



# ANNUAL REPORT

SCHOOL YEAR 2024-2025



**192,000+**  
Children Reached



**10,800+**  
Teachers Trained



**564**  
Schools Served



**69**  
cents of every \$ spent went toward  
direct delivery in schools



# Letter from the Director

Dear Colleagues,

School Year 2024-25 was full of exciting new projects and initiatives for HILL For Literacy, including new state partnerships with Massachusetts and Rhode Island, the creation of multiple self-paced course offerings, our Speaker Series webinars, and several state vendor approvals farther afield.



We are particularly thrilled to be partnering with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) on the Literacy Launch Institutes, the professional learning portion of Governor Healey's Literacy Launch Initiative, a large-scale effort to spread evidence-based early literacy practices more widely across the state. We're also proud of our continued work with DESE on the Summer School Literacy and Professional Learning Grant which reached school sites in Brockton, Randolph, Somerville, and Southbridge in Summer 2024. The HILL also partnered with the CT State Department of Education (CSDE) on the CT Right to Read Project, and with CSDE's Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities and SERC to train special educators in the science of reading in early 2025. In addition, we began a new partnership with the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) on their Comprehensive Literacy Initiative: Literacy Planning for PreK-12 Districts and Early Childhood Community-based organizations (CBOs) which will support Literacy Leadership Teams in PreK-12. We also secured state vendor approvals in Arkansas, Delaware, Hawaii, New Hampshire, and Oregon as part of our efforts to expand our reach within and outside of New England.

To better meet our clients' needs, we developed several self-paced courses for HILL Online in SY24-25. Our new Small Group Initial Training Series offers tailored tracks of learning for Primary, Intermediate, and Secondary grades, along with a Small Group Implementation Series that dives deeper into the topics covered in the initial training. In response to a clear market demand for implementation support across the country, we developed our HQIM/Core Program Implementation Series with the aim to better serve our current clients and reach those in new states with specific HQIM funding opportunities.

In February 2025, Dr. Michael Coyne, from UCONN's Neag School of Education, kicked off our Speaker Series—webinars with industry experts—highlighting the power of partnership and his recent peer-reviewed paper on the CK3LI project, of which the HILL is longtime partner. Additional webinars in the series featured literacy luminaries such as Dr. Maryanne Wolf from UCLA, Dr. Rachel Brown-Chidsey from the University of Alaska Anchorage, Dr. Rachel Romeo from the University of Maryland College Park, and Tanya Wright, Ed.M., an actress, educator, and author. Hundreds of people registered for the webinars and many more have viewed the recordings online.

We look forward to School Year 2025-26 and continuing our partnerships with DESE, CSDE, and RIDE to reach more teachers and students through their statewide initiatives. We're in the process of applying to be an approved vendor with more states across the country to meet our expansion goals and provide training in the best evidence-based literacy practices far and wide. We look forward to the launch of our partnership with Storyshares, packaging their Adolescent Literacy instructional materials with our Small Group Initial Training for Secondary grades to fulfill the great needs of students in upper grades. We're also partnering with ThinkSRSD, a leading Self-Regulated Strategy Development professional learning provider. In addition, we're actively pursuing new funding opportunities for HILL Online 2.0, which is currently a finalist for an IES grant. HILL Online 2.0 will add many exciting improvements including the AI-powered HILL Online Advisor component which utilizes a school's literacy data to equip their teachers, special educators, and literacy leaders with just-right, just-in-time, evidence-based instructional support.

As a nonprofit, our organization's ability to continue operations is due in part to the generous donations of community members and foundations. We don't take the challenge of teaching kids to read lightly: according to the 2024 NAEP results, 69% of 4th graders fail to read at grade level each year and we know that we can help them. For nearly 25 years we've changed students' lives by translating decades of education research into practice through the installation of evidence-based systems and structures, and providing targeted professional learning in our partner schools. Your support can have a tangible, meaningful impact on the lives of children in HILL schools and help us reach even more students each year. Donations can be made via our website [www.hillforliteracy.org](http://www.hillforliteracy.org) or by contacting the HILL at 1-888-860-0190.

Best Wishes,

**Darci Burns, Ph.D.**

*Executive Director  
HILL For Literacy*



# Our New Mission & Vision

For the last 24 years, HILL for Literacy has worked closely with our client districts to provide the training, tools, and resources they need to meet their literacy goals. When we incorporated as a nonprofit in 2010, we chose a lofty mission and vision that set the tone for our work. Now, 15 years later, we're due for a refresh and we launched the new framing midway through the school year.



## Our Vision

We strive to create a world where every child is a reader.



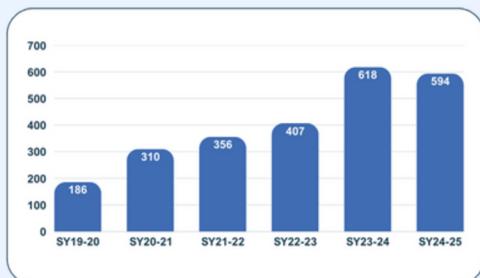
## Our Mission

HILL for Literacy is dedicated to advancing equitable literacy outcomes for PreK-12 students by equipping educators with the knowledge and skills to deliver high-quality, responsive literacy instruction that meets the unique needs of every child.

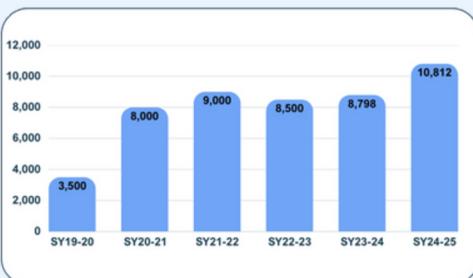
## Our Growth

Year over year, the HILL is growing, expanding, and impacting more schools, teachers, and students.

### SCHOOLS SERVED SINCE 2019



### TEACHERS TRAINED SINCE 2019



### STUDENTS REACHED SINCE 2019



# Literacy Launch Institutes



In February 2025, HILL for Literacy was selected by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as the vendor for the Literacy Launch Professional Learning Institutes. The HILL and its partners, RMC Research Corporation (RMC) and the Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy (Rennie), in collaboration with the Center for Teacher Education and Research (CENTER) at Westfield State University and the Commonwealth Learning Center are implementing professional learning for the new, 5-year, multipronged initiative focused on strengthening early literacy across the state.



## About the Institutes

Literacy Launch Institutes are designed to spread powerful, evidence-based early literacy instruction that celebrates Massachusetts students' cultural and linguistic strengths. When students read and write by grade 3, they're on the path to future academic success. The Literacy Launch Institutes are 4 days of differentiated professional learning for educators teaching students from preschool to grade 3, providing a pathway for every educator to build their confidence and expand their expertise.

The first round of institutes were held in Summer 2025, and will be followed by additional institutes during school year 2025-2026. Participants will have the opportunity to continue their learning by applying for follow-up coaching for their school teams, participating in Community of Practice sessions or joining our Fellowship Program.

## Institute Tracks



- Novice
- Advanced
- School/District Leaders
- Preschool
- Educator Preparation Program Faculty & Staff

# Summer School Literacy and Professional Learning Grant

In summer 2024, HILL for Literacy partnered with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education on the Summer School Literacy and Professional Learning Grant (SSLPL) for the second year. The goals of this initiative were to:

- maximize literacy achievement in extended school year programs, and
- provide educators with professional development in evidence-based literacy practices.

500 rising 1st-5th graders from Brockton Public Schools, Randolph Public Schools, Somerville Public Schools, and Southbridge Public Schools benefited from 4.5 weeks of intensive structured literacy instruction.

Approximately 86 educators across the four sites received 45 hours of comprehensive professional development, including two days of initial training, weekly professional development meetings, and daily individualized instructional coaching support.

By the end of the program, all school sites saw substantive improvements in teacher knowledge and significant growth in students' ability in and attitude toward reading.

## B ROCKTON



[Video](#)



[Whitepaper](#)

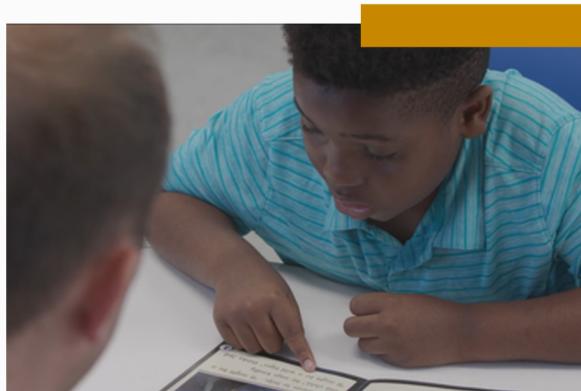
## R ANDOLPH



[Video](#)



[Whitepaper](#)



## S OMERVILLE



[Video](#)



[Whitepaper](#)



HILL for Literacy is an incredible partner. They've really met us where we're at and helped us to grow. They've been supportive and right there with us in the work.

-Dr. Amy Hartley-Matteson  
Assistant Superintendent  
Randolph Public Schools (MA)

## S OUTHBRIDGE



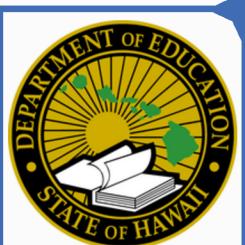
[Video](#)



[Whitepaper](#)

# Expansion to New States

The HILL team has been hard at work applying for state vendor approvals across the country to support our efforts to bring evidence-based literacy practices to more schools. Obtaining approved vendor status means that districts in that state can use grant funds for our services, usually in a specific category such as HQIM Implementation, MTSS, Leadership training, Science of reading training, and more. The HILL is now approved to provide consulting services in Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Oregon, and Rhode Island. We plan to expand our services to even more states in SY25-26!



## RIDE Comprehensive Literacy Initiative

We're thrilled to be involved in **RIDE's Comprehensive Literacy Initiative: Literacy Planning for PreK-12 Districts and Early Childhood Community-based organizations (CBOs)**. The project aims to support Literacy Leadership Teams in PreK-12 districts and CBOs in reflecting on the implementation of their current literacy plan, exploring the degree to which evidence-based literacy practices are in place and setting aligned goals with measurable action steps for each of the components of a district-wide literacy model for subsequent years. The initiative relies upon a self-paced virtual approach to providing training and technical assistance as well as the development of tools and processes which can be used in an on-going manner to sustain the work.

# HILL Online Highlights



In School Year 2024-25, a major priority was expanding the professional learning offered through HILL Online to better serve our current clients and retain our competitive edge with new, appealing courses on timely topics.

Through our HILL Online platform alone we served 241 districts, over 10,000 teachers, and 76,000 students. We anticipate serving even more in School Year 2025-26.

**“ It takes the science of reading right into the science of learning.**

**-Kate Engledrum**  
*ELA Program Leader*  
Trumbull Public Schools (CT)

We expanded our Science of Reading (SOR) series to meet a variety of client needs. We now offer **live, virtual delivery for Administrators, Early Childhood, Primary & Intermediate Grades, as well as an Adolescent Literacy series** for content area classroom teachers. Plus we now have **self-paced versions for Primary & Intermediate Grades and the Adolescent Literacy Series**. We've also developed **live, virtual application sessions** to complement the self-paced Science of Reading Series for Primary & Intermediate Grades.



We launched our new **self-paced Small Group Initial Training for Primary and Intermediate Grades**, which includes training on the Foundational Skills Lesson Plan (FSLP) and the Fluency Lesson Plans (for Intermediate).



We developed and piloted an **Implementation Series for Small Group Training** to support classroom application and improve fidelity that dives deeper into the topics covered in the *Small Group Initial Training*.



We developed and piloted a **HQIM/Core Program Implementation Series** to support schools in effectively using their High-Quality Instructional Materials.



We developed a self-paced version of **Small Group Initial Training for Secondary Grades**, and **partnered with Storyshares** to build lesson plans for their **Adolescent Literacy intervention curriculum, LIFT**.



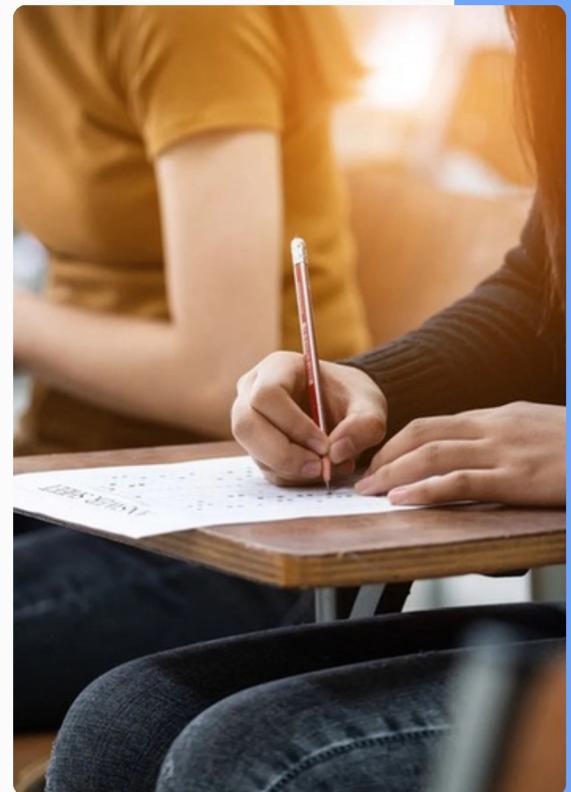
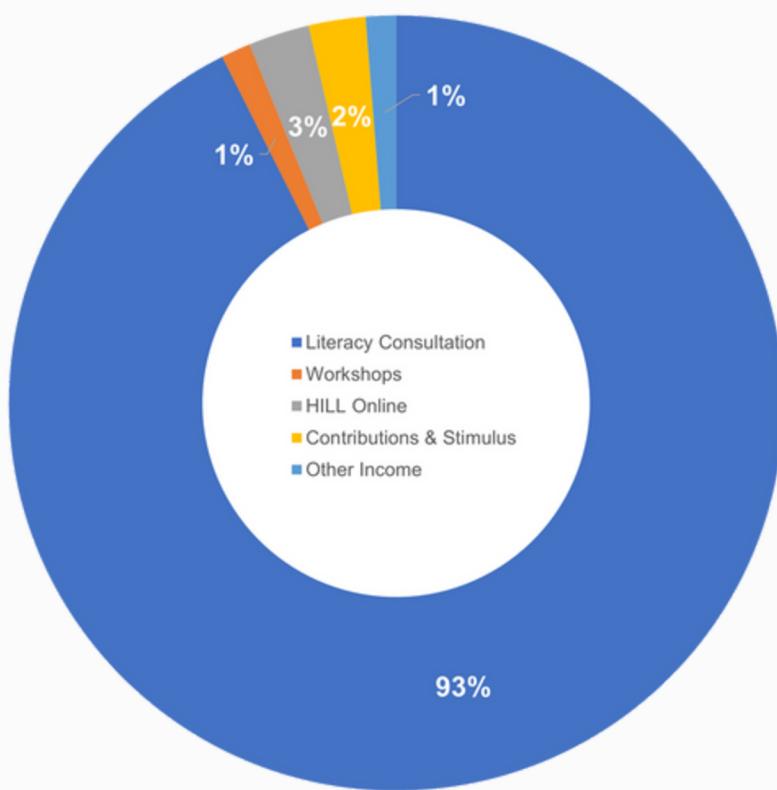
We began work on **just right/just in time microcourses** to support educators with critical information when they need it in small doses with a clear application to instruction.



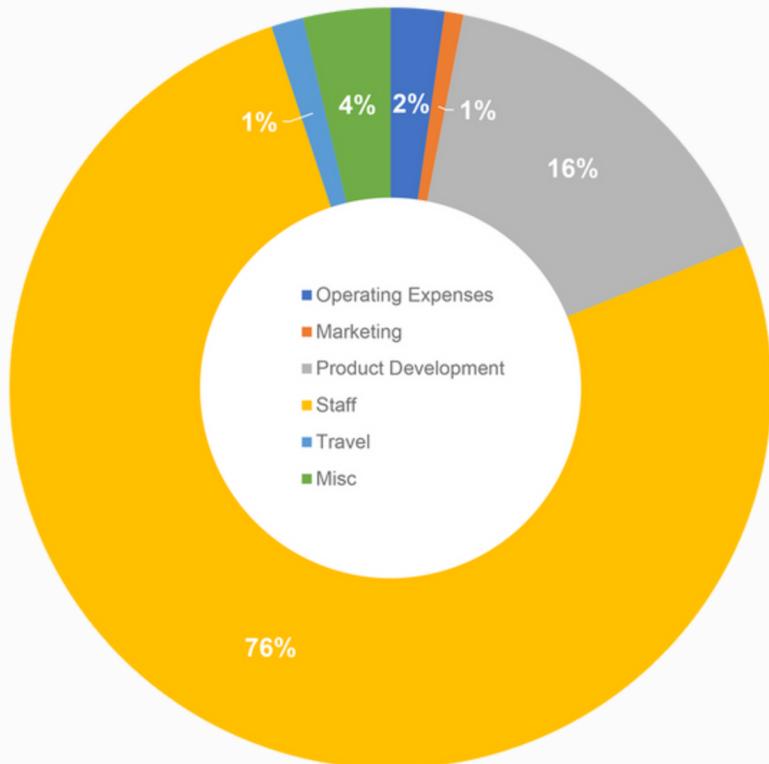
# Financials

from FY2023-24 financial audit

## Revenue



## Expenses





# Our Supporters



## Key Partners

- Black & Puerto Rican Caucus of the Connecticut General Assembly
- Center on Teaching and Learning, *University of Oregon*
- Center for Behavioral Education & Research, *University of Connecticut*
- Connecticut Commission on Women, Children, and Seniors
- Connecticut State Department of Education
- Crafting Minds
- Hope For Youth & Families
- Literacy How
- Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education
- NeuEon, Inc.
- New Hampshire Teaching, Learning, and Leading Association
- The Rennie Center
- Rhode Island Department of Education
- Right to Read CT
- RMC Research Corporation
- RTI International
- Storyshares
- Westfield State University
- YPTC

## Donors

- Richard and Treasure Cohen
- The Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation
- Thomas Ewing and Marilyn London-Ewing
- Robert Gonzalez
- Kurt Johnson
- Krokidas & Bluestein
- Dr. Leslie Laud
- Levy Family Fund
- Mattei Family Foundation
- Christine Pellerin

# Our Board

David C. Poole  
*Board Chairman*

Dr. Jennifer Curtis  
*Director*

Cyndi Weekes Bradley  
*Director*

Darci Burns, Ph.D.  
*Board President*

Pam Hook, Ph.D.  
*Clerk*

# Our Staff

## Administration

Kate Bindewald  
*Senior Business Analyst*

Diana Malkin, M.Ed., CAGS  
*Director of Product Development*

Darci Burns, Ph.D.  
*Executive Director*

Bob Massicotte  
*Senior Technology Manager*

Shira M. Cohen-Goldberg, Ed.M.  
*Director of Client Services*

Jennifer McAlpine  
*State Partnerships & Grants Coordinator*

MarcyKate Connolly  
*Marketing Director*

Cindy McGurl, Ph.D., NCSP  
*Director of HILL Online*

Cara Dellaterra  
*Director of Consulting*

Chloe Melton  
*Project Manager*

Stephney Gonzalez, Ph.D.  
*Director of State Partnerships*

Kai Michlmayr  
*Application & Analytics Support Specialist*

Jeannine Kimber  
*HR Specialist*

Laurie LaVallee  
*Operations Director*

Megan Lanoue  
*HILL Online Support Manager*

Emma Miller, M. Ed.  
*Training Logistics Coordinator*

Kit Rousu  
*Tech Support Specialist*

Benjamin Scherz, M.Ed.  
*Strategic Partnerships & Business Development Director*

Eleni X. Steadman, M.S., CCC-SLP  
*Director of Coaching & Mentorship*

Frances I. Suazo, Ph.D.  
*Instructional Designer*

Stephanie White  
*LMS Manager*

Michelle Zampell  
*Content & Instructional Designer*

## Facilitators

Kelly Ally, M.Ed.  
Kara Atilho

Tracey Lamothe, M.A.  
Britt Landis, Ph.D.

Tracie Berry, M.Ed.

Joanne Leach, M.Ed.

Joanna Davis

Kaitlin Leonard, Ph.D.

Marisa Davidson, M.A.T.

Diane MacKinnon, M.A.

Molly Dunn, M.Ed.

Keegan E. Manchester, M. Ed, CAGS

Tera B. Dunn, M.Ed., CAGS

Angela Martin, M.S.

Cherie Dupont-Kent, M.Ed.

Kate O'Donnell, M.A.

Jennifer Fleischmann, CAGS

Michelle O'Neil, M.Ed.

Jenna Gampel, M.Ed.

Julie Pellerin-Herrera, M.Ed.

Meaghan Geisler-Tubridy, M.Ed.

Amanda Rathbun, M.S.

Adrian Gonzalez-Martinez, M.Ed.

Andrea Reade, Ed.D.

Lindsay Rodriguez, Ed.M.

Emily Russin, Ed.M.

Sharon Ryan, Ed.D.

Alex Stout, M.Ed.

Rebecca Stuart, MAT, Ed.S.

Jennifer Traverso, M.Ed.

Janice Yanni, MS, WDP, C-SLDI

Lisa Ziobron, M.A.



**“**Finding a method that can really improve the ability to read, that's life changing. Not only life changing, that's world changing. May HILL For Literacy touch more people than ever.

-Chrisnove Tica, *Paraprofessional*  
Somerville Public Schools (MA)

## Contact Us

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