

THE Decoder

THE VOICE OF THE WILSON COMMUNITY



WILSON THROUGH THE YEARS: MEETING CRITICAL NEED

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The Decoder is published by Wilson Language Training, a leader in multisensory structured language instruction, dedicated to providing educators with the resources needed to help students become fluent, independent readers.

Dear Friends,

We face this new academic year with hope and determination as we continue to navigate ongoing pandemic challenges.

The science of reading has been at the forefront of the educational landscape for several years now. Encouraged by the grassroots movement urging lawmakers to help students with dyslexia, states are adopting legislation requiring reading instruction that reflects how children learn to read. This shift has increased demand for research-based reading programs offering explicit phonics instruction. Learning loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic has spurred this momentum. Wilson's programs and professional learning have always been grounded in the science of reading, effective instructional principles, and implementation science. More and more schools, learning centers, and parents have turned to Wilson to help their struggling readers. You'll see examples of our ongoing commitment in the following pages.



The cover article highlights the Wilson Language Training® story—where we started and where we're going. Through our commitment to implementation science and comprehensive professional learning, we've been putting structured literacy into practice for 35 years. Today, there's an even greater need to bring this instruction to classrooms nationwide. Find out how we're meeting that call—by growing our teams, partnering with Alpine Investors, and welcoming a new Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Keri Dixon.

Next, we invite you to meet Keri. With a background in business strategy and marketing, as well as experience in an executive role where she led a staff of over 1,000, Keri is poised to help Wilson expand as our programs, products, and services face growing demand.

Our professional learning feature explains how Wilson's virtual workshop offerings were developed during the pandemic. These have proven so effective (and requested) that we continue to offer them. As a result, we can now provide training to distant and remote areas in a manner aligned with implementation science and effective practices.

More happy news follows with an update about several states that have reviewed and added Foundations® and Geodes® to their lists of approved programs, either separately or as a combined package. Then, read about the Higher Education/Academic and Accredited Partners Wilson has welcomed since 2021.

You will also meet the educators of Columbia Public Schools in Missouri who successfully implemented Just Words®; celebrate the achievements of three teachers from the Medford Area Public School District in Wisconsin; and learn about Juan, Michael, Bea, and Deanna, who have achieved reading fluency.

Finally, with gratitude, we celebrate the life of one of our original Wilson Trainers, Margaret Logue, who certified hundreds of teachers in the Wilson Reading System® (WRS) while generously sharing her instructional knowledge and dyslexia experience with teachers and trainers across the country. She is truly missed.

We trust you'll enjoy this issue and hope you'll find inspiration in the many accomplishments of the Wilson community.

Sincerely,

Barbara & Ed Wilson

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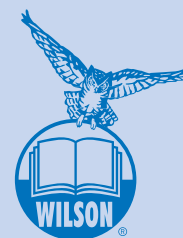
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WILSON THROUGH THE YEARS: MEETING CRITICAL NEED



Barbara supporting participants at an early Wilson training.

Wilson Language Training® (WLT) looks quite different now compared to its beginning days with founders Barbara and Ed Wilson more than thirty-five years ago. Despite decades of growth and change, two important things remain the same: the vision of “Literacy for All” and the mission to

provide educators with the knowledge, tools, and support they need to help their students become fluent, independent readers.

Addressing Dyslexia in the Early Years

In the early 1980s, Barbara worked in a school district conducting educational assessments for children referred for special education services. At the time, she realized that the teachers in the district, including herself, did not know how to instruct the students who struggled with reading. That led her to a yearlong training in the Orton-Gillingham methodology at the Massachusetts General Hospital Language Disorders Unit.

There, Barbara discovered the tenets of structured literacy, although it was not yet called that. Following that year, Barbara was offered a position at the Language Disorders Unit working with adults diagnosed with dyslexia. While doing that part time, Barbara and her husband, Ed, also founded the Wilson Learning Center for students of all ages who struggled with reading, and Barbara wrote the first edition of the Wilson Reading System® (WRS), published in 1987.

In that same year, responding to parents’ requests, a consortium of ten school districts located near the Center asked Barbara to train their teachers. After working with several of these districts, the Wilsons realized that a dedicated commitment to teacher training in public schools was needed so that all children could benefit from structured literacy. Barbara developed the WRS certification process, closed the Learning Center in 1992, and started Wilson Language Training with the mission of doing just that.

Initially, the Wilson certification process was often brought into a school district because of a due process hearing to avoid an outside placement. For example, Wilson might be contacted to

assist with a student in 8th grade who was reading at a 2nd grade reading level. Throughout the 1990s, the work with districts was conducted with special educators who were working with students with dyslexia (although during that time very few students were given that diagnosis).

Expanding Work in Schools

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the reading research effort led by Dr. Reid Lyon at NICHD demonstrated that all students benefited from the type of teaching that is now called Structured Literacy. Wilson Language Training began its work with kindergarten to third-grade teachers to help them teach the foundational skills of decoding, spelling, and handwriting to all their students using a comprehensive structured literacy approach. In 2002, the Foundations® program was published and our training expanded to help teachers instruct all students according to the reading research (the Science of Reading). In 2009, the Just Words® program was published to help older students who lacked access to systematic instruction in earlier grades, and consequently, needed accelerated word study support to learn to read and spell successfully.

Now in its fourth edition, WRS continues to provide a systematic, integrated, and comprehensive approach to teaching literacy to students with significant reading and writing challenges. We are honored that WRS Level I and II Certification programs are accredited by the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) as an Independent Teacher Training Program for students with dyslexia.



Teaching Teachers

From the start, the Wilson team knew schools would be required to shift away from the predominant approach to reading instruction including strategies such as memorization, guessing words from context, and learning to read from repeated exposure to books. Additionally, both teachers and students were often taught that the English language had more exceptions than rules, which set up struggling readers for failure. Wilson instruction demonstrates that English is a structured language; learning how it works is key to learning to read for many students, and critical for those with dyslexia.

Today, Wilson's professional learning opportunities have reached all 50 states and ten countries. More than 333,000 teachers have participated in WLT workshops and courses, and over 27,000 individuals have earned Level I Certification. Wilson remains dedicated to student learning by leveraging educator and administrator leadership.



Demand for Wilson professional learning opportunities have increased substantially in recent years. Some of these requests come from distant and remote locations where Wilson can't logistically provide in-person trainings. Additionally, when the COVID-19 pandemic made in-person meetings impossible, Wilson expanded its online training and support. Wilson now provides varied combinations of in-person and synchronous and asynchronous virtual training. Our new Virtual Implementation Support (VIS) portal provides additional professional learning and support to educators after their initial Foundations® and Just Words® workshops during their first year of instruction.

Implementation Science and Ongoing Support

For implementation to be effective, teachers must have professional learning, coaching, and administrators who are invested in the process.

Through the decades, Barbara, Ed, and the Wilson team recognized the goals for districts adopting Wilson programs were sustainability and the maximization of student success. In 2011, Wilson adopted the principles of implementation science at the core of its planning with districts. This process is called COMPASS—Comprehensive Plans for Achieving Success and Sustainability.

Sustainability refers to the capacity to independently use and support Wilson programs by developing Facilitators and Presenters for Foundations and Just Words, as well as teachers and trainers credentialed in WRS. Specifically, implementation science guides the introduction of literacy interventions in a manner that allows schools, districts, and their students to realize the benefits of the intervention and then sustain those benefits over time. Wilson does this by collaborating with administrators and educators to ensure that all steps necessary for effective program implementation (e.g., workshops/courses and coaching) are appropriately incorporated during the school year. The steps outlined for each district's implementation team are described in their individual COMPASS Plans.



Districts participating in COMPASS have the assistance of Wilson implementation coordinators, Literacy Advisors, and Literacy Specialists who empower educators to support their teams and eventually establish self-sustaining capacity.

To offer ongoing resources and supports for educators, Wilson Academy® was established in 2003. This online teaching community and instructional resource library continues to offer video demonstrations, printable classroom materials, text passages, lesson planning guidance, and other valuable teaching aids. When the COVID-19 pandemic caused school closures in 2020, Wilson Academy was used to support remote literacy instruction, coupled with a new resource for Foundations teachers—the Virtual Resource Hub (FUN HUB®). Expanding on the idea of Wilson Academy, the FUN HUB contains digital teacher's manual access, targeted practice support, interactive activities for the virtual classroom, and video demonstrations of new concepts.

Partnerships for Success

As requests for Wilson workshops, courses, ongoing support, and certification programs continue to increase, Wilson has grown its capacity by collaborating with outside organizations that share the same commitment to effective Wilson professional learning and certification. Since 2003, Wilson® Accredited Partners have supported our reach by delivering high-quality training in our programs—the same offerings we provide ourselves and with the same focus on results.


Moreover, since 2006, Wilson has teamed up with colleges and universities to prepare teachers to work with struggling readers. Wilson Higher Education Partners offer specialized programs where educators earn WRS Level I Certification as part of their M.Ed. program. This ensures that future teachers receive authentic professional learning so that they can maintain the integrity and fidelity of Wilson’s programs when using them in the field.

To continue meeting the heightened demands for Wilson professional learning opportunities, research-based programs, and high-impact products, Wilson partnered with Alpine

Investors in early 2022. With Alpine’s support, Wilson is poised to meet increasing demand and maintain the utmost quality, thereby upholding the company’s mission.

Following the Alpine partnership, Wilson welcomed its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Keri Dixon, in June. Keri is a graduate of Stanford University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). She works alongside Barbara, Ed, and the leadership team ensuring that Wilson continues to provide our acclaimed curricula, products, and professional learning to an ever-increasing number of educators, schools, and districts. To learn more about Keri, please see her letter below.

Ever Evolving

For the last 35 years, Wilson has answered the call for effective reading instruction and professional learning. As the need for both increases stateside and beyond, Wilson continues to grow and develop to meet that call. Much has changed since its earliest days, but Wilson’s mission remains the same as we work to achieve our vision of “Literacy for All.” 

FROM THE CEO




Dear Wilson Community,

In recent years, Wilson’s professional learning opportunities and programs have reached more teachers than ever before. As a result, we’re growing our impact across the country so teachers are equipped with the knowledge and training they need to ensure their students succeed in acquiring critical reading skills necessary for a secure future. This unprecedented demand for our curricula, products, and professional learning services is increasing because of new dyslexia legislation, the recognition of the science of reading, and the need to address learning gaps caused by pandemic-era disrupted learning.

There’s still much work to be done to reach the growing number of teachers and students who need our help nationwide. We’re ready to answer the call for critical foundational reading and spelling skills

for all children, including those negatively affected by COVID-19-related school closures, as well as for intensive intervention for students with dyslexia and other language-based learning challenges.

I’m pleased to join Wilson as Chief Executive Officer at this exciting time and eager to help expand the organization’s reach. By partnering with the many minds behind Wilson’s success, I feel confident we’ll continue growing our ability to make literacy a reality for individuals across the country. That said, I look forward to the future, specifically working with Barbara and Ed, Wilson’s dedicated employees, and all of you in the field to bring about our shared vision of “Literacy for All.” 

Sincerely,

Keri Dixon

Chief Executive Officer

GET TO KNOW THE FOUNDATIONS® PRE-K ACTIVITY SET

Wilson® offers the Foundations Pre-K Activity Set to accompany preschool classroom literacy instruction. Wilson's commitment to "Literacy for All" extends to the youngest learners, providing materials for explicit, systematic, multisensory instruction that helps to establish the foundations of lifelong literacy.



Key Features

The Pre-K Activity Set introduces the letter-sound and writing skills that are taught to mastery in Foundations Level K. Although not intended to provide a full pre-k literacy curriculum, skills taught align with those that the Report of the National Early Literacy Panel (2008) identified as strong and consistent predictors for later literacy development. Additionally, the Pre-K Activity Set strongly supports the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (2015).

Instruction

Instruction is divided into two semesters. The first semester is conducted in a whole-class setting and centers on teaching the alphabetic principle of letter-sound correspondence. Students practice: recognition of alphabetical order of letters a-z; letter-sound correspondence; and visual connection between a letter's name, its sounds, and its grapheme (written representation).

During the second semester of Foundations Pre-K, further development of letter-sound correspondence (alphabetic principle) continues in a whole-class setting, and letter formation skills are introduced in small groups. Students practice: letter formation for lowercase letters; letter formation for uppercase letters; and association of a sound with a letter that is written.

Although the amount of time needed for Foundations Pre-K daily activities varies, it typically takes about 10-15 minutes for whole-group instruction and an additional 5-10 minutes for small-group instruction, which is added in the spring.

For more information about the Foundations Pre-K Activity Set, we invite you to visit <https://tinyurl.com/PreKSet>. ↪

GET TO KNOW COMPREHENSION S.O.S.™ FOR FOUNDATIONS®

While Foundations® is designed to be paired with a core English language arts program, it includes a key feature that teaches students to think actively while reading and to self-monitor for understanding. Called "Comprehension S.O.S.™" (Stop-Orient-Scaffold/Support), this instruction is a teacher-led interactive discussion about written text.

With Comprehension S.O.S., students listen to or read a text and the teacher intermittently stops and interacts with students to support their understanding of that text. Goals of this process include: student engagement to establish a deep understanding of content; smooth, natural discussion and explanation of vocabulary, idioms, and phrases within content; demonstration of "thinking while reading" by showing students how to engage interactively with text to make it come alive; and monitoring of students' understanding by stopping, checking, and showing them how to say, "Do I get this?" Students should eventually be able to tell you exactly where they're confused and what they can "see" and not "see" in a story.

Comprehension S.O.S. activities always conclude with student retelling of the story or information that has been read. This

is a critical skill that must be developed. Retelling confirms and solidifies understanding. It also improves a student's oral language skill.

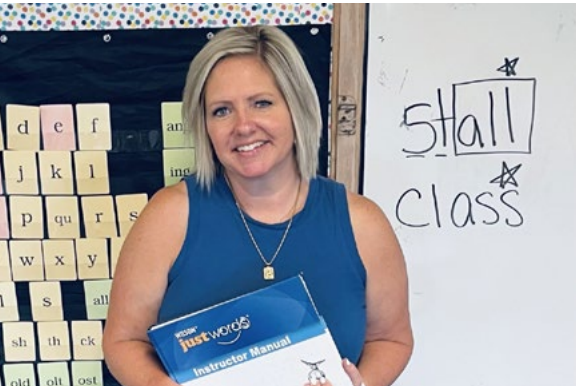
Retelling begins in Level K. Students follow gestures and picture notes to assist their oral retell of story events. Starting in Level 1, students use mental imagery or visualization to help guide their words for retelling. Teachers model and assist them with paraphrasing and the retelling of longer passage and story segments.

In Levels 1 and 2, students receive direct and explicit instruction to create mental images with simple decodable passages. Students learn how to use their working memory to hold several words and sentences in mind and to process, understand, and recall them. Students retell the stories in their own words.

Please see the "Skills Taught in Foundations" section of the Levels K-3 Teacher's Manuals to learn more about Comprehension S.O.S.™. ↪

INVESTING IN STUDENTS AND TEACHERS YIELDS GREAT RETURNS

When Kristi Shinn, director of curriculum and instruction, joined Columbia Public Schools seven years ago, middle school students showed significant gaps in basic reading skills with some reading three years behind grade level.



*Just Words Facilitator and Presenter,
Chrissy McCormick*

These gaps could have come from a lack of consistent, systematic reading instruction. A sanctuary city, Columbia's large transient and refugee populations move around often, causing many children to miss out on key foundational reading skills. As a result, many sixth and seventh graders struggled to read and needed a push in the right direction. Many of the district's middle school teachers were not prepared to teach basic reading. Just Words® was brought in to address this need.

Kristi, who previously taught middle school, says, "If kids showed up in my seventh-grade class unable to read, I didn't know how to teach them to read. I studied Shakespeare and the classics. I didn't know what it meant to decode. I didn't have any strategies. Just Words provided the strategies."

Kristi continues, "We made a collective commitment not just to adopt Wilson Reading System for Tier 3 or Foundations for Tier 1. We made the collective commitment that we needed a [district-wide] vocabulary of literacy instruction."

With the support of Wilson® Credentialed Trainer, Shari Barr, the Columbia middle schools began implementing Just Words as a Tier 2 intervention during the 2018–2019 school year. When the position became available, Chrissy McCormick accepted the role of instructional mentor, completing her Just Words training with Shari's support, as well. Additionally, Chrissy earned her Just Words Facilitator and Presenter certifications to provide support and training to other Just Words teachers.

"We had excellent training with Shari," Chrissy says. "We have such a strong foundation now in the science of reading in our district, from elementary up. We're closing learning gaps. It's a culture we've built around this priority."

As implementation began, the district's seven middle schools recognized an overwhelmingly high need for instruction—more than the few dedicated reading specialists could meet. The schools opted to allocate time in the school schedule for Just Words instruction by offering it as an elective class. The class was not only open to English language learners or students with IEPs, but all students.

"We were able to make it an elective, and these kids could have time to take care of their reading needs without missing core grade-level content," Chrissy explains. Although building the program into the course schedule was difficult, it was essential to prioritize reading interventions for students who needed them.

A testament to the effectiveness of Just Words in Columbia middle schools, the district experienced less learning loss in reading than expected during the COVID-19 pandemic. The team adapted their teaching to a virtual setting and dealt with multiple school closures. Columbia's dedicated, trained, and well-supported teachers continued to provide Just Words instruction with fidelity and kept students on track.

Three years later, Columbia Public Schools are heading into the 2022–2023 school year with all seven middle schools offering Just Words. The district is also using Foundations® across its elementary schools, and teachers are finding that many students now have the necessary foundational skills needed for success. All students receive the same reading instruction opportunities, no matter which schools they attend.

"The effects trickle up," Kristi says.

Kristi emphasizes the importance of fully implementing Just Words with fidelity and training teacher-leaders in the schools. Teacher turnover is common, and having someone in the district train and support new and established teachers is vital.

"This is an investment," she says. "It's an investment in your kids; it's an investment in your teachers."

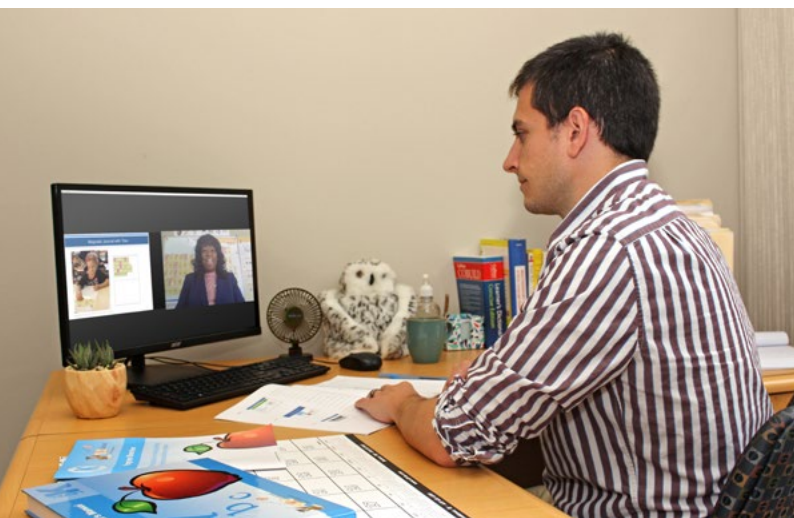
We have such a strong foundation now in the science of reading in our district, from elementary up. We're closing learning gaps. It's a culture we've built around this priority.

The Wilson team wishes the educators and students at Columbia Public Schools all the best for the school year and applauds the efforts of Kristi, Chrissy, and their team to ensure literacy for all! 🌟

REIMAGINING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING DURING THE PANDEMIC

Pilot Study Leads to Expanded Training Opportunities Nationwide

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, educators had to quickly pivot to remote learning. Aware of the difficulties this caused, instructional support was top of mind at Wilson®. First, we acknowledged that program implementation happens differently when teachers and students connect online. This was followed by the realization that professional learning opportunities were needed to support teachers as they navigated these unique implementations. And in keeping with safety protocols, that professional learning also had to be virtual in nature. Wilson rose to the challenge and created a system for virtual professional learning that was piloted, tested, and found to be effective in helping administrators and teachers support students in virtual classrooms and feel successful with the instruction they provided.



What was the Pilot Study?

Comprehensive professional learning has long been a focus at Wilson. We wanted to offer the same quality expected from our in-person workshops and trainings—but in a virtual setting. That meant setting up participating educators (both administrators and teachers) for success by supporting their readiness to implement a literacy program, expanding their ability to monitor fidelity of implementation, and encouraging their commitment to continuous improvement. How could we accomplish this over the internet? Enter Wilson's pilot study on remote professional learning.

As planning for the pilot study began, it was obvious that positive findings about our online professional learning would have an exciting additional benefit beyond pandemic learning: Wilson could eventually offer virtual options on a larger scale and reach educators in distant and remote locations.

The yearlong pilot study took place during the 2020-2021 school year, focused on the Foundations® program, and followed the Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) cycle of implementation science. This trial-and-learn framework allowed our research team to accomplish two things: examine our existing professional learning practices and then adapt them for effective use in a virtual setting.

Four school districts—two that were implementing Foundations for the first time and two that were in their fifth year or later of implementation—participated in the study and the four components listed below were provided to all of them:

1. A Foundations Virtual Launch Workshop
2. Virtual Implementation Support (VIS) sessions for teachers via online conferencing/meetings throughout the year
3. The Wilson Implementation Network for Principals (WIN Prin)—virtual meetings held throughout the year
4. A monthly bulletin and free access to the Foundations Virtual Resource Hub (FUN HUB®)

Specific activities and resources were created (and housed in our first iteration of the FUN HUB) to help participating educators with their remote program implementation. Wilson researchers were able to gather feedback about these resources from both teachers and administrators.

How Was Data Collected?

Teachers and administrators completed a pre-evaluation survey to determine how ready they were to implement the Foundations program. Teachers and administrators then attended a Virtual Launch Workshop and received Virtual Implementation Support (VIS) while principals engaged in WIN Prin. A focus group with members from each district was conducted mid-year and at the end of the year. A final post-evaluation survey was also conducted. The collection of participant feedback and data throughout the year helped determine how effectively each of the four components supported Foundations implementation. Additionally, end-of-the-year student data was also collected.

What Were the Findings?

We're pleased to report that by the end of the pilot study, the results were clear: effective Foundations implementation (even in a virtual setting) could be achieved through this systematic approach that included ongoing education, modeling, and support.

We also discovered that administrators expanded their literacy knowledge, gaining confidence and an understanding of how to implement Foundations with fidelity. One principal from Florida noted:

The support that we have had as administrators is very unique. It is something I've never experienced. You know, delving into any curriculum over the course of my career and having this level of administrative support, it just hasn't happened.

Best of all, according to student assessment data, participating districts saw limited to no change in achievement over the two years of the COVID-19 pandemic, avoiding learning loss so prevalent across the country.


In the evaluation surveys we collected from participating educators, we noticed a recurring sentiment: continuous access to tools and resources combined with ongoing coaching helped them limit gaps in their virtual instruction and keep students engaged. One participant wrote:

There's just a plethora of support this year. This special type of learning (virtual networks) was necessary for this school year. There was so much knowledge that we [teacher and literacy specialist] were sharing through the virtual presentation.

What Does This Mean for You?

In the end, the pilot study proved helpful for several reasons. It revealed opportunities for the expansion of Wilson professional learning and confirmed a way to effectively support administrators and educators remotely.

Each of the four participating districts, while having varying Foundations experience, overwhelmingly improved their ability to access professional learning, ongoing coaching and support, and professional networks due to virtual access. Additionally, educators' readiness and ability to implement Foundations with fidelity were as strong in a virtual environment as in a face-to-face setting.

What does this success mean for the immediate future? With our virtual launch and intervention workshops, Virtual Implementation Support (VIS), and other virtual supports, Wilson is now ready to offer more virtual professional learning opportunities. In fact, we currently have teachers in remote locations such as: Metlakatla, AK; Garden City, ID; Greybull, WY; and Clarksburg, WV, earning their certifications or accessing learning support. Wilson looks forward to digitally connecting with new teachers and administrators all over the country to support the achievement of their literacy goals. 

WILSON® PILOT STUDY SCHOOL RECEIVES NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON DESIGNATION

Congratulations to Fort Barton Elementary School in Tiverton, RI, for its 2022 designation as a National Blue Ribbon School.




The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program recognizes outstanding public and private schools across the country. The program celebrates academic excellence, positive transformation, and success in closing achievement gaps.

Fort Barton School, led by Assistant Superintendent and Principal Amy Donnelly-Roche, was designated as an Exemplary High Performing School. During the 2020-2021 school year and the

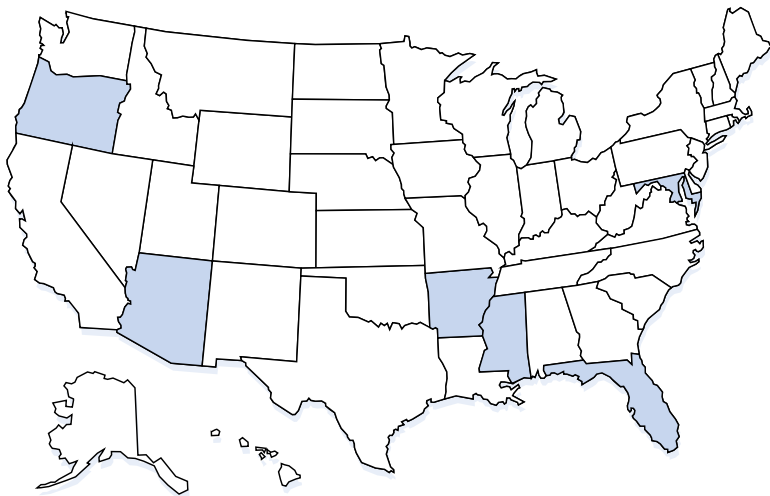
COVID-19 pandemic, the Rhode Island school was one of four schools that participated in Wilson's virtual professional learning pilot study (see pages 8-9 for study details). While other schools in the state experienced declining performance, results from the study demonstrated that Fort Barton School maintained its student reading achievement on norm-referenced tests during the first two years of the pandemic. School officials reported that this consistent achievement was due in part to Foundations® implementation and the direct support educators and administrators received.

In response to receiving this distinguished designation, Principal Amy Donnelly Roche says, "This is a 'WE' award. It's quite an honor and it speaks to the hard work of Fort Barton's educators and students. They deserve this recognition."

Well done, Fort Barton Elementary School—keep up the great work! 

UPDATE: WILSON® AND RECENT STATE READING INITIATIVES

Many schools and districts can select and use supplemental reading programs that meet their needs without drawing from a state-approved list. However, there has been an uptick in the number of states conducting reviews of supplemental and intervention programs. Along these lines, the Wilson® community has exciting news to share!



To facilitate the use of our programs more broadly, we've started to engage in program reviews across the country. Our success in these rigorous reviews reinforces that our programs and professional learning align with states' instructional standards, expectations of quality, and research.

In some states, we are participating in core English Language Arts (ELA) textbook reviews in partnership with Great Minds®. This allows educators to have the opportunity to adopt a comprehensive core program that offers a high-quality, knowledge-building curriculum—Wit & Wisdom®—alongside a thorough and effective foundational skills curriculum—Foundations®.

While our state-level adoption work is just beginning, we want to remind you that many states allow the pairing of supplemental and intervention programs like Foundations, Just Words®, and the Wilson Reading System® (WRS) alongside core ELA programs

without going through an approval process. This pairing ensures the use of high-quality materials and curricula that are grounded in the science of reading and in alignment with state standards. Teacher and student success depend on careful selection of literacy programs and effective instruction, so we are pleased to be involved in this work and honored to provide the updates below.

Arizona: The combined package of Foundations with Geodes® and Wit & Wisdom by Great Minds is listed as a “green” rated Core Reading Program that meets all requirements to be used within a Move On When Reading (MOWR) Literacy Plan. Foundations is also identified independently as a “green” rated Supplemental/ Intervention Program in K-3, and WRS is listed as a “green” rated Intervention Program for grades 2-8.

Arkansas: Foundations is an Approved Science of Reading Program in phonics, aligned with the state's Right to Read Act. Geodes has also been designated as an Approved Resource in the areas of phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Florida: The combined package of Foundations, Geodes, and Wit & Wisdom by Great Minds was approved by the Florida Department of Education as an ELA textbook that schools may adopt to meet state learning guidelines. This combination also meets Florida's Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) Standards for grades K-2.

Mississippi: Foundations, in combination with Great Minds' core reading program Wit & Wisdom, is on the list of ELA textbooks that schools may adopt to meet state learning guidelines.

Maryland: Wilson Language Training® (WLT) is pleased to be a Maryland Leads Partner in the Science of Reading category for Foundations, Just Words, and WRS professional learning and materials.

Oregon: The Oregon Department of Education reviewed and approved the combined package of Foundations with Geodes and Wit & Wisdom by Great Minds as an ELA textbook that Oregon schools can adopt to meet state learning guidelines. ↻

WELCOMING OUR 2021–2022 WILSON PARTNERS

Wilson Language Training® is pleased to announce its newest Higher Education and Accredited Partners for 2021–2022. Wilson® Higher Education Partners and Wilson® Accredited Partners help us meet the ever-growing demand for Wilson's programs and high-quality professional learning.

Higher Education Partners

Our Higher Education Partners allow educators to pursue a Master of Education degree while gaining Wilson Reading System® (WRS) Level I Certification as part of their graduate-level program or as a separate certificate program. Participants gain the experience, knowledge, and skills to identify and assist struggling readers and those with language-based learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, to become fluent, independent readers.

ASHLAND UNIVERSITY **Ashland University, Ashland, OH:** This university offers a freestanding, 10-credit certificate in WRS. While the certificate program does not count toward a master's degree, those who complete it will receive college credit. WRS instruction is a powerful resource for teachers seeking to follow the Ohio Department of Education's Third Grade Reading Guarantee, a program designed to identify and help struggling readers in kindergarten through third grade.



Providence College, Providence, RI: New this fall, Providence College offers a Master of Education in Special Education with Dyslexia Credential. It also includes a 10-credit sequence leading to Wilson Reading System (WRS) Level I Certification and eligibility for the Wilson® Dyslexia Practitioner (W.D.P.) credential. Dr. Marcy Zipke, professor and co-editor in chief of the *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, directs the 24-credit program.

Accredited Partners

Accredited Partners are schools or educationally focused institutions authorized to offer professional learning opportunities. A credentialed Foundations® Presenter, Just Words® Presenter, or Wilson® Credentialed Trainer (W.C.T.) is on staff or under contract with the partner to deliver professional learning.



Fitchburg State University, Center for Professional Studies, Fitchburg, MA: This partner now offers area schools and individuals the opportunity to register for Wilson professional learning or to contract for training, either in person or virtually. Director of Extended Campus and Professional Studies, Lisa Moison, will lead the expansion. Lisa's assistant, Tracy McGrath, will serve as Partner Administrator.



Delaware County Intermediate Unit, Morton, PA: Delaware County Intermediate Unit (DCIU) serves more than 69,000 school-aged children and more than 6,000 educators on a regional basis. More than 15,000 students enrolled in DCIU's Special Programs, Career, and Technical Education and specialized programs receive direct instruction. Wilson® Credentialed Trainer Dee Lippincott provides WRS professional learning at the Marple Education Service Center in Broomall, PA.



Springer School and Center, Cincinnati, OH: Led by Executive Director Brett Marcoux, Springer School and Center educates professionals, offers parent workshops, and provides services for children with learning disabilities. It provides many professional learning opportunities through scholarships and uses a holistic approach to educate and support learners. The team providing Wilson professional learning includes Curriculum Director Diane Houghton, Center Director Lisa Bruns, and Director of Learning Programs Carmen Mendoza.



Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio, Independence, OH: The Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio provides individualized support for 47 school districts in five counties with 30,000 educators and 250,000 students through city/county services, fiscal management, contract services, direct program services, consortium and cooperatives, and interagency programs across many fields of education. Paula Kucinic, director of professional development and instructional technology, is senior partner administrator; her assistant, Mary Pramik, serves as partner administrator.



Apples of Gold Center for Learning, Pella, IA: Apples of Gold Center for Learning provides educational services and individualized programs for students from preschool through adulthood providing WRS instruction. Elizabeth Hoksbergen, Ed.S., serves both as the executive director of assessment and education services and Wilson® Credentialed Trainer (W.C.T.).

FROM RELUCTANT STUDENT TO VORACIOUS READER

In two years, Beatrice (known as Bea) went from unable to read to devouring *Nancy Drew* books. However, Bea, a sixth grader from Illinois, isn't just a fan of mysteries—she enjoys a wide variety of genres.

This wasn't always the case. In third grade, Bea struggled with reading. By fourth grade, her literacy challenges led her to Wilson® Dyslexia Practitioner (W.D.P.) and tutor Allison Kay.

"I went to Bea's house at the beginning of the pandemic," says Allison. "We met twice a week. I wore a mask, but when you're working with students with dyslexia, they need to see your face and mouth."

The pair transitioned to remote lessons and later adopted a mix of in-person and video conferences, eventually completing Step 12 of the Wilson Reading System® (WRS).

Bea didn't understand the relationship between graphemes and phonemes or how to divide multisyllabic words.




Rising sixth grader Bea can't get enough of reading these days.

"Bea knew the sounds of the alphabet but couldn't use them to identify or make closed-syllable words," recalls Allison. "I taught her a lesson, we reviewed it, and Bea taught the lesson back to me," Allison explains. "Each time we met, we repeated this pattern."

Bea soon demonstrated progress. In the beginning of her journey, she never wanted to read aloud, but soon began to enjoy the activity as her literacy skills increased.

Since completing WRS, Bea has become a strong reader. She continues to meet with Allison every week to work on comprehension. The remainder of the time, Bea reads aloud.

The biggest change is that Bea genuinely loves reading; she'll come home from the library with 20 books.

"She has turned into a voracious reader," says Allison. "She reads everything, but *Nancy Drew* and the *Friendship List Series* by Lisa Greenwald are her favorite." 

WILSON READING SYSTEM® (WRS) STUDENT GRADUATES WITH TEACHER'S SUPPORT

While wearing her cap and gown, graduating senior Deanna joined a processional through her Ohio elementary school as part of a Jefferson Area Local School District tradition. Cheered on by the younger students, Deanna sought out her Wilson Reading System® (WRS) teacher, Karen Sly, for a hug and photo.



Deanna progressed from receiving special education services to ranking among the top 35 students in her class. Her final three-year individualized education program (IEP) evaluation indicated she no longer qualified for those services.

Deanna, who struggled early with decoding, and verbal and reading comprehension


skills, began taking special education classes in fourth grade. That's when she met Karen, an intervention specialist. Determined to help Deanna, Karen selected her as a WRS Level I and II practicum student outside of school.

Deanna's drive to learn, combined with WRS's repetition and phrasing practice, helped her to achieve reading fluency. She became what Karen affectionately calls a "word nerd," looking deeply into the structure of the English language.

"It gave her a sense of accomplishment," explains Karen. "As her confidence grew in reading, it began to show in other areas of her life."

Using her newfound courage, Deanna dove into other interests—earning school awards and recognition at a performance conference. She took media classes and participated in SkillsUSA, a career and technical student organization. Just before graduation, Deanna completed WRS Step 12.

Deanna's inspiring success will help future students. Karen and her fellow WRS-certified instructors used Deanna's story to champion expanding WRS instruction beyond elementary school and it's now offered in middle school.

Today, Karen looks to become a Wilson® Credentialed Trainer (W.C.T.) while Deanna is taking a gap year to consider the possibilities of her future. 

TAKING CENTER STAGE

Two Fourth Graders Shine Bright with Wilson Reading System® (WRS)

In one year, two struggling fourth graders from South Sioux Community Schools in Nebraska became star readers with the help of WRS Certified Teachers and Wilson® Dyslexia Practitioners (W.D.T.) Amanda Pick and Lori Baker.

Juan: Gaining Confidence and Becoming Curious



In September 2021, quiet and observant fourth grader Juan struggled with foundational literacy concepts. Reading aloud was difficult. He attended special education classes where he read at about the second-grade level. Amanda stepped in to help and selected him as her WRS Level I practicum student.

Wilson® Credentialed Trainer (W.C.T.) Jeanne Rutgers observed Amanda and Juan's WRS lessons and quickly saw that Juan, the youngest of eight children in a non-English-speaking home, was a hard worker. Jeanne also noticed he was "ready to bloom" into a strong reader. All he needed was intensive, structured literacy instruction to boost his skills and confidence.

Amanda happily reports that with repetition and exploration of word structure, Juan's vocabulary skills improved, and he enjoyed learning about words. He proudly told Amanda he was able to figure out a word his classroom teacher used because of its Latin base.

"The way [WRS] is laid out is amazing," Amanda says. "It's like a code, and they're finally teaching you a way to crack it."

By May the following year, teachers noticed that Juan was more confident, making eye contact and speaking in class. He retold stories with detail and ease, using a broader vocabulary. As he built a trusting relationship with Amanda, he began showing curiosity, asking questions about word structure.

"He wanted to know the science behind the things [WRS] was teaching him," Amanda says. "Getting his thoughts in order and being able to write and know he's writing the words correctly motivated him," Amanda says.

"It was really emotional to watch him grow," Jeanne says. "After [WRS instruction], he was a different kid. He volunteered information and was excited to show what he was learning. He's going to keep up, and he's going to do well with whatever he puts his mind to."

Michael: Persevering Beyond Guessing to Reading



Juan was not the only rising star of the fourth grade in South Sioux. Lori Baker, Amanda's teaching partner, fellow WRS teacher, and Wilson® Dyslexia Practitioner, had the joy of watching another student's reading skills improve.

Michael, a bright and active child, became Lori's WRS Level I practicum student in September. Michael's reading and spelling skills fell between the first and second grade level. Like many children with reading difficulties, Michael guessed at words, but he had a strong memory and was capable of learning.

"A lot of kids can get by with memorizing for a long time, then it starts to fall apart because they can't add any more to their memory," Lori explains. "When given the opportunity to learn how words work, why vowels work the way they do, and how all of it goes together, he really seemed to enjoy his learning. It was fun to watch."

In addition to his decoding difficulties, Michael struggled to pay attention in a large group. He needed structured guidance and one-on-one interaction, both hallmarks of WRS. With Lori's diagnostic and individualized instruction, Michael thrived.

"Part of the power of a one-on-one [setting] is the relationship building," Lori says. "We already had a previous relationship, and I think relationships were important to him. He was excited to get to work with me again. He was thrilled to be there."

"He went from being a guesser, which he had been for many years—that's a hard habit to break—to being able to look through words, notice parts he knew, and figure them out," Lori says. "Wilson has given him the tools to build on the learning he had so he can be successful in his reading and writing."

This past spring, Juan and Michael's test scores showed they now read and spell better than many of their peers. Congratulations to Juan and Michael on their show-stopping progress! 🎉



Calling All Teachers! Do you have a story you would like to share about your Wilson student? Email us at stories@wilsonlanguage.com

WILSON® DYSLEXIA THERAPISTS (W.D.T.) RECEIVE R.E.A.D. INITIATIVE AWARD

Honoring Leadership by Example

The Taylor County Literacy Council recognized three Wilson® Dyslexia Therapists (W.D.T.) from the Medford Area Public School District in Medford, WI, with the Research, Educate, and Advocate for Dyslexia (R.E.A.D.) Initiative Award. On August 18, 2021, Kristine Brandner, Misty Galli, and Kathleen Schumacher were honored at the Friend of Literacy award banquet for their commitment to making literacy a reality for people with dyslexia.



From left to right: Kristine Brandner, Misty Galli, Kathleen Schumacher, and Joseph A. Greget

“All three are active in the community, leaders by example,” says Joseph A. Greget, Taylor County Literacy Council president and director of special education for Medford Area Schools.

He continues, “The R.E.A.D. Initiative Award recognizes individuals who make a significant impact in the area of dyslexia through research, education, or advocacy via their personal and professional efforts in our schools and community.”

When Response to Intervention (RTI) rules came to the educational and legislative forefront in the late 2000s, Kristine, Misty, and Kathleen enrolled in their first Wilson Reading System® (WRS) workshops. Under the tutelage of the late Wilson® Credentialed Trainer, Janet Lorenz, all three earned both WRS Level I and II Certifications. Kristine also went on to earn her Wilson® Credentialed Trainer (W.C.T.) certification.

Joseph emphasizes that the three educators, of their own volition, were willing to pursue certification.

“They’ve made an impact,” he says. “Their work is a good example for others around the country. We’re blessed to have each of them here.”

Kristine’s award-worthy work includes serving as a Wilson® In-District Trainer for Medford schools where she facilitates WRS Level I Certifications and works as an instructional mentor and special education teacher at Medford Area Middle School. As a R.E.A.D. Night presenter, she conducts parent seminars and family literacy events.

Like Kristine, Misty’s award reflects her dedication as a WRS instructor, Reading (316) licensed teacher, R.E.A.D. Night presenter, Northcentral Technical College instructor at Medford Adult Diploma Academy, and instructional mentor. As a special education teacher at Medford Area Elementary School, Misty teaches six to seven sections of WRS classes daily to students requiring interventions. A proud moment in her career involves a private school student who wrote a note of thanks for his reading teacher in his prayer journal.

A Stetsonville Elementary School special education teacher, Kathleen received the award for her work as a WRS instructor, Taylor County Literacy Council vice-president, R.E.A.D. Night presenter, Northcentral Technical College instructor at Medford Adult Diploma Academy, and instructional mentor. A memorable moment in her teaching career occurred when a third grade WRS student told his mother she didn’t need to read him a bedtime story because he could read the book to her.

Each R.E.A.D. Initiative Award recipient received not only a trophy, but also an autographed copy of *Overcoming Dyslexia*, Second Edition by Dr. Sally Shaywitz and a personalized thank-you note and DVD from learning disabilities expert Dr. Rick Lavoie. Congratulations Kristine, Misty, and Kathleen—keep up the inspirational work! 🌟

Save the Dates!
July 2023 • Boston, MA

Specific dates and venue information available at
<https://tinyurl.com/events23>



Wilson® Trainer Meeting • WRS Certified Teacher Conference • Foundations® Conference

IN MEMORIAM: MARGARET DEVANE LOGUE

Our fingerprints don't fade from the lives we touch. -Judy Blume



With tremendous sadness the Wilson® community says farewell to our longtime friend and colleague, Margaret Logue.

To say Margaret was dedicated to the field of education is an understatement. An alumna of Smith College, she taught English and history in the primary grades early in her career. In 1970, she began teaching at a private

school in New York, remaining there for 12 years. During that time, she earned a master's degree and a certificate in reading and learning disabilities from New York University. Margaret completed a course in the Orton-Gillingham approach to Multisensory Structured Language (MSL) instruction at Teachers College, Columbia University in 1978.

Before long, Margaret's journey introduced her to a variety of roles in education. Among them, she was a teacher at the Winsor School in Boston; a teacher and administrator at Saint Ann's School in Brooklyn; and head of the Carroll School in Lincoln, MA.

In 1995, she became one of the original Wilson® Trainers, also known as the "Wise Owls." In this position, she certified hundreds of teachers in the Wilson Reading System® (WRS). Margaret was also a skilled writer and editor with a keen eye for detail. As a result, she assisted with many Wilson writing projects throughout the years.

Margaret was a Wilson devotee and quite tech savvy, so it's not surprising she was one of the first trainers to implement the online teacher training model. In fact, as the years went by and travel became difficult, Margaret continued her important work remotely. She enthusiastically attended every Wilson Trainer Meeting and kept up to date on the latest dyslexia research. She accepted new students until age 93.

When she wasn't hard at work, Margaret enjoyed traveling throughout the United States and to more than 30 countries. At home on Martha's Vineyard, she was active in many facets of public life. She served as clerk of the Chilmark Pond Association and was on the Dukes County Charter Commission, the Island Parent Advisory Council, and the West Tisbury library landscaping subcommittee. Margaret always warmly welcomed and entertained visitors at both her island homes.

"Margaret had a wealth of dyslexia and literacy experience and she passionately shared it with others," says Barbara Wilson, author and Wilson co-founder. "A long-serving and well-respected member of the Wilson community, her many contributions are fondly remembered and will serve as inspiration for our ongoing mission. Although our dear friend is greatly missed, we have no doubt that countless generations of future students and teachers will benefit from her many years of dedication and advocacy." 🌸

2022 WILSON TRAINER MEETING

"Together, Once Again"

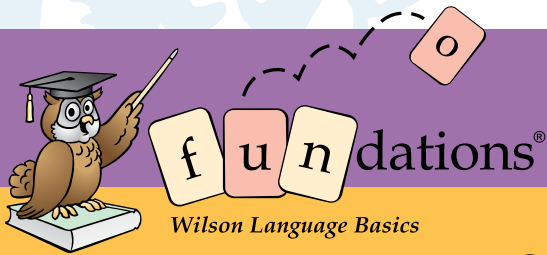
For the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic began, Wilson® Certified Trainers (W.C.T.) from all over the United States gathered in person at the Seaport Hotel in Boston for the 2022 Wilson® Trainer Meeting. More than 200 attendees enjoyed happy reunions, collaborative workshops, and insightful addresses from both Barbara and Ed Wilson, and Steve Pemberton, bestselling author of *A Chance in the World* and *The Lighthouse Effect*. Wilson also pinned the largest cohort of trainers to date. We're already looking forward to the Wilson® Summer Conferences 2023! 🌸



THE Decoder

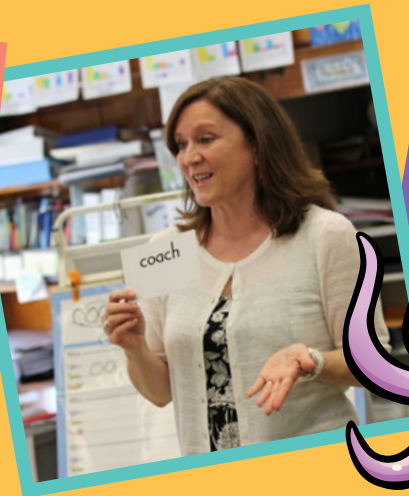
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