sup> -grade report to parents on readiness in reading and mathematics, including a plan for accelerating those with learning deficiencies |
| KRS 158.6459 Intervention strategies for accelerated learning – Individualized learning plan – Retake of ACT   | accelerated learning plans for high school students not ready for postsecondary English, reading and mathematics                                     |
| KRS 158.6453 Assessment of achievement goals   | accelerated learning plans for high school students who require additional assistance in reading   |
| KRS 158.649 Achievement gaps   | use of professional development funds to address achievement gaps  |
| KRS 158.840 General Assembly Findings and Intent – Importance of Student’s Reading and Mathematics Skills in Achieving Scholastic Goals – Roles of Statewide Entities in Improving Student Achievement | sets forth reading and mathematics proficiency as gateway skills for Kentucky students to achieve the academic goals established in KRS 158.6451     |
| KRS 158.840 General Assembly Findings and Intent – Importance of Student’s Reading and Mathematics Skills in Achieving Scholastic Goals – Roles of Statewide Entities in Improving Student Achievement | requires colleges and universities to provide high-quality teacher preparation and continuing education programs in reading and mathematics          |

In its 2008 session, the Kentucky Legislature passed a Joint Resolution on Adolescent Literacy calling for a cohesive and comprehensive statewide literacy plan (*see Appendix E*).

### Concerns and Challenges

While Kentucky has many excellent literacy initiatives already in place, the state lacks a cohesive vision and plan for adolescent literacy that brings those initiatives together in a systemic effort to address the adolescent literacy problem in Kentucky.

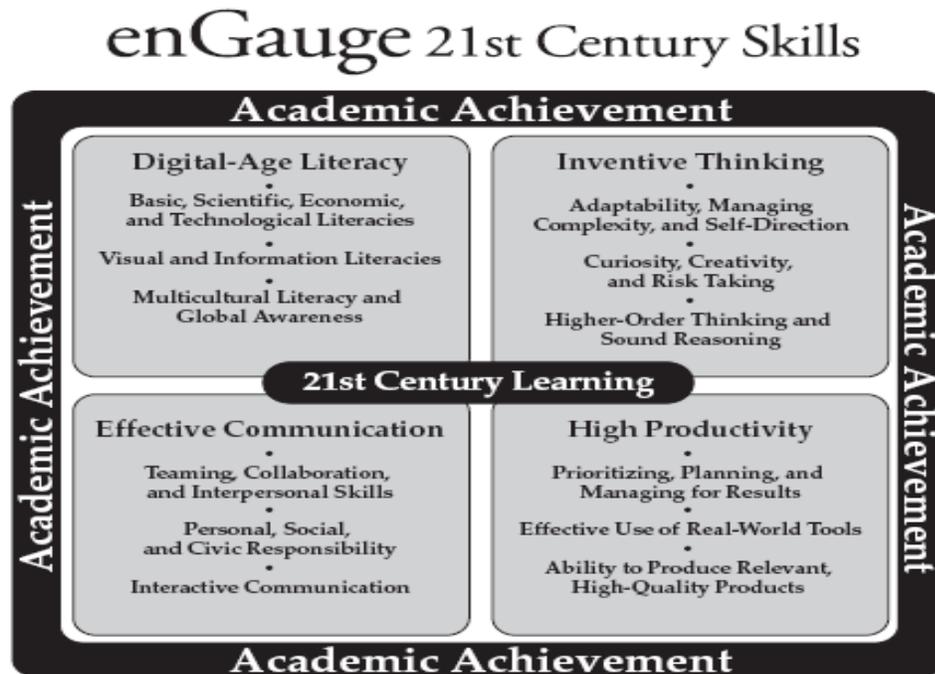
## **Adolescent Literacy Instruction**

### 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills

Throughout this report, data has been presented that illustrates the literacy crisis faced by the nation and Kentucky. In order to meet the needs of adolescent learners, what

kind of instruction needs to occur? According to enGauge: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learner, literacy in the digital age requires a major change in the way students are taught. “The sheer magnitude of human knowledge, world globalization, and the accelerating rate of change due to technology necessitates a shift in our children’s education—from plateaus of knowing to continuous cycles of learning.”

What does learning look like in a technological society? 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills include digital-age literacy, inventive thinking, effective communication and high productivity, all of which should be taught within the “context of rigorous academic standards. They are the bridge to authentic, intellectually challenging work by students.” (NCREL, enGauge)



Without these skills, students will not be prepared for the high-skilled jobs now required to make a successful living. According to Chao (2001), “not providing students with opportunities to develop 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and proficiencies will create a disconnect between the innovative jobs being created and the skills of the workforce” (7).

## Content Literacy Instruction

It is essential that literacy instruction be a part of all instruction that takes place; it does not occur in isolation in the English/Language Arts classroom. Content-area teachers, most of whom have had little or no training in literacy, will need to be able to incorporate both general literacy strategies as well as content-specific ones. Each content area has its own set of literacy practices that enable students' access to the content. According to the report *Literacy Instruction in the Content Areas* “[I]t is most helpful to teach comprehension strategies, text structures, and word-level strategies *while students are engaged in reading challenging, content-rich texts*” (8). But the report goes on to say that “To become competent in a number of academic content areas requires more than just applying the same old skills and comprehension strategies to new kinds of texts. It also requires skills and knowledge and reasoning processes that are specific to particular disciplines” (10). So, general literacy skills that transfer across all content areas, as well as content-specific ones, are necessary to help students reach levels of proficiency required for workplace and college demands.

The following list adapted by KDE content consultants from CCSSO's *Content Literacy Guide* (2007) shows the varied literacy tasks required by each content area.

### **Literacy Tasks of Each Content Area**

#### **Science**

- compare/contrast
- form hypotheses, make observations, draw conclusions and make predictions
- make generalizations based on evidence/data
- understand the bigger picture
- determine relative importance of information
- write about and share findings
- evaluate sources
- recognize issues and trends in context
- engage in reflecting through reading and writing
- recognize and write about cause and effect
- distinguish between and write about fact vs. opinion
- create and interpret graphical representations
- construct and/or interpret diagrams
- compare and critique experimental strengths, weaknesses and accuracy
- analyze evidence
- defend/support position related to a proposed action

- create models
- explore, design and evaluate models

### **Social Studies**

- sequence and make connections between historical events
- understand text structures and features
- recognize issues and trends in context
- reflect through reading and writing
- analyze and write about cause and effect relationships
- distinguish between and write about fact vs. opinion
- analyze information from a variety of print and non-print sources (e.g., books, documents, articles, interviews, Internet) to research and explore issues
- analyze and interpret primary and secondary sources
- use a variety of tools (e.g., maps, globes, charts, graphs, photographs, models) to interpret patterns and to analyze information

### **Math**

- justify and communicate answers and solution processes
- grasp abstract concepts and translate them into symbols
- examine ideas, reflect on solutions and compare key concepts
- create and interpret graphical representations
- communicate, model and apply multiple representations of real numbers
- analyze data representations and make predictions
- apply logical thinking strategies
- translate from concrete pictorial and verbal expressions to mathematical expressions and vice versa
- describe mathematical relationships (e.g., distinguishing patterns, describing change, comparing geometric figures)

### **ELA (Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening and Observing)**

- articulate thinking orally and in writing for various audiences
- understand mechanical and rhetorical techniques
- use reading strategies to comprehend various genres (e.g., fiction, nonfiction, picture books, poetry, fantasy, historical fiction, magazine articles)
- self-select texts based on personal interests
- make comparisons and synthesize information within and across texts
- share and respond to others' ideas through writing and discussion
- recognize that both formal and informal communication are interpretive processes that integrate listening, observing, reading, writing and speaking with confidence
- understand that language usage is related to successful communication and language patterns and vocabulary transmit culture and affect meaning
- use the writing process to generate different types of writing
- use the reading/writing connection to persuade, learn, inform and evoke feelings

- write for a variety of authentic audiences and purposes by communicating purpose, focus and controlling ideas, applying grammar skills and grade-appropriate spelling rules

### **A & H**

- describe structures and elements in artworks (music, dance, drama, theatre, visual arts)
- describe relationships between artworks and time, place and personality
- explain the use of elements and principles of design in artworks
- compare artworks
- make and defend interpretations of artworks
- evaluate/critique artworks and justify evaluations
- communicate expressively in the arts

### **Career/Tech**

- acquire and evaluate information
- organize and maintain information
- interpret and communicate information
- recognize and write about cause and effect
- understand processes
- defend/support position related to a proposed action
- use observations
- distinguish between and write about fact vs. opinion
- engage in reflecting through reading and writing
- comparison/contrast
- determine relative importance of information
- use journals to write about and examine ideas and reflect on solutions
- explore, design and evaluate models
- analyze evidence

Without revision of teacher preparation programs, ongoing professional development for teachers or administrative support, implementation of literacy strategies that will help all students succeed cannot occur.

## Kentucky Adolescent Literacy Task Force

### Policy Recommendations

The Kentucky Adolescent Literacy Task Force met in January 2008 to consider the recommendations generated by stakeholders at fall meetings. As a result, the task force makes the recommendations outlined here.

#### **Recommendation 1: Statewide Coordination and Infrastructure**

*“Set state literacy goals and standards, ensuring alignment with curricula and assessments, and raising literacy expectations across the curriculum for all students in all grades” (NASBE, Reading at Risk).*

Every national policy statement on adolescent literacy recommends that policymakers become aware of the issues surrounding adolescent literacy and create a statewide plan to address those issues. According to NASBE, “strong state leadership is necessary to enlist the multiple constituencies needed for framing a vision and setting the public agenda” (2007). Although Kentucky has a few isolated adolescent literacy initiatives in place, a coordinated state effort is needed to bring those initiatives together and fill in the gaps.

One of the major findings and recommendations of the Kentucky Adolescent Literacy Task Force is to develop capacity for literacy instruction from the state level to the district/school level. This includes:

- *Create a state literacy office to coordinate efforts* -- While not requiring a lot of additional funds, this reorganization would help coordinate efforts and evaluate existing resources and ones that need to be developed in order to have a cohesive statewide plan and initiatives. Housing the office as a part of KDE would ensure cohesiveness to the work done by all partners and stakeholders across the state.
- *Train state-level literacy coaches* to provide support to districts/schools on a regional basis. Kentucky can build on models created by Reading First and also use the 11 reading specialists housed through the special education cooperatives.

- Based on lessons learned from Reading First, this type of support structure is essential in order for schools to have success in implementation and sustainability.
- *Create and sustain capacity through literacy coaches and reading specialists* -- Kentucky needs to provide endorsements, certifications and incentives to increase the numbers of these professionals serving secondary schools. Some funding is in place through the federal TEACH grants, which recognize reading specialists as a high-need area. Also, Kentucky has identified middle and high school English/Language Arts as a critical need area due to teacher shortages. This allows for some tuition reimbursement and loan forgiveness.

**“School-based literacy coaches prepare teachers to use instructional practices that boost student achievement in reading (Russo, 2004)” (NCTE).**

- Additional incentives are necessary to increase the numbers of teachers seeking endorsements and certifications in these areas. The Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) and institutions of higher education should work together to ensure coursework and certifications meet the needs in these areas. Additionally, increasing the number of literacy coaches in schools and acknowledging their role in providing ongoing, job-embedded professional development is integral to guide and improve classroom instructional practices. “School-based literacy coaches prepare teachers to use instructional practices that boost student achievement in reading (Russo, 2004)” (NCTE). Schools have many professional development needs to be met and inadequate infrastructures in place to meet those needs. Literacy coaches can assist schools in this key area.
- *Require school literacy plans that are schoolwide, but tied to existing planning frameworks, such as Comprehensive District Improvement Plans (CDIPs) and Comprehensive School Improvement Plans (CSIPs)* -- KDE already has a framework in place to assist schools in this process and is currently reviewing and updating resources to assist in this capacity. The Program Effectiveness Review for Kentucky Schools (PERKS) is a planning tool schools can use to establish

literacy teams, develop literacy plans and track, monitor and measure goals and objectives. A vital component of successful implementation and support of any literacy plan is administrator involvement in team planning, implementation and monitoring of literacy plans. Using tools such as walk-throughs and observations to ensure implementation of literacy goals will create a positive climate in schools.

## **Recommendation 2: Teacher Preparation/Certification**

*“Putting a quality teacher in every classroom is key to addressing the challenges of reading achievement in schools” (IRA Teaching Reading Well).*

A major finding of the NASBE study group responsible for the report *Reading at Risk: The State Response to the Crisis in Adolescent Literacy (NASBE, 2006)* is that a key way to target improvement in literacy skills is to teach them within the context of core academic subjects, rather than apart from challenging content instruction. In order to achieve this goal effectively, teacher preparation and training must be revised to include standards addressing reading and content literacy instruction so that students have access to the best-prepared practitioners. This would include specific coursework in literacy for pre-service teachers in all content areas, as well as professional development opportunities in literacy for practicing teachers.

Schools and teachers also will require help in diagnosing students’ reading deficiencies, implementing appropriate interventions and assessing and monitoring progress toward goals. Additionally, the state should encourage more teachers to become certified reading specialists to meet the needs of our most struggling students. In Kentucky, a teacher must have a K-12 Reading/Writing Endorsement in order to teach a reading intervention class at the secondary level. Currently, Kentucky has 682 teachers with valid credentials, but only 110 are teaching at the middle or high school level. This does not designate what specific courses they may be teaching that count as a reading intervention classes, but there are 617 reading courses reported, according to EPSB.

Schools and teachers also will need resources and staff to support implementation of literacy plans and strategies. Recent work to revise principal preparation, master’s redesign, teacher leadership networks and secondary redesign are among those initiatives that relate to fulfilling the resource and staffing needs required to meet goal of boosting adolescent literacy achievement.

Major findings and recommendations of the task force include:

- *Provide adequate coursework in literacy and content literacy for secondary pre-service teachers and teachers pursuing advanced degrees -- This will*

require institutions of higher education to ensure that pre-service teachers demonstrate competency in reading theory and practice and content literacy strategies. The International Reading Association's *Five Star Policy Recognition* says that students have the right to be taught reading by certified teachers who have taken two or more courses in the teaching of reading and/or who have demonstrated their proficiency in teaching reading. An advanced endorsement/certification certifies that those serving as coaches have met qualifications to serve in those roles. Currently, the only qualifications are to have a master's degree, three years of teaching experience and a consultant certificate from EPSB, which is granted automatically upon payment of a \$50 fee. Kentucky needs an endorsement that provides credentials for literacy coaching and teacher leadership.

- *Provide opportunities for instructors in postsecondary classrooms to learn and apply research-based literacy strategies within their own content areas --* If pre-service teachers practice in the styles modeled to them during their coursework, they are more likely to implement practices that are modeled and shown as valuable and effective. This may require training of postsecondary faculty and revised evaluation instruments. The Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) would be an excellent resource for this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 3: Teacher Professional Development**

*“Students whose teachers participate in sustained professional development read better than those with less well-prepared teachers (Fisher, 2001)” (Research Based Policy Statement on Adolescent Literacy, NCTE).*

In addition to teacher preparation and certification, practicing teachers need ongoing, job-embedded professional development in order to implement literacy instruction across the content areas.

According to the Alliance for Excellent Education report *Literacy Instruction in the Content Areas*, “Inasmuch as the academic content areas comprise the heart of the secondary school curriculum, content literacy instruction must be a cornerstone of any movement to build the high-quality secondary schools that young people deserve and on which the nation’s social and economic health will depend.”

The task force recommends:

- *Creating capacity for in-service teachers through ongoing, job-embedded professional development in literacy and content literacy --* Professional development opportunities should emphasize the literacy skills that are specific to each discipline. One way for teachers to increase their knowledge of the literacy demands required in various workplace positions is for businesses and industries to provide internships for teachers to work in those fields during summer or through extended workshops.

The types of skills and strategies adolescents need to achieve in literacy and content areas have been widely documented. Many adolescents need to work on advanced word recognition skills, vocabulary, fluency, academic dialogue and comprehension. Motivation and engagement are also vital components of adolescent literacy success. There is a myriad of resources regarding these strategies in professional development texts on literacy strategies for grades 4-12. Practicing teachers should acquire/update skills in how to teach literacy effectively in their classrooms. The literacy office should work with collaborative partners to develop and implement professional development content that addresses these needs. The school literacy plan should reflect intentional planning

that ensures schools are actively implementing plans and strategies and using data (diagnostic, formative and summative) and resources (including family and community) to target literacy growth in schools. Schools also should be provided with access to resources (instructional CDs/DVDs, print materials) on literacy to help with training and implementation of literacy practices (*see Appendix C for list of KDE resources*).

### **Teacher Behaviors That Improve Adolescent Literacy Instruction**

*What strategies can teachers use to improve adolescent literacy instruction?*

Highly effective adolescent literacy teachers share the following qualities:

- teaching with approaches that foster critical thinking, questioning, student decision-making, and independent learning
- addressing the diverse needs of adolescents whose literacy abilities vary considerably
- possessing personal characteristics such as caring about students, being creative and collaborative, and loving to read and write
- developing a solid knowledge about and commitment to literacy instruction
- using significant quality and quantity of literacy activities, such as hands-on, scaffolding, mini-lessons, discussions, group work, student choice, ample feedback, and multiple forms of expression
- participating in ongoing professional development
- developing quality relationships with students
- managing the classroom effectively

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Another important component of effective literacy instruction is to provide extended time for literacy. Research indicates that the most effective way to improve literacy skills is to increase the amount of time students are actively engaged in reading and writing about and discussing what they read. The authors of *Informed Choices for Struggling Adolescent Readers* say, “Extending literacy instructional time can be accomplished not only by extending the ELA [English Language Arts] period but also by bringing an explicit focus on literacy practices to content area classes.” (Deshler, Palincsar, Biancarosa, Nair, 2007).

#### **Recommendation 4: Data-Informed Decision Making**

*“...assessment should focus on underlying knowledge in the larger curriculum and on strategies for thinking during literacy acts (Darling-Hammond and Falk, 1997; Langer, 2000; Smith, 1991)” (NCTE).*

Assessments, including diagnostic, formative and summative, are essential in informing instruction to meet students’ individual needs. Adjustments to instruction based on data ensure that student learning is on track to meet learning goals. Kentucky is well-poised to meet many of these needs through Individualized Learning Plans, a data system to track student performance and intervention requirements to meet college readiness standards, but schools will need information and support in designing informal and formal assessments to diagnose and monitor students.

The task force recommends:

- *Requiring schools to use diagnostic and formative assessments, including determining students’ reading levels in content areas, to inform instruction --* Having data (beyond annual adequate yearly progress reports) is essential in order for schools to meet the individualized needs of students. The International Reading Association’s *Five Star Policy Recognition* says that students have the right to reading assessments with multiple methods that provide information about their strengths and needs as learners, involve them in making decisions about their own learning and lead to clear implications about instruction. Some current resources are the Program Effectiveness Review for Kentucky Schools (PERKS), Lexile reports and EPAS reports. Network grants from KDE can be used to develop other assessment measures.
- *Using data (including EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT) to determine interventions needed for students, including those not meeting college readiness standards --* Having data from multiple sources, including EPAS, will allow schools to meet students’ individual learning needs and adjust curriculum and instruction to meet those needs. The International Reading Association’s *Five Star Policy Recognition* says that students have the right to reading assessments with multiple methods that provide information about their strengths and needs as learners, involve them in making

decisions about their own learning and lead to clear implications about instruction. School PD funds and ESS funds could be used. Training on interpreting EPAS reports will be needed.

- *Using Individualized Learning Plans (grade 6-12) to differentiate instruction and meet individual learning needs and goals* -- ILPs will allow students' individualized needs to be met and tie curriculum and instruction to students' interests, goals and skills.

## **Conclusion**

The recommendations of the task force provide direction for the state on the work that needs to be done to ensure a cohesive statewide plan that, when implemented and monitored, will lead to improved literacy instruction for Kentucky teachers and improved learning for students. Kentucky is in a good position to achieve these goals due to the commitment and involvement among various stakeholder groups and individuals.

## Appendix A

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## **Appendix B**

### **Policy Statements on Adolescent Literacy**

#### National Policy Statements on Adolescent Literacy

*From State Policy to Classroom Practice: Improving Literacy Instruction for All Students.* National Association of State Boards of Education. April, 2007.

*Reading at Risk: The State Response to the Crisis in Adolescent Literacy.* National Association of State Boards of Education. July, 2006

*Reading to Achieve: A Governor's Guide to Adolescent Literacy.* National Governors Association. 2005

*The Next Chapter: A School Board Guide to Improving Adolescent Literacy.* National School Boards Association. July, 2006

*Reading Next: A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy.* Alliance for Excellent Education. 2004

*Writing Next: Effective Strategies to Improve Writing of Adolescents in Middle and High Schools.* Alliance for Excellent Education. 2007

*Literacy Instruction in the Content Areas: Getting to the Core of Middle and High School Improvement.* Alliance for Excellent Education. June, 2007

*Academic Literacy Instruction for Adolescents: A Guidance Document from the Center on Instruction.* Center on Instruction. 2007

*Improving Literacy Instruction in Middle and High Schools: A Guide for Principals [6-12].* Center on Instruction. 2007

*The Role and Qualifications of the Reading coach in the United States.* International Reading Association. 2004

*Adolescent Literacy: A Position Statement.* International Reading Association. 1999

*Federal Support for Adolescent Literacy: a Solid Investment.* Alliance for Excellent Education. 2007

*Literacy Across the Curriculum.* Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). 2003

*Creating a Culture of Literacy: A Guide for Middle and High School Principals.* National Association of Secondary School Principals. 2005

*Standards for Middle and High School Literacy Coaches.* International Reading Association, in collaboration with national content organizations. 2006

*Double the Work: Challenges and Solutions to Acquiring Language and Academic Literacy for Adolescent English Language Learners.* Alliance for Excellent Education. 2007

*enGauge 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills: Literacy in the Digital Age.* <http://www.ncrel.org/engauge> 2003

*Online Adolescent Literacy Toolkit.* Council of Chief State School Officers, 2007

#### State Plans for Adolescent Literacy

- *Reading to Learn: A Classroom Guide to Reading Strategy Instruction, Grades 4 - 12,* Vermont Strategic Reading Initiative, 2007
- *K - 12 Reading Model: Implementation Guide*  
Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2005
- *New Hampshire PreK-16: Literacy Action Plan For the 21st Century*  
New Hampshire Department of Education, 2007

- *Personal Literacy Plan Guidelines*  
Rhode Island Department of Education, 2005
- *Beyond the Blueprint: Literacy in Grades 4-12 and Across the Content Areas*  
Connecticut State Department of Education, 2007

#### Kentucky Recommendations

*Learning-Centered Leadership: the Preparation and Support for the Next Generation of Kentucky's School and District Leaders.* 2006 House Joint Resolution 14 report prepared for the Interim Joint Committee on Education.

*Securing Kentucky's Future: a Plan for Improving College Readiness and Success.*  
Kentucky Developmental Education Task Force.

## **Appendix C**

### **Program Effectiveness Review for Kentucky Schools (PERKS)**

Literacy PERKS is a resource for principals, teachers and all other stakeholders to use in the review and evaluation of the school's literacy program.

There are nine elements of comprehensive schoolwide literacy programs: Aligned Curriculum; Multiple Assessment; Intervention and Targeted Instruction; Literate Environment; Partnership: Family/School/Community; Professional Development; Literacy Team; Valuable Resources; Literacy Plan.

The list of documents and sources below can be used to gather evidence to demonstrate that indicators are being met.

- Lesson Plans
- Audits and Reviews
- Comprehensive School Improvement Plan
- Interviews (students, teachers, parents, community members)
- Units of Study
- Kentucky Performance Report
- Reading Programs Currently Implemented
- School Report Card
- Master Schedule
- E-walks
- Walkthroughs

Literacy PERKS is available on the KDE Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Instructional+Resources/Literacy>.

## Appendix D

### **Kentucky Literacy Resources**

- **Teaching the Writer DVD (KDE-CTL)**

This DVD, a joint project with the Kentucky Department of Education and the Collaborative for Teaching and Learning, is designed to provide specific instructional support in the area of writing. It includes interviews with students, teachers and administrators. The classroom videos show successful models of research-based writing instruction.

- **Kentucky Writing Handbook**

This tool was developed to help Kentucky educators build strong writing programs culminating with the development of students as independent writers. The handbook, *Kentucky Writing Handbook: Helping Students Develop as Proficient Writers and Learners*, is divided into two parts. “Writing Development” (Part 1) of the handbook discusses issues important to instructional practice, methods of teaching writing across the curriculum and grade levels, and suggestions to improve an overall writing program within a school. “Scoring” (Part 2) contains scoring materials used in the assessment of Kentucky writing portfolios at grades 4, 7 and 12 and the Kentucky on-demand writing assessment at grades 5, 8 and 12.

**The development handbook can be especially useful to**

- plan and develop schoolwide writing programs
- help teachers embed writing in standards-based units of study
- determine focus of professional development sessions related to writing instruction
- help teachers and administrators understand writing and the assessment of writing
- help clarify Kentucky’s expectations of writing instruction in the public schools
- answer commonly-asked questions about the Kentucky writing instruction

**The scoring handbook can be especially useful to**

- help teachers and administrators understand Kentucky’s writing criteria
- help teachers and administrators assess on-demand and portfolio writing

help cluster leaders prepare cluster trainings and scoring sessions  
determine focus of professional development sessions related to scoring  
provide student samples to be used for instruction, training sessions and scoring sessions  
answer commonly-asked questions regarding writing assessment

- **Parent Handbook**

A tool to accompany the Kentucky Writing Handbook, the parent handbook explains the necessity of teaching students how to communicate their thoughts through writing and how parents can help their children to do this well. It also answers questions about the Kentucky's Writing Portfolio, Kentucky's Scoring Rubric, the writing process that leads students to effective writing and the role that parents play in this process.

- **Reading Strategies in Action (Grades 6-10)**

Reading Strategies in Action, a joint project with KET and the Kentucky Department of Education, is designed to build teacher knowledge about the most effective reading strategies to use with middle and high school students in the context of everyday classroom instruction. Visual models of successful, research-based reading practices are at the heart of this CD-ROM and video-based project.

- **More Reading Strategies in Action (Grades 6-10)**

More Reading Strategies in Action showcases videotaped examples of excellent teachers modeling strategies that help students in grades 6-10 improve their comprehension of informational texts. Information is presented in four content areas – English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. The video clips are cross-referenced by content areas and reading strategy to enable users to watch excellent practice in all four content areas.

- **Literacy Strategies in Action: Resources for Primary Teachers (CD-ROM)**

More than 100 video clips of lessons that focus on the five skills essential to learning to read: phonological awareness; phonics; fluency; vocabulary; and comprehension. Other highlighted practices include connecting writing to reading acquisition and teaching in a multi-age classroom. Literacy Strategies in Action: Resources for Primary Teachers received an award for instructional media in a large market from the National Educational Telecommunications Association.

- **Literacy Without Limits: Help for Struggling Students, Grades 4-12 (DVD-ROM/Web)**

<http://www.literacywithoutlimits.org>

Effective Literacy Instruction for intermediate and secondary students who struggle with literacy is illustrated in more than 90 video clips. This resource focuses on meeting the needs of those students who have a wide range of identified literacy needs - in multiple content areas and classroom settings.

- **Literacy Leadership: Stories of Schoolwide Success (CD-ROM/Web)**

<http://www.literacyleadership.org>

This look at effective schoolwide literacy programs – how they were developed and how they continue to evolve – is targeted to principals and other literacy leaders. The highlighted schools represent Kentucky’s diverse student population, including both rural and urban schools that have made extraordinary gains in literacy. Most of the schools have very challenging student populations, such as high poverty and transiency.

## **Appendix E**

### **International Reading Association Student Literacy Rights**

The International Reading Association has long advocated that all students have five basic literacy rights.

1. Students have the right to be taught reading by certified teachers who have taken two or more courses in the teaching of reading and/or who have demonstrated their proficiency in the teaching of reading. These certified teachers keep their skills up to date through effective professional development. The state or province requires reading courses for all teachers K-12 or requires that all K-12 teachers show proficiency in the teaching of reading. The state or province requires ongoing professional development for teachers.
2. Students who struggle as readers have the right to receive additional help from qualified reading specialists. The state or province supports reading professionals/specialists, provides or supports intervention programs for struggling readers at all grade levels and has state- or provincial-level staff positions specifically dedicated to the promotion of reading.
3. Students have a right of access to a wide variety of books and other reading materials in classroom and school library media centers. Students also have a right to access technology that will enhance their reading achievement. The state/province or nation provides ample support for building and maintaining good collections in classroom and school library media centers. The state or province provides access to technology to all students, including those in schools in low-income communities.
4. Students have the right to be taught beginning reading through methods chosen on the basis of their needs as learners. The state or province encourages the use of multiple methods in beginning reading, with methods selected on the basis of students' needs in learning to read, and does not mandate the use of one particular method. (This right should be extended to older struggling readers.)
5. Students have the right to reading assessment with multiple methods that provide information about their strengths and needs as learners, involve them in making

decisions about their own learning and lead to clear implications for instruction. The state or province uses multiple measures of reading achievement and does not rely only on standardized tests or use single test scores to make promotion, placement or graduation decisions.

## **Appendix F**

### **Joint Resolution of Adolescent Literacy**

Adolescent Literacy: A JOINT RESOLUTION directing the Department of Education as the lead to develop with educational partners including but not limited to, other state agencies, business and postsecondary education partners, a cohesive and comprehensive literacy plan with a focus on adolescent literacy.

WHEREAS, the 1990 session of the General Assembly passed the Kentucky Education Reform Act in response to the opinion of the Kentucky Supreme Court in *Rose v. Council for Better Education, Inc.*, 790 SW 2d 186 (Ky. 1989), which said in part that all Kentucky children deserved equal educational opportunities to acquire an adequate education; and

WHEREAS, the court defined "adequate education" as one which develops seven capacities that include "...communication skills necessary to function in a complex, changing civilization..."; and

WHEREAS, since 1990 the General Assembly has established high standards, and provided a variety of programs and funding sources to enable local schools and districts to improve instruction across all the core content areas with special attention to improving reading and literacy skills; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly recognizes that for the Commonwealth to achieve its goals of economic development, enhanced quality of life and a high standard of living for all its citizens, literacy skills are essential and are a gateway skill necessary for all of Kentucky students to achieve the academic goals established in KRS 158.6451; and

WHEREAS, even though Kentucky's readers have shown progress on national and statewide reading and writing assessments, Kentucky still faces greater challenges with many historically underachieving populations as well as adolescents of all populations; and

WHEREAS, while emphases from the federal government's "Reading First" program and the state's "Read to Achieve" program have provided resources to many local schools at the primary level, there is not a comprehensive literacy plan for Primary through Grade 12 and transition to postsecondary and the workplace, especially with a

focus on adolescent literacy that is designed to meet the Commonwealth's stated goal to help every child reach a proficient reading level by the year 2014 and to bring all partners together to achieve this goal; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly has set forth the collaborative roles of the General Assembly, the Kentucky Board of Education, the Kentucky Department of Education, the Council on Postsecondary Education, the Education Standards Board, colleges and universities, local boards of education, school administrators, school councils, teachers, parents and other education agencies such as the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development and the Center for Middle School Achievement (KRS 158.840, KRS 164.0207, KRS 160.345 )

WHEREAS, the General Assembly finds there is an urgency to focus its attention on improving reading and literacy skills, especially for adolescents;

NOW, THEREFORE,

***Be it resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:***

Section 1. The Department of Education, with partners, shall develop a cohesive and comprehensive statewide literacy plan that builds instructional and leadership capacity, sustains continuous improvements in literacy especially adolescent literacy, and identifies policies and practices to improve the literacy of the Commonwealth's children. The plan shall include strategies for business, community and family involvement, schools, districts, and postsecondary education focused on building partnerships and contributions of all to the improvement of literacy across the Commonwealth. The Kentucky Department of Education shall consult with the Adolescent Literacy Task Force, the Council on Postsecondary Education, the Education Professional Standards Board as well as with business, community and educational partners.

Section 2. The Department of Education shall submit its initial plan and recommendations to the Interim Joint Committee on Education no later than December 1, 2009.

## **Appendix G**

### **Literacy Coaching Standards**

#### **International Reading Association Key Elements of Literacy Coaching**

##### **Leadership Standards**

###### **STANDARD 1: SKILLFUL COLLABORATORS**

Content-area literacy coaches are skilled collaborators who function effectively in middle school and/or high school settings.

###### **STANDARD 2: SKILLFUL JOB-EMBEDDED COACHES**

Content-area literacy coaches are skilled instructional coaches for secondary teachers in the core content areas of English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

###### **STANDARD 3: SKILLFUL EVALUATORS OF LITERACY NEEDS**

Content-area literacy coaches are skilled evaluators of literacy needs within various subject areas and are able to collaborate with secondary school leadership teams and teachers to interpret and use assessment data to inform instruction.

##### **Content-Area Standard**

###### **STANDARD 4: SKILLFUL INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGISTS**

Content-area literacy coaches are accomplished middle and high school teachers who are skilled in developing and implementing instructional strategies to improve academic literacy in the specific content area.

Source: *Standards for Middle and High School Literacy Coaches*. International Reading Association, 2005.

**Appendix H**

**Recommendations**



**Improving Adolescent Literacy:  
Recommendations for Kentucky's Adolescent Literacy Plan**



Kentucky Department of Education  
Kentucky Board of Education



Kentucky Reading Association

## **Introduction and Rationale**

The National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) State Adolescent Literacy Network, with funding from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, has provided funding to five states, including Kentucky, to guide state leadership efforts in crafting comprehensive state literacy initiatives that address literacy instruction in core academic subjects as a part of the states' overall school improvement initiatives.

As a part of Kentucky's funded proposal, the primary goals of the NASBE grant are to:

1. develop an Adolescent Literacy Taskforce charged with developing a statewide Adolescent Literacy Plan
2. develop a position statement for stakeholder groups, as well as a compilation of resources and model programs to build knowledge and create interest in advocating for change
3. enhance teacher preparation and certification by requiring courses in literacy and creating a literacy coach/teacher leader endorsement
4. design and implement professional development opportunities for schools based on existing programs and models (e.g., Striving Readers, the Adolescent Literacy Coaching Project, content literacy academies)
5. provide state-level guidance and training for schools to develop comprehensive literacy plans beginning in fall 2008

In developing recommendations for the plan, KDE staff and partners analyzed national and state data, research and recommendations from national organizations and lessons learned from existing literacy initiatives, such as Reading First, Striving Readers and the Adolescent Literacy Coaching Project. Also included in this work are plans to address accelerated learning associated with college readiness standards and EPAS.

Based on feedback received from key stakeholders, the following areas have been identified as key components:

1. Teacher Preparation/Certification
2. Professional Development
3. Instructional Resources
4. Data-Informed Decision Making
5. Support Structure

Each of these five components contains an overview, stating the need or urgency, and is followed by a chart outlining the specific recommendations for each area, the rationale for the recommendation, outcomes, and timeline and resources. Each component was

developed with the Conditions of Literacy Success in mind. The Conditions of Literacy Success were developed with the Kentucky Literacy Partnership, a group representing a consortium of state agencies as part of Kentucky's participation in federal Title I reading funding. A series of Literacy Summits resulted in the identification of certain conditions that must be met if the state is to realize its objective of being a fully literate population. The basis for these conditions included research on the state and national level and data from the Kentucky Core Content Test, the National Assessment of Educational Progress and college readiness assessments such as the ACT. The statements below, as agreed upon by summit participants, serve as the focus for the work on improving the literacy performance of Kentucky students.

### *Conditions of Literacy Success*

1. supportive, participating families that value literacy
2. early diagnosis and evaluation with appropriate individual intervention for students who struggle with literacy at all levels
3. content-area reading and writing instruction in all academic areas
4. acknowledgement and ownership by communities of the importance of reading and writing that leads to literacy attainment as a means to improve economic development and the quality of life
5. adequate time devoted to the teaching of reading and writing
6. engaging instruction in a supportive environment that will motivate students to achieve and to value education
7. well-prepared and supported teachers at all levels who have a deep understanding and knowledge of the latest research and processes needed to teach students to read and write in all content areas
8. leadership and policy direction at all levels that support reading and writing and lead to high literacy attainment for all Kentuckians

## Part 1: Teacher Preparation/Certification

A major finding of the NASBE study group responsible for the report *Reading at Risk: The State Response to the Crisis in Adolescent Literacy* is that a key way to target improvement in literacy skills is to teach them within the context of core academic subjects, rather than apart from challenging content instruction. In order to achieve this goal effectively, teacher preparation and training must be revised to include standards addressing reading and content literacy instruction so that students have access to the best-prepared practitioners. This would include specific coursework in literacy for pre-service teachers in all content areas, as well as professional development opportunities in literacy for practicing teachers.

Schools and teachers also will require help in diagnosing students' reading deficiencies, implementing appropriate interventions and assessing and monitoring progress toward goals. Additionally, the state should encourage more teachers to become certified reading specialists to meet the needs of our most struggling students. In Kentucky, a teacher must have a K-12 Reading/Writing Endorsement in order to teach a reading intervention class at the secondary level. Currently, we have 682 teachers with valid credentials, but only 110 are currently teaching at the middle or high school level. This does not inform us of what specific courses they may be teaching that count as reading intervention classes, but there are 617 reading courses reported, according to the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB).

Additionally, schools and teachers will need resources and staff to support implementation of literacy plans and strategies. Recent work to revise principal preparation, master's redesign, teacher leadership networks and secondary redesign are among those initiatives that relate to fulfilling the resources and staffing needs required to meet our goals.

NASBE grant goals **highlighted**

| Recommendation   | Rationale   | Outcomes   | Timeline/Resource   |
|--|---|--|---|
| 1. Increase competency of pre-service teachers in reading theory/practice across all content areas, grades 4-12. | Currently, secondary teachers have no requirement in this area, yet are expected to meet the literacy needs of all students. The International Reading Association's <i>Five Star Policy Recognition</i> says students have | Institutions of higher education will develop the competencies teachers must demonstrate as part of teacher preparation courses. | By June 30, 2009/CPE and institutions of higher education — report to EPSB and task force |

|   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
|   | the right to be taught reading by certified teachers who have taken two or more courses in the teaching of reading and/or who have demonstrated their proficiency in teaching reading.   |   |  |
| 2. Increase competency of pre-service teachers across all content areas in literacy strategies, grades 4-12.  | Currently, secondary teachers have no requirement in this area, yet are expected to meet the literacy needs of all students.   | Institutions of higher education will develop the competencies teachers must demonstrate as part of teacher preparation courses.  | By June 30, 2009/CPE, institutions of higher education — report to EPSB and task force |
| 3. Provide endorsement/certification for literacy coaching/teacher leadership.  | An advanced endorsement/certification certifies that those serving as coaches have met qualifications to serve in those roles (Currently, the only qualifications are to have a master’s degree, three years of teaching experience and a consultant certificate from the EPSB).   | Institutions of higher education will submit plans to EPSB showing the coursework required for coaching/teacher leadership by their institutions.   | By June 30, 2009/CPE, institutions of higher education — report to EPSB and task force |
| 4. Provide incentives to increase numbers of certified Reading Specialists and provide emergency certifications while teachers are earning certification. | At the secondary level, Kentucky has an enormous shortage of certified reading specialists, who are the only ones trained to provide interventions through reading courses for our most struggling readers. At the secondary level, Kentucky has 110 teachers in middle or high schools with valid credentials to teach reading. | Offer loan forgiveness and tuition credit for completing Reading Specialist certification in order to increase the number of certified teachers. Some funding may be available through federal TEACH grants.<br><br>Provide emergency certification to secondary teachers pursuing the certification. | Ongoing/Kentucky legislature, CPE, EPSB, KDE   |
| 5. Model research-based literacy strategies within postsecondary classrooms.  | Teachers practice in the styles modeled to them during their coursework; they are more likely to implement practices that are modeled and shown as valuable and effective.   | Train postsecondary faculty in the use of content-based literacy strategies and reading strategies.<br><br>Revise evaluation instruments.   | 2010/CPE, institutions of higher education   |

## Part 2: Professional Development

In addition to teacher preparation and certification, practicing teachers need ongoing, job-embedded professional development in order to implement literacy instruction across the content areas. According to the Alliance for Excellent Education report *Literacy Instruction in the Content Areas*, “Inasmuch as the academic content areas comprise the heart of the secondary school curriculum, content literacy instruction must be a cornerstone of any movement to build the high-quality secondary schools that young people deserve and on which the nation’s social and economic health will depend.” The report goes on to say that “reading and writing are more than just basic skills that permit students to go on and study advanced subject matter; reading and writing are also the very stuff from which the academic content areas are made.” Professional development supported by school leadership is a key way to increase teacher competency in this area.

| <b>Recommendation</b>   | <b>Rationale</b>   | <b>Outcomes</b>  | <b>Timeline/Resource</b>  |
|---|--|--|---|
| 6. Provide literacy/learning strategies professional development (PD).                            | Practicing teachers and administrators need to acquire/update skills in how to teach literacy effectively in their classrooms and monitor implementation in their schools.   | Develop and implement literacy professional development opportunities (school/district and regional based, online courses, WebExes, toolkits, etc.).                   | By June 2009/KDE, CCLD, co-ops, KWPs, other partners  |
| 7. Provide content literacy PD.   | In order to create capacity in schools for literacy instruction, practicing teachers need to acquire/update skills in how to teach literacy effectively in their classrooms, acknowledging that literacy requirements are unique in each content area. | Develop and implement literacy professional development opportunities (school/district and regional based, online courses, WebExes, toolkits, etc.).                   | By June 2009/KDE, CCLD, co-ops, KWPs, other partners  |
| 8. Provide literacy team planning/implementation PD.  | Intentional planning will ensure that schools are actively implementing plans and strategies and using data (diagnostic, formative and summative) and resources (including family and community) to target literacy growth in schools.                 | Provide guidance to schools in the use of Literacy PERKS.  | Fall 2008/KBE, KDE literacy staff, special education co-op Literacy specialists, other partners |
| 9. Provide training to literacy coaches grades 4-12 and incentives to schools to provide coaches. | Ongoing, job-embedded PD has been shown to be effective, and literacy coaches are a useful tool for the delivery of that model. The coach is also a resource to support the implementation of the literacy plan in the school.                         | Increase the number of trained literacy coaches serving secondary schools in order to support teachers in implementation of literacy strategies across the curriculum. | Ongoing/Kentucky legislature; CCLD, CTL, KDE  |

|   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
|   | The Teachers Professional Growth Fund (TPGF) currently funds the training of literacy coaches, but expires in 2010 unless funding is continued; the last cadre will begin training in summer of 2008. Funding does not currently cover any salaries. |  |  |
| 10. Train state-level coaches to be able to provide support to schools on a regional basis. | Schools have many PD needs to be met and inadequate infrastructures in place to meet those needs. A team of trained coaches can help bridge that gap between the state and local levels, similar to Reading First State Coaches.                     | Form a cadre of trained state-level literacy coaches to work with schools/districts on a regional basis to support implementation of literacy plans and goals. | By June 2009/KBE, KDE, other partners  |
| 11. Develop and provide online PD and courses in literacy.                                  | Teachers have a menu of options to meet their needs, and learning can be done on a schedule that fits teachers' availability.  | Increase teachers' capacities to implement effective literacy instruction.   | By June 2009/KDE literacy staff, KYVS staff, Kentucky Educational Television (KET), other partners |

### Part 3: Instructional Resources

As pre-service and practicing teachers gain skill in integrating literacy into the content areas, they will need resources to develop capacity in the schools in order to support implementation. And, while it is useful for teachers and students to know and use a set of general literacy strategies, it is not enough in order for students to navigate the difficult content-specific texts they encounter in the various subjects. According to Alvermann and Moore and other literacy researchers, not all literacy skills can be transferred easily from one field to another. Resources are a key way in which implementation can be supported.

| Recommendation   | Rationale  | Outcomes   | Timeline/Resource  |
|--|--|--|--|
| 12. Provide resources to schools (instructional CDs/DVDs, print materials) on literacy.  | Building-level personnel can be trained on the use of these resources, which are then shared at the school level in order to increase implementation of effective literacy instruction.  | Increase teachers' access to instructional materials and their capacities to implement effective literacy instruction. | Ongoing/Reading First, KDE; CTL, CCLD, KET, KWPs         |
| 13. Extend time for literacy by embedding literacy strategies in all academic areas and through cross-discipline units of study.                                 | Research indicates that the most effective way to improve literacy skills is to increase the amount of time students are actively engaged in reading and writing about and discussing what they read.  | Increase literacy skills and performance by Kentucky students.   | By fall 2009/school PD funds; KBE, KDE                   |
| 14. Target literacy instruction for struggling readers through access to teachers who are highly trained in literacy instruction, assessments and interventions. | The International Reading Association's <i>Five Star Policy Recognition</i> says that students who struggle as readers have the right to receive additional help from qualified reading specialists. Additionally, all teachers will need support in meeting the learning needs of struggling readers. | Increase literacy skills and performance by Kentucky students by having highly trained teachers.                       | Ongoing/CPE, institutions of higher education, EPSB, KDE |
| 15. Utilize reading clinics associated with institutions of higher educations.   | Schools, especially those without resources such as reading specialists, need access to centers and resources  | Schools and families have access to reading clinics to help students reading below grade-level.                        | Ongoing/CPE, institutions of higher education, CCLD      |

|  |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
|  | that can provide additional support to students who are behind grade level in reading.  |  |   |
| 16. Encourage schools to provide students with access to a wide variety of reading materials | The International Reading Association's <i>Five Star Policy Recognition</i> states that students have a right of access to a wide variety of books and other reading materials in the classroom and school media centers. | Increased interest in reading and literacy skills and performance by KY students | Ongoing/school media centers and media specialists; community libraries; Bluegrass Book Award program; KDE literacy staff, media specialist consultants |

## Part 4: Data-Informed Decision Making

Assessments, including diagnostic, formative and summative, are essential in informing instruction to meet students' individual needs. Adjustments to instruction based on data ensure that student learning is on track to meet learning goals. Kentucky is well-poised to meet many of these needs through Individualized Learning Plans, a data system to track student performance and intervention requirements to meet college readiness standards, but schools will need information and support in designing informal and formal assessments to diagnose and monitor students. Kentucky also can use data from initiatives such as Striving Readers and the Adolescent Literacy Coaching Project to inform decisions.

| Recommendation  | Rationale  | Outcomes   | Timeline/Resource                    |
|---|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| 17. Use diagnostic and formative assessments, including determining students' reading levels in content areas, to inform instruction.                   | Having data (beyond annual AYP reports) is essential in order for schools to meet the individualized needs of students. The International Reading Association's <i>Five Star Policy Recognition</i> says that students have the right to reading assessments with multiple methods that provide information about their strengths and needs as learners, involve them in making decisions about their own learning and lead to clear implications about instruction.   | Schools/districts utilize all available data sources (PERKS, Lexile reports, EPAS reports, classroom data) in order to make instructional decisions. | Fall 2009/KDE, schools and districts |
| 18. Use data (including EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT) to determine interventions needed for students, including those not meeting college readiness standards. | Schools will need support to develop and implement balanced assessment systems. Additionally, having college readiness data from EPAS will allow schools to meet students' individual learning needs and adjust curriculum and instruction to meet those needs. The International Reading Association's <i>Five Star Policy Recognition</i> says that students have the right to reading assessments with multiple methods that provide information about their strengths and needs as learners, involve them in making decisions about their own learning and lead to clear implications about instruction. | Schools/districts utilize all available data sources (PERKS, Lexile reports, EPAS reports, classroom data) in order to make instructional decisions. | Fall 2009/KDE, schools and districts |
| 19. Use Individualized Learning   | ILPs will allow students' individualized needs to  | Schools/districts utilize ILPs to meet   | Fall 2009/KDE, schools and           |

|   |  |  |           |
|---|--|--|-----------|
| Plans (grade 6-12) to differentiate instruction and meet individual learning needs and goals. | be met and ties curriculum and instruction to students' interests, goals and skills. | the individual learning needs and goals of each student. | districts |
|---|--|--|-----------|

## Part 5: Support Structure

The support structure section includes instructional support as well as infrastructure. According to *Reading Next*, “Improving instruction, whether done by an entire school or a single teacher, can have dramatic effects on student achievement. However, improving school infrastructure to better support literacy teachers and students in addition to instructional improvement will reap the biggest rewards. Ultimately, change can occur from the top down, the bottom up, or the middle in, but truly effective and enduring change must include elements of both instruction and infrastructure.”

| Recommendation   | Rationale   | Outcomes   | Timeline/Resource                                 |
|--|---|--|---|
| 20. Require schools to develop literacy plans.   | Intentional planning will ensure that schools, families and communities are actively implementing plans and strategies and using data (diagnostic, formative and summative) to target literacy growth in schools.   | Using Literacy PERKS to develop school plans will ensure planning and collaboration to ensure students’ literacy needs are being met.                          | Fall 2009/KDE, other partners                     |
| 21. Utilize literacy/learning strategies as a component of Kentucky Teacher Internship Program (KTIP) observation protocol and experienced teachers standards. | Utilizing PD and planning of the literacy/learning strategies as a component of KTIP observation protocol will impact instructional practices.  | Including literacy as a part of teacher evaluation process will ensure that literacy instruction is being implemented in all secondary classrooms.             | 2010/EPBSB, institutions of higher education, CPE |
| 22. Encourage involvement by administrators in team planning, implementation and monitoring of literacy plans.   | Utilizing tools such as walk-throughs and observations to ensure implementation of literacy goals will create a positive climate in their schools; involve administrators in literacy trainings (modeled after Striving Readers and Adolescent Literacy Coaching Project) and incorporate EILA credit for administrators. | Administrators ensure that literacy plans are monitored and implemented.   | Fall 2009/KDE, other partners                     |
| 23. Provide state-level literacy coaches to work with schools and literacy coaches to improve literacy instruction.  | Building on the successful Reading First model, having state coaches increases KDE’s capacity to support and monitor implementation of school-level literacy framework.   | Form a cadre of trained state-level literacy coaches to work with schools/districts on a regional basis to support implementation of literacy plans and goals. | 2010/KDE, KBE                                     |

|   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <p>24. Establish a literacy office, responsible for organizing existing resources to form a cohesive support system for schools and districts, preschool through postsecondary.</p> | <p>Creating a literacy office to coordinate KY's resources and efforts in literacy will provide the opportunity to have a state-level framework to use resources effectively and avoid duplication of services.</p> | <p>Reorganization and reallocation of staff and additional resources for staffing, offices, communication and collaboration with partners ensures a cohesive statewide effort.</p> | <p>Fall 2008/KDE</p>   |
| <p>25. Develop programs for parents and community members to become effective partners for literacy advancement.</p>  | <p>Parents and communities have an important role in improving literacy for all of Kentucky. The state and local schools need to do more to involve this important resource.</p>                                    | <p>Increase capacity of parents/communities/businesses to impact literacy skills of Kentucky's adolescents.</p>  | <p>By June 2009/Prichard Committee, Partnership for Successful Schools, adult education, family literacy programs, Missing Pieces of the Puzzle (PAC), libraries, adult tutors</p> |