

Statutory Basis

[KRS 158.306](#) requires each public school district to ensure that, by June 30, 2029, all interdisciplinary early childhood through grade 5 educators complete a science of reading professional learning program approved by the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE). This document addresses common questions about that requirement.

What is the Training Requirement and Timeline?

Q: What does HB 253 require related to science of reading professional learning?

A: Per [KRS 158.306\(3\)](#), "[b]y June 30, 2029, all kindergarten through grade 5 educators must complete a science of reading professional learning program approved by KDE." This requirement is not intended to be met through a one-time training or a short overview of the Science of Reading. High-quality Science of Reading professional learning must include sustained learning on the five essential components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. It must also provide opportunities for application and ongoing support connected to classroom practice.

Q: What is the deadline for completing the required science of reading professional learning?

A: Educators must complete an [approved program](#) by June 30, 2029. Districts should plan participation across the implementation period, so educators have enough time to complete all required components.

Who Must Complete the Training Requirement?

Q: Who is included in the requirement?

A: The requirement applies broadly to any interdisciplinary early childhood through grade five (5) educator. This includes classroom teachers and other educators who support instruction, student learning, or instructional leadership in these grades.

Q: Do special education teachers have to complete approved science of reading professional learning?

A: Yes. Special education teachers serving students in interdisciplinary early childhood through grade 5 are required to complete the science of reading training. Knowledge of evidence-based reading instruction is especially important for educators who support students with reading difficulties and disabilities.

Q: Do art, music and physical education teachers have to complete the professional learning?

A: Yes. Art, music and physical education teachers serving students in interdisciplinary early childhood through grade 5 are included in the requirement. [KDE-approved pathways](#) provide options that vary in depth, duration and scope so districts can select an appropriate pathway for different roles.

Q: Is the requirement limited to educators who received certification through specific alternative certification options?

A: No. The district requirement in KRS 158.306 applies to all kindergarten through grade 5 educators. It is not limited to educators who received certification through alternative certification pathways.

Q: Are library media specialists, principals, assistant principals and instructional coaches required to complete the science of reading training?

A: Yes. Educators in these roles who serve interdisciplinary early childhood through grade 5 are included. Leaders and support staff play an important role in creating coherent system, recognizing evidence-based practices and supporting effective implementation.

Q. Are K-12 school counselors, mental health services providers, speech language pathologists, and other similar supporting roles required to complete the science of reading training?

A: While all are welcome to complete the training, only those in roles providing direct academic instruction, or supervision of academic instruction, are required to complete the science of reading professional learning.

Q: Are educators who only serve students in grade 6 or above required to complete the science of reading professional learning?

A: The district-wide completion requirement in KRS 158.306 specifically applies to kindergarten through grade 5 educators. Educators who serve only grade 6 or above are not included in that specific requirement, although science of reading professional learning may still support their work with adolescent readers.

What are the Approved Pathways?

Q: Which science of reading professional learning pathways are currently approved by KDE?

A: As of July 1, 2026, [KDE has approved three pathways](#): LETRS, designated AIM Pathways courses, and the Kentucky Learning Hub Science of Reading courses. All approved pathways meet the HB 253 requirement, but they vary in depth, duration and scope. Educators and districts should review the pathway descriptions and select the option that best aligns with the educator's role and learning needs.

Q: I previously completed LETRS. Have I met the requirement?

A: Yes. Educators who successfully completed LETRS have met the science of reading professional learning required in KRS 158.306 and do not need to complete another approved program. Educators should retain documentation of successful completion.

Q: I am currently participating in LETRS. Will it meet the science of reading requirement?

A: Yes, once the educator successfully completes the LETRS course. Enrollment or partial participation alone does not document completion. The educator must finish the required course components by June 30, 2029.

Q: I participated in another science of reading training. Will it count?

A: In order for a science of reading training to meet the requirement provided in KRS 158.306, it must be a KDE-approved professional learning program. If the prior training is not one of the approved pathways, the educator will still need to complete an approved pathway by June 30, 2029.

Q: Does Orton Gillingham, IMSE, EPIC, dyslexia or other literacy training meet the requirement?

A: These experiences may provide valuable learning, but they do not currently satisfy the requirement unless the specific program is included as a KDE approved pathway. Prior training may strengthen an educator's knowledge, but it does not replace completion of an approved program.

Q: Does professional learning approved by EPSB automatically meet the HB 253 requirement?

A: No. KRS 158.306 requires the KDE to approve science of reading professional learning for this requirement. EPSB approval, continuing education credit, rank change credit or approval through another organization does not automatically make a program KDE-approved for HB 253.

Q: Does professional learning provided by a district, cooperative or curriculum vendor meet the requirement?

A: Only professional learning that has been approved by the KDE will meet the requirement. It counts only if the professional learning is part of a KDE-approved pathway. Training on high-quality instructional resources (HQIRs), curriculum implementation or selected reading components can support local implementation, but it does not

independently satisfy HB 253 unless it is included on the [approved list](#). The requirement is not intended to be met through a one-time training or a short overview of the Science of Reading. High-quality Science of Reading professional learning must include sustained learning on the five essential components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. It must also provide opportunities for application and ongoing support connected to classroom practice.

Q: Must every educator complete the same approved course?

A: No. HB 253 requires completion of a KDE approved program, but it does not require every educator to complete the same pathway. Districts may consider an educator's role, responsibilities, input, preference, prior knowledge and professional learning needs when selecting among approved options.

Q: How do the approved pathways differ?

A: LETRS and the AIM Pathways foundational courses provide the most comprehensive study of reading development, assessment, language structures and evidence based instructional practices. The Kentucky Learning Hub courses provide a flexible, introductory pathway that builds foundational knowledge. All approved pathways satisfy the requirement when successfully completed. More information about each pathway can be found on this [KDE's Science of Reading Professional Learning webpage](#).

Q: Does the science of reading for secondary teachers course meet the requirement for a grade 4 or grade 5 teacher?

A: A secondary-focused course does not meet that requirement unless it is included on the KDE's approved list.

Q: How will completion be tracked?

A: KDE-approved courses track participation and completion for educator, school and district record keeping. Educators should keep their completion documentation, and districts should maintain local records to monitor progress toward the June 30, 2029, deadline.

Q: What happens if an educator changes schools or districts?

A: Successful completion of an approved pathway remains with the educator. The educator should retain completion documentation, and the receiving district should verify that documentation when reviewing local records. An educator who has already completed an approved pathway does not need to repeat it solely because of a change in employment.

Q: Who is responsible for ensuring educators complete the requirement?

A: KRS 158.306 requires each public school district to ensure that educators complete an approved program by the deadline. Districts should identify covered personnel, communicate approved options, provide reasonable completion plans, and maintain accurate records.

Q: May schools and districts continue to provide professional learning that uses the three-cueing system of teaching students to read?

A: No. KRS 158.306 prohibits KDE, EPSB, educational cooperatives, special education cooperatives, early childhood regional training centers and local school districts from providing or using professional development that teaches the three-cueing system. By the 2029-2030 school year, no public school district shall use any curriculum, reading intervention, or program of instruction that utilizes the three-cueing system.

Q: Is KDE currently reviewing additional science of reading professional learning programs to be included on the state-approved list?

A: At this time, KDE has identified three approved pathways. KDE will communicate any future updates through official guidance and the [KDE's Science of Reading Professional Learning webpage](#).