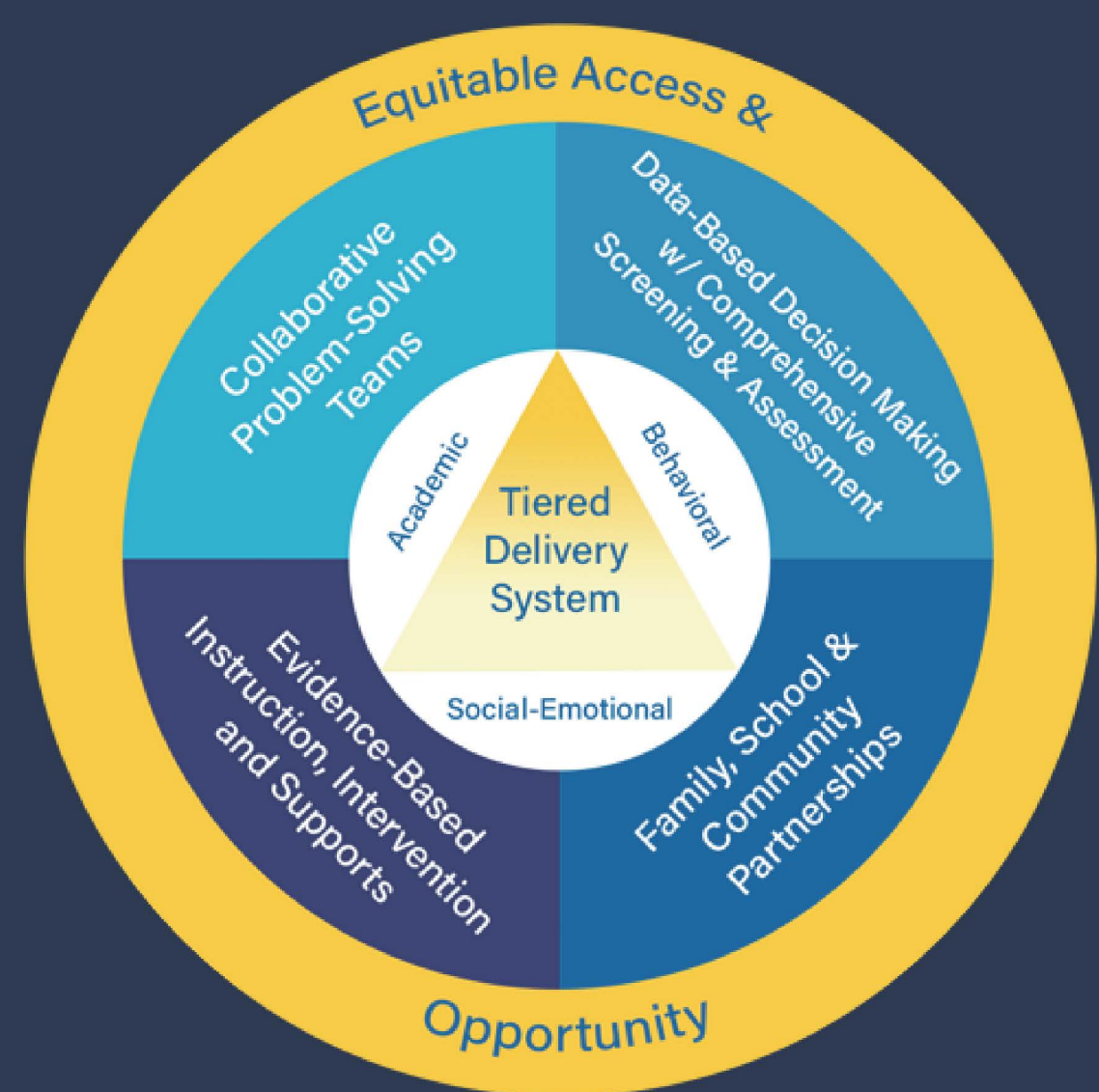


A critical predictor of both educational and lifelong success is a child's ability to read. Students must have every opportunity to gain and strengthen this skill, and teachers must be equipped and empowered in the teaching of reading to best support their students.

Reading proficiency is a gateway skill necessary for children to achieve their academic goals. The aim of Kentucky's *Read to Succeed Act* (Senate Bill 9, 2022) is that all children learn to read well before exiting third grade through high-quality, comprehensive school-wide reading instruction delivered by highly trained teachers.



Acknowledging that all children learn at a different pace, KY schools implement a multi-tiered system of support (KyMTSS) to maximize student achievement, engage all students in learning, and address diverse student needs. KyMTSS provides educators with a preventative and responsive framework that promotes positive student outcomes in academic and behavioral learning.



The KyMTSS framework has six essential elements:

- Equitable Access and Opportunity
- Tiered Delivery System with a Continuum of Supports
- Collaborative Problem-Solving Teams
- Data-Based Decision-Making w/ Comprehensive Screening & Assessment
- Evidence-Based Instruction, Intervention, and Supports
- Family, School, and Community Partnerships

In 2022, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) created the Kentucky Reading Academies, a partnership between KDE and Lexia's Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS), to provide educators and administrators with professional learning on evidence-based early literacy instruction via a self-paced, online platform with live professional learning unit sessions.

The Kentucky Reading Academies support educators as they build upon their early literacy knowledge and implement **evidence-based reading instruction, intervention, and a multi-tiered system of supports** that ensure the **equitable access** to literacy for all of Kentucky's children.

Participants of the Kentucky Reading Academies reported that they:

- ✓ Increased use of universal screeners and diagnostic assessments to measure student growth and identify areas where students needed extra support.
- ✓ Benefitted from new and increased literacy knowledge.
- ✓ Strengthened or modified their beliefs about how students learn to read and why they struggle.
- ✓ Incorporated evidence-based strategies into their classroom practice.
- ✓ Were more motivated to implement district-approved High Quality Instructional Resources (HQIRs) into classroom practice because of their participation.

Educators shared anecdotal evidence about student progress, including:

- ✓ Reduced need for intervention.
- ✓ Increased scores in specific assessments across the year.
- ✓ Early indicators of positive student outcomes because of Kentucky Reading Academies participation.
- ✓ Substantial gains in reading and writing skills among elementary school students who arrived behind grade level.

Program participants shared several recommendations to facilitate participation in the Kentucky Reading Academies, including:

- ✓ District-level support for the Kentucky Reading Academies created a positive environment for implementation.
- ✓ Administrator or district support strengthened the number of participants and the quality of participation.
- ✓ Participating in LETRS with colleagues in the same school supported implementation and helped facilitate long-term planning.

KENTUCKY READING ACADEMIES CONNECTION TO MTSS**1 Equitable Access and Opportunity**

The Kentucky Reading Academies provide Kentucky educators with intentional and ongoing professional learning in evidence-based literacy instruction as well as coaching opportunities with the goal of helping teachers assess, explore, and expand their instructional practices to support literacy development for all K-5 students. Preliminary results from the 2022-23 school year demonstrated incremental student progress from those who participated in the LETRS training.

2 Tiered Delivery System with a Continuum of Supports

The Kentucky Reading Academies enable educators to provide high-quality literacy instruction at a universal level, or Tier 1 level through LETRS professional learning, which supports teachers' implementation of the fundamentals of literacy instruction. Observed teachers demonstrated strong pedagogy at the Tier 1 level for some areas of literacy (e.g., grapheme-phoneme correspondence). This has implications for equipping educators with the knowledge on how to best support students not yet meeting proficiency through targeted literacy instruction at Tiers 2 and 3.

3 Collaborative Problem-Solving Teams

Knowledge gained from the Kentucky Reading Academies is best supported using a systematic approach that enables school and district staff to participate in vertical and/or horizontal professional learning communities with time built in for reflection. In fact, administrative or district support was found to strengthen the number of participants, improve the quality of participation in the Kentucky Reading Academies, and create a positive environment for implementation.

4 Data-Based Decision-Making with Comprehensive Screening & Assessment

Educators and administrators trained via the Kentucky Reading Academies utilized universal screeners and diagnostic assessments to determine student literacy proficiency levels and apply content and skills learned from LETRS training to make data-driven decisions on how to support literacy growth for Kentucky students. Assessment data enabled teachers and interventionists to provide more tailored instruction and customized intervention to struggling students.

5 Evidence Based Instruction, Intervention, and Supports

Phonics, decoding, and phonemic awareness were the most cited areas of LETRS implementation - all components of evidence-based instruction rooted in the science of reading. Most teachers reported intentionally integrating strategies they learned from LETRS into their classroom practices, with many participants even indicating that they found implementation to be generally easy.


























































6 Family, School, and Community Partnerships

The Kentucky Reading Academies support school, district, and statewide partnerships by offering networking opportunities for educators during the synchronous LETRS webinars. Educators revealed that when they participated with colleagues in LETRS training, this led to successful implementation of the newly learned evidence-based strategies and also facilitated long-term planning.

How LETRS content connects to KyMTSS elements

 LETRS for Educators (Units 1-8)

 LETRS for Administrators (Units 1-5)

KyMTSS Elements	LETRS Unit 1	LETRS Unit 2	LETRS Unit 3	LETRS Unit 4	LETRS Unit 5	LETRS Unit 6	LETRS Unit 7	LETRS Unit 8
Equitable Access & Opportunity								
						Not Applicable		
Tiered Delivery System with a Continuum of Supports								
						Not Applicable		
Collaborative Problem-Solving Teams								
						Not Applicable		
Data-Based Decision-Making with Comprehensive Screening & Assessment								
						Not Applicable		
Evidence-Based Instruction, Intervention, and Supports								
						Not Applicable		
Family, School, and Community Partnerships								
						Not Applicable		

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