



R.I.S.E. (Reading Initiative for Student Excellence) Arkansas encourages a culture of reading by coordinating a statewide reading campaign with community partners, parents, and teachers to establish the importance of reading in homes, schools, and communities. The initiative has three primary goals:

- Sharpen the focus and strengthen instruction;
- Create community collaboration;
- Build a culture of reading.

To sharpen the focus and strengthen instruction, the R.I.S.E. Academy program was developed to bring evidence-based teaching practices to the classroom. In 2017, the first R.I.S.E. Academy was held for K- 2nd grade teachers. This comprehensive reading program incorporated five essential components: phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

To promote the continued growth of the R.I.S.E. Arkansas initiative, the Arkansas Department of Education is pleased to recognize the top schools that have successfully implemented these strategies for students. ([View images of the award recipients.](#)) Nominations were made by the R.I.S.E. Train the Trainers group, which works closely with local teachers, administrators, and districts to bring about a change in the culture of reading in schools and in the state. Ten schools have been selected to receive the 2018 Outstanding R.I.S.E. Arkansas School Award.

1. Edgewood Elementary School in the Watson Chapel School District is implementing its phonics program with fidelity and showing great gains in achievement on Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) assessments. The school's efforts toward student-focused reading instruction is aligned with the science of reading program and making a difference for students.

2. Half of the teachers at Midland Elementary School were trained in 2017, and the other half have signed up for the academy in summer 2018. These teachers and administrators are committed to full implementation of the science of reading and its ability to help improve reading skills in their students.

3. Anne Watson Elementary in the East End School District looked at their current program and realized it had weaknesses that did not match the R.I.S.E. instruction practices. Educators have problem-solved as a team and identified the science of reading processes that will strengthen their core program. They are committed to bringing a change for their students.

4. Scranton Elementary has shown tremendous dedication in ensuring that all students receive science-based reading practices across all three tiers of instruction. The student achievement shown by assessment data proves that teachers and staff are committed to following best practices every day.

5. Teachers at Drew Central Elementary are always willing to try new activities based on the science of reading. They have monthly meetings with the co-op specialist, school literacy specialist, and principal to ensure they are meeting the needs of their students. They observe other R.I.S.E. teachers and model for teachers that are not R.I.S.E. trained, helping to spread the initiative throughout the building.

6. Asbell Elementary School in the Fayetteville School District has not only worked tirelessly on implementation of the science of reading instruction practices, but has also created a culture of reading by working with community groups and families. Eat and Read with Families sponsored by the Ozark Literacy Council is just one of many ways they are creating a love for reading.

7. With a high English Language Learner (ELL) rate, SC Tucker Elementary in Danville is seeing a drop in its remediation rate, proving that science of reading works for all students. They have 100 percent buy-in including the principal who attends all the training and follow-up meetings, and their librarian and special education teachers who attending the 2018 Science of Reading Conference so they could support the teachers in their interventions.

8. At Paris Elementary school, teachers are working diligently to implement the Science of Reading throughout all aspects of their day. There is tremendous support from administration and staff to aid in using data to drive future instruction. The R.I.S.E. Arkansas initiative is truly making an impact for their students.

9. With the active support of their principal, the teachers of Poyen Elementary School are seeing great gains in student achievement through science-based reading instruction and support through the R.I.S.E. Academy training. This school is an example of what happens when administration and teachers join for a common focus.

10. Flippin Elementary School educators realized that they were using some ineffective methods and materials that did not give them the desired results in their students. They have been very transparent about what they see as their weaknesses and have sought out help to make themselves stronger and more effective reading teachers. They are noticing differences in their students compared to past years and they attribute that to the changes they have made in their instruction.