



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: December 1, 2022
To: Local Educational Agency Leads
Route To: Assistant Superintendents of Curriculum and Instruction, Principals Serving Students in Grades K-3, Directors of Student Services, Directors of Special Services, Supervisors of English Language Arts
From: Kathy Ehling, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Educational Services

Supporting Effective Early Reading Instruction Using a Tiered System of Supports

As part of the [New Jersey Partnership for Student Success](#) initiative, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) is excited to share the [New Jersey Tiered System of Supports for Early Reading website](#). This new resource is designed to support local educational agencies in strengthening their early literacy instruction through the application of the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports framework. The website was developed through activities funded by Federal State Personnel Development Grant, New Jersey Tiered System of Supports-Early Reading (NJTSS-ER), which was awarded to the NJDOE by the United States 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.
- (3) Increase fidelity of school/LEA implementation of NJTSS-ER to support all students through sustainable practices and processes.

The NJTSS-ER website is the mechanism the NJDOE is using to deliver these supports statewide.

Additional Project Details

The NJTSS-ER grant project is facilitated through a partnership between NJDOE and Rutgers University. This website along with future webinars and other professional development opportunities are intended to provide LEAs with knowledge and skills to implement evidence-based early reading instruction, which has shown promise in supporting all students to improve reading performance including students with disabilities.

The website features:

- The NJTSS-ER Framework, which includes overviews of the essential components, protocols to guide planning meetings, and action plans to drive implementation of the framework.

- A collection of resources and tools to support LEA leadership personnel and project implementation personnel.
- Asynchronous online learning courses to support districts in building knowledge and capacity to implement the NJTSS-ER Framework. For each course, a certificate of completion is available to school personnel to document hours towards district determined continuing education requirements.

Key steps/actions

Visit the NJTSS-ER website, and if interested in learning more about the project or future related professional opportunities, please email NJTSS@doe.nj.gov.

Contact Information

Should you have additional questions, please contact the Office of Student Support Services via njtss@doe.nj.gov.

c: Members, State Board of Education
NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group