



KANSAS BLUEPRINT FOR LITERACY REPORT

January 2025

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KANSAS BLUEPRINT FOR LITERACY

The purpose of this report is to fulfill the requirements to report on the Kansas Blueprint for Literacy per KSA 74-32,290-296.

Executive Summary

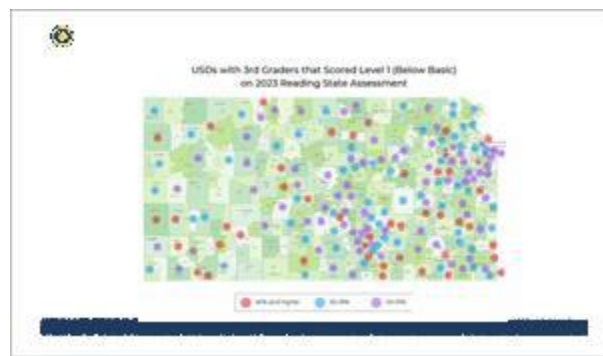
Senate Bill No. 438, AN ACT concerning education; making and concerning appropriations for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, for the state board of regents; establishing the Kansas blueprint for literacy and the literacy advisory committee; directing the state board of regents to appoint a director of literacy education and develop a comprehensive assessment system; requiring the state board of regents and the state board of education to collaborate on a literacy micro-credential and professional development; providing university presidents and deans of education oversight over postsecondary literacy courses; requiring a plan to establish centers of excellence in reading; requiring the state board of education to submit annual reports to the legislature on certain statistics of students who take the statewide assessments.

The Advisory Committee is charged with meeting the following goals:

- 100% of the elementary teacher workforce will be trained in the Science of Reading and Structured Literacy by 2030.
- 50% of all 3rd through 8th graders shall achieve a Level 3 or 4 and 90% of 3rd through 8th graders shall achieve Level 2 on Kansas English language arts assessments.

The Blueprint: A Comprehensive Approach

Kansas is experiencing unprecedented economic growth. At the same time, 33% of Kansas students are struggling with reading proficiency. Teacher vacancies are one of the factors complicating student literacy achievement, with the Kansas Department of Education reporting 1,810 vacancies, including 462 in elementary education. Additionally, the science of how to teach reading has changed from whole language and balanced literacy to Structured Literacy. The Blueprint requires postsecondary educator preparation programs to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to implement Structured Literacy. The principles of Structure Literacy are beneficial and necessary to ensure all children learn to read.



Economic Impact of Literacy

The Barbara Bush Foundation recently reported that low adult literacy rates have cost the U.S. economy \$2.2 trillion. Currently, 54% of US adults, or 130 million people, are reading below the sixth-grade reading level. In Kansas, the issue has led to a \$19.3 billion loss, or 10% of the state's Gross Domestic Product. Addressing literacy must be a top economic priority for both the state and nation. Investing in a comprehensive approach to equipping educators with the skills to

implement Structured Literacy is the most impactful step Kansas can make to support families, bolster businesses, and drive advance prosperity.

Education and Training

The Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) reports that 18,698 educators are currently required to achieve the Seal of Literacy. The seal is given to veteran educators who demonstrate knowledge of the science of reading. Of these educators, there are:

- 12,100 General Education Teachers in Grades 1-6
- 2,401 Special Education Teachers
- 828 Pre-K Teachers
- 1,839 Kindergarten Teachers
- 248 School Psychologists
- 425 Reading Specialists
- 859 Administrators

As of January 10, 2025, a total of 3,208 educators have completed Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS®) training. Additionally, 502 educators have completed LETRS® for early childhood and 8 have completed LETRS® for administrators. There are 8,518 teachers actively enrolled in the training. 481 are enrolled to complete LETRS® in early childhood and 744 are enrolled in LETRS® for administrators.

According to KSDE's reported LETRS® completion and enrollment data, 3,208 educators have completed LETRS®, 502 have completed LETRS Early Childhood, and 8 elementary administrators have completed LETRS® for administrators. This leaves 14,980, or 80%, yet to complete training. Assuming the 9,743 currently enrolled will complete training, 5,237, or 28%, of the elementary educator workforce, are neither enrolled in, nor have completed Structured Literacy training.

The State Board of Education has approved two additional training programs, and three literacy exams as options for educators to demonstrate competence in Structured Literacy. Currently, there is no data available on enrollment or completion rates for these additional training or test options.

K.S.A 74-32,295 (f) charges the postsecondary education institutions to help develop a reading science and structured literacy micro-credential for educators focused on research-based fundamentals of reading instruction. This course, titled "Foundations in the Science of Reading: Equipping Educators with Structured Literacy", is in the final stages of development and shall be available in late spring 2025. Along with the other approved training courses and exams, this course will assist the advisory committee to achieve the goal that 100% of the educator workforce have a micro-credential in the Science of Reading and Structured Literacy by 2030.

Completing training is important to ensuring educators have the knowledge and skills to implement Structured Literacy. On-going professional learning and coaching is necessary to significantly improve literacy outcomes across the state.

Strategic Action of the Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee is engaging in a strategic planning process to closely examine current practices, identify necessary improvements required for pre-service education programs, and address education and training needs to meet the goals of SB 438. The following priority areas are under consideration by the Advisory Committee:

1. Program Accreditation: Explore accreditation by the International Dyslexia Association.
2. Faculty Recommendations: Formulate a recommendation for university and college faculty teaching literacy courses to successfully complete the Knowledge and Practice Examination for Effective Reading Instruction (measures knowledge and practices of Structured Literacy); LETRS Facilitator Training; Certification through the Center of Effective Reading Instruction (CERI).
3. Educator Preparation Program Accreditation: Formulate a recommendation that Educator Preparation Program Accreditation preparation programs incorporate robust field and clinical experiences, focus on teaching struggling readings, including those with dyslexia, and go beyond a standards alignment review.

Progress on Implementation of the Blueprint for Literacy (SB 438)

The Blueprint Advisory Committee held an organization meeting on June 25, 2024, at which time the Committee formed action sub-committees around four pillars of implementation: Educators, Leaders, Research, and Centers. The committee also identified three immediate priorities 1) educator preparation in Structured Literacy; 2) development of a plan to establish the Centers of Excellence in Literacy; 3) build a movement of stakeholders to advance literacy outcomes.

The following actions have been put in place to address the initial priorities:

1. **Design and Implement Science of Reading and Structured Literacy Application Courses** for undergraduate pre-service teachers by August 2024.
 - **Status:** Complete
2. **Designate Structured Literacy as Tier 1 methodology**, prohibit use of discredited methodology (such as 3-cueing), and design comprehensive literacy assessment system to be taught in educator preparation programs.
 - **Status:** Designation completed January 2025. Assessment system review and recommendation committee members appointed by February 1, 2025, with report and recommendations completed by May 1, 2025.
3. **Design and implement Foundations in Structured Literacy Course** for in-service educators.
 - **Status:** Course content complete December 2024; initiate pilot March 2024; Full scale course offered June 2024. Approval by State Board of Education for Seal of Literacy anticipated February 2025
4. **Develop a plan for the Centers of Excellence in Literacy**
 - **Status:** The Plan developed and presented to the Board of Regents, December 2024.
 - **Implementation Timeline**
 - January 2025 – Each university to align plan and detailed 4-year budget.
 - February 2025 – Advisory Committee review of each university plan, makes recommendations to the Director of Literacy
 - March 2025 – Center Directors hired for those authorized
 - August 2025 – Centers begin operation for those authorized
5. **Develop and implement a needs assessment, research, and evaluation plan of Blueprint impact.**
 - **Status:** Evaluation plan approved by Board of Regents November 2024, plan initiated December 2024

6. **Develop and implement a Comprehensive Blueprint Strategic Plan.** The strategic plan is based on a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis, development of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-based) goals; Key Performance Indicators to track progress, and a strategy map to meet all requirements of the Kansas Blueprint.
 - **Status:** Strategic Planning Process began in December 2024.
7. **Build a movement** by cultivating a network of educators, literacy experts, and organizations supporting advancing literacy outcomes.
 - **Status:** In-place with continued effort. Conduct a variety of meetings and presentations to policy organizations, superintendents, school board association, university faculty, and advocacy organizations on economic imperative of literacy and what needs to change in how we prepare teachers.

Implementation Details

K.S.A. 74-32,295 Science of Reading and Structured Literacy Courses and Structured Literacy Courses for Pre-Service Educators

Beginning Fall 2024, the six state universities and Washburn began teaching two courses in the Science of Reading and Structured Literacy for undergraduates in elementary education programs. These courses include a performance assessment utilized across the public universities. Implementation of the applied courses began in August 2024 and will undergo annual review.

K.S.A. 74-32,293 Postsecondary Institution Literacy Practices; Comprehensive Reading and Literacy Assessment System K.S.A. 74-32-293(a) requires postsecondary educational institutions to designate practices based on the science of reading utilizing Structured Literacy as the official tier I literacy methodology, and to prohibit the use of teaching of any discredited methodologies.

Discredited methodologies include the three-cueing system model of teaching students to read based on meaning, structure and syntax, and visual memory or cues, which is also known as "MSV", or related balanced literacy and whole language strategies for teaching word recognition.

Educator Preparation Programs shall instead be based on instruction that prepares teachers to teach reading and language arts using scientifically researched and evidence-based reading instruction, shall be fully aligned with the International Dyslexia Association Knowledge and Practice Standards.

As of January 2025, the public university deans of each college of education have attesting adherence to the requirements of K.S.A. 74-32,290, *et seq.*, for their respective institution, ensuring educator preparation programs and graduate level literacy courses are based on the science of reading and structured literacy, that all discredited practices and methodologies are prohibited and have been removed from the curriculum and instruction, and that the director of literacy has been informed of the designee to participate in the annual systemwide analysis of curriculum maps across all literacy courses.

The Course Alignment Planning Tool (CAPT) for Analyzing and Constructing Courses that Align to Reading Research Version 3.0 will be utilized by the Office of Literacy to annually verify that post-secondary institutions educator preparation programs are based on the science of reading and Structured Literacy. Utilizing the CAPT analysis process, a committee comprised of university

and Office of Literacy appointees (state and national literacy experts) will review and provide a report to the Blueprint Advisory Committee by May 1, 2025, and annually thereafter.

K.S.A. 74-32,293 (D) calls for postsecondary institutions to recommend literacy-specific universal screening measures and diagnostic, formative and summative assessments to the State Board of education.

Also, the recommended literacy screening measures and diagnostic and formative assessments are used in teacher preparation programs. A team of experts in literacy and assessment design are organizing into a taskforce, facilitated by the Office of Literacy, to recommend a comprehensive reading and literacy assessment system. The recommendations will be available on or before May 1, 2025, with the Advisory Committee receiving a full report of the recommendations.

K.S.A. 74-32,294 (b) Develop and Make Available Professional Development Programs and Courses

The Foundations in Science of Reading: Equip Educators in Structure Literacy course content was completed in December 2024. The course was developed by the Regent Universities and Washburn University. The Foundation course is intended for in-service educators, including general education, special education, early childhood teachers, and administrators. The Foundation course is available for graduate credit and a stipend upon successful completion.

The Blueprint provides funding for tuition for the Foundation in the Science of Reading: Equip Educators in Structured Literacy course for Kansas in-service educators. \$1.8 million of the appropriated funding in FY 25 is dedicated to tuition, with \$750,000 dedicated to providing a stipend for successful completion (\$500 per educator) of the course. The annual enrollment projection for the Foundation's course is 1,500 based on 18,559 elementary educators who are required by the State Board of Education to obtain the Seal of Literacy. As of December 2024:

- 3,242 have completed training in LETRS.
- 8,899 are currently enrolled in LETRS.
- Estimated gap of 6,557 in-service elementary educators who have not enrolled in or completed training.
- The initial Blueprint budget estimated 1,500 educators to enroll and complete the Foundations in Structured Literacy course.
- 6,000 educators are projected to complete Foundations in Structured Literacy by 2030.

K.S.A. 74-32,296 Develop a Plan to Establish Regional Centers of Excellence in Literacy

The Advisory Committee utilized a multi-step process over a four-month period to develop a plan to establish seven Centers of Excellence. The Plan was presented by the Director of Literacy to the Kansas Board of Regents on December 18, 2024. The purpose of the Centers is to equip educators with the knowledge and skills in Structured Literacy by providing Structured Literacy courses, on-going professional learning, training, and to provide support to families with assessment and outreach services.

To view The Plan for the Centers of Excellence in Literacy, click [here](#).

Implementation Timeline:

- January 2025: Each university aligns its plan and detailed 4-year budget.
- February 2025: Advisory Committee reviews each university plan and makes recommendations to the Director of Literacy.
- March 2025: Center Directors hired for authorized centers.

- August 2025: Centers begin operation for authorized centers.

Projected Costs and Funding Model:

- FY25: \$2.3 million of the \$10 million allocation for the Blueprint designated for Centers start-up.
- FY26: \$8.7 million recommended for the first full year of operation.
- FY27: \$9.1 million; FY28: \$9.4 million; FY29: \$9.7 million.

The funding model includes dedicated state funding, university contributions, and private funding and grants. Resource allocations consider factors such as the number of educators, literacy achievement levels, population density, poverty, demographics, broadband access, geography, and language differences.

K.S.A. 74-32,291 and K.S.A. 74-32,292 Monitoring Progress and Implementation

The Advisory Committee is specifically charged with monitoring progress, designating best practices, making recommendations, attaining goals, submitting progress reports, and submitting a plan on the establishment of centers of excellence in reading. The Director of Literacy is required to implement and administer the Blueprint. Research and evaluation of Blueprint initiatives is a key aspect of monitoring and implementation.

Design-Based research is one methodology being used to determine the impact of Blueprint initiatives on educator preparation and to advance literacy achievement. This methodology will inform the development, validation, and evaluation of strategies and resources, to include participation in Structured Literacy professional learning and education, the impact of the Centers to support teachers, leaders, and families, and methodology taught in teacher pre- service education.

The Center of Research and Learning has been contracted to complete the 3-year research and evaluation, pending appropriations. The focus areas include 1.) pre-service education effectiveness 2.) in-service educator professional system needs, professional learning, access and utilization of high-quality instructional materials, and system supports 3.) family needs by catchment area; 4) partnerships of current literacy initiatives, services, and resources available to schools; 5) Centers of Excellence in Literacy impact to address the unique needs of the catchment areas.

SB 438 Recognized Literacy as an Economic Imperative

The goals articulated in SB 438, now K.S.A. 74-32,291 are bold and the importance of succeeding cannot be understated. The Blueprint is Kansas’ commitment to engaging all partners needed to support a literacy transformation. The Advisory Committee and staff are committed to building a movement one person, one organization, one idea, one partner at a time. The basis of the Advisory Committee itself is representative with members including legislators, school leadership, board members, business leaders, educators, university faculty, public and independent education associations, parents, and non-profit organizations.

The director and members of the Advisory Committee are engaging school building and district level leadership, school board members, and business leaders. The director is forming partnerships and collaborations with the Kansas Literacy Coalition, The Reading League, Kansas/Missouri chapter of the International Dyslexia Association, The Evidence Advocacy Center, adult education programs, and leaders in the science of reading research and educator preparation across the nation. Outreach efforts will continue to be a priority to ensure the Blueprint

supports and builds a network of collaborators to share expertise resulting in improved literacy outcomes in all regions of Kansas.

K.S.A. 74-32,291 Responsible for Attaining Goals and Monitoring Progress

The Committee recognizes the critical importance of developing a strategic plan to guide implementation of the Blueprint. The strategic plan will serve as a roadmap, facilitating the development of strategic actions, approaches, and overarching goals. The complete strategic planning process is projected to be complete on or before April 1, 2025. Key areas include:

1. Explore Educator Preparation Program Accreditation by the International Dyslexia Association or formulate a recommendation that Educator Preparation Program Accreditation ensures Structured Literacy is the methodology taught in teacher pre-service education, and incorporates robust field experiences, how to teach struggling readers, including those with dyslexia, and go beyond a standards alignment review.
2. Formulate a recommendation for university and college faculty teaching literacy courses to successfully complete the Knowledge and Practice Examination for Effective Reading Instruction (gold standard of applying Structured Literacy;) LETRS Facilitator Training; Certification through the Center of Effective Reading Instruction (CERI.)

Additional areas to address through the strategic plan include:

- Systemwide analysis of course offerings and curriculum to ensure specific courses and clinical experiences in Structured Literacy.
- Identify the literacy education and training needs of school leadership, school psychologist, speech pathologists, special education, English to Second Language Learners, paraprofessionals, early childhood educators, middle and high school teachers.
- Assessment and evaluation support for families with struggling readers
- Identification and strategies to address adult literacy education.
- Identify curriculum based instructional assessments in literacy to be taught in educator preparation programs.
- Establish data collection process and identify priority needs for training of educators, prioritizing high need school districts (40% or more of students reading at Level 1 on Kansas English Language Arts assessment)

Resource Allocation in Alignment with Blueprint Priorities

For fiscal year 2025, the legislature has appropriated \$10 million to the Kansas Board of Regents for the Kansas Blueprint for Literacy. These funds are allocated in accordance with the requirements of SB 438 (K.S.A. 4-32,290) and the established priorities.

Blueprint for Literacy Budget Plan					
	Start Up	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Structured Literacy Education					
Faculty Credential SoR/ Structured Literacy	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,000	\$ --	\$ --	\$ --
Foundations Graduate Course Tuition	1,800,000	2,700,000	2,700,000	2,700,000	2,700,000
Foundations Graduate Stipend	750,000	750,000	750,000	750,000	750,000
Foundation for Paras Course Tuition	37,500	37,500	37,500	37,500	37,500
Foundation for Paras Stipend	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Total - Structured Literacy Education	\$ 2,619,500	\$ 3,519,500	\$ 3,512,500	\$ 3,512,500	\$ 3,512,500
Micro-Credential Development and Design					
Instructional Design	\$ 341,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Course Development	227,003	100,000	100,000	--	--
Total - Micro-Credential Dev't and Design	\$ 568,003	\$ 125,000	\$ 125,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
Program Evaluation					
Design-Based Research Blueprint Impact	\$ 219,623	\$ 196,141	\$ 200,906	\$ --	\$ --
Credential Course Validation/Improvements	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Curriculum Map Literacy Program Review	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Total - Program Evaluation	\$ 249,623	\$ 226,141	\$ 230,906	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
Centers of Excellence in Reading					
Personnel	\$ 1,589,966	\$ 7,622,700	\$ 8,222,529	\$ 8,507,831	\$ 8,804,849
Operating Costs	609,000	598,300	427,749	430,081	432,484
Contract Literacy Partnerships	--	160,000	160,000	160,000	160,000
Catchment Area Weightings	--	320,000	329,600	339,488	349,673
Total - Centers of Excellence	\$ 2,198,966	\$ 8,701,000	\$ 9,139,878	\$ 9,437,400	\$ 9,747,006
Office of Literacy					
Personnel	\$ 387,171	\$ 396,850	\$ 406,771	\$ 416,940	\$ 427,364
Operating Costs	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000
Total - Office of Literacy	\$ 462,171	\$ 471,850	\$ 481,771	\$ 491,940	\$ 502,364
Grand Total	\$ 6,098,263	\$ 13,043,491	\$ 13,490,055	\$ 13,496,840	\$ 13,816,870

Advisory Committee Members

Voting Members:

Dr. Carolyn Carlson
 Rep. Susan Estes
 Regent Regent Diana Mendoza
 Dr. Suzanne Myers
 Dr. Howard Smith

Dr. Laurie Curtis
 Dr. Cynthia Lane
 Martha Mendoza
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 Nick Mancini
 Amber Pagan
 Dr. Randy Watson

Dennis Burke
 Mike Hill
 Susanne Martinez
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Deb Farr
 Dr. David Hurford
 Ed McKechnie
 Judi Price

Please contact the Kansas Board of Regents Office with any questions regarding this program.