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## **NEW YORK STATE SELECTED FOR HUNT INSTITUTE'S THE PATH FORWARD TO TRANSFORM LITERACY INSTRUCTION**

### **Literacy Academy Collective and New York State Education Department to Convene Team In Partnership with SUNY, CUNY, NYC Public Schools**

**New York, NY:** Literacy Academy Collective and New York State Education Commissioner Betty A. Rosa are thrilled to announce that New York State has been chosen to participate in the third cohort of Hunt Institute's [The Path Forward for Teacher Preparation and Licensure in Early Literacy](#). In coordination with the New York State Education Department (NYSED), [Literacy Academy Collective](#) (LAC) has been tapped to convene the NY State Path Forward cohort team, with the aim to transform early literacy instruction in New York State by embedding the [science of reading](#) into educator preparation. Led by an esteemed [Steering Committee](#), The Path Forward team is comprised of leaders from NYSED; the NY State Legislature; the Governor's office; leaders, deans, and faculty from higher education educator preparation programs; and key community advocates, funders, and stakeholders from across New York State. They will gather regularly over the course of the year to collaborate on a New York State Action Plan to make that goal a reality.

The Steering Committee will work in concert with Commissioner Rosa, New York State Board of Regents Chancellor Lester W. Young, Jr., State University of New York (SUNY) Chancellor John B. King, Jr., The City University of New York (CUNY) Chancellor Félix V. Matos Rodríguez, and New York City Public Schools Chancellor David C. Banks, who will lend their collective support and institutional [commitment](#). This policy initiative has the power to transform the way NY State prepares educators for the classroom, finally ensuring that *all* NY State students learn to read.

Including this year's cohort, eighteen states will have participated in The Path Forward process, an important trend that will have a profound impact on national literacy rates. The Path Forward makes clear that collective effort has the power to transform educator preparation while demonstrating the importance of honoring the nuances of each state. The result has been well-defined local strategies to support essential shifts in practice. Over the next year, New York will work alongside five other states from the Northeast, Midwest, Southwest, and Pacific Northwest to develop actionable strategies to make that goal a reality in their states. Each team will be supported in their efforts through intensive coaching, participation in virtual convenings, and attendance at an in-person convening to be held in July 2024 in North Carolina. At the end of their participation, teams will have a customized action plan for further embedding the science of reading into their state's higher education teacher prep programs to be implemented in the following years.

**New York State Board of Regents Chancellor Lester W. Young, Jr.** said, "There are a wide range of factors that directly impact reading achievement, but none greater than equitable access to quality instruction, something every student in New York State deserves. Also, we recognize that many of the current instruction methods for teaching literacy are not effective for all students. As a result, we are exploring ways to strengthen our teacher preparation programs that empower educators with information and resources that support all students. Through our work with the Path Forward Program, we will be better positioned to embed evidence-based literacy instruction in our teacher preparation programs, paving the way for students to be better prepared academically and in life."

**New York State Education Commissioner Betty A. Rosa** said, "Collaboration will be the driver to building a sustainable, foundational literacy plan that understands the learning process and meets the needs of every student in New York state. Working with the Hunt Institute, Literacy Academy Collective, and our education stakeholders, we are doubling down on our commitment to support and inspire our teachers, ensuring they have the research-based tools and supports to bring the science of reading to life in their classrooms. We are grateful for the opportunity to work with some of the premier literacy and teacher preparation experts on this comprehensive effort to provide world-class literacy instruction to improve reading outcomes and address the equity gaps that exist in reading skills."

**Ruth Genn, Executive Director of Literacy Academy Collective**, the non-profit organization convening the NY State Team, said, "At LAC, we have seen firsthand the revolutionary power teachers have to change the trajectory of a child's education through literacy when they receive preparation and training in culturally responsive, evidence-based practices. We are honored to work with such an acclaimed group of education leaders to finally give teachers what they need to reach every student in their classroom."

**SUNY Chancellor John B. King, Jr.** said, "Improving early literacy is imperative for our students and our future. As the state's largest teacher preparation provider, SUNY is working hard to advance the science of reading – including launching a new Center of Excellence at SUNY New Paltz and a new

micro-credential in the science of reading for current teachers. We are grateful to the Hunt Institute and look forward to working closely with our state partners.”

**CUNY Chancellor Félix V. Matos Rodríguez** said, “Preparing more teachers with training in evidence-based practices in literacy is crucial to creating educational equity because it impacts our children’s ability to thrive in and outside of school. CUNY, which prepares nearly a quarter of the classroom teachers in the State and nearly 40% of the teachers of color, is pleased to support NYSED, along with the Literacy Academy Collective and Hunt Institute, in this promising initiative to advance the use of the science of reading in early literacy education.”

**Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon** said, “The literacy rate among New York children is at a crisis level, with only 30% of fourth-graders reading proficiently. New York has long needed to train our future educators in the science of reading. That’s why I am thrilled that our leading institutions of education are partnering with literacy experts to move our state forward. Imagine what we can accomplish when all our children are taught to read proficiently!”

**Dr. Katie Pace Miles, Professor, Brooklyn College, CUNY** said, “In order to improve literacy outcomes for students, we must be sure that teacher training is aligned with scientific findings. I am very excited that this process will focus on informing teacher training throughout NY State using evidence-based practices.”

**Dr. John Strong, Assistant Professor, University at Buffalo, SUNY** said, “I am eager to collaborate with stakeholders across New York State through the Path Forward Steering Committee to figure out how we can do a better job of preparing literacy educators to implement evidence-based practices informed by reading science.”

“When a student learns to read early on, it changes their trajectory in life both inside and outside the classroom,” said **The Hunt Institute’s President and CEO Dr. Javaid Siddiqi**. “Increasing early literacy proficiency for students is critical for ensuring equitable success for all students, and I’m proud to take part in this necessary work.”

In the coming year of this program, cohort members will explore topics to:

- Improve literacy instruction;
- Consider the science of reading for racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse students;
- Examine levers for change in educator preparation; and,
- Plan for strategies in designing state action plans for impact.

Teams will also have the opportunity to meet with members of The Path Forward National Advisory Group, learn from [nationally renowned experts](#), and collaborate with other states in strengthening their action plans.

\*The Path Forward is made possible through support from The Barksdale Reading Institute, The Belk Foundation, and The Oak Foundation.\*

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**About The Hunt Institute:**

[The Hunt Institute](#), an affiliate of the Duke University Sanford School of Public Policy, is a recognized leader in the movement to transform public education. Marshaling expertise from a nationwide partner network since its establishment in 2001, The Institute brings together people and resources that help build and nurture visionary leadership and mobilize strategic action for greater educational outcomes and student success. For more information, please visit [hunt-institute.org](http://hunt-institute.org).

- Over the course of a year, state teams come together to set goals and share best practices regarding ways to ensure that teacher preparation, licensure, and program approval are aligned to the science of reading.
- Each state is supported in these efforts through intensive coaching, participation in virtual convenings, and attendance at an in-person convening. At the end of the program, teams will have a customized action plan for further embedding the science of reading into their state’s plans.
- State teams are made up of individuals from the state working to improve literacy for its students. It is critical that each team prioritize members who have a deep understanding of the science of reading, understand policy levers to bring change in teacher preparation, licensure, and program approval, and are strong voices in the state’s teacher preparation programs.

**About Literacy Academy Collective:**

At [Literacy Academy Collective](#) (LAC), a non-profit school support organization, we believe access to literacy is the most pressing Civil Rights issue in New York City. Our mission is to build and support a network of NYCPS schools to allow struggling readers to achieve academic success by bringing culturally relevant, structured literacy to students at the intersection of race, poverty, and disability. Our first school, [South Bronx Literacy Academy PS642](#) opened this fall to 72 families in the South Bronx as the first district public school in the country specifically designed to serve students who struggle to read.

We have partnered with schools, families, community-based organizations, and institutes of higher education to build a replicable school model, engage in district support and training for teachers, and educate families in literacy awareness and advocacy

LAC’s goal is to break the cycle of illiteracy for students with dyslexia, LBLDs, and other struggling readers.

For more information, please visit [literacyacademycollective.org](http://literacyacademycollective.org)

**About the New York State Education Department:**

The [New York State Education Department](#) is part of the [University of the State of New York](#) (USNY), one of the most complete, interconnected systems of educational services in the United States.

Our mission is to raise the knowledge, skill, and opportunity of all the people in New York. Our vision is to provide leadership for a system that yields the best educated people in the world.