

# **SURRY COUNTY SCHOOLS**

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **For Immediate Release**

#### **Surry County Schools Gives Teachers Choice in Professional Development**

On Friday, September 16, 2022, Surry County Schools hosted a Differentiated Professional Development event at Meadowview Magnet Middle School from 7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. All secondary education and elementary teachers not involved in Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) training attended.

During this time, all educators involved were given the opportunity to choose which professional development sessions best suited their needs. There were 21 sessions offered by administrators, curriculum coaches, and teachers across the district. Teachers were able to sign up for 3 sessions that piqued their interest. The focus of these sessions was on how to engage students across all content areas, strategies for delivering instruction, and co-teaching, among others. Also, teachers were also able to collaborate with their district professional learning communities to focus on the continuous improvement cycle, including data analysis, creating assignments and assessments, identifying student strengths and weaknesses to address student needs, and then planning for intervention and/or enrichment.

Amy Harris, Director of Secondary Curriculum and Instruction commented on the day, “It was so exciting to observe teachers from across the county engage with their colleagues and peers in these professional development opportunities. Our teacher leaders, curriculum coaches, school and district level administrators prepared sessions to meet the various needs of staff which leads to supporting all students. As a curriculum team, we reviewed surveys to help us develop the sessions that were offered. Based on the feedback we received at the end of the day, our teachers were appreciative of having choice and voice. We want our teachers to know they are valued and we hope to have another successful day of offerings on November 4th. I cannot express my gratitude to all those who led the sessions and to all who participated. We have amazing educators across Surry County Schools and their work is the most important work of all.”

While these teachers participated in differentiated professional development, elementary teachers began LETRS training in their schools. LETRS is professional learning that provides educators and administrators with deep knowledge to be literacy and language experts in the science of reading. LETRS teaches the skills needed to master the fundamentals of reading instruction—phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, writing, and language. Teachers at each school began their training online with a certified LETRS trainer and then spent the afternoon with their professional learning communities, continuing to focus on LETRS modules.

“This first day of this professional development has shown that teachers in Surry County Schools are excited about what they’re learning and are having great discussions about what strategies are successful, what aspects of classroom instruction can be improved, and how to best meet the needs of all students. Upon completion of their first day of LETRS training, elementary teachers were reflective about reading instruction and their impact on students as they navigate the process of learning to read. Over the course of the next two years, I look forward to seeing what teachers gain from learning these research-based strategies and how they impact student learning long term,” said Margaret Spicer, Director of Elementary Curriculum and Instruction.