

# Science of Reading Audit: Report of Findings

## Defiance College

2025

The Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) Science of Reading Audit of Ohio’s educator preparation programs (EPPs) assessed the extent to which institutions of higher education (IHEs) in Ohio aligned coursework, instructional materials, and practices with Ohio’s definition of the science of reading as established in the [Science of Reading Audit Metrics: Standards Alignment for the Ohio Department of Higher Education](#) and the Ohio Revised Code.

The audit focused on courses related to reading and literacy instruction. These included courses designed to meet Ohio’s 12-Hour Reading and Literacy Core Standards, 3-Hour Reading in Content Standards, and Reading Endorsement Standards, as well as other undergraduate and graduate courses addressing reading and literacy instruction.

The audit methodology included a multi-tiered course review, supplemental qualitative data collection, and a structured rating framework for programs and institutions. (See the state-level audit report for detailed methodology.)

## Data Analyzed

Table 1 summarizes audit data sources from Defiance College, including data collected at a site visit (March 3–5, 2025). A total of nine course sections were reviewed as a part of the audit process.

**Table 1**

*Audit Data Sources at Defiance College*

Source	<i>N</i>
Syllabus reviews	9
Textbook reviews	9
Instructional observations	5
Faculty and EPP leader interviews	4

## Audit Results

Each IHE received a rating based on the cumulative alignment ratings of individual course findings.

The rating of **In Alignment** requires that

- 97%–100% of the audit metrics were addressed across the full set of 12-Hour Reading and Literacy Core courses, **and**
- all literacy-related courses complied with relevant provisions of the Ohio Revised Code.

The rating of **In Partial Alignment** requires that

- 50%–96% of the audit metrics were addressed across the full set of 12-Hour Reading and Literacy Core courses, **and**
- all literacy-related courses complied with relevant provisions of the Ohio Revised Code.

The rating of **Not In Alignment** requires that

- fewer than 50% of the audit metrics were addressed across the full set of 12-Hour Reading and Literacy Core courses, **or**
- there was evidence of noncompliance with the Ohio Revised Code in one or more literacy-related courses.

The curriculum and instruction provided in EPPs at Defiance College are **Not In Alignment**. This determination reflects the extent to which courses, instructional materials (e.g., syllabi, textbooks, articles, assignments), and practices align with the expectations established in the audit metrics and in the Ohio Revised Code.

At Defiance College, **99%** of the audit metrics are addressed, but there is evidence of **noncompliance** with Ohio's definition of the science of reading as codified in the Ohio Revised Code. A description of the number of audit metrics addressed by domain is provided in Table 2. Appendix A lists all literacy-related courses within the 12-Hour Reading and Literacy Core that provided evidence of alignment with the audit metrics. A list of audited courses in noncompliance with Ohio's definition of the science of reading is provided in Appendix B.

**Table 2***Number of Metrics Addressed per Domain at Defiance College*

Metric domain	Metrics addressed
Teacher Knowledge	12 of 12
Phonological Awareness	9 of 9
Decoding and Encoding	8 of 8
Vocabulary and Oral Language	8 of 8
Reading Fluency	5 of 6
Reading Comprehension	7 of 7
Writing	9 of 9
Collaborative Problem Solving and Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)	11 of 11
High-Quality Instructional Materials	3 of 3



= All metrics addressed



= Some metrics addressed



= No metrics addressed

## Commendations

Commendations highlight notable accomplishments or exemplary practices documented in the audit that reflect alignment with the requirements of the Ohio Revised Code. Their purpose is to recognize, reinforce, and encourage effective practices, and to provide models for replication in other IHEs.

### Commendations for Defiance College:

- **Faculty have begun to develop structures and participate in structured collaboration across literacy-related courses, reinforcing a shared understanding of evidence-based literacy practices and improving instructional coherence.**

When interviewed, faculty referenced opportunities to collaborate and share resources during the summer and throughout the year and discussed ongoing collaborative learning

around the science of reading. This included the review and study of the Ohio science of reading modules.

- **Adjunct instructors with current and relevant K–12 experience contribute to preservice candidate learning by modeling classroom-tested strategies and bringing real-world insights into instruction.**

During field observations and faculty interviews, faculty used their classroom experience to build knowledge and model best practices (explicit, multimodal) for preservice candidates. Faculty expressed their mutual goal of preservice candidates completing coursework with tools, resources, and practices they can use in the classroom.

## Recommendations

Recommendations identify areas where improvements are needed to achieve full alignment with the requirements of the Ohio Revised Code and evidence-based literacy practices.

*Mandatory recommendations* are required for compliance with Ohio’s definition of the science of reading. Failure to adequately address mandatory recommendations will result in revocation of program approval by ODHE as required by Ohio law.

*Advisory recommendations* are suggestions for improvement intended as a guide toward best practices and informed by audit findings. Though implementation of advisory recommendations is not compulsory, these suggestions are intended to support continuous improvement and strengthen alignment with the science of reading.

### Mandatory Recommendations for Defiance College:

#### 1. **Revise course content to ensure alignment with evidence-based literacy instruction.**

Replace course materials and instructional practices that incorporate approaches prohibited by the Ohio Revised Code (e.g., the three-cueing approach) to ensure all current and future materials and practices are both high quality and aligned with demonstrated research (e.g., the science of reading). Course materials and instructional practices prohibited by the Ohio Revised Code exist in EDUC 446 and EDUC 222A. Evidence of prohibited practices was found within the following textbooks:

- DeVries, B. A. (2023). *Literacy assessment and intervention for classroom teachers* (6th ed.). Routledge.
- Gunning, T. G. (2025). *Creating literacy instruction for all students*. Pearson.

These textbooks embed a cueing approach in instructional frameworks or assessment procedures. For example, DeVries (2023) discusses miscue analysis, prompting students to reflect on whether miscues “made sense,” and uses results to guide instruction. The text

includes explanations of meaning, structure/syntax, and visual cueing systems and scoring, often referred to as MSV. Gunning (2025) outlines a “pause-prompt-praise” routine that encourages students to use context as part of word solving, including asking, “What word makes sense here?” under a phonics strategy heading (p. 248). The audit team recommends that Defiance College leadership and faculty systematically review all course content and replace content that is prohibited by the Ohio Revised Code with content fully aligned with the science of reading.

**2. Address all audit metrics across the 12-Hour Reading and Literacy Core courses. Revise courses and ensure integration of all audit metrics within syllabi, course content, and assessment across courses.**

Defiance College addressed 99% of the audit metrics. Revise courses to ensure full alignment, in particular the inclusion of Domain 5: Reading Fluency (Audit Metric 43). (See Appendix A.) Review the 12-Hour Reading and Literacy Core course materials and integrate all audit metrics into appropriate courses in the sequence.

**Advisory Recommendations for Defiance College:**

**1. Strengthen the consistency and clarity of course syllabi across literacy-related coursework.**

The audit team determined that some course syllabi lack detailed descriptions of how the content aligns with evidence-based literacy practices and the specific components required under the Ohio Revised Code. Support faculty to ensure that all syllabi communicate clear expectations and instructional goals.

**2. Ensure that faculty assigned to literacy-related courses have the expertise necessary to provide high-quality instruction in evidence-based literacy teaching practices. Be intentional in staffing decisions to avoid discrepancies.**

When interviewed, some faculty referenced having experience teaching at the middle and high school levels, indicating that they felt underprepared to provide candidates with practical applications of research-based practices that apply to early grades. The audit team noted that some responses to interview questions demonstrated a lack of understanding for teaching phonological awareness, decoding, and encoding. During field observations, faculty demonstrated uncertainty about research, best practices, and appropriate terminology.

## Appendix A–Metrics Addressed in Literacy-Related Courses

Tables A1 through A9 list all literacy-related courses within the 12-Hour Reading and Literacy Core that provided evidence of Defiance College’s alignment with the audit metrics, separated by audit metric domain. This list is not exhaustive; however, EPP faculty can use this information to identify which, if any, courses may need revisions to be in further alignment with the audit metrics. No individual 12-Hour Reading and Literacy Core course is expected to address every audit metric.

**Table A1**

*Courses Contributing to Evidence of Metric Alignment, Domain 1: Teacher Knowledge*

Audit metric	Courses that addressed metric
1	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg1
2	EDUC 445-gcg1
3	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg1, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446
4	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg1, EDUC 445-gcg2
5	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg1, EDUC 445-gcg2
6	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446
7	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446
8	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg1, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446
9	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg1, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446
10	EDUC 222B, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446
11	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446
12	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg2

**Table A2***Courses Contributing to Evidence of Metric Alignment, Domain 2: Phonological Awareness*

Audit metric	Courses that addressed metric
13	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446
14	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446
15	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
16	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446
17	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
18	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446
19	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446
20	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg1, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446
21	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 446

**Table A3***Courses Contributing to Evidence of Metric Alignment, Domain 3: Decoding and Encoding*

Audit metric	Courses that addressed metric
22	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
23	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg1, EDUC 446
24	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
25	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446
26	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435
27	EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg1, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446
28	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435
29	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 446



**Table A4***Courses Contributing to Evidence of Metric Alignment, Domain 4: Vocabulary and Oral Language*

<b>Audit metric</b>	<b>Courses that addressed metric</b>
30	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446
31	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
32	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
33	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
34	EDUC 222B, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
35	EDUC 222B, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg1, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446
36	EDUC 222B, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
37	EDUC 222B, EDUC 435, EDUC 446

**Table A5***Courses Contributing to Evidence of Metric Alignment, Domain 5: Reading Fluency*

<b>Audit metric</b>	<b>Courses that addressed metric</b>
38	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
39	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435
40	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
41	EDUC 222B, EDUC 446
42	EDUC 222B, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
43	<b>No evidence of audit metric alignment</b>

**Table A6***Courses Contributing to Evidence of Metric Alignment, Domain 6: Reading Comprehension*

Audit metric	Courses that addressed metric
44	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446
45	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435
46	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
47	EDUC 222B, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg2
48	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
49	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446
50	EDUC 222B, EDUC 435, EDUC 446

**Table A7***Courses Contributing to Evidence of Metric Alignment, Domain 7: Writing*

Audit metric	Courses that addressed metric
51	EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
52	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
53	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
54	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
55	EDUC 222B, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
56	EDUC 435
57	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
58	EDUC 435, EDUC 446
59	EDUC 435, EDUC 446

**Table A8**

*Courses Contributing to Evidence of Metric Alignment, Domain 8: Collaborative Problem Solving and MTSS*

Audit metric	Courses that addressed metric
60	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
61	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
62	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
63	EDUC 222B, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
64	EDUC 435
65	EDUC 222B, EDUC 435, EDUC 446
66	EDUC 435
67	EDUC 222B, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446
68	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446
69	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg1, EDUC 445-gcg2
70	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg2, EDUC 446

**Table A9**

*Courses Contributing to Evidence of Metric Alignment, Domain 9: High-Quality Instructional Materials*

Audit metric	Courses that addressed metric
71	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg2
72	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435
73	EDUC 222B, EDUC 307, EDUC 435, EDUC 445-gcg1

## Appendix B—Courses With Evidence of Noncompliance

Table B1 provides a list of course sections at Defiance College determined to be out of alignment with Ohio’s definition of the science of reading as codified in the Ohio Revised Code.

**Table B1**

*Audited Courses Not Aligned With Ohio’s Science of Reading Definition*

Course	Data source(s) not aligned
EDUC 222A	Textbooks
EDUC 446	Textbooks