



Board Meeting: 10.7.24

Title: PreK- 12 Comprehensive Literacy Plan & the Science of Reading Professional Development (LETRS, OL&LA) Update

Type: Discussion

Presenter(S): Jody De St. Hubert, Director of Teaching and Learning; Bethany Van Osdel, Assistant Director of Teaching and Learning, Sandra Harley, Elementary Literacy Coach and internal LETRS trainer

Description: The Edina Public School Board approved the PreK-12 Comprehensive Literacy Plan in the Spring of 2021. This report is an update on the overall progress of the PreK-12 implementation of the plan to date. While there are many aspects to the Comprehensive Literacy Plan, this report will highlight the Science of Reading professional development in:

- **LETRS:** Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (Lexia) professional development initiative.
- **OL&LA:** Online Language and Literacy Academy – Consortium on Reaching Excellence in Education (CORE)

Recommendation: There is no recommendation at this time.

Desired Outcomes for the Board: Review in detail, have questions prepared, and provide feedback on the content provided.

Background Materials:

[Comprehensive Literacy Plan - PreK-5](#)

[Comprehensive Literacy Plan - 6-12](#)

[Presentation](#)

Overview:

The Edina PreK-12 Literacy Plan has been developed in response to the Edina Public Schools 2020-2030 Strategic Plan’s call to review, develop, and implement a continuous improvement plan for literacy, readiness, and rigor for all.

This report will provide the following:

1. An overview of progress as it relates to the Stages of Implementation Science
2. An update on each key component/goal area for PreK, elementary and secondary schools
3. An in-depth look at the the Science of Reading Professional Development (LETRS and OL&LA)
4. Student outcome data as it relates to progress and performance in literacy from 2019-2024.

Implementation Timeline:

The Comprehensive Literacy Plan is being implemented through a Stage Based Approach as it is defined by Implementation Science. In this approach, there are 4 main stages that outline the journey to the goal of full implementation. There is not a defined amount of time spent in each stage. The goal is to complete the steps in each stage. The progress of the Comprehensive Literacy Plan, as it aligns to the stages, is outlined below:

Exploration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Define current reality ● Unpack standards ● Research best practices ● Select and define the practice/program
Installation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The program/practice has been identified and defined ● Professional Development and coaching are used to prepare for the implementation ● Resources are purchased ● Data systems are prepared
Initial Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Educators begin using the program/practice ● Data is collected around both implementation and student outcomes ● Adjustments and alignments
Full Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● More than 50% of educators are using the program/practice as intended ● Student outcome data is showing improved outcomes

	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
PreK	<i>PreK-Grade 5 Comprehensive Literacy Plan approved by the Edina School Board in June of 2021</i>	<p style="background-color: #d9ead3;">Exploration:</p> Tier 1 Curriculum	<p style="background-color: #d9ead3;">Installation</p> Tier 1 Curriculum (Creative Curriculum)	<p style="background-color: #d9ead3;">Early Implementation</p> Tier 1 Curriculum (Creative Curriculum)	<p style="background-color: #d9ead3;">Full Implementation</p> Tier 1 Curriculum (Creative Curriculum)
		<p style="background-color: #d9ead3;">Exploration:</p> Science of Reading (LETRS, OL&LA) PD began	<p style="background-color: #d9ead3;">Installation</p> Science of Reading Professional Development (LETRS, OL&LA) PD	<p style="background-color: #d9ead3;">Early Implementation</p> Science of Reading Professional Development (LETRS, OL&LA) PD	<p style="background-color: #d9ead3;">Early Implementation</p> Science of Reading Professional Development (LETRS, OL&LA), OL&LA)

				38 staff fully trained in both volume 1 and volume 2	<p>PD</p> <p>Approximately 15 enrolled and continue the learning</p> <p>Liz Denn enrolled in facilitator training</p>
K-5	<i>PreK-Grade 5 Comprehensive Literacy Plan approved by the Edina School Board in June of 2021</i>	<p>Exploration Tier 1 Curriculum</p> <p>Exploration: Science of Reading Professional Development (LETRS, OL&LA) PD Kindergarten and 1st grade and intervention teachers</p> <p>Exploration MTSS Screening, Progress Monitoring and Intervention Support</p>	<p>Exploration Tier 1 Curriculum</p> <p>Installation Science of Reading Professional Development (LETRS, OL&LA) PD Added 2nd grade, Special Education and EL staff</p> <p>Installation FASTBridge Screening, Progress Monitoring and Intervention Support</p>	<p>Exploration Tier 1 Curriculum</p> <p>Early Implementation Science of Reading Professional Development (LETRS, OL&LA) PD Added 3rd grade and ASPIRE for grades 4-8 Internal facilitators trained: Sandra Harley, Alyssa Barnes and Sue Johnson</p> <p>Early Implementation FASTBridge Screening, Progress Monitoring and Intervention Support</p>	<p>Installation Tier 1 Curriculum Benchmark Advance</p> <p>Early Implementation Science of Reading Professional Development (LETRS, OL&LA) PD</p> <p>To date: 38 teachers fully trained 145 teachers trained in Units 1-4 All staff identified in READ Act Phase 1 are on pace to complete training as required. 3 internal facilitators</p> <p>Spanish Dual Language begins OL&LA</p> <p>Full Implementation FASTBridge Screening, Progress Monitoring and Intervention Support</p>

(Eaker & Keating, 2009). Professional development involves systematic, sustainable, and positive changes in the practices of teachers and leaders.

- **Collaborative Leadership:** District and Site Leadership will collaborate to align the PreK-12 Comprehensive Literacy Plan, the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) processes and ensure successful implementation of the PreK-12 Comprehensive Literacy Plan.
- **Community Partnerships:** Edina Leadership and School Board will create communication pathways for parents, caregivers, and community members to understand the goals and action steps of the PreK-12 Comprehensive Literacy Plan and provide periodic feedback.

Year-to-date Updates

Academic Excellence:	
Pre-K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Instructional fidelity checklists have been shared with staff, ongoing goal setting and reflection meetings scheduled with every classroom teacher at the ELC and the literacy coach. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fidelity focus for 23-24 SY: GOLD Assessment (fall), teacher/child relationships (winter), and structure (spring)
Elementary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Literacy Lead Team has developed commitments for each grade level. The commitments are an intentional alignment between the Science of Reading professional development and district resources to ensure implementation integrity. ● Edina’s Tier 1 Commitments are linked here. ● In July of 2024 the Literacy Lead Team unanimously recommended Benchmark Advance for adoption. This is a Tier 1, comprehensive curriculum that received an “All Green” rating from EdReports. Learn more here. The Literacy Lead Team will implement in 2024-2025 and upon approval from the school board all staff will implement the program in 2025-2026. ● Literacy coaches are providing consistent, intentional and aligned facilitation of Professional Learning Communities at all sites.
Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● After a 3 year review, the Middle School ELA Lead Team unanimously recommended the adoption of StudySync curriculum for ELA enriched and ELA Standard course instruction. ● The Edina School Board approved the adoption of StudySync in the spring of 2024. ● All Middle School ELA teachers are implementing this curriculum beginning this year (24-25). ● The Middle School ELA Lead Team has developed commitments for the implementation of StudySync. The commitments are intentionally designed to ensure implementation integrity. Edina’s StudySync Commitments are linked here.

MTSS:	
Pre-K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Early Learning Center is focused on the continued implementation of the new Tier 1 literacy curricula, Creative Curriculum. Staff are in the second year of implementation. ● TS Gold is the Universal Assessment used as a measure for both proficiency and progress along the way. Student progress is captured in checkpoint assessments each fall, winter and spring. ● The staff will also engage in continued teaming with Pyramid implementation. Pyramid is the name used to describe the framework developed by the Center on the Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL).

Elementary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tier 1 instructional elements that are aligned to LETRS and ASPIRE have been defined. The literacy coaches are working alongside teachers on a collaboration model that is consistent at all 6 elementary sites. • Through the use of the FASTBridge Universal Screener, interventions are being identified and implemented in all sites. • Progress monitoring will occur starting in October for all students who are receiving an intervention. This will allow teachers to ensure instruction is impacting students as intended
Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the use of the FASTBridge Universal Screener, interventions are being identified and implemented in all sites. • Progress monitoring will occur starting in October for all students who are receiving an intervention. This will allow teachers to ensure instruction is impacting students as intended • In grades 6-8, FASTBridge interventions are being implemented to support students who fall below benchmark. • A systematic and explicit intervention is being implemented in the College Reading Readiness Courses in grades 9-10 at Edina High School.

Goal 3: Purposeful Assessment and Data Systems

Pre-K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Strategies GOLD is used in the Early Learning Center as part of the purposeful assessment system. This is an authentic, ongoing observational system for assessing children from birth through kindergarten. It helps teachers to observe children in the context of everyday experiences, which is an effective way to learn what they know and can do. • preLAS Early Learning Language Assessment will be used in the Early Learning Center as part of the purposeful assessment system. This is an ongoing system for assessing English language acquisition for children ages 3-5 and will be given each fall and spring. Families will be notified about assessment and results will be shared. The preLAS will help staff identify and prioritize language needs, document growth in language acquisition and bring additional data to any upcoming evaluation process. • PELI (Preschool Early Literacy Indicators) is used in the Early Learning Center as part of the purposeful assessment system. This is administered each fall, winter and spring to two of our full-day preK classrooms as part of our work with the Early Learning Corps. It is a universal screener used to identify students that are eligible to receive Tier 2 (small group) or Tier 3 (1:1) support through intervention/tutoring. • The literacy coach provides intentional, job-embedded professional development to staff.
Elementary And Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FASTBRidge is the district-wide tool used for Universal Screening. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Just under 7,000 students have been screened with the FASTBridge Universal Screener this fall. ○ As part of a systematic Multi-Tiered System of Support, Edina Public Schools is committed to ensuring all students are screened 3x per year. This screening process allows educators to identify student and classwide needs. ○ The data is being used at ALL sites to adjust instruction in response to the data. • Diagnostics are being administered on students who score below benchmark in certain areas of the FASTBridge screener. There are diagnostics that align with FASTBridge interventions and also diagnostics that come from the LETRS learning platform. The diagnostics focus on identifying gaps in phonemic awareness and phonics.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress monitoring data is also being collected and will be used to drive instructional decisions for students. This data will be discussed by teams with the intention of ensuring all students are making progress towards benchmark goals. • Literacy coaches provide intentional, job-embedded professional development to staff.
--	---

Goal 4: Professional Excellence:

Pre-K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The professional development in the Early Learning Center is focused on the implementation of the new curriculum adoption: Creative Curriculum. This includes whole group professional development and 1:1 coaching with Liz Denn, the ELC Literacy Coach. • The Early Learning Center is also maintaining and sustaining the use of the Pyramid model. There is an intentional overlap between Creative Curriculum and Pyramid in our fidelity work with both resources. • This year’s LETRS cohort consists of 8 staff. The cohort will be facilitated by the Early Learning Literacy Coach and all will complete 20 hours of coursework outside of the work day including online training modules and in-person cohort meetings. As of 2023, there are 22 ELC staff members enrolled in LETRS. • Ongoing training is offered to support implementation of Heggerty with the 3s and 4s classrooms for the 24-25 SY • Staff were trained during workshop week in the preLAS (English language proficiency assessment for early learners). This assessment will be given each fall and spring.
-------	--

Elementary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 38 teachers have completed LETRS training! • There are currently over 200 staff members enrolled in LETRS. LETRS is a professional learning course that provides educators and administrators with deep knowledge to be literacy and language experts in the science of reading. <i>The Science of Reading Professional Development</i> teaches the skills needed to master the fundamentals of reading instruction—phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, writing, and language. 10 district administrators have also taken the LETRS Course for Administrators. This includes principals, coaches and Teaching and Learning Director and Assistant Director. • ASPIRE is the intermediate extension of theLETRS learning platform. It consists of 23 courses that each contain approximately 1 hour of Professional Learning and a Bridge to Application. ASPIRE was started pre-READ Act. It is currently being implemented in alignment with the Edina Early Learning - 12 CLP. At this time the Phase 2 READ Act PD has not been determined. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Edina currently has 85 staff members who took ASPIRE PD. ○ Edina staff completed at least 6 hours of ASPIRE PD in 2023-2024 which is what was asked as an Edina requirement. ○ 26 staff members opted to complete more than 20 hours of professional development! • 1:1 coaching is also part of the professional excellence in Edina Public Schools. Each literacy coach has 3 buildings to support. The literacy coaches are in classrooms observing instruction, providing feedback, guiding data conversations, modeling instruction and much more. The goal of the literacy coach program is to ensure that the professional development experienced by our staff produces aggressive growth for our students.
------------	---

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● K-2 staff participated in professional learning that aligned the Science of Reading Professional Development to our current resources. ● K-5 classroom teachers engage in monthly Professional Learning Communities facilitated by the literacy coaches that specifically develop the Science of Reading Professional Development aligned instruction. <i>This facilitation is consistent across all 6 schools and all 6 grade levels.</i>
Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Intentional coaching support and intervention planning with the secondary reading leads is occurring in 2024-2025. The leads are Sarah Burgess (EHS), Katie Higgins (VV) and Rosie Rink (SVMS). Bethany Van Osdel is meeting with the reading leads in 1:1s 2x per month to support data literacy and implementation in the secondary sites. 1x per month, the middle school coaches will join the elementary coaches in a vertical meeting. ● FASTBridge implementation and use is a key topic for professional development for Edina secondary schools. Through large group and small group sessions, the teams learn more about the “what, why and how” of the FASTBridge assessment system. This includes setting up progress monitoring and designing structures for administering the interventions. ● Secondary staff required to engage in the Science of Reading Professional Development approved in Phase 1 of the READ Act include 6-12 Special Education and Intervention staff responsible for reading instruction. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 36 6-12 Special Education Teachers are participating in LETRS ○ 1 6-12 Reading Intervention Teacher is participating in LETRS ○ 4 6-12 Reading Intervention Teachers are participating in OL&LA ● ASPIRE is the intermediate extension of the Science of Reading Professional Development learning platform. It consists of 23 courses that each contain approximately 1 hour of Professional Learning and a Bridge to Application. Middle School ELA teachers took 6 required by Edina hours of ASPIRE PD in 2024-2025. All 6-12 staff participated in ASPIRE PD to target explicit vocabulary instruction. ASPIRE was started pre-READ Act. It is currently being implemented in alignment with the Edina Early Learning - 12 CLP. At this time the Phase 2 READ Act PD has not been determined.

Goal 5: Collaborative Leadership	
Pre-K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Early Learning Center has a Literacy Leadership Team representative of the staff. Members for 2024-2025 are: Kim Isley (Assistant Director of Early Childhood), Brittany Armstrong (preK teacher), April Johnson (preK teacher), Justyne Smith (early preK teacher), Kate Strand (Special educator), Pam Muss (Speech), and Liz Denn (Early Learning Literacy Coach). This team provides leadership and has adopted a sustainability plan to guide the work. LLT Site Goals for the 24-25 SY: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support implementation of fall, winter and spring fidelity checks for Creative Curriculum with returning classroom teachers ○ Support 24-25 LETRS cohort training ○ Support continued implementation of sound walls in EC classrooms ○ Support continued embedding of Early Learning Corps, PELI and EMI assessments into preK classrooms served by Early Learning Corps ○ Continued implementation of Heggerty resources for early preschool classrooms (3s) and preK classrooms (4s) to enhance phonemic awareness skills and better bridge to the elementary

	sites.
Elementary	<p>The Edina Literacy Leadership Team consists of 2-3 teachers and/or administrators from each site. There is representation from the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All grade levels K-5 ○ Special Education ○ ML ○ Media ○ Immersion ○ Principals and deans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The purpose of the team is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ build collective ownership as we advance the implementation of the PreK-5 Comprehensive Literacy Plan ○ strengthen and support Site Based Leadership with advancing and implementing the PreK-5 Comprehensive Literacy Plan ○ ensure alignment among developing district systems to build equity and sustainability including: Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), Social Emotional Learning (SEL), Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), and Professional Development (PD) Systems, and the PreK-12 Comprehensive Literacy Plan (CLP). ○ Role description linked here.
Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● At the secondary level, there is a Curriculum Design Team that consists of 2-3 teachers from each site. A design team is a group of representatives who serve to guide and inform district decisions. ● The design team is now functioning as an “implementation team”. An implementation team is critical in informing and supporting the implementation of any new initiative. The team will meet monthly to review implementation data, share feedback and discuss needs for professional development as we move forward. ● Role description linked here.

Goal 6: Community Partnerships

Pre-K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ECFE staff will offer a family literacy class for the 24-25 school year to support language and literacy with our multilingual families and students. As part of this program, families will meet with family educators and also have an opportunity to take part in an English acquisition class for adults. ● EPS ML staff will use the preLAS to screen all incoming VPK and ECSE ML students as identified through the MN Language Survey per MDE requirements. ● The ELC Outreach Supervisor will offer outreach events planned throughout the 24-25 school year. Events include pop-up ECFE story times at the local library, tabling at community events, and having ECFE playdates at local sites 2-3 times each month. ● The ELC MLLT (multilingual leadership team) will meet monthly to focus on finding ways to better serve our ML students and families at the ELC and will serve as a liaison with our Director of MLL programming
Elementary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In 2023-2024 each elementary site held a Science of Reading Night to inform

	<p>families on how Edina is responding with excellence to the MN READ Act. Teachers, principals, coaches, Teaching and Learning and the Edina Education Fund worked in partnership to present information, respond to questions and celebrate the progress of Edina’s literacy work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In January of 2024 a Science of Reading Community Night was held to tell our Edina literacy story. District leaders, coaches and principals partnered with the Edina Education Fund to present the information. ● The literacy coaches work regularly and intentionally with families and teachers around the next steps for students that reveal markers of Dyslexia in the classroom.
Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In January of 2024 a Science of Reading Community Night was held to educate our community by telling our Edina literacy story. District leaders, coaches and principals partnered with the Edina Education Fund to present the information.

The Science of Reading Professional Development

- Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS)
- OL&LA: Online Language and Literacy Academy – Consortium on Reaching Excellence in Education (CORE)

Minnesota Reading to Ensure Academic Development Act, known as the READ Act, was passed and signed into law by Governor Tim Walz on May 24, 2023. The goal of this legislation is to have every Minnesota child reading at or above grade level every year, beginning in kindergarten, and to support multilingual learners and students receiving special education services in achieving their individualized reading goals in order to meet grade level proficiency. The READ Act replaces Read Well by Third Grade (RWBTG) and is in effect as of July 1, 2023.

Beginning July 1, 2024, each district and charter school must provide teachers and instructional support staff with responsibility for teaching reading with training on evidence-based reading instruction that is approved by the Department of Education. (Minnesota Department of Education, n.d.)

In accordance with MDE and the READ ACT, there are 2 phases in which districts move forward with professional development on the Science of Reading:

Professional development for Phase 1 educators* (completed by July 1, 2026):

- Participate in one of the MDE approved programs
- Submit certificate of completion with a passing score of 80% to district or charter school

Professional development requirements for Phase 2 educators (completed by July 1, 2027):**

Registration for Phase 2 educators will occur February–October, 2025.

- Professional development options have not yet been approved. *Details coming this fall.*

Phase 1 of the READ Act approved 3 professional development platforms for districts to choose from:

CAREIALL: Advancing Language and Literacy – Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI University of Minnesota)

OL&LA: Online Language and Literacy Academy – Consortium on Reaching Excellence in Education (CORE)

LETRS: Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (Lexia)

After piloting both the LETRS and OL&LA, there was an intentional plan put in place for each platform.

Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) is a rigorous professional development program grounded in the science of reading. It consists of 8 units, each focusing on key pillars of reading instruction such as phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Each unit requires approximately 18 hours of study, totaling approximately 144 hours upon completion. This comprehensive training equips educators with a deep understanding of how the brain learns to read, enabling them to implement evidence-based reading practices effectively in their classrooms.

This platform was selected for K-3 classroom teachers, elementary and secondary Special Education teachers, interventionists, EL teachers and administrators (principals, coaches, Teaching and Learning Director and Assistant Director).

OL&LA (Online Language and Literacy Academy), developed by the Consortium on Reaching Excellence in Education (CORE), is a professional development program focused on improving literacy instruction. It also provides educators with evidence-based strategies aligned with the Science of Reading, emphasizing both orthographic learning (how students recognize and remember words) and linguistic awareness (understanding language structures like sounds and word parts). CORE is a more condensed platform that preserves and prioritizes critical Science of Reading research. The program is approximately 50 hours of professional learning, delivered online for accessible, ongoing educator training.

OL&LA professional learning has been selected for the Spanish Dual Language teachers and the secondary intervention staff identified in Phase 1 of the READ Act:

- OL&LA is particularly beneficial for Spanish dual language teachers because it provides instructional strategies grounded in the Science of Reading that can be applied to both English and Spanish literacy instruction. The program emphasizes linguistic awareness, helping teachers better understand how language structures—like phonology, morphology, and syntax—function in both languages. This is crucial for guiding students in transferring literacy skills across languages.
- Secondary teachers often face students with diverse literacy needs, including struggling readers who lack foundational skills. OL&LA equips educators with evidence-based strategies from the Science of Reading to support adolescent literacy development, improve comprehension of complex texts, and enhance vocabulary skills.

Over the past five years, the focus of implementation in the Science of Reading professional development has been through Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS). This has been transformative for Edina’s Early Learning Center and Elementary schools. This initiative has significantly enhanced the instructional practices of our educators and positively impacted student literacy outcomes. The alignment of the LETRS with the Edina Public Schools (EPS) Strategic Plan and the Minnesota Reading to Ensure Academic Development (READ) Act showcases the district's commitment to providing high-quality literacy education.

The remainder of this report will outline the work accomplished through the LETRS professional development platform, its alignment with district goals, and the subsequent benefits for both staff and students.

LETRS: Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (Lexia)

In 2020, the first of many Edina cohorts enrolled in LETRS through an early cohort at the Minnesota Department of Education. This cohort completed their LETRS training in 2023. Since then, there have been several cohorts of teachers added to the the LETRS platform each year in alignment with the READ Act Phase 1 of Professional Development:

- There are currently 38 Edina teachers fully trained in LETRS.
- There are over 200 still enrolled in Early Learning - 12. 6-12 Special Education and Intervention teachers and new teachers (or new to position teachers) in early learning and elementary are beginning volume 1, while all other teachers have started volume 2.

- By the summer of 2025, all current Early Learning - 3 staff members but new or new to position teachers (including Special Education teachers, English Language teachers, district administrators, coaches and Teaching and Learning staff) will have completed LETRS. New or new to position teachers defined in Phase 1 will complete LETRS by the summer of 2026.

Student Outcome Data

Since starting LETRS, (2021 Spring to 2024 Spring) there has been:

- ❖ **An 8% increase** in FASTBRidge earlyReading proficiency in grades K-1.
- ❖ **An 11% increase** in FASTBridge earlyReading proficiency for students receiving English Language services in grades K-1.
- ❖ **A 22% increase** in FASTBridge earlyReading proficiency for students receiving Special Education services in grades K-1.
- ❖ **A 6% increase** in FASTBRidge R-CBM (fluency) proficiency in grades 2-3.
- ❖ **A 4% increase** in FASTBridge R-CBM (fluency) proficiency for students receiving English Language services in grades 2-3.
- ❖ **An 8% increase** in FASTBridge R-CBM (fluency) proficiency for students receiving Special Education services in grades 2-3.

Implementing with Impact

LETRS is an educational platform for teachers. The content in and of itself is *not* transformative. The act of *applying* the content is transformative. Since 2020, there have been key players that have ensured that LETRS learning lands on students, including parent and community stakeholders. The literacy coach position was installed in Edina during the 2020-21 school year. Since then, the program has been strengthened and refined to ensure that staff receive job embedded, differentiated, action/results-oriented professional learning.

The coaching model is based largely on Elena Aguilar's definition of coaching:

Aguilar defines coaching as a partnership where a coach and teacher collaborate to improve teaching practices through dialogue, reflection, and action. It is a cyclical process that involves analyzing data, setting goals, observing practice, offering feedback, and fostering self-efficacy in teachers, all with the ultimate aim of enhancing student learning and achievement. Sustained coaching efforts, coupled with intentional focus on equity and relationships, create lasting, meaningful impacts on both teachers and students. Aguilar, E. (2013). *The art of coaching: Effective strategies for school transformation*. Jossey-Bass.

The literacy coach model in Edina truly defines excellence in the state of Minnesota. The team was one of only a handful of districts invited to present at a statewide conference in June of 2024 (MN COMPASS Summer Institute). The team presented the Edina K-12 coaching model to an audience of leaders in education from across the state.

Instructional Impact

“LETRS training created common, research-based tools, strategies, and language to effectively teach literacy across all tiers of instruction. Because students are using the same strategies, with every teacher, across all grades, they are more efficient in applying the strategy to new material and feel confident that they know what to do when they get stuck.”

Laura Hanson
M.Ed²– Reading and Math Learning Specialist
Normandale Elementary

As teachers become more knowledgeable about how the brain learns to read through professional development on LETRS, instruction is shifting. The biggest shifts have taken place around the pillars of reading instruction:

Pre-Kindergarten	
Pillar	Instructional Shift
Alphabet Awareness	<p>A shift to more visible literacy: With the new learning and new materials, teachers are embedding direct instruction into the classroom through new Creative Curriculum materials. Literacy is more visible in the classrooms and hallways at the ELC. Walking through the halls, one will see charts, name charts, sound/letter cards, etc. more than ever before. This aspect of early literacy was certainly strong before the LETRS at the ELC, and it is more prevalent than ever.</p>
Oral Language	<p>A shift to stronger oral language instruction: Oral language is the foundation of literacy and academic success. There has been a much stronger focus on broadening language and vocabulary through Creative Curriculum daily routines. Through the LETRS training, ELC staff have had an opportunity to delve into the language-stimulation strategies to better develop students' oral language skills. Specific application examples have centered around using recasts and expansions to broader expression language skills.</p> <p>A shift to a direct link to text: A more direct link to text for students is more intentional than it was in the past. Teachers are using authentic texts to ground discussions and sharing more often since LETRS learning.</p>
Phonemic Awareness	<p>A shift to systematic and explicit phonemic awareness instruction: Teachers are now <i>systematically</i> and <i>explicitly</i> teaching phonemes and sound awareness using the Heggerty program. With this increased focus on phonemic awareness, students are making the transition from speech to print in a more organic, natural way.</p>

Elementary	
Pillar	Instructional Shift
Phonemic Awareness:	<p>A shift to phonemes: Before LETRS, teachers were teaching the 26 letter names and sounds. Now, because of professional learning in LETRS, teachers have shifted to teaching 44 phonemes. This instruction is both systematic and explicitly using evidence-based instruction materials (Heggerty, Benchmark Advance).</p> <p>A shift to multisensory instruction: LETRS research in the science of reading also indicates that multisensory instruction, which engages multiple senses like sight, sound, and touch simultaneously, can significantly benefit reading acquisition, particularly for foundational skills like phonemic awareness and decoding, by creating stronger neural connections in the brain and providing multiple pathways for learning; this is especially helpful for students with learning difficulties like dyslexia, although the effectiveness can vary depending on the specific implementation and student needs. Because of this research, teachers are integrating more sensory components into their instruction. Using manipulatives and strategies such as sandpaper, magna tiles, pointers, air</p>

	tracing, etc. during literacy instruction are more prevalent in classrooms now. Teachers in grades K-2 are also using sound walls to focus on making sounds tangible.
Phonics:	<p>A shift to systematic and explicit phonics instruction: Explicit - not incidental - phonics instruction is now stronger in elementary classrooms. The instruction is tightly aligned to evidence-based materials that have systematic scope and sequences.</p> <p>A shift to more purposeful formative assessments: Teachers are also using assessments more intentionally with phonics instruction. Periodic mastery checks are crucial because teachers have learned that kids can't be pushed through skill lessons until they master the skills.</p> <p>A shift from leveled readers to decodable text: Decodable texts focus on phonics and help students build their reading confidence by breaking down the code of words. Decodable texts are written with a focus on specific phonetic patterns and word families, and they use specific sound-letter relationships throughout the text. K-2 classrooms have added decodable books and passages to classroom libraries. Teachers are also prioritizing time for students to practice decodable reading.</p> <p>A shift AWAY from memorizing sight words: Before LETRS, it was common practice to encourage students to memorize irregular words. Now, teachers are learning more about the importance of orthographic mapping. Orthographic mapping is a mental process that helps people store words in their memory by connecting their pronunciation, spelling, and meaning. - mapping orthographically. Instead of encouraging students to memorize irregular, sight words, teachers are teaching strategies to allow for orthographic mapping by providing them with phonics rules and teaching them to use those rules to decode new words.</p>
Fluency:	<p>A shift to orchestrated fluency instruction: Fluency combines accuracy, speed, and prosody (expression) when reading text. Fluent readers can read accurately, quickly, and with appropriate phrasing, enabling them to better understand what they are reading. Teachers have understood the importance of fluency, however, now through LETRS learning and FASTBRidge assessments and interventions, teachers are deliberately building in daily opportunities for students to practice fluency. Teachers are not only providing time for practice, but are now more intentionally practicing fluency at the letter, word, phrase and text level.</p>

The LETRS initiative has brought a powerful transformation to our district, fostering uniformity of understanding among teachers with a shared focus, language, and approach to literacy instruction.

- ❖ Consistent practices are now more evident than ever in classrooms, with clear expectations around interventions and literacy implementation. This mindset shift has redefined how we approach instruction, rooted in a deeper understanding of how the brain learns to read and write.
- ❖ Early intervention has become a priority, with schools utilizing assessment days to implement supports sooner than ever before.
- ❖ Accountability is shared by all, from district to site staff, with a strong emphasis on data-driven practices to inform instruction and interventions.
- ❖ Connections and conversations with families are now more meaningful, rooted in data and a deeper understanding of each student's needs.

The opportunity to learn and grow through the LETRS platform has been a significant commitment across the Edina school district and community, and it is one that is already yielding tremendous benefits in student growth and achievement. As a district of excellence, Edina continues to shine, and this initiative is another example of how we lead in providing the highest quality education for our students. With a deeper understanding of literacy instruction for all, early interventions, and data-driven practices, we are ensuring every student has the support they need to succeed.

Resource Allocation

Ensuring proper resource allocation is a major component of the commitment to the Science of Reading professional development in Edina. Teaching and Learning professional development resources have been focused on the Science of Reading over the last three years and will continue to be focused on this topic for the 2024-25 and 2025-26 school years. In 2021-22 ESSER dollars were used in addition to the Teaching and Learning professional development budget and in 2021-to date our community has provided an immense amount of financial support through the targeted efforts led by Ed Fund. From 2021 to the 2023-24 school year the Science of Reading expenses fell into the following categories:

- Compensation for participating staff at the teacher's regular hourly rate of pay (pro rata)
- Substitute teacher expenses to allow teachers to engage in professional development during contract hours as a cohort participation option
- LETRS licenses (to access the professional development content)
- Additional instructional materials, such as Sound Wall resources
- Providing facilitator training to 1 Early Learning and 3 Elementary staff to ensure sustainability.

In the spring of 2024 critical changes to the READ Act legislation provided additional money to districts to support the Science of Reading professional development compensation. The additional money is allocated for LETRS licenses and also for teacher compensation. The total cost for licenses is completely supported by state funding. The total cost for professional development compensation is partially supported by state funding. It is projected that Edina will receive approximately \$300,000 to \$350,000 to be put towards compensation.

Thus in 2024-25 Edina is paying for the Science of Reading professional development and implementation costs using the following sources:

- New state funding directly allocated to districts
- The Teaching and Learning professional development budget
- Ed Fund donations

The legislation changes providing financial resources and intentional Edina sustainability plans have narrowed the current and future expense areas to:

- Compensation for participating staff at the teacher's regular hourly rate of pay (pro rata)
- Additional instructional materials, such as Sound Wall resources for new or new to position teachers
- Additional support costs including substitute costs for uniquely scheduled large group sessions and implementation support staff costs

Approximate costs for 24-25 in these two areas are:

- Compensation = approximately \$800,000.00
- Additional materials = approximately \$7,000.00
- Substitute costs = approximately \$24,000.00
- Implementation support staff costs = approximately \$6,000.00

Approximates are due to the following variables:

- Teacher's have the option to choose time card pay or board credits.
- Teachers' individual need for substitute support varies and is unpredictable based on unique situations. When a substitute is provided, time card pay is adjusted because work is done during the contract day.

This is currently being approved in unique situations and is not an option for all staff. This does not impact substitute costs, as we utilize already existing building substitutes in this situation.

- Teacher rate of pay varies.
- New teacher and new-to position teacher numbers can fluctuate impacting total compensation costs, as well as additional materials costs.
- Additional materials cost vary slightly based on the size of the classroom (intervention and special education classrooms are smaller than a grade level classroom).
- There are and will always be unique relicensure situations, for example a leave of absence may cause a teacher to leave mid-year and return the following year. A relicensure cost occurs when a volume (4 units) is not done within a year of the start date. In our new budget model this is an additional materials cost.

Implementing the Science of Reading professional development is complicated. It takes approximately 10 hours a week (on a typical week) of oversight from our Teaching and Learning Department Specialist to ensure staff have completed their units of training, passed their unit tests at 80% or above, completed Bridge to Practice assignments, are compensated accordingly, and have their questions answered in a responsive and supportive format. In addition to this time, funds have been allocated to a READ Act Phase 1 Specialist (one of our two elementary literacy coaches) in the format of a stipend to be a direct support to staff in their completion and application. It is not unusual for these two staff members to collectively spend 20 to 30 hours a week not only ensuring accountability but more importantly partnership in the learning journey.

It cannot be stated enough that the opportunity to learn and grow through the LETRS platform has been a significant commitment across the Edina school district and community in both time and money, AND it is one that is already yielding tremendous benefits in student growth and achievement.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the community, Edina District Leadership, the Ed Fund and dedicated staff and students for their unwavering support of the LETRS initiative. Together, we are not only maintaining our reputation as a district of excellence but are helping staff and students TRULY reach their full potential and thrive.

Student Outcome Data

FASTBRidge Cohort Data:

*The FASTBRidge assessments were only given consistently in grades K-6 in the spring of 2022. Cohort data (same student data) will be more robust now that the assessment is used universally in fall, winter and spring in grades K-9.

BOLD outline indicates an increase across the years.

	2021 Fall	2022 Fall	2023 Fall	2024 Fall
K	72%	78%	74%	80%
1	63%	59%	68%	61%
2	67%	63%	72%	74%
3	76%	77%	75%	76%
4	73%	69%	82%	80%
5	73%	76%	78%	79%
6	N/A	76%	81%	84%
7	N/A	74%	73%	79%
8	N/A	62%	76%	76%
9	N/A	68%	78%	84%

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments

MCA Cohort Data:

	2022	2023	2024 *Bold outline = cohort increase *Green = 3 year trend increase from 2022
3rd	70.6%	66.9%	67.2%
4th	71.8%	74.1%	73.3%
5th	82%	79.6%	82.1%
6th	77.8%	76.5%	79%
7th	69.4%	70.3%	70.4%
8th	70.1%	68.2%	69.1%
9th	MCA's are not administered in 9th Grade	MCA's are not administered in 9th Grade	MCA's are not administered in 9th Grade
10th	72.7%	85.5%	88.7% *18.6% increase from 8th grade

