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OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION

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Walters Announces Oklahoma Awarded Nearly \$60 Million Grant to Improve Student Literacy

Tulsa, Okla – State Superintendent Ryan Walters today was joined by Tulsa Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Ebony Johnson today to announce a federal grant totaling \$58,949,098 over a five-year period that will support reading and literacy programs across Oklahoma public schools. In the 2024-25 academic year, approximately \$9 million will be disseminated to public schools that apply and qualify through a competitive grant process.

“When I started this job, I made a promise to the people of Oklahoma that we would get back to the basics of education, that we would eliminate the political activism and social indoctrination in the classroom and return focus on teaching our kids the skills they need to succeed in college and the workplace,” Walters said. “This grant will be a powerful supplement to the work we are already doing and offers us incredible resources to build upon the foundation we’ve built that prioritizes reading, writing, math and other critical disciplines that will enable our kids to compete and succeed wherever their dreams take them. I want to thank the lawmakers and superintendents who joined us today. I am grateful for their work and dedication to our joint mission of improving education outcomes for all Oklahoma students.”

As part of this initiative, 25 districts across Oklahoma will receive sub-grants to directly support the implementation of literacy programs tailored to their unique student populations. These sub-grants will enable schools to enhance their literacy instruction, provide targeted interventions, and foster a stronger foundation in language arts for their students.

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The project will focus on achieving the following key goals:

- **Early Language Development:** Increase the percentage of four-year-old children who achieve significant gains in oral language skills. This will be measured through universal screening tools, diagnostic assessments, and formative assessment processes.
- **Elementary Literacy Proficiency:** Increase the percentage of fifth-grade students who meet or exceed proficiency levels on the Oklahoma state reading/language arts assessment.
- **Middle School Literacy Proficiency:** Increase the percentage of eighth-grade students who meet or exceed proficiency levels on the Oklahoma state reading/language arts assessment.
- **Teacher Training and Professional Development:** Provide Oklahoma teachers with extensive training in the science of reading and effective literacy instructional strategies to ensure high-quality literacy education across the state.

The grant awarded to OSDE is part of the U.S. Department of Education's Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant Program which exists to advance literacy skills, reading, and writing for students from birth through grade 12, including limited-English-proficient students and students with disabilities.

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