

Key Takeaways



- Leadership that understands “the why” behind reading instruction consistently drives better outcomes.
- Strong Tier 1 instruction is preventive—it stops gaps before they require intervention and gives every student access to excellent teaching every single day.
- Coherence across pre-K–12 is foundational. The strongest school leaders align practices, language, and priorities for literacy across the entire district.
- Professional learning is most effective when embedded, ongoing, and aligned to classroom realities.

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When school leaders approach literacy improvement with courage, vulnerability, and a willingness to let go of what isn’t working, transformation becomes possible.”

–Jeanne Schopf,
Literacy Consultant,
Pathways Toward Literacy

Panelist Content Overview

For three days (October 6–8, 2025), education experts spanning pre-K–12 explored literacy transformation through the lens of our students' experience. Panelists included district literacy directors, classroom teachers and coaches, university researchers, and consultants—all with hands-on implementation experience.

Day 1: Early Readers (pre-K–3)

- Literacy development begins well before kindergarten.
- Quality Tier 1 instruction prevents intervention overload.
- Continuous professional learning builds teacher confidence.

Day 2: Developing Readers (elementary)

- Instructional coherence is more impactful than continuously adding new programs.
- Practice time is essential for skill mastery.
- Courageous de-implementation of what isn't working

Day 3: Adolescent Readers (grades 6–12)

- Student agency and relationship-first instruction drive engagement.
- Secondary teachers need literacy training regardless of content area.
- Adolescent brains remain remarkably responsive to evidence-based reading instruction.

