



TENNESSEE READING
RESEARCH CENTER



2025 A Leader in Literacy

Reading Research

Evaluations of the Tennessee Literacy Success Act

In 2025, our partners at the Tennessee Department of Education commissioned us to conduct reviews of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) and the impact of Early Reading Training (ERT) on reading outcomes in kindergarten and first grade. Results of these evaluations were released in reports available in our [Resource Library](#).



Varied Practice Reading (VPR)

Our innovative approach integrates science and social studies knowledge building within a Tier 2 reading intervention. During the 2024-25 school year, we conducted a pilot study of VPR with over 600 middle school students in Knox and Franklin County Schools. Further information can be found on our [webpage](#).



Meta-Analyses of Summer Reading

This project involves reviewing all existing literature on what happens to students in kindergarten through fifth grade who do and do not participate in summer reading interventions. Over the past year, we identified over 120 studies of the summer effect and over 140 studies of summer reading interventions. Data extraction is ongoing and updates will be shared via our [website](#).



Tennessee Partners

This year, the Tennessee Reading Research Center (TRRC) has been actively engaged across Tennessee, collaborating with partners to strengthen a statewide network of research-based support for students. Below are a few highlights of this important work.

Community Engagements

- Provided guidance to Chattanooga 2.0 on their Summer Reads program
- Met with a number of individuals and groups contributing to the literacy efforts in Shelby County, including, but not limited to: Porter-Leath, International Dyslexia Association–Tennessee branch, Slingshot Memphis, Memphis Communities in Schools, CodeCrew, Stand for Children Tennessee, Economic Opportunities, Shelby County Community Affairs Division, and The Collective Blueprint

State-Level Engagements

- Discussed literacy with the U.S. Secretary of Education, the commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Education, and several Tennessee school superintendents
- Participated on a panel for the PIVOT webinar “Leading RTI Well in Middle Schools”
- Served on the Tennessee Department of Education’s Dyslexia Advisory Council
- Served on the Tennessee Department of Education’s Literacy Council

School Engagements

- Visited middle schools in Franklin County
- Observed Knox County elementary schools
- Held focus groups at Emerald Youth Foundation

Awards

The Tennessee Reading Research Center presents two awards annually to honor outstanding contributions to literacy advancement. In May, Dr. Ronnie Erwin received the Friend of Literacy Award. Dr. Erwin is recognized not only for his philanthropic leadership, but also for modeling how a deeply personal mission can inspire real change in rural communities.

In November, we presented the Friend of TRRC Award to the Tennessee Child Care Resource and Referral (TN CCR&R). The organization brings together diverse stakeholders—including the Tennessee Reading Research Center—for discussions and events that strengthen literacy efforts statewide.



24,296

views through
Facebook

13,095

website engagements
from 84 different
countries

3,496

LinkedIn
engagements

2,304

resource downloads

68.9%

increase in reach on
social media

167

posts shared on
social media



sign up for
social media

Presentations

- Literacy Mid-South (adolescent literacy)
- The National Association of Educational Foundations annual conference (the science of reading)
- TN CCR&R Early Language and Literacy Summits (developing early literacy skills)
- GELF 2025 SELECT Convening (keeping practices aligned to the science of reading)
- STRONG ACC (literacy in Grades preK through 5)
- Memphis Literacy Conference (vocabulary instruction in middle and high school)
- First 8 Memphis' Early Care and Education Conference (supporting early language and literacy development)

TRRC Advisory Board

As we embark on our fourth year, the TRRC formed an Advisory Board to help guide its direction and raise awareness of its work. We were fortunate to assemble seven representatives from different stakeholder groups and different regions of Tennessee.



Name and Affiliation	Stakeholder Group	Tennessee Region
Stephanie Boshears	Educators	North Cumberland Plateau
Cary Holman	District Leaders	South Tennessee
Angie McNichols	Private or Charter Schools	Northwest Tennessee
Wiley Richards	Businesses	West Tennessee
Stephen Santellan	Educator Preparation Programs	Middle Tennessee
Yvette Stewart	Other UT Campus	Southeast Tennessee
Mike Taylor	Foundations	East Tennessee