



## Standards for Certified Local *LETRS* Trainers

### Purpose and Goals

*LETRS* is a professional development program designed to help educators understand scientifically-based reading research, the structure of the English language, and explicit teaching methodologies for language, reading, spelling, and writing instruction. It is to be used as one part of a comprehensive professional development approach, including the selection and implementation of validated approaches and programs of instruction.

Voyager Sopris Learning (VSL) a member of the Cambium Learning Group, encourages wide dissemination and use of *LETRS* in professional development settings, as long as training is provided by certified individuals who have attained a high level of knowledge and skill. VSL also seeks to ensure that *LETRS* dissemination will be carried out with integrity and fidelity to the design of the *LETRS* program. We will certify and support those who respect the content, pedagogy, and goals for teacher learning and who meet the standards delineated below.

### Steps Required of Certified Local *LETRS* Trainers

We require that candidates complete the following steps if they are to be certified by VSL to teach any component of the *LETRS* program within their district or local area:

- a) Attend an *LETRS* institute for the modules to be used, taught by a National *LETRS* Trainer through VSL (initial training). This applies to all *LETRS* modules, supplementary modules, and components.
- b) Study the module material and the additional recommended readings.
- c) Successfully complete an online, timed, pre-test. This pre-test will assess the prospective participant's knowledge base and appropriateness for attendance in TOT trainings. If a participant fails to successfully pass the pre-test, additional recommendations will be made to support their knowledge base and increase their odds of attending TOT sessions at a future date. Only those candidates who successfully complete the pre-test will be allowed to attend the TOT session.
- d) Additional reading of research articles is expected between each initial training and TOT training. Reading lists for each set of modules is provided following the initial training.
- e) Attend a Training of Trainers institute (TOT), at which the content and process of using the Presenters' materials are reviewed in detail. This training must be presented by a National *LETRS* Trainer through VSL. This applies to all *LETRS* modules, supplementary modules, and components.
- f) Pass online, timed exams on the content of the modules attended to demonstrate a deeper understanding of the content and guide future studies.
- g) Consider use of the applicable online course at a reduced fee and for a limited time to further support understanding.
- h) Obtain a Presenter's Kit for each TOT trained module and become familiar with the presenter notes. Order information will be provided. Ordering is the responsibility of the sponsoring organization or the individual.
- i) Participate in monthly (or as available) webinars provided to certified local *LETRS* trainers, or documentation that the recorded webinar was viewed at a later time
- j) Strongly recommended to attend the *LETRS* Summit at a minimum of every other year.



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- k) Sign and adhere to an annual statement of commitment to uphold standards of quality and fidelity of *LETRS*; this statement will include a listing of webinars attended, *LETRS* Summits attended, and other professional development conferences attended.

### Requirements of Sponsoring Agency

Before contracting for the *LETRS* training and TOT sessions, the sponsoring agency must agree to the following:

- a) Designation of one individual who will coordinate the roll-out of the TOT and subsequent *LETRS* trainings.
- b) Completion by TOT candidates of an online, timed pre-test, after they have completed the first *LETRS* modules and *before* the first TOT session. Candidates should demonstrate familiarity with the modules' content, evidence of effective presentation skills, and a strong background in reading instruction before they undertake the TOT.
- c) Commit candidates to a schedule that follows this sequence:
  - i. Participation in agreed-upon *LETRS* modules, provided by a National *LETRS* Trainer, through VSL.
  - ii. Independent or group study of module content and one critical book from the reading list provided by the trainer.
  - iii. Online, timed pre-test.
  - iv. Participation in *LETRS* TOT for agreed-upon modules, provided by a National *LETRS* trainer, through VSL.
  - v. Online, timed exam after each TOT session.
  - vi. Access to the applicable online courses to further support understanding is recommended.
  - vii. Opportunity to practice presenting small portions of content and to observe other presenters in supervised or supported setting.
  - viii. Collaborative presentation with evaluation and feedback.
  - ix. Strongly recommend attendance of certified local *LETRS* trainers at the *LETRS* Summit, a minimum of every other year.
  - x. Attendance of certified local *LETRS* trainers at monthly (or as available) webinars provided by the *LETRS* program.
  - xi. Continuing education through group study, networking, observation, co-teaching, etc.
  - xii. Any additional coaching, mentoring, observation, or follow-up to be provided by a National *LETRS* Trainer must be contracted through VSL.
- d) Outline of a plan for the roll-out of *LETRS* after the certification process is successfully completed. This plan should include:
  - i. The district or agency's initial intentions for the sponsorship of *LETRS* training, including timelines, locations, and target audiences.
  - ii. Plans to allow new trainers to collaborate in presentations, to observe one another, and to provide feedback and support.



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- iii. Delineation of the manner in which feedback on candidates' performance will be shared.
- iv. Specification of any plan for a continuing relationship with a National *LETRS* Trainer employed to co-teach, observe, supervise, or provide review sessions. These sessions will be contracted through VSL.
- e) Inclusion of *LETRS* and *LETRS* TOT training in the professional growth plans of school district employees. The recommended time frame for this growth plan is two years.
- f) Outline expectations of certified local *LETRS* trainers:
  - i. Expected length of commitment
  - ii. Reimbursement of costs if trainer vacates position early
  - iii. Non-training clause if trainer leaves the district/position

### Recommended Qualifications for Certified Local *LETRS* Trainers

Education and Experience: A minimum of a master's degree in reading, speech and language, psychology, or educational psychology is strongly suggested. If the degree is in education, the individual should also have studied language development, developmental psychology, and the psychology of reading development as illuminated by scientifically conducted research.<sup>1</sup> The trainer candidate should have at least **3 years** of classroom or clinical experience in which the candidate demonstrated excellence in teaching and the ability to achieve positive outcomes with children.

Professional Knowledge: If the trainer candidate is lacking in background knowledge of reading research and instruction in reading, he or she must be willing to broaden that knowledge base through continuing graduate education, independent study, and attendance at conferences in which high quality reading research is presented and discussed. In addition, it is desirable for the prospective trainer to have training and experience with one or more evidence-based, structured language approaches, as *LETRS* strongly emphasizes the relationship between oral language structure and written language.

Presentation abilities: Knowledge of and experience with presentation skills and adult learning principles is essential. If the candidate is lacking in experience, the candidate should be willing to co-teach with several competent presenters until presentation skills are honed.

Interpersonal skills: Excellent interpersonal and presentation skills are essential. *LETRS* institutes are interactive. The presentations are structured but not scripted. The ability to consider and to provide appropriate responses to questions and other requests in various types of settings is a critical characteristic of a certified local *LETRS* trainer. The ability to interact positively with diverse individuals and diverse school cultures is a professional quality that must be demonstrated.

### Expectations for *LETRS* Module Delivery

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<sup>1</sup> *LETRS* modules have reference lists, and the website will update a list of current, recommended readings.



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Use of evaluation forms. VSL will provide to any certified local *LETRS* trainer a copy of its standard *LETRS* evaluation form. State, regional, district, and local trainers who use *LETRS* material are encouraged to maintain a file of these evaluation forms as a record of their skill in presenting the material. If the need for National *LETRS* Trainers grows, those trainers with strong records may be invited to become National Trainers.

Module delivery. Single modules may be used for varied purposes, but the sequence of modules 1-3 is strongly recommended for maximum growth of teacher insight into language structure and reading development. The use of Foundations prior to Modules 1-3 is also strongly encouraged in settings where teachers have little exposure to concepts based on reading research.

Modules may be delivered over an extended time-frame that exceeds the one-day (7 hour) format, especially if follow-up and application of learning is included. We do not support module delivery of less than one day. More than one day may be needed to teach the content effectively.

Use of materials. The published *LETRS* books and materials must be purchased for or by the teachers participating in the training. Photocopying or excerpting of *LETRS* material without written permission of the author and publisher is forbidden under copyright law.

Labeling of professional development offerings. Trainings provided by certified local *LETRS* trainers for their sponsoring states, agencies, or districts should be clearly labeled to distinguish them from VSL-sponsored events. For example, Buffalo Public Schools *LETRS* training, Colorado *LETRS* Network, Michigan Adaptation of *LETRS*, and similar references are appropriate. The credentials of the presenter should be specified on the brochure.

To maintain my certification as a local *LETRS* trainer, I agree to conduct *LETRS* trainings within the following standards. I understand that my certification may be revoked for non-compliance.

1. Each module in the *LETRS* program will be presented in no less than 7 hours of total instructional time. More time is often advisable to cover the content well.
2. The *LETRS* Presenter's Kit CD-ROM presentation will be used for all *LETRS* presentations. Presenter's Kit CD-ROMs are available for each individual module, and supplemental module.
3. *LETRS* presentations may not be modified.



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4. *LETRS* information, slides, handouts and activities are not to be used in any setting other than *LETRS* training without written permission from Voyager VSL Learning (VSL), *LETRS* Program.
5. Certified local *LETRS* trainers are required to purchase the *LETRS* individual modules for trainings for each participant, or require participants to purchase individually. No photocopying of modules, or any content within the modules, is allowed.
6. Photocopying the Presenter Kit PowerPoint slides is not permitted. Applicable slides are included within the individual modules for participants.
7. Evaluation forms for each *LETRS* training provided will be kept on file by the trainer. VSL, *LETRS* Program, reserves the right to request copies of evaluations at any time.
8. Sign-in sheets are to be collected from each training (including name, organization, and email address at a minimum) and sent in to the Voyager VSL Learning, *LETRS* program. This will place attendees on our *LETRS* email list to receive notifications regarding the program.
9. Trainings provided by certified local *LETRS* trainers for their sponsoring states, agencies, or districts should be clearly labeled to distinguish them from VSL-sponsored events. For example, Buffalo Public Schools *LETRS* training, Colorado *LETRS* Network, Michigan Adaptation of *LETRS*, and similar references are appropriate. The credentials of the presenter should be specified on the brochure.
10. Certified local *LETRS* trainers will not portray themselves as National *LETRS* trainers.
11. Trainings must be conducted in sites with suitable space, seating, lighting, ventilation, and audio-visual equipment.
12. Certified local *LETRS* trainers are not permitted to provide open-tuition trainings.
13. Certified local *LETRS* trainers are expected to fulfill their obligation to their sponsoring organization in exchange for the professional development received.
14. Certified local *LETRS* trainers may not provide any training in connection with the certification process of additional/new trainers. Only VSL is authorized to provide such training.
15. Certified local *LETRS* trainers are not permitted to enter into any contract to provide *LETRS* Training that is outside of the district/organization for which they are employed. Those contracts must be completed through Voyager VSL Learning.
16. Certified local *LETRS* trainers who are self-employed or are employed by a private PD, tutoring, consultation company are not permitted to enter into any contract to provide *LETRS* training. Those contracts must go through VSL.
17. Attendance at the *LETRS* Summit is strongly recommended, at least every other year.
18. Participation in monthly (or as available) webinars provided by VSL is required. (This can be done through recordings of the webinars.)

**Did you attend the 2013 *LETRS* Summit?**      Yes      No

**Previous *LETRS* Summits attended: (please list year(s)):**

**Please list other professional conferences attended in 2013:**



## Standards for Certified Local *LETRS* Trainers

**Please list all webinars attended/accessed in 2013:**

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certified local *LETRS* trainer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of certified local *LETRS* trainer (**please print**)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Organization/District/School

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

State of \_\_\_\_\_

County of \_\_\_\_\_

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this \_\_\_\_\_ (date) by  
\_\_\_\_\_ (name of person acknowledged).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public

My commission expires: \_\_\_\_\_