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# LEGACY

TRANSFORMATION IN ACTION



**Ramona Brown**

**Literacy and Justice for All at Cox Campus**

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**Get to know Ramona!**



The Worthy Educator

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## Literacy and Justice for All at Cox Campus

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Professional development is a critical component of any career, but it is especially important in education. Teachers have a tremendous responsibility to shape the minds of future generations. To be equipped to meet the challenge, effective professional development requires access to the latest research and best practices. Access to professional development opportunities is only

sometimes equitable.

I've seen this disparity firsthand. During my first six years as a classroom teacher, I worked in one of my state's premier districts. I received high-quality professional development that prepared me to achieve National Board Certification in Early Childhood Education and impact colleagues and students. For the next three years, I taught in a neighboring district and found that not all professional development is equal.

Professional development was more compulsory than relevant, and teachers were held accountable for knowledge they could not access. The professional development provided support for translating research into practice. During my time at the state level in two different states and my experience with teachers from across the country, I learned that funding is one of the main barriers to high-quality professional development that is actionable, sustainable and growth is measured.

In 2022 I joined the Rollins Center for Language and Literacy, whose mission is Literacy and Justice for all. Cox Campus is at the center of fulfilling this mission. Research shows that a well-qualified teacher has the most significant impact on student achievement. Cox Campus is an online platform that provides access to professional development based on the latest science of reading research and provides resources that align with evidence-based practices.

*“Cox Campus is the only free professional development platform that addresses literacy beginning with the last trimester of pregnancy through third grade. The knowledge of the science of reading is shared with healthcare practitioners to support them in putting parents on the path to developing literate children.”*

At the Rollins Center for Language and Literacy, we believe “reading belongs to all of us.” Cox Campus is the heartbeat of this belief in action. Cox Campus is the only free professional development platform that addresses literacy beginning with the last trimester of pregnancy through third grade. The knowledge of the science of reading is shared with healthcare practitioners to support them in putting parents on the path to developing literate children. Partnerships with Grady Memorial Hospital, Wellstar, daycares, and parents provide the foundation for children to develop a deep reading brain.



## The Cox Campus

In addition to building knowledge in the birth through 5 spaces, we have a suite of K-3 courses for all educators. Recently, Cox Campus courses were accredited by the International Dyslexia Association (IDA). This means educators who take our course are eligible to take the Knowledge and Practice Examination for Effective Reading Instruction (KPEERI). Passing this exam provides educators with the distinction of being highly trained to teach reading effectively to all students.

Our coursework is supported by pioneers in getting the science of reading out to the masses. We work with subject matter experts to ensure high-quality and practical courses and resources are developed and based on current research. Over the past two years, Cox Campus course enrollment and completion have skyrocketed. This means reaching more countries, states, districts, and classrooms with scientifically proven methods for teaching reading.

Why does this matter? Providing a free online platform eliminates barriers to educators' access to knowledge about best practices and evidence-based resources. Teachers are better equipped to serve all students, including those for whom reading is challenging. With this knowledge, teachers have more agency to implement practices that have proven to be “helpful to all children and harmful to none.”

Literacy significantly impacts a person's life outcomes. The inability to read limits access to employment, higher education, the ability to be a fully engaged citizen, and healthcare, and it can also impact a person's self-esteem.

The most recent NAEP report, known as the nation's report card measurements, shows a decline in fourth and eighth-grade reading scores since 2019. Currently, only 32% of fourth graders are proficient in reading, 31% of eighth graders, and 37% of twelfth-grade students. While this is alarming, there is a solution. It begins with equipping our teachers with knowledge that gives them the tools to reach all children.

The decline in reading scores is not solely due to the pandemic. The current scores represent a 3% decline in reading in both fourth and eighth-grade scores. The decline has persisted despite legislation such as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Cwiklinski, H. (2020). Reading performance has shown a decline since 1971.



## How it Works

At Rollins, our approach is to move knowledge to practice. The Wheel of Equitable Outcomes guides our work with systems change. The Wheel of Equitable Outcomes consists of the following six components: Teacher Professional Learning, Instructional Coaching, Culturally Responsive Practices, High-Quality Instructional Materials, Data & Assessment, and MTSS & Intervention. I will provide suggestions to make the knowledge actionable in districts and schools by focusing on Teacher Professional Learning and Instructional Coaching.

In my role, I provide district and school support through coaching for system change to support sustainability. While Cox Campus provides research-based knowledge, a comprehensive professional development plan must be ongoing, be applied with support, and be measurable. Coaching is the lever that provides the consistency required to sustain and scale best practices.

Cox Campus also offers coaching based on Jim Knight's Impact Cycle. The Rollins Impact Cycle is a modification of Jim Knight's Impact Cycle and includes, Initial Conversation, Identify, Explain, Modeling and Guided Practice, Observe, and Improve. The Rollins Impact Cycle is the framework used when working with districts and schools. We recommend the framework to districts and schools for continuous growth—coaching tools for collecting data and measuring progress through classroom observations.



Our courses provide a basis for teachers' professional learning. It is a cost-saving benefit with high-quality research-based content that states, districts, and schools can use to improve student literacy outcomes. Coaches can use course guides in PLCs to deepen professional conversations. The course guides and content-aligned resources are helpful for leaders and coaches to support coaches with modeling evidence-based practices for teachers. A repository of resources that includes modeling by coaches or teachers can support the sustainability and scalability of evidence-based practices. Districts or schools can use the videos to refresh teacher practice and for new teacher training. Learn more about the Reading by Design Structured Literacy Certification Program.

Schools can develop specific implementation plans for actualizing practices highlighted in the structured literacy courses. An implementation plan should include collecting baseline data through classroom observations and analysis of student data to determine key areas of focus. Establishing a calendar or schedule for course completion to be completed individually, in teams, or school-wide is important for developing a foundation for knowledge that will drive changes. We recommend using a peer collaborative process that we call an action lab. In an action lab, coaches model the targeted practice and teachers observe, discuss what they observed, and make a plan to put into practice what they observed. The coach provides additional professional development to teachers or teams of teachers. Coaches and administration monitor effective implementation through classroom observations.

The focus should be for a specific amount of time and have clear objectives, and Cox Campus can also be used to create a virtual professional learning network across states, districts, and within schools. Universities can use the platform to build knowledge for preservice teachers providing them with an






understanding of research and application to support their development as professional educators. Educators can create groups on the platform to facilitate collaborative learning in multiple educational contexts.

So what are you waiting for? It takes less than a minute to create an account and start the journey to building knowledge that provides access to all students. Don't stop there; share with your colleagues, healthcare practitioners, and parents. The power of Cox Campus is that there are no time restrictions, geographic barriers, and, most of all, no obstacles due to cost.

In an information-powered society, literacy is the civil rights issue of our time. Using this resource is one step anyone can take towards harnessing the potential we all possess. By equipping ourselves and others with knowledge and utilizing the power of practice, we can accomplish literacy and justice for all.



*Ramona Brown is a Science of reading Professional Development Coach passionate about education equity because it aligns with her belief that ALL children possess gifts and qualities that can make the world a better place. She sees how inequity has stifled our growth as a society because we are limiting opportunity and placing limitations on everyone's potential. Join her online at Cox Campus!*   

**Cox Campus Provides \$140+ Million in Free Teacher Training**

A revolutionary approach through free access to professional development

*[Read more here!](#)*



Legacy is the official journal of The Worthy Educator, elevating the good work being done by leaders in education who are working to change the narrative on the profession and actively plan for impact that transforms its future to serve the needs of a diverse, decentralized, global society that is inclusive, equitable and open to all people as next generations adapt, evolve and contribute by solving problems and creating solutions that meet the needs of a world we have yet to envision.

Submissions are accepted on a rolling basis from educators who are implementing new and innovative approaches in the classroom and at the building and district levels. Information on specifications and instructions to submit can be found online at [theworthyeducator.com/journal](http://theworthyeducator.com/journal).