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# INFORMED TEACHERS CHANGE LIVES

Teachers are the most important factor in student success.

Informed teachers can explain language to students, including

sounds, spellings, and word meanings that might be

confusing. They use lessons based on reading science and

understand the process of learning to read and write.

Research proves it. Science matters.

- LOUISA MOATS, ED.D.



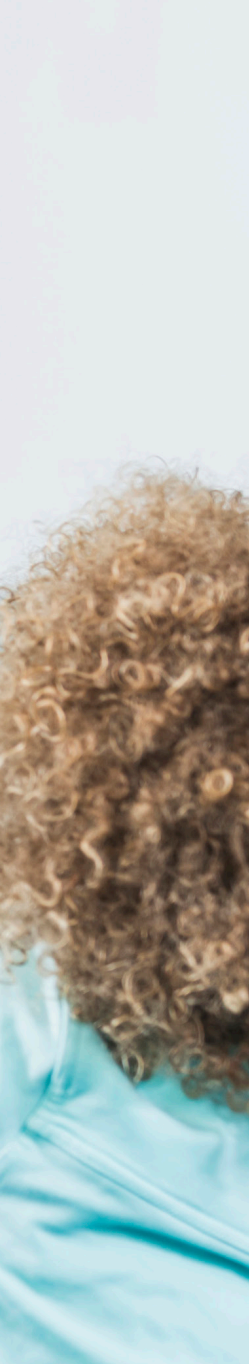
Literacy Professional  
Development





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Why are **only 35%** of U.S. students reading proficiently or better?\*



Teachers are essential to student success than any other aspect of schooling. They, not programs, teach students how to read. Yet a study of most teaching institutions found only 49 percent actually prepare teachers with all five essential components of literacy instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.\*\* Additionally, the 2019 National Assessment of Educational Progress, NAEP, study found 66 percent of U.S. fourth grade students are not proficient readers.

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## Learning to read is complex

Reading requires multiple parts of the brain learning to work together. Teaching reading requires a deep understanding of the science behind how we learn to read, why we spell the way we do, or how phonemic awareness and phonics lead to comprehension, teachers are left feeling ill-prepared. That's why *LETRS*<sup>®</sup> bridges decades of evidenced-based research into classroom success.

*\*nationsreportcard.gov/reading/nation/achievement?grade=4*

*\*\*nctq.org/publications/2020-Teacher-Prep-Review:-Program-Performance-in-Early-Reading-Instruction*

# LETRS Fills in the Gaps in Teacher Preparation

LETRS addresses four critical outcomes for effective literacy instruction: understanding the science of reading, converting research to practice, enhancing teacher effectiveness, and transforming instruction. By understanding the “why” behind science and evidence-based research, educators can effectively know how to aid students in learning to read. LETRS professional learning is relevant and applicable and designed to be the cornerstone of a multiyear, systemic literacy improvement initiative.



## SCIENCE OF READING

Leverages decades of research including the latest neuroscience to help educators identify the source of reading difficulties and how to teach more effectively.



## CONVERTS RESEARCH TO PRACTICE

Evidence-based research and strategies that explain the “why” behind comprehensive literacy instruction, providing explicit instruction about “how” to effectively teach for the best results.



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*“Going through LETRS, you sit there, moment-by-moment, thinking, ‘I should have known this.’ It’s the tool to change lives and change communities.”*

— Ebony Lee, Ph.D.  
Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment  
Clayton County Public Schools, GA

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## ENHANCES TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

Teacher effectiveness is more significant to student achievement than any other factor. When teachers know the “why” and “how” of reading, they can change lives.



## TRANSFORMS INSTRUCTION

Provides a common language and understanding of evidence-based reading practices. Promotes effective and consistent literacy instruction school- and district-wide. Helps prevent and remediate reading difficulties for all students.



# What Makes **LETRS** Unique

*LETRS*® is a professional development experience that bridges deep, meaningful research into practical classroom success. *LETRS* provides educators with the science of reading, depth of knowledge, and tools to teach language and literacy skills to every student.



## **Flexible**

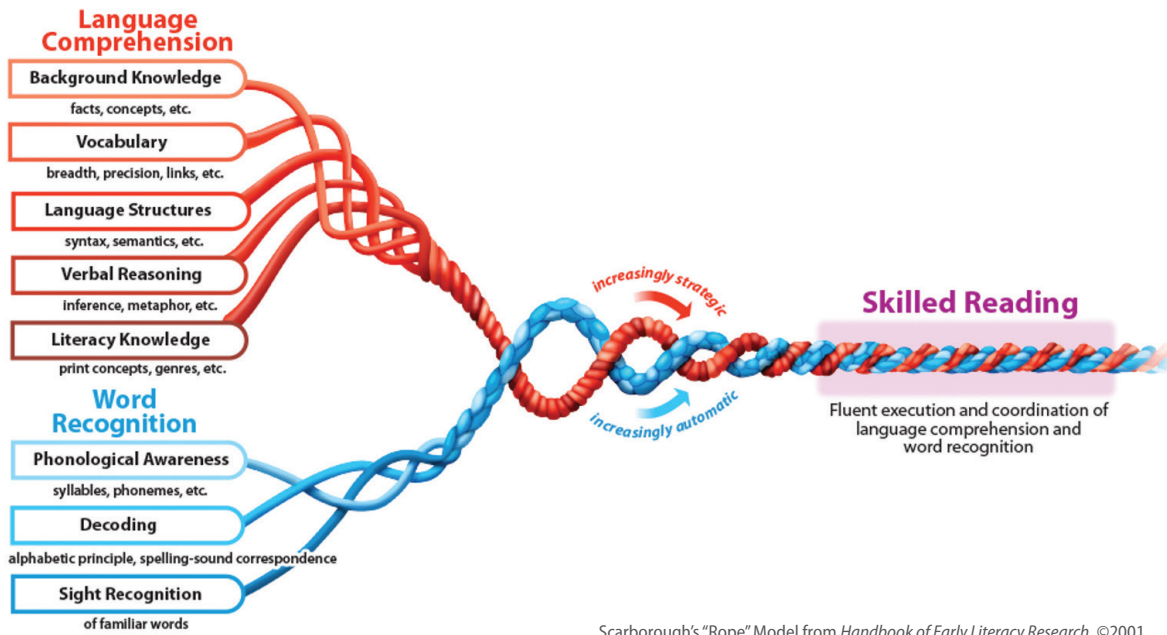
*LETRS* provides practical support to teachers with tools that are available 24/7 and ongoing support throughout the school year with strategies specific to instruction. *LETRS* meets educators where they are in terms of resources and options and can be used with any quality literacy program.





## Based on Evidence-based Research with a Focus on Language

LETRS has more than a decade of demonstrated success in schools and districts across the U.S., and fills the gaps in language structure and language development that were not taught in teacher-preparation courses.



Scarborough's "Rope" Model from *Handbook of Early Literacy Research*, ©2001. Reprinted with permission of Guilford Press.



# What Makes **LETRS** Unique Cont'd



## Integrated Bridge to Practice Exercises\*\*

Bridge to Practice opportunities to apply evidenced-based concepts and best practices to daily instruction.

The screenshot displays a digital interface with two main sections. The top section, titled "Instructions" (18 mins), contains the following text:

**Bridge to Practice: Oral Language Development**

On your own, take 15–20 minutes to do the following:

**Journal**

- Reflect on what you have learned about the connection between oral language and literacy. Add your thoughts to your journal.

**Portfolio**

- Take some time to deeply consider the oral language development of the students you've chosen for your case study project.
  - For each of your selected students, download a Development Reflection Worksheet.
  - Answer the questions to help you analyze each s
  - To inform your answers, download the appropria
  - Add the completed worksheets to the folders you

After you have completed these activities, you'll be r Understanding, the extension activity, and the session s Session 2 in the LETRS manual before beginning the C

The bottom section, titled "Bridge to Practice (Click on titles below)" (20 mins), features a video player for a "Summary Video" (2 mins). The video shows a woman in an orange dress standing in front of a screen that displays the text "Oral Language and Literacy".

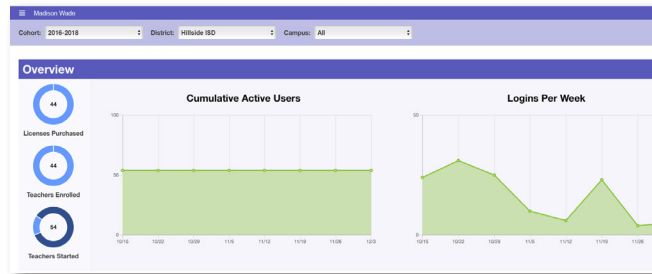






## Detailed Reporting for Accountability\*\*

LETRS gives participants and administrators the ability to measure participation and knowledge gains.



## Embedded Video Modeling of Instruction\*\*

Embedded video demonstrates how to deliver effective instruction that teachers understand and how to apply concepts to classroom practice.

\*\*Only available through the online platform.

**Exercising the Context Processor**

Reflect on how you just saw children using the context processor in a classroom activity.

- What kind of activity did they do?
- What are some ways you can have your students exercise the context processor?

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1. What did students learn about morphemes and syllables in this lesson? Select all that apply.

- a. Morphemes are meaningful chunks of a word.
- b. Most syllables in most words are morphemes.
- c. Sometimes a syllable in a word is a morpheme.
- d. Roots can combine with any prefixes and suffixes to form words.

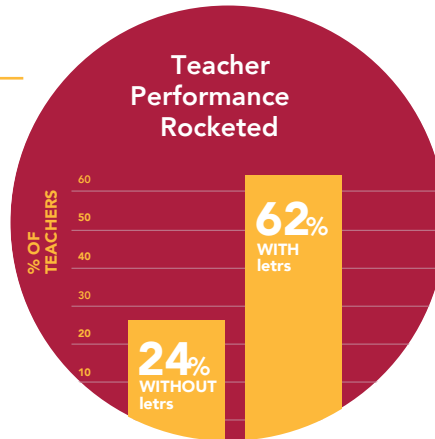
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# LETRS Helped Transform Mississippi

Mississippi is one of many shining examples of how instruction rooted in the science of reading and backed by scientific research can transform outcomes. A statewide LETRS® implementation catapulted Mississippi to No. 1. in the U.S. on the 2019 NAEP.

## Teachers Matter

With LETRS, 62% of Mississippi teachers rated above average or excellent in teacher performance.



1

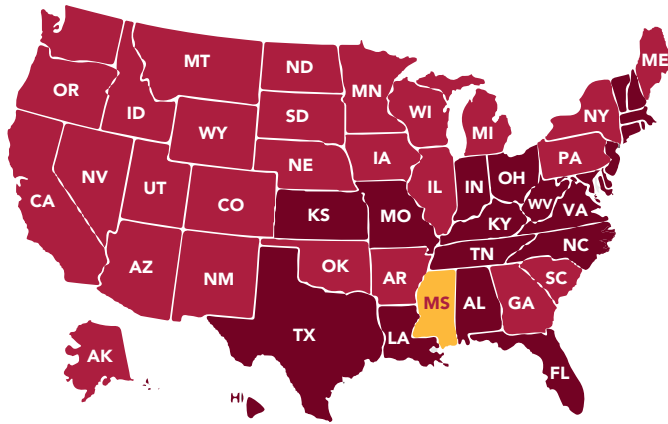
Had a score increase

34

had no significant change in score

17

had a score decrease



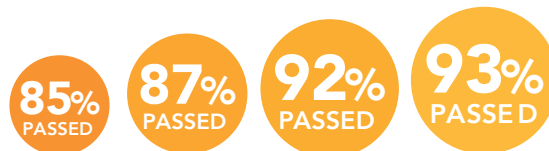
ALL STATES/JURISDICTIONS 2017-2019

## Mississippi Outperforms All

With LETRS, Mississippi is the only state to increase scores on NAEP.

## Reading is Science

Mississippi's scores demonstrate a science-based approach maintains consistent, powerful improvement year over year.



STATEWIDE END-OF-THIRD GRADE READING PASSING RATES

mdek12.org/OPR/Reporting/Reports

# LETRS Drives Success

When regular education and intervention teachers learn and apply the information contained in *LETRS*, such substantive professional development has been shown to have powerful beneficial effects on student learning, including:

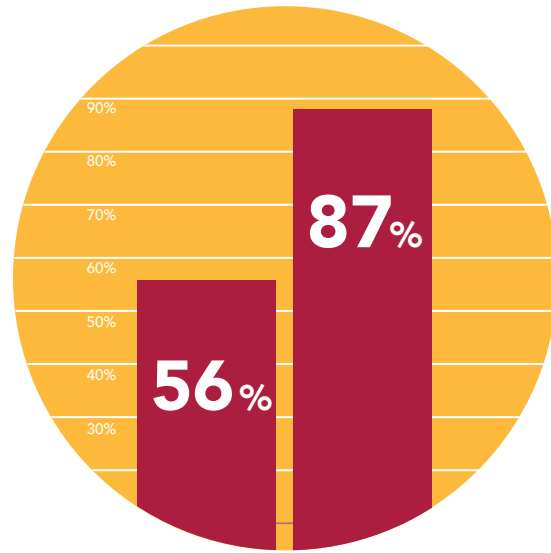
- An increase in overall achievement levels and fewer students experiencing reading difficulties
- Effective teachers who are more content and whose sense of efficacy and empowerment will replace burnout and low expectations

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## In Ohio

In Ohio, where Niles City Schools (NCS) implemented *LETRS*, the district's K–3 students reading at or above average increased from 56% to 87% within one school year.

In just one year, student literacy success at NCS improved dramatically, according to the district's universal screening measure, ***DIBELS® Next (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills Next)***, also a Voyager Sopris Learning® product.

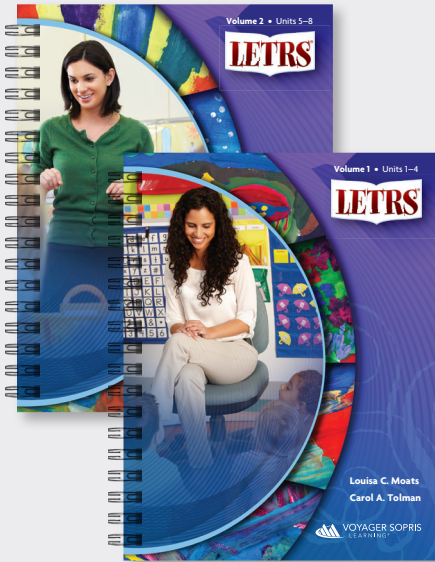


STUDENTS AT OR ABOVE AVERAGE READING LEVEL



# What Will Teachers Learn?

# UNITS



*LETRS* units address each essential component of reading instruction and the foundational concepts that link each component.

## Units 1–4

Theoretical models from reading science; phonology, basic and advanced phonics; screening and educational diagnostic assessment

## Units 5–8

Teaching vocabulary, language and reading comprehension, and writing

### Unit 1 The Challenge of Learning to Read

- Why reading is difficult
- The connection between language and literacy
- What the brain does when a person is reading
- The skills that support proficient reading
- How children learn to read and spell
- Major types of reading difficulties
- How to use assessment for prevention and early intervention
- Using assessment to differentiate instruction

### Unit 2 The Speech Sounds of English

- Phonology related to reading and spelling
- How phonological skills develop
- The importance of phonemic awareness
- The consonant and vowel phonemes of the English language
- Recognize and respond to errors of English learners and dialect speakers
- Recognize how allophonic variation in speech affects students' spelling
- How phonological skills should be taught, and which ones should be assessed

### Unit 3 Teaching Beginning Phonics, Word Recognition, and Spelling

- The role of the strands of the Reading Rope in word recognition
- The role of phonics in reading instruction
- Compare code-emphasis instruction with meaning-emphasis instruction
- Explore phoneme-grapheme correspondence system of English
- Classify phonics elements
- Understand some basic patterns of position-based spelling in English
- Instruction sequence: letter names and letter formation; key word for sound-symbol associations; teach correspondences explicitly; use sound-blending routines
- Word practice and word meaning routines
- How to teach spelling using dictation
- Decodable text and when it is important to use
- Using data to further student success

### Unit 4 Advanced Decoding, Spelling, and Word Recognition

- Advanced word study
- Position-based spelling correspondences and other orthographic conventions
- Phoneme-grapheme mapping
- The six syllable types and how they should be taught
- Distinguish syllables from morphemes
- Suffix rules
- Spelling screeners and how to interpret the results
- Best practices for teaching spelling
- Relationship between reading fluency and reading comprehension
- Building word, sentence, and passage reading fluency
- Interpret phonological, phonics, spelling, and fluency data
- Aligning practices with scientific evidence

### Unit 5 The Mighty Word: Oral Language and Vocabulary

- The relationship among vocabulary knowledge, background knowledge, oral language proficiency, and reading comprehension
- Mental map of a well-known word
- Words that should be taught directly
- Introducing new words
- Effective practice of new words
- Creating a language-rich classroom

### Unit 6 Digging for Meaning: Understanding Reading Comprehension

- The language and cognitive skills that support reading comprehension
- Distinguish comprehension products from comprehension processes
- The goal of comprehension instruction is to create a coherent mental model of the text
- Characteristics of students who struggle with language and reading comprehension
- The connection among vocabulary, background knowledge, and reading comprehension
- Process for teaching texts
- The importance of syntax and how to teach it
- The importance of text coherence and its relationship to mental coherence
- How text structure affects comprehension

### Unit 7 Text-Driven Comprehension Instruction

- The balance of foundational skills with language comprehension
- Which comprehension strategies are supported by research
- Effective strategies during and after reading
- Student-generated questions before, during, and after reading
- The importance of generating questions that deepen understanding of text
- Reread and revisit text for various purposes
- The process for planning an entire reading comprehension lesson for narrative and informational text
- Adapting instruction or special populations

### Unit 8 The Reading-Writing Connection

- Writing is important because it benefits reading
- Understand the foundational and language skills necessary for writing
- The phases of the writing process
- Letter formation and handwriting fluency
- Explicit instruction for spelling
- How students gain competence in building sentences
- Narrative writing development
- Informational and opinion writing development
- Methods for assessing student progress in writing



## Respected Authorship

### **Dr. Louisa C. Moats**

Louisa C. Moats, Ed.D., is a nationally recognized authority on literacy education and is acclaimed as a researcher, speaker, consultant, and trainer. Dr. Moats received her doctorate in reading and human development at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and is widely published on reading instruction, the professional development of teachers, and the relationship between language, reading, and spelling. Dr. Moats' awards include the prestigious Samuel Torrey Orton Award and June L. Orton Award from the International Dyslexia Association® for outstanding contributions to the field and the Eminent Researcher Award from Learning Difficulties Australia. Dr. Moats also received the Benita A. Blachman Award from The Reading League.



### **Dr. Carol A. Tolman**

Carol A. Tolman, Ed.D., has presented *LETRS* hundreds of times, in all states and districts, as Voyager Sopris Learning's lead trainer of trainers. With unparalleled talent as a teacher of teachers and enabler of school change, Dr. Tolman also has more than 25 years of experience in public schools and the juvenile justice system. In addition to spearheading many successful, long-term literacy initiatives, Dr. Tolman organized and delivered curriculum for the Massachusetts Licensure Program and conducted a four-year project for the Maryland Department of Education supporting literacy knowledge for professors.

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*"Informed teachers are our best insurance against reading failure. While programs are very helpful tools, programs don't teach, teachers do."*

— Dr. Louisa Moats

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**Full biographies of all *LETRS* authors can be viewed online:**  
[voyagersopris.com/professional-development/leters/leters-new](http://voyagersopris.com/professional-development/leters/leters-new)

# LETRS Changes Lives

LETRS supports professional learning through:

- Modern, blended approach with the availability of digital and print resources and professional learning practice to meet staff development needs.
- Face-to-face interactive sessions specific to each unit
- Optional LETRS Consulting support for teachers and administrators.

## Delivery Options

LETRS is offered in flexible implementation models to meet the specific needs of customers. We work with you early in the process to identify the delivery models and supports that produce the most impactful results.



Online Course



Print Participant Book



Online Course



Print Participant Book



Face-to-Face Workshops



Print Participant Book

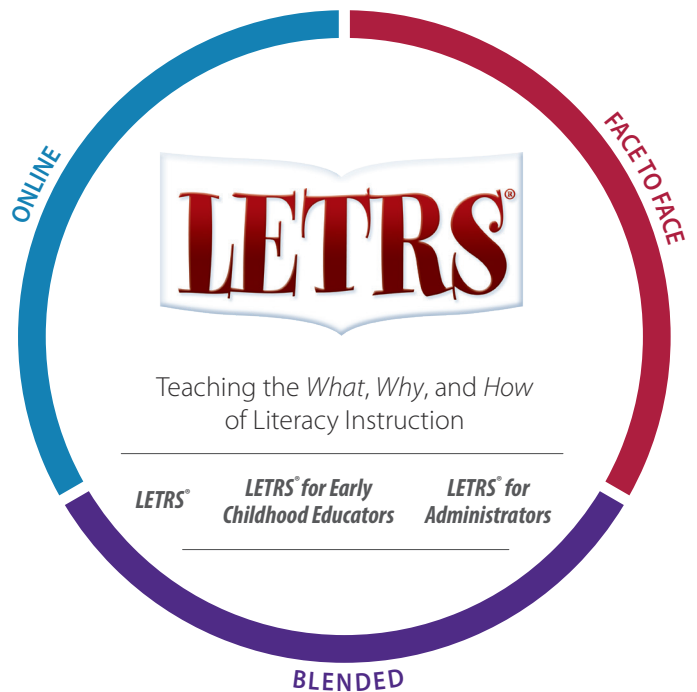


Face-to-Face Workshops

# The **LETRS** Suite of Professional Learning

## The **LETRS** Suite of products helps literacy educators:

- Distinguish between the research base for best practices and other competing ideas not supported by scientific evidence
- Understand how language, reading, and writing are related to one another
- Make instructional decisions and program choices with reference to scientific research evidence, strategic use of assessments, and observations of students
- Deliver comprehensive, integrated, language, and literacy instruction as defined by standards and by research for a given grade, age, or ability level
- Facilitate early identification and intervention with reading problems, including dyslexia







for Early Childhood Educators



for Administrators

### First Steps to Early Literacy

The more children know about language and literacy before they begin formal schooling, the better equipped they are to succeed in reading.

*LETRS® for Early Childhood Educators* provides vital, applicable information about the foundational skills young children need before learning to read and write.

*LETRS* professional development for early childhood teachers:

- Empowers teachers to understand the “what,” “why,” and “how” of early literacy instruction
- Aligns with the recommendations of the 2008 National Early Literacy Panel on Developing Early Literacy
- Helps educators build deep understanding of oral language, phonological processing, and print knowledge
- Includes targeted practices

### Champion Change

Administrators can be the catalyst for facilitating change and implementing strong literacy instruction. *LETRS® for Administrators* is a professional development experience that helps literacy leaders learn how to:

- Create highly efficient methods of analyzing student data
- Establish highly effective instructional blocks in literacy
- Examine resources for all tiers of instruction
- Provide an insightful overview of *LETRS* content to support teachers

Administrators are provided specific steps for facilitating change, developing a comprehensive assessment plan, managing resources, assembling a school leadership team, and making data-based decisions.



**FOR ADDITIONAL DETAILS, VISIT:**

[voyagersopris.com/professional-development/early-childhood-leters/overview](http://voyagersopris.com/professional-development/early-childhood-leters/overview)



**FOR ADDITIONAL DETAILS, VISIT:**

[voyagersopris.com/professional-development/leters-for-administrators/overview](http://voyagersopris.com/professional-development/leters-for-administrators/overview)



# What Educators Say About **LETRS**

**“The results have  
been incredible.”**

— Alana Cohen

District Curriculum Specialist Rapides Parish, LA

**“It gave us the  
springboard to change our  
instructional practices.”**

— Ann Marie Thigpen

Superintendent of Niles City Schools, OH

**“LETRS was the missing  
piece, especially with the shift in  
education where so many teachers  
are coming from nontraditional  
backgrounds to teach.”**

— Kimberly Bennett

Executive Assistant Superintendent Rapides Parish, LA

# More **LETRS** Solutions

When extra help is needed to support your teachers as they apply **LETRS**® professional development and learning strategies, we offer easy-to-use, engaging, supplemental programs.

## **LETRS Consulting Model (LCM)**

*Educators Benefit From:*

A deeper understanding of **LETRS**; Real-time, actionable, and customized consultative support; developing an understanding of how to analyze and diagnose student skill deficits.

## **LETRS-Aligned Programs**

Literacy solutions guided by **LETRS**' science of reading pedagogy, the Structured Literacy approach, and explicit teaching of sound-letter relationships for effective reading instruction.

## **Literacy Symposium**

An online professional development event designed for all educators in preK to college interested in improving student success in reading and writing.

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*"Thank you for providing the most valuable training I've received in my entire educational career. I now have the knowledge, backed by research, to support my teachers as they create reading success for all students."*

— Gary Robinson, Principal, IN

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The nation's leading  
literacy professional  
development is  
also online.



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for a demonstration today.

800.547.6747 or visit  
[voyagersopris.com/letrs](http://voyagersopris.com/letrs).

