



# STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

**Date:** April 13, 2022

**To:** Local Educational Agency Leads, Administrators of Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities, Directors of Nonpublic Schools

**Route To:** Directors of Curriculum and Instruction, School Administrators, Supervisors of Literacy, School Counselors, Reading Specialists, Interventionists and Intervention and Referral Services Team Members

**From:** Kathy Ehling, Assistant Commissioner  
Division of Educational Services

**Deadline:** Applications are due by May 13, 2022

## **New Jersey Tiered System of Supports for Early Reading: Three-Year Coaching and Professional Development Opportunity**

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) is proud to release an opportunity for Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) serving students in grades Kindergarten to grade three to receive three-years of intensive coaching to establish and implement a multi-tiered system of support designed to provide evidence-based early literacy instruction and intervention. This opportunity is made possible through the Federal State Personnel Development Grant, New Jersey Tiered System of Supports-Early Reading (NJTSS-ER), which was awarded to the NJDOE by the United State Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs in June of 2021.

A study published by Policy Analysis for California Education (Domingue et al 2021), an independent, non-partisan research center based at Stanford University, estimated that at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, U.S. second and third grade students were approximately 30 percent behind typical growth expectations for oral reading fluency, an indicator of a student's early reading proficiency, illustrating the potential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal of the NJTSS-ER project is to improve reading proficiency through technology-facilitated training and coaching to LEAs that will:

- (1) Improve implementation knowledge and self-efficacy for leadership team members, coaches, and instructional staff;
- (2) Assist in building a multi-tiered, data-driven decision-making system that increases early reading proficiency for students in grades kindergarten through third grade, including those with or at risk of reading disabilities and /or those who are economically disadvantaged or from underperforming racial ethnic groups; and
- (3) Increase fidelity of school/LEA implementation of NJTSS-ER to support all students through sustainable practices and processes.

### **Additional Project Details**

The NJTSS-ER grant project is facilitated through a partnership between NJDOE and Rutgers University. LEA literacy coaches and other key personnel will participate in professional development to enhance the effectiveness of reading instruction and interventions available to all students. Coaching will be provided to select LEA personnel in up to two district schools that serve students in Kindergarten through grade three. LEAs selected for participation will have the opportunity to apply for up to \$2,000 applicable towards approved external trainings on evidence-based practices relevant to the implementation of a Multi-Tiered System of Support or early reading.

**Application Process**

Additional project details and expectations of participating project schools can be found on the [online application form](#). Please email the complete application to the NJDOE, at [njtss@doe.nj.gov](mailto:njtss@doe.nj.gov) by May 13, 2022. Applicants will be notified of their advancement to the next stage of the selection process following the NJDOE's review of all submissions. LEAs nominated to advance in the selection process will participate in an interview with the NJTSS-ER Team. To learn more about this opportunity, school officials are invited to take part in a [webinar and question-and-answer session](#) on April 27, 2022 from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m.

c: Members, State Board of Education  
Angelica Allen-McMillan, Ed.D., Acting Commissioner of Education  
NJDOE Staff  
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network  
Garden State Coalition of Schools  
NJ LEE Group