

Tennessee Read to be Ready Coaching Network

Background: Although Tennessee has seen student achievement improve in the past decade, elementary reading scores have not increased at the rate that the state desired. Fewer than half of Tennessee’s elementary students meet grade-level standards on the state’s English language test, and results are worse for underserved populations. In a first step to improve elementary students’ reading scores, Tennessee set as a goal that 75 percent of its students would read on grade level by 2025. Among the major strategies the state is implementing to address this need, the state is focusing on strengthening reading instruction through quality training options and a coaching initiative. Because research finds that teachers coached about reading instruction produce more gains in achievement for their students, Tennessee launched the Read to be Ready coaching network in 2016 to improve literacy instruction in K–3 classrooms.

The Challenge: To embed literacy coaching best practices in Tennessee’s Read to be Ready coaching network

What We Did: Staff at the ARCC are working with Tennessee to:

- review literacy professional development initiatives in other states to identify best features
- facilitate conversations with other states from which Tennessee could learn
- consult on implementation of the Read to be Ready coaching network

What Happened:

- Every region has a reading coach consultant who trains district Read to be Ready coaches, who in turn lead professional learning in reading for teachers in that district.
- More than 200 literacy coaches in 83 districts received training and currently serve more than 2,500 K-3 teachers across the state.
- Tennessee selected a second group of coaches in summer 2017.

“This is the most focused and comprehensive literacy initiative we have had, and the shifts that are happening in our classrooms are real and lasting.” Allison Kruse R2BR Coach, Dickson County February 2017 Coach of the Month