



**VISION:** The Center for Literacy IMPACT is a comprehensive and sustainable system designed to provide knowledge, experience, and support for pre-service teachers, in-service educators, students, families, and community members. Washburn’s motto, “non nobis solum,” means “Not for ourselves alone” and speaks directly to the University’s commitment to others. To that end, the Center is rooted in the principles of Washburn University’s mission, vision, and values to create a positive **IMPACT**:

<b>Inclusion</b>	Creating a system that provides meaningful support to all teachers, students, and families throughout the catchment area through a network of resources by removing barriers to access and closing the opportunity gap.
<b>Modernization</b>	A dedicated team focused on identifying, developing, and sharing new research, methods and technologies in the Science of Reading.
<b>Partnership</b>	Fostering collaboration among universities and colleges, school districts, community organizations, and other national and local partners to support literacy throughout the catchment area.
<b>Achievement</b>	A literacy-focused university providing high-quality teacher preparation, educator knowledge and support, advocacy for families and students, and resources for communities that lead to an increase in literacy skills.
<b>Community</b>	Creating a network of collaborations across the catchment area that creates a sustainable community-based approach to supporting the literacy needs of all individuals
<b>Transformation</b>	Changing the lives of the members of the community and the future of Kansas through education, support, and advocacy



## **PRE-SERVICE EDUCATOR PREPARATION**

### **Current Programs:**

The Washburn University Department of Education currently has three full-time faculty specializing in the area of literacy education. Dr. Carolyn Carlson, Ms. Tracie Lutz, and Dr. Grace Leu have a combined 10 degrees (two Ph.D.’s, one J.D., three Master’s degrees, and four Bachelor’s degrees), 8 teaching licenses, and 64 years of experience in the field of education. The resume (see Supporting Documents) of each faculty member provides evidence of three well-established and successful careers focused on literacy education in addition to a commitment to staying abreast of recent research as well as contributing to the body of research in the field of education. In addition to the three full-time faculty in literacy education, the Department of Education has a team of practicum supervisors that collaborate with faculty, pre-service teacher candidates, and mentor teachers in the field. This team supports pre-service teacher candidates in the field as they apply their knowledge of the Science of Reading in the partner classrooms. Through training and collaboration, the literacy practicum supervisors support candidates through verbal and written coaching to strengthen their application of the principles and elements of the Science of Reading in local school classrooms.

The Washburn University Department of Education is committed to providing initial level candidates with the knowledge and experiences to become effective literacy teachers. Their preparation is a mix of rigorous coursework and in-depth application in various classrooms throughout the program. In the P-6 teacher education program, knowledge and application of The Science of Reading is woven into the program across multiple courses/experiences. Five courses, in particular, provide explicit instruction and application of The Science of Reading elements and principles:

1. *ED 295: Experiencing Teaching as a Profession* (3 credit hours)
2. *ED 320 Science of Reading I* (3 credit hours)
3. *ED 325 Teaching Language Arts and Children's Literature in the Elementary School* (2 credit hours)
4. *ED 327 Science of Reading II* (3 credit hours) (practicum)
5. *ED 395 Extending Teaching as a Profession* (3 credit hours) (field experience)

In *ED 295 Experiencing Teaching as a Profession*, P-6, P-12, and 6-12 candidates are introduced to the concepts of the Science of Reading which are built upon in subsequent courses and field experiences. Candidates demonstrate their understanding of the following concepts: the modes of language (reading, writing, speaking, and listening), theories of language acquisition, the components of language (including syntax, morphology, phonology, semantics, and pragmatics), language acquisition and development strategies, the importance of oral language on vocabulary acquisition and the development of literacy skills, the significance of concepts about print on early literacy, and the study and assessment of morphological development and its impact on language acquisition and vocabulary development. In addition, candidates complete a study on dyslexia, including characteristics, myths v. facts, assessments, and instruction. Finally, candidates complete a hands-on dyslexia simulation.

*ED 395: Extending Teaching as a Profession* is the fourth in series of four courses that comprise the foundational education program for future teachers (P-6, P-12, 6-12). The third course (*ED 295*) focuses on acquiring knowledge of the Science of Reading and applying that knowledge through classroom projects/assignments as well as field-based learning opportunities. *ED 395* builds upon that knowledge/application and requires candidates to practice/develop their skills related to the Science of Reading in a practicum setting. Candidates observe, teach, and learn from their peers, students, teachers, staff, professors, parents, the school, and the community. The goals of this partnership are the increased learning achievement of all children in each instructional setting, as well as the development of pre-service teachers who are well-prepared to enter this profession and positively affect literacy learning. Each practicum experience is tailored to meet the needs of the students in the classroom but is focused on candidates experiencing real-world application of literacy approaches/practices.

In *Science of Reading I*, P-6 candidates focus on oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing. In *Science of Reading II*, teacher candidates focus on applying this information in authentic settings in a 110-hour practicum experience. Structured literacy is an instructional approach that emphasizes systematic, explicit teaching of literacy skills. Our program integrates structured literacy into both coursework and practical experiences, ensuring that teacher candidates can apply their knowledge in real-world settings. Throughout their studies, candidates engage in courses specifically designed to deepen their

understanding of structured literacy. They learn to develop lesson plans that incorporate explicit, systematic instruction in phonics and other essential reading skills. Courses also cover the use of assessment tools to identify students' strengths and weaknesses, enabling candidates to tailor instruction to meet individual needs. Our program emphasizes hands-on experience, where candidates apply structured literacy principles in classroom settings. They work directly with elementary students, implementing evidence-based strategies for reading instruction. Candidates are trained to use multisensory techniques, scaffolding, and differentiated instruction to support all learners, including those with reading challenges.

To ensure that candidates have multiple learning opportunities to apply their knowledge of the Science of Reading and structured literacy, Washburn participates in an ongoing Professional Development School partnership with three Topeka Public Schools in USD 501: Randolph Elementary, Whitson Elementary, and McClure Elementary. The partnership is maintained through purposeful and meaningful collaboration that includes selecting teachers/classrooms where candidates can experience highly effective and evidence-based approaches and instruction. Through meetings with school administrators and teachers throughout the academic year, the strengths of the school and classrooms are shared with Washburn faculty to ensure alignment between what candidates learn in coursework and what is experienced in field placement settings. The ongoing collaboration between Washburn and USD 501 has resulted in the opportunity for Washburn candidates to complete three field experiences at these schools: an observation experience, a practicum experience, and student teaching.

In addition, the collaboration/partnership with USD 501 extends beyond field placements. To provide pre-service teacher education candidates an even more immersive experience in the Science of Reading in schools, candidates in ED 320 Science of Reading I and ED 325 Children's Literature in the Elementary School, and ED 327 Science of Reading II meet at Randolph Elementary School in a classroom dedicated for Washburn University classes. Faculty provide instruction in the dedicated classroom and candidates are then able to visit classrooms to observe what was just discussed/learned for immediate, real-world application before beginning their own application in their rigorous literacy practicum. This approach to the literacy courses for P-6 candidates means that both the knowledge and application components of the courses are done in a school setting (rather than on campus). Further, candidates are not limited to experiencing course-related topics while at the schools. Candidates participate in breakfast duty, fire and tornado drills, assisting teachers and administrators when needed, observing in parent-teacher conferences, etc. This collaboration between Washburn and USD 501 provides an engaging and authentic experience for candidates as they prepare to enter the field of education. Due to the success of this collaboration, Washburn is exploring additional collaborations with middle and high schools in the area to develop a similar experience for candidates in courses focused on those grade levels.

Due to the immersive, authentic, and applied learning approach to the Science of Reading, pre-service teachers typically experience success on the licensure exam that is focused on the principles of the Science of Reading. Not only do an overwhelming majority of candidates pass the exam, they do so with scores well above the required minimum (cut) score:

PRAXIS Reading Exam: 7812 (Cut Score = 159)

Academic Year	n	Mean	Pass Rate
2020-2021	41	174.35	90.2%
2021-2022	43	171.34	86%
2022-2023	26	170.5	88%

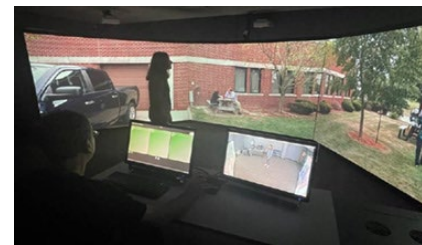
Each year, the scores are analyzed by topics to determine trends indicating areas for improvement in the program. Enhancements to both content courses and field experiences are continually made based upon this data (and other data).

Each year, the Kansas Educator Alumni and Employer Survey is administered by Kansas State University's Office of Educational Innovation and Evaluation to collect data on the seven public universities' recent graduates and their employers (school district administration). The most recent survey occurred in summer 2024 which provided data on individuals with an education degree from one of the seven public universities who received a first-time teaching license from KSDE between July 2022 and June 2023 and were teaching in the state of Kansas during the 2023-2024 school year. In addition, the principals who employed these teachers were also surveyed to collect data on their perspective on the preparation/knowledge of these teachers. Both recent graduates and the principals shared comments about the pre-service teacher preparation program at Washburn including statements related directly to their preparation in the Science of Reading, indicating that Washburn graduates are provided with a program that includes both knowledge and application in the Science of Reading.

As a result of the rigor, authentic learning, and success of program completers, Washburn University has an effective teacher preparation program related to the Science of Reading.

### Proposed Initiatives/Programs:

- 1. Simulation Lab.** All pre-service teacher candidates at Washburn University engage in various simulated experiences including a hands-on dyslexia simulation (see supporting documents for a 2024 published article by Dr. Carlson for deeper understanding of the research on the impact of simulations and the impact of this particular simulation on Washburn teacher candidates: *Fight, Flight, Freeze: The Impact of a Dyslexia Simulation on Preservice Teachers*). Due to their impact on learning, additional simulated experiences can further increase candidate knowledge. The Washburn University School of Applied Studies has a state-of-the-art simulation lab that uses simulated learning opportunities to prepare candidates to respond to a variety of real-world experiences. The Virtual Training and Simulation Lab (VTSL) houses a three-screen Multiple Interactive Learning Objectives (MILO) decision-based simulator that provides candidates the opportunity to engage in a fully immersive training experience. During a VTSL experience the candidate encounters a scenario projected onto three large screens surrounding them. The VTSL is currently used in the Criminal Justice Department, the Allied Health Department, Social Work Department, and the School of Nursing. For example, in a Criminal Justice firearms decision-making



course, candidates engage in law enforcement decision making scenarios wearing a duty belt equipped with a laser-based OC pepper spray, a Taser, and a gun. The candidates then determine the appropriate course of action based on how the person in the virtual scenario responds. The instructor then uses these responses to assess the candidate's ability to use best practices and communication, de-escalation, and the use of force. This type of learning also allows the candidate to work on improving and developing their skills in a safe, hands-on learning environment. The VTSL has a broad application across campus and the greater Topeka community, and its offerings are being expanded to anyone who can benefit from using it.

The future Washburn Center for Literacy IMPACT has been approved to use the simulation lab to create simulated learning opportunities for both pre-service teachers and in-service educators in a variety of education-related scenarios including, but not limited to, tutoring a striving reader to practice evidence-based approaches to support the reader, implementing a structured literacy lesson to a full classroom of students, managing classroom behaviors, explaining classroom/student data to parents during a conference, etc. Designing the first set of simulations (a one-on-one tutoring session with a student with dyslexia) is underway.

2. **Simulated Classrooms.** At least two classrooms on the Washburn campus will be remodeled to simulate a classroom setup/environment that supports literacy learning and teacher development. One classroom will be designed as an elementary-level classroom while another will be designed as a secondary-level classroom. These classrooms will serve pre-service teacher candidates, in-service educators, and P-12 students and families. For example, after-school tutoring of P-12 students by pre-service teacher candidates can occur in the classroom setting (a more comfortable learning environment than a stale, office-type room), literacy events (such as Family Literacy Night (see below) or a STEM and Literacy event (see below) can occur in these rooms that are more conducive to teaching/learning, in-service educators can observe literacy lessons taught by experts to P-12 students and then can teach themselves with coaching, etc.
3. **P-12 Student Instruction.** The Center will provide one-on-one or small group instruction to P-12 students that need additional support in literacy. This instruction, free of charge to P-12 students, will be administered by pre-service teacher candidates in their final year of their education program in conjunction with the Science of Reading I and the Science of Reading II courses. In addition to their school-based field experience to apply their knowledge of the Science of Reading to a classroom of P-12 students, they will work one-on-one or in small groups with students that need additional support. Under the guidance of the faculty, the pre-service teacher candidates will administer assessments, analyze data, develop instructional plans using evidence-based approaches, and instruct the student. Additionally, the assessment results, instructional plans, and weekly progress monitoring data will be shared with both the classroom teacher at the student's school and the parents/families of the students. Therefore, this program will serve to strengthen both pre-service teacher candidates' application of the Science of Reading principles and P-12 student literacy skills.
4. **Translators for ELLs.** Pre-service teacher candidates often have the opportunity to work with English Language Learners (ELL students) in area schools during field experiences and beyond. While teaching in the field, it can be challenging for candidates to communicate effectively, as well as build connections with ELL students due to language barriers. To bridge the language and communication gap, teacher candidates and the students they



serve use the Timekettle WT2 Edge for real time translation. The Timekettle earbud device supports bilingual conversations (in 40 languages and 93 dialects) to create a seamless connection between the teacher and the ELL student, allowing learning and relationships to flourish. The Timekettle device is bi-directional and simultaneous which means translation and communication is seamless and instantaneous. These devices have already shown a positive impact on communication and relationships between pre-service teachers, students, and families. Additional devices are needed to ensure that throughout the catchment area, these devices are available to support communication between individuals that speak different languages. (If desired, please search “Timekettle WT2 Edge: World's 1st Bi-directional Simultaneous Translation Earbuds” to watch a video explaining all the features of this device.)

- 5. Enhanced Field Experiences in the Science of Reading.** It is essential that pre-service candidates apply their knowledge in classrooms where the principles of the Science of Reading are already implemented. The Center will pay additional stipends to Mentor Teachers that have the KBOR micro-credential in the Science of Reading to serve as mentors for literacy practicums to ensure that pre-service teachers experience a classroom setting that immerses them in evidence-based approaches and methods based on the principles and elements of structured literacy. This will ensure that candidates learning about the principals of the Science of Reading will be able to observe and implement that knowledge in a classroom with a Mentor Teacher whose instruction aligns with what is being taught in courses.



## IN-SERVICE EDUCATOR AND DISTRICT SUPPORT

### Current Programs:

The Washburn University Department of Education is committed to providing advanced level candidates with the knowledge and experiences that prepare them to be licensed, effective reading specialists in P-12 schools in Kansas. The Reading Specialist Master's degree program leads to licensure by the Kansas State Department of Education. The program consists of 31 credit hours of coursework that includes both knowledge of and application of the Science of Reading (including structured literacy, supporting students with dyslexia, supporting English Language Learners, and supporting students with other disabilities/needs) in elementary, middle, and secondary settings and an action research project that requires candidates to conduct original research in the field of literacy in their own classrooms. In addition, candidates must complete a capstone project and pass the PRAXIS exam. In the past 8 years, 100% of program completers have passed the PRAXIS exam for licensure as a reading specialist.

In addition to providing knowledge and application in the Science of Reading for candidates studying to become reading specialists, all candidates obtaining the Special Education degree complete a course in the Science of Reading which provides knowledge and application in structured literacy, supporting students with dyslexia, and supporting students with other disabilities/needs.

In addition to providing learning opportunities for advanced level candidates in the Reading Specialist and Special Education programs, candidates can also complete coursework to earn an endorsement in English for Speakers of Other Languages. Through coursework and application



in elementary, middle, and secondary classrooms, future ESOL teachers are equipped to become effective teachers to the English Language Learners.

Washburn is committed to providing support to in-service teachers beyond just coursework. All faculty members provide no-cost professional development opportunities throughout the year and at districts around the catchment area. For example, six faculty regularly travel to schools to provide a training (including a simulated experience) in working with students with dyslexia. Feedback from these sessions has indicated that this authentic, hands-on learning experience is one of the most impactful professional development opportunities many teachers have completed.

**Proposed Initiatives/Programs:** To further support in-service teachers throughout the catchment area, the Center will develop new initiatives/programs that will support in-service educators (elementary school teachers, reading specialists, ESOL teachers, special education teachers, etc.) throughout the 22 school districts (21 public school districts and the Kickapoo Nation School) within the catchment area.

- 1. The KBOR Science of Reading Credential.** This credential is currently being collaboratively developed by literacy faculty (with extensive background in the Science of Reading) from Washburn University, Emporia State University, Fort Hays State University, University of Kansas, Kansas State University, Pittsburg State University, and Wichita State University. This credential, aligned with the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) Knowledge and Practice standards and the Kansas Elementary Education P-6 Educator Preparation Program standards 5, 6, & 7 will be offered to educators across Kansas at a flat-rate tuition amount. This collaboratively developed credential (which will transfer to any of the seven universities for six graduate credit hours) will ensure that educators can have access to the collective expertise of the literacy faculty at the seven public universities in Kansas. To meet the needs of various learning styles, preferred schedules, etc., the credential at Washburn will be offered in various modalities/timeframes (based upon the needs of various groups of educators).
- 2. Literacy Coaching.** Teachers need meaningful, personalized, ongoing support in the classroom when learning how to implement the components of the Science of Reading. Literacy coaching (on-site, virtual, or a combination) is a powerful, effective tool for providing that needed guidance. The Washburn Center for Literacy IMPACT will provide literacy coaches to teachers across the catchment area. These coaches will be highly skilled in implementing the Science of Reading in classrooms as well as being highly skilled in mentoring/guiding/coaching teachers. They will provide meaningful support to the teachers in the format, style, and approach most appropriate based upon the needs/desires of the teacher. This personalized coaching model will create a non-evaluative but impactful relationship between the teacher and the coach that will result in a positive impact on student learning. Our network of coaches can serve on-site or virtually, depending on the needs of the educators. As the number of highly effective literacy coaches grows, the Center will be able to offer more services to more educators in the catchment area.
- 3. Support for Advanced Training (Graduate Programs).** Teachers with the KBOR credential in the Science of Reading can serve as Mentor Teachers for the pre-service teachers in the literacy practicum course and will earn an additional stipend for their expertise. In addition, these Mentor Teachers will receive financial support for graduate-level coursework to earn a Reading Specialist master's degree. This recognizes the commitment to earning the KBOR

credential and serving as a Mentor Teacher to pre-service teachers by supporting their continued learning.

4. **Literacy Faculty Excellence.** Similar to most universities' campus programs to increase faculty knowledge and skills, this program will specifically target enhancing faculty knowledge/skills in literacy. This initiative will provide ongoing opportunities for faculty to learn and collaborate. The program seeks to create a sense of collegiality across institutions and an environment where faculty can grow in their own teaching and learning. "Badges" will be awarded for participation in events that demonstrate continued knowledge/application/growth in literacy education. These learning opportunities will occur regularly and consistently throughout the academic year, including but not limited to attending events, participating in local/national workshops, attending conferences, inviting faculty to review syllabi and/or classroom teaching, revising course content, etc. Badges will be awarded for participation in or leading an event during the academic year and participants will receive a list of all badges earned through the Center's program. This initiative will be open to all faculty at all universities, including independent colleges and community colleges.
5. **Science of Reading Faculty Retreat.** To provide an opportunity for faculty across Kansas to share recent research, discuss trends in educator preparation programs, form new partnerships for projects, etc. a multi-day "camp" for faculty will be held during the summer months. The camp will be partially facilitated by national experts in teacher preparation and the Science of Reading who can share the latest research in the Science of Reading, explore new approaches to in-service teacher preparation in literacy, discuss programs related to supporting in-service teachers, etc. Participants will also share their own research/knowledge to learn from colleagues across the state, identify ways to collaborate, etc.
6. **Kansas Literacy Summit.** This Summit, held annually at WU, will bring together both state and national experts in the field of literacy. Representatives from each of the state's Literacy Centers will share information from the previous year (pre-service teacher candidate program improvements/innovations, in-service educator learning opportunities and support, research on assessments and interventions, new initiatives, etc.) to learn from the other Centers around the state. In addition, national experts will be brought in to share recent research, new initiatives, etc. with the Centers for possible adoption/implementation.
7. **Kansas Literacy Excellence Podcast.** The Center will host a podcast focused on literacy in the state of Kansas, including at the universities, in the schools, in the community, throughout the catchment area, and beyond the catchment area. The podcast will be a collaboration with partners throughout the state and nation to bring both local and national information directly to the state of Kansas.



## **OUTREACH (PARTNERSHIPS AND FAMILY/STUDENT SUPPORT)**

### **Supporting Schools, Families, and Communities through Partnerships:**

Washburn University is a community-focused, mission-driven institution that maintains a strong presence and meaningful community partnerships throughout northeast Kansas. Through the Center for Literacy IMPACT, those existing community-based initiatives and partnership can be strengthened and new ones can be formed to provide stronger support for schools, families, and communities both within the catchment area and throughout the state of Kansas. The Center for Literacy IMPACT is not just a place for learning – it is designed to be a community-based sustainable network that provides ongoing support throughout the catchment area. Founded on the pillars of IMPACT (**I**nclusion, **M**odernization, **P**artnership, **A**chievement, **C**ommunity, and



Transformation), the Center will both welcome individuals to campus and meet individuals where they are. In both cases, the Center’s mission of increasing the literacy skills of those within the catchment area will be achieved through community-based partnerships and initiatives.

### **Key Partnerships:**

1. **Public Institutions across Kansas.** The Regent institutions and Washburn University will develop a Council of Directors of the Centers of Excellence in Literacy. The center directors will meet regularly to ensure knowledge across the center system, identify areas of strength, needs and places for sharing, collaboration, and partnership, and learn from each other. Particular impactful areas of focus and expertise will be shared so that duplication of services, resources can be kept to a minimum. Additionally, the Council of Directors will meet with the Regent and Washburn College/School of Education deans to ensure a focus on our common mission.


The partnership between the Regent Institutions and Washburn has been longstanding and strong. Most recently, collaboration and communication among faculty, chairs, and deans at the seven institutions has increased significantly. For example, beginning in 2022, each institution appointed a faculty member with literacy expertise to represent their institution to work collaboratively on literacy initiatives. This group of faculty (known as the “Literacy 7”) has developed professional development modules, created a common performance assessment for in-service teacher candidates, reviewed state standards, discussed recent research in literacy, and most recently, the faculty are developing the content for the KBOR micro-credential. This micro-credential is co-created by the seven institutions and will be shared among the seven institutions for dissemination to the field. The Literacy 7 communicate multiple times per week and that rigorous communication and collaboration will continue as current and new initiatives/projects occur.

Examples of additional potential partnerships include: 1) partnering with the KU Center for Research and Learning to conduct research on the simulation lab and virtual literacy coaching, 2) partnering with FHSU on creating an effective mobile unit, and 3) partnering with PSU on implementing simulated classrooms.

2. **Independent and Community Colleges.** The Washburn Center for Literacy IMPACT will collaborate with the independent college and community college located within the catchment area to support their current efforts in preparing pre-service and in-service teachers. Efforts have been made to contact both the independent college and community college in the catchment area but have been unsuccessful thus far. Washburn University is committed to working with both partners, if they so desire, and will continue to try to engage their leadership in conversation.
3. **Northeast Kansas School Districts.** In addition to current Professional Development Schools partnerships, Advisory Councils, community-based projects, etc. the Center will collaborate with all school districts within the catchment area. Each school district has been contacted and many members of the administration have expressed interest in partnering with Washburn on this initiative.



together educators and experts from across the state and nation to learn, share, and connect around supporting students with dyslexia. At that event, Washburn faculty were able to form new connections with various individuals around the state. Many of these individuals comprise organizations that make up the recently formed Kansas Reading Coalition: *The Center for Reading at Pittsburg State University*, *Decoding Dyslexia - Kansas*, *Kansas-Missouri International Dyslexia Association*, and *The Reading League – Kansas*. Washburn's Center for Literacy IMPACT looks forward to collaborating with this group as they develop programs, outreach events, etc.

7. **MIDTESOL.** The Mid-America Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages organization works to strengthen the effective teaching of English in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska to people whose native language is a language other than English while respecting their individual language rights. By partnering with this organization, Washburn can bring additional resources to the teachers, students, families, and community members of the catchment area. Partnership initiatives may include hosting a spring 2025 symposium, hosting the 2026 annual conference, connecting pre-service and in-service educators with ELL coaches, etc. 
8. **Northeast Kansas Early Childhood Programs.** Throughout the catchment area, there are programs and organizations focused on supporting early childhood learning and development. This includes programs in school districts, community organizations (such as the local library or youth center), and childcare facilities. The Center will partner with these organizations to provide resources and support for the early literacy programs already established or newly created throughout the catchment area. This may include Center personnel modeling oral language development strategies and activities at the partner location, Center personnel training partners in early literacy assessments to understand both the why and how of administration as well as analyzing each individual child's results to inform instruction/activities. In addition, programs such as the Thirty Million Word Project (TMWP) can be implemented in communities where appropriate to help strengthen families' understanding and involvement in their child's oral language development and literacy growth. This partnership will also include pre-service teacher education students at Washburn. Through their coursework, they learn about the purposes and administration of early literacy assessments as well as the TMWP. Therefore, pre-service candidates can learn about the assessments in their coursework and observe the training/discussion that occurs between the faculty and community partner and assist in the administration and analysis of the assessments. Further, pre-service candidates can participate in the implementation of the TMWP in communities over the course of an academic year.
9. **Community Organizations.** Throughout the catchment area, there are established community organizations that provide support to schools, families, and the community as a whole. The Center will become a partner with these community organizations to provide resources/programs to the community based upon the needs of the individuals in that area. Many partnerships are already established while others will be developed as the work of the Center's plans develop. These partnerships/initiatives may include, but are not limited to:
  - a. **Partnering with SENT Topeka's community-based model** of wraparound services (literacy, food insecurity, mental health, physical health, housing) to replicate the model in other areas of northeast Kansas. (If desired, please search online for "SENT Topeka" for more information.)

- b. **Hosting Family Literacy Days** at community centers or local educational partners with a focus on literacy and STEM activities for children/adolescents and resources for parents. Once established, these sites/events would be ongoing in the community with local volunteers (both in and outside of the field of education). Washburn’s Center personnel would develop each event’s activities and provide training, materials, etc. to volunteers throughout the catchment area so that the events can be implemented (with Center personnel onsite as needed).
- c. **Hosting Literacy/STEM Camps** for children during the summer focused on early literacy (K-3) through fun STEM activities (robotics, engineering, chemistry, etc.). This camp will be at no-cost to the attendees and each child would receive three meals a day in addition to all of the literacy/STEM learning opportunities. The Washburn University Department of Education has held a STEM camp for middle school students for 9 years, so we are well equipped to host another similar camp. In addition, this camp could be held on campus, but could also be hosted at various sites in the catchment area (and/or around the state). This “mobile camp” format provides an opportunity for camps to be held throughout the summer in areas where accessibility to this type of learning experience is limited. This camp will come to the children rather than requiring the children to come to the camp.
- d. **Hosting Literacy and Laundry Days** to reach families while supporting a basic need. By acquiring a mobile laundry unit or partnering with local laundromats, families can do their laundry at no-cost and while they are waiting, children can engage in hands-on literacy activities and parents can learn about how they can support literacy skills. To establish sustainability, we will partner with local community groups to participate as well (such as the local library or early literacy programs) so that families connect with local resources as well. These local groups can then host the Literacy and Laundry events (with continued support from the Center or other partners). Research at NYU evaluated the effectiveness of the use of laundromats to support early literacy development in urban areas. The findings overwhelmingly showed that laundromats can serve as an important environment for early literacy development, noting that children were observed engaging in 30 times more literacy activities in laundromats with literacy supports than laundromats without literacy supports; when librarians participated, children engaged in substantial and sustained literacy activities (the average stay per child was 47 minutes); parents observed librarians modeling a rich array of literacy activities and expressed their enthusiasm for the literacy spaces and librarians’ visits, etc. If desired, please search online for “Laundromats Support Early Literacy, Finds NYU Steinhardt Professor” for more information.
- e. **Removing the language barrier** through the use of real-time translators to more fully engage with families throughout the catchment area. As noted, pre-service teacher candidates often have the opportunity to work with English Language Learners (ELL students) in area schools during field experiences and beyond. To support effective and inclusive communication, the Department of Education obtained Timekettle devices for bi-directional, simultaneous translation for pre-service teacher education candidates to use to bridge the communication gap among the candidate, students, parents, etc. These devices have already shown a positive impact on communication and relationships when used by our pre-service teacher



candidates. To meet the diverse language needs of the entire catchment area, additional devices are needed. These earbuds (that instantly translate 40 language and 93 dialects) can be used at community events, at parent-teacher conferences, at the local libraries, etc. to increase natural communication and inclusivity in events. (If desired, please search “Timekettle WT2 Edge: World's 1st Bi-directional Simultaneous Translation Earbuds” to watch a video explaining all of the features of this device.)



## QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM (MEASURES)

### Washburn University Quality Assurance System

The Washburn University Department of Education maintains a Quality Assurance System (QAS) that enables successful quality control and meaningful continuous improvement. This is an ongoing, collaborative system of data collection, analysis, sharing, and decision-making that occurs purposefully and systematically. This occurs at both the initial and advanced levels in accordance with the QAS Calendar. The QAS is comprised of three distinct but connected components: 1) Data Collection, 2) Data Analysis, and 3) Data Reporting.

**Data Collection.** Key assessment evidence is collected, reported, analyzed, and shared at three distinct levels: 1) Unit Level, 2) Program Level, and 3) Candidate Level. As the first step in the process, data collection must be efficient, purposeful, and systematic.

- 1) Unit Level. The Department collects data at the unit level to provide data of candidate performance and program areas of strength/areas for improvement.
- 2) Program Level. To ensure that data can be analyzed to determine strengths and area for improvement in individual areas, data is collected by program.
- 3) Candidate Level. To monitor and support candidates as they progress through the program, data is collected at the candidate level.

To ensure accurate and complete collection of data, the department utilizes several resources, including the University’s Strategic Analysis, Research, and Reporting Department, the Dynamic Forms tools, the University Banner system, the Education Data Management System, the University’s Navigate system, and the University’s shared network drive.

**Data Analysis.** The second component of the QAS is Data Analysis. Once data is collected and reported, it is analyzed so that informed decisions can be made to strengthen the programs, processes, and procedures. Data is analyzed in a collaborative, systematic, and ongoing manner. Each faculty member is a member of the Assessment Committee led by the Assessment Coordinator. All key assessment data is initially analyzed by specific faculty members and then with the remaining faculty members at Assessment Committee meetings during the next step in the QAS.

**Data Sharing.** The department has a systematic and detailed schedule for data sharing with faculty, colleagues, partners, and stakeholders to ensure consistency, depth, and data-driven decision making: Assessment Retreats and Faculty Meetings, Annual Program Reports, University Teacher Education Committee Meetings, Advisory Council Meetings, and Stakeholder and Partner Meetings/Events.

This intense focus on improving the initial and advanced programs through a strong QAS allows for data collection, reporting, analysis, and sharing as a collaborative task that includes faculty, staff, and additional partners. The Center will use this existing structure to develop its own QAS to ensure data collection, data analysis, and data sharing in a systematic manner to inform changes to programs/initiatives.