

# LETRS Implementation in Kentucky:

## Analysis of Teacher Training and Student Literacy Outcomes

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



Since Fall 2022  
**7,000+**

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



**574**  
schools



**135**  
districts



**2021-2025**

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

## Key Outcome: Significant Growth in “Proficient” Students

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

### More trained teachers = more proficient readers.

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

### Schools with more trained teachers saw stronger growth.

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

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

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

Read the full report at [kyreadingresearch.org/2026LETRSanalysis](https://kyreadingresearch.org/2026LETRSanalysis)



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



Kentucky Department of  
**EDUCATION**

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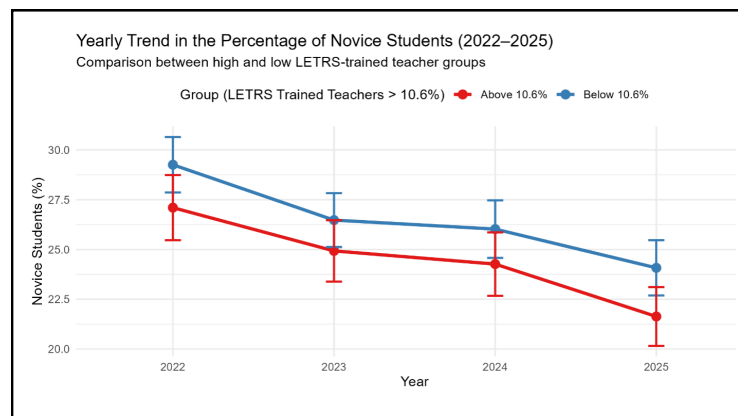
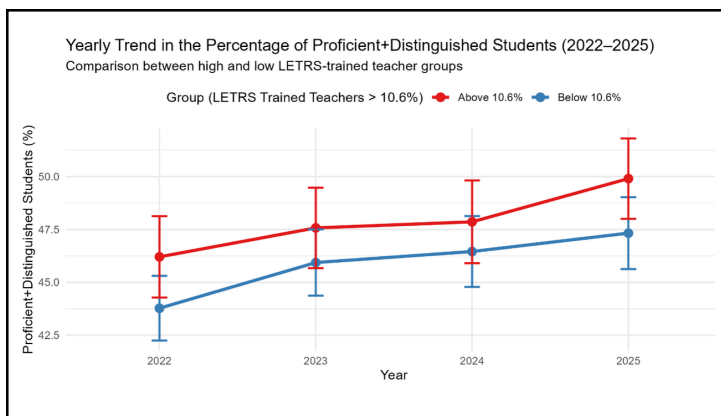
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### Impact on struggling readers

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

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

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



### What this means for Kentucky

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

### Opportunities for future research

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

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

### Recommendations for decision-makers



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



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



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

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