



## Improving Literacy Partnership Grant Recipients:

### Highlights of Funded Work

November 2019

#### Cleveland State University

**PI:** Laura Northrop, PhD

**Partner LEA:** Cleveland Metropolitan School District

**Title:** CSU 12-Hour Reading Core Redesign

**Description:**

This project will support a complete redesign of CSU's 12-hour reading core in collaboration with Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD), serving to strengthen CSU teacher candidates' knowledge of the science of reading. CSU faculty and partners are committed to better preparing their graduates to teach all children, including those with disabilities and students who are English Learners, to read. In order to reach this goal, CSU and CMSD will: (1) revise existing courses and create new courses that align with the new 12-hour reading core standards, the Foundations of Reading exam, and the needs of CMSD and other partner districts; (2) implement a field-based course focused on intervention for struggling readers at CMSD schools; (3) participate in a community of practice with CMSD to identify gaps between preservice preparation courses and district practice; and (4) create instructional materials to use in our online and field-based courses. Upon completion of this project, CSU will have revised courses and syllabi, created case studies and simulations for its online courses, and created a field-based intervention course, to be implemented at schools in CMSD.

#### Marietta College

**PI:** Raven Cromwell, PhD

**Partner LEA:** Marietta City Schools

**Title:** Alliance for Literacy

**Description:**

The Alliance for Literacy project will create a higher education - elementary school partnership to support in-service teachers and teacher candidates as they learn and apply reading instruction grounded in the science of reading and designed to ensure that each child exhibits reading proficiency. Marietta College will partner with Washington Elementary School to create a literacy alliance with the goals of 1) redesigning the 12-hour reading core to focus on evidence-based reading instruction and aligned clinical activities, 2) providing professional development and support for in-service K-5 reading teachers, and 3) ensuring that teacher candidates are able to observe and practice evidence-based instructional strategies. Activities include College faculty working with K-5 teachers to redesign and align reading core courses, professional development and ongoing support for K-5 teachers at the school to ensure quality clinical sites for teacher candidates and optimum learning for K-5 students, and development of course syllabi, resources and clinical materials, including an alliance memorandum of understanding between the College and Washington School.

#### Mount St. Joseph University

**PI:** Amy Murdoch, PhD

**Partner LEA:** Cincinnati Public Schools

**Title:** Stronger Together: Advancing Reading Science (STARS)

**Description:**

The project is designed to positively impact the reading achievement of Ohio's children by deepening the skills of the intervention professionals who serve them and their future teachers. Mount St. Joseph University (MSJU) will partner with Cincinnati Public Schools' (CPS) literacy department (Lucie Collier, ELA Manager) to engage in joint professional learning on the science of reading with 10 school intervention teams (consisting of K-3 Reading Specialists, 4-6 Reading Specialist, Intervention Specialists, and/or English Language Teacher) and one team of three high school



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Reading Specialists (total of 13 schools impacted). Activities include (1) conducting a book study using a train-the-trainer model in order to deepen IHE-district collective knowledge and skills around implementing the Science of Reading in urban public schools that serve a diverse group of students with a range of reading needs; and (2) strengthening MSJU's 12-hour reading core by engaging in professional learning on CPS's new reading curriculum and identifying strong schools and classrooms for field experiences.

#### **Muskingum University**

**PI:** Allison Gunter, PhD

**Partner LEA:** East Muskingum Local Schools

**Title:** Empowering Reader Achievement (ERA)

**Description:**

Recruiting and retaining well trained teachers to teach and live in areas of poverty is a significant challenge and has resulted in school districts often struggling to implement effective literacy practices and early intervention. Muskingum University (MU), recognized across the Appalachian region for responding to the needs of local educators, will partner with East Muskingum Local to improve literacy achievement by closely examining and restructuring the existing 12-credit hour literacy core. Integral to this transformation is an awareness of teaching literacy to all students with meaningful activities and experiences. The collaborative and inclusive team will re-examine the preparation program from all perspectives. The outcome of the program, its coursework, syllabi, and resources – to be shared with other IHEs – will reflect how the knowledge, skills, and dispositions will be infused in specific general education coursework using creative and science-based approaches. Candidates will graduate with the professional framework to provide optimal learning environments and experiences to increase reading achievement of students with disabilities, English Learners, and traditionally marginalized groups within inclusive P-12 classroom settings; and clinical partners will have access to high-quality modules focused on specific areas of literacy instruction.

#### **Ohio University**

**PI:** Sara Helfrich, PhD

**Partner LEAs:** Alexander Local Schools, Athens City Schools

**Title:** Curricular Revisions to Engage All Teachers in Growing Readers (CREATinG Readers)

**Description:**

The purpose of the project – a collaboration among Ohio University (OHIO), Athens City School District (ACSD), and Alexander Local Schools (ALS) – is to redesign the 12-hour reading core courses to prepare teacher candidates to teach all children, including those with disabilities and learning challenges, to read. This project aligns with *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement* by pairing university- and school-based educators who are experts in their respective fields in order to ground core reading courses in the science of reading and provide meaningful clinical experiences in P-12 classrooms. Teacher candidates will develop a deeper understanding of how children learn to read, be able to diagnose why some children struggle, and be better able to select and implement evidence-based practices and interventions. CREATinG Readers includes the expertise of faculty from the fields of Reading Education, Early Childhood Elementary Education (ECEE), Middle Childhood Education (MCE), and Special Education. Paired with these faculty are ECEE, MCE, and Special Education teachers from ACSD and ALS.



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#### Youngstown State University

**PI:** Marcia Matanin, PhD

**Partner LEAs:** Youngstown City Schools

**Title:** A Sustainable Literacy Partnership Between YSU and Youngstown City School District

##### **Description:**

The project's goal is to create a sustainable literacy partnership between Youngstown State University (YSU) and Youngstown City Schools to improve K-5 students' ability to read. YSU seeks to redesign the four, 12-hour core reading courses, assignments, and field experiences so that teacher candidates are prepared as soon as they begin working in Ohio's schools. Activities will include: (1) aligning course work and shared professional development designed to assist faculty, practicing teachers, and teacher candidates in understanding *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy*, the science of reading, strategies aligned with explicit phonics instruction, systematic and brain-based reading tools, and the role phonemic awareness in developing fluency and comprehension; and (2) redesigning university fieldwork to focus on word recognition and systematic phonics. YSU will utilize valid and reliable assessment strategies, build collaborative partnerships, develop an electronic repository, and create workshops that address differentiating instruction for all learners.

#### Walsh University

**PI:** David Brobeck, PhD

**Partner LEAs:** Perry Local Schools **Other Partners:** SST Region 5, SST Region 9

**Title:** The Walsh Literacy Initiative: Dive In, Learn, and Change

##### **Description:**

The project's intended outcome is to expand reading science knowledge and influence for Walsh teacher preparation students, Walsh Division of Education faculty, and the educators and students in our partnership agreements. Diverse partnerships, effective strategies, and innovative activities will benefit the teaching and learning needs of those we serve.

The goals to reach the intended outcomes are embedded in a four-phase process; each phase is distinct, yet is designed to transition logically from one phase to another. The objectives and actions of the phases support the curriculum adoption of reading science, partnership needs and activities, and development of all learners. Activities are designed to generate interest and meet the needs of a variety of learners through traditional conversation, podcasts, Zooms, seminars, LETRS training, Read-A-Palooza, and most importantly, a change of the reading program to reading science. Each activity has the underlying goal to support reading science as a means to help all children to read well. Partner district leaders are requesting teacher candidates who can teach reading science curriculum. We recognize the need to develop teaching candidates prepared to teach in districts committed to reading science. Partners include State Support Team (SST) 5, representing four Appalachian counties; SST 9, representing three counties with urban to rural schools; and Perry Local Schools, which will provide LETRS training for 30 staff members and host teacher candidates for field study.