



Proposal: Science of Reading Instruction (SORI) Coach Training and Support System

June 16, 2026

I. Project Overview

The **Center for the School of the Future (CSF)** at **Utah State University** proposes a **Science of Reading Instruction (SORI) Coach Training and Support System** for 8–10 Utah charter school literacy coaches. Building on CSF's proven early literacy professional development model, this project blends coach assessment, intensive training, applied coaching practice, and ongoing school-based implementation support.

Strategic Goal

The primary objective is to equip coaches to help partner charter schools progress towards Utah's target of **90% reading proficiency by the end of third grade** (Acadience Composite Score of 405 or higher). Coaches will develop the deep content knowledge, practical skills, and clinical judgment necessary to translate Science of Reading (SOR) research into sustainable, schoolwide literacy improvements.

II. Purpose and Need

Utah charter schools are investing heavily in SOR and SORI initiatives to raise early literacy scores. While many educators have completed foundational coursework, bridging the gap between theory and classroom execution remains a critical challenge. Declarative knowledge alone does not automatically translate into effective teacher coaching, robust curriculum implementation, or student proficiency.

This project directly addresses this application gap. The focus is not simply on *what* works, but on *how* to implement, monitor, and sustain explicit, research-grounded instruction across diverse school environments.

Professional Knowledge Framework

The training architecture is structured around three essential dimensions of professional mastery:

- **Declarative Knowledge ("The What"):** Deep comprehension of reading development, cognitive science, and evidence-based instructional design.
- **Procedural Knowledge ("The How"):** Mastery of high-leverage coaching routines, including structured observations, lesson analysis, data-driven co-planning, and actionable feedback.
- **Conditional Knowledge ("The When and Why"):** Developing the clinical judgment to diagnose specific institutional barriers, differentiate support based on teacher readiness, and determine exactly which instructional interventions are needed under varying school conditions.

III. Scope and Participant Expectations

The project will run as a cohort model pairing approximately 8–10 literacy coaches with one carefully selected partner charter school for a proof-of-concept implementation phase. Final cohort sizes, school selections, and training timelines will be determined in collaboration with the Utah State Charter School Board.

Participant Commitments	
Entity	Core Responsibilities & Expectations
Participating Coaches	Complete the SORI pre-assessment and readiness review. Attend all summer intensive days and monthly 6-hour training sessions. Lead a proof-of-concept coaching project at a paired charter school. Submit coaching artifacts and engage in structured reflection and peer feedback.
Partner Charter Schools	Designate a school leadership contact to actively support the initiative. Identify target grade levels, classrooms, and participating teachers. Provide the coach with access to classrooms, instructional contexts, and relevant literacy data. Participate regularly in ongoing planning and project evaluation reviews.

IV. Training Design and Components

The system is delivered across five interconnected phases:

Component 1: Coach Pre-Assessment and Readiness Review

Prior to the summer intensive, coaches will complete a comprehensive readiness review (utilizing the LIKS Reading survey or a comparable instrument). This baseline data is not used for ranking; instead, it generates a cohort profile that allows CSF to customize the training sequence and identify targeted areas for coaching support. The review includes a content-knowledge baseline, a self-assessment of experience, and a current workload survey.

Component 2: Declarative Knowledge Base

Coaches receive rigorous instruction in the cognitive science of the reading mind and explicit instructional design. Scope of topics includes:

- Oral language foundations, phonological/phonemic awareness, and the alphabetic principle.
- Phonics, decoding/encoding, multisyllabic word analysis, and morphology.
- Oral reading fluency routines, vocabulary development, and text comprehension models (micro, macro, and situation models).
- Evidence-based writing foundations, MTSS alignment, and data-driven differentiation.

Component 3: Procedural Coaching Routines

Training shifts heavily to the practical execution of coaching cycles. Coaches will learn to conduct brief observations, evaluate lessons for systemic pacing and explicit delivery, analyze student error patterns, co-plan high-leverage routines, and deliver precise feedback without overwhelming teachers. Skills are developed using video analysis, case studies, and peer role-play.

Component 4: Conditional Judgment (Proof-of-Concept)

Coaches apply their skills in real-time within their paired charter school. CSF field specialists guide coaches through critical diagnostics, helping them determine whether a school's primary bottleneck is teacher content knowledge,

curriculum utilization, data collection, or systemic scheduling limitations. Coaches learn when to introduce new routines and when to recommend the "de-implementation" of low-value legacy practices.

Component 5: Follow-Up Year Support

To ensure long-term sustainability and prevent the initiative from becoming an isolated one-year event, an optional second year provides quarterly problem-solving sessions, school-level implementation reviews, and capacity-building plans to help schools scale the model to additional grade levels.

V. Professional Development Sessions & Budget Table

The following schedule and investment package is modeled after CSF's successful early literacy professional development framework. Final calendar dates will be established collaboratively.

Session / Deliverable	Core Content & Focus	Format / Timing	Cost
Project Launch & Pre-Assessment	Orientation, LIKS/comparable baseline assessment, workload profile review.	1 Day (Summer 2026)	\$5,000
Cognitive Science Foundations	How the mind learns to read, cognitive architecture, roots of reading difficulties.	1 Day (Summer)	\$5,000
SORI Foundations	Explicit, systematic, and responsive instruction; literacy block design and vertical alignment.	1 Day (Summer)	\$5,000
Coaching Practice Intensive	Developing a coaching stance, observation protocols, feedback delivery, school pairing setup.	1 Day (Summer)	\$5,000
Reading Foundations 1	Oral language development, phonological and phonemic awareness, concepts about print.	6-Hour Session (Month 1)	\$5,000
Reading Foundations 2	Letter knowledge, alphabetic principle, foundational phonics routines.	6-Hour Session (Month 2)	\$5,000
Reading Foundations 3	Single-syllable decoding/encoding, student error analysis, explicit phonics application.	6-Hour Session (Month 3)	\$5,000
Reading Foundations 4	Multisyllabic word reading, advanced spelling structures, structural morphology.	6-Hour Session (Month 4)	\$5,000

Session / Deliverable	Core Content & Focus	Format / Timing	Cost
Reading Foundations 5	High-frequency word strategies, oral reading fluency routines, progress monitoring.	6-Hour Session (Month 5)	\$5,000
Reading Foundations 6	Vocabulary frameworks, language comprehension, systematic background knowledge building.	6-Hour Session (Month 6)	\$5,000
Reading Foundations 7	Text comprehension levels (micro, macro, situation models), explicit strategy instruction.	6-Hour Session (Month 7)	\$5,000
Reading & Writing Connections	Sentence-level mechanics, writing genres, Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD).	6-Hour Session (Month 8)	\$5,000
Assessment & Data Analysis	Screeners, diagnostics, benchmark tracking, translating raw data into instructional adjustments.	6-Hour Session (Month 9)	\$5,000
MTSS & Differentiated Support	Struggling reader profiles, small-group design, aligning Tier 1, 2, and 3 interventions.	6-Hour Session (Month 10)	\$5,000
Coaching for Implementation	Live observation debriefs, co-planning mastery, teacher reflection protocols.	6-Hour Session (Month 11)	\$5,000
Proof-of-Concept & Scale Review	Coach capstone presentations, post-assessments, data sharing, year-two scale-up planning.	6-Hour Session (Month 12)	\$5,000
School-Based Field Support	Direct CSF side-by-side field support for coaches inside paired schools, utilizing video analysis (optional).	12 Days (Throughout Year)	\$36,000
Follow-Up Year Support	Quarterly support, sustainability planning, scaling reviews, ongoing problem-solving (optional).	4 Sessions (Year 2)	\$16,000

Session / Deliverable	Core Content & Focus	Format / Timing	Cost
Project Management & Tools	CSF project coordination, general training materials, electronic toolkits, templates, assessment summaries, implementation tools, and reporting.	Project-Wide	\$30,000
In-State Travel Logistics	Field site visits, school consultations, and regional travel.	Project-Wide	\$20,000
TOTAL ESTIMATED PROGRAM COST			\$182,000

Budget Summary

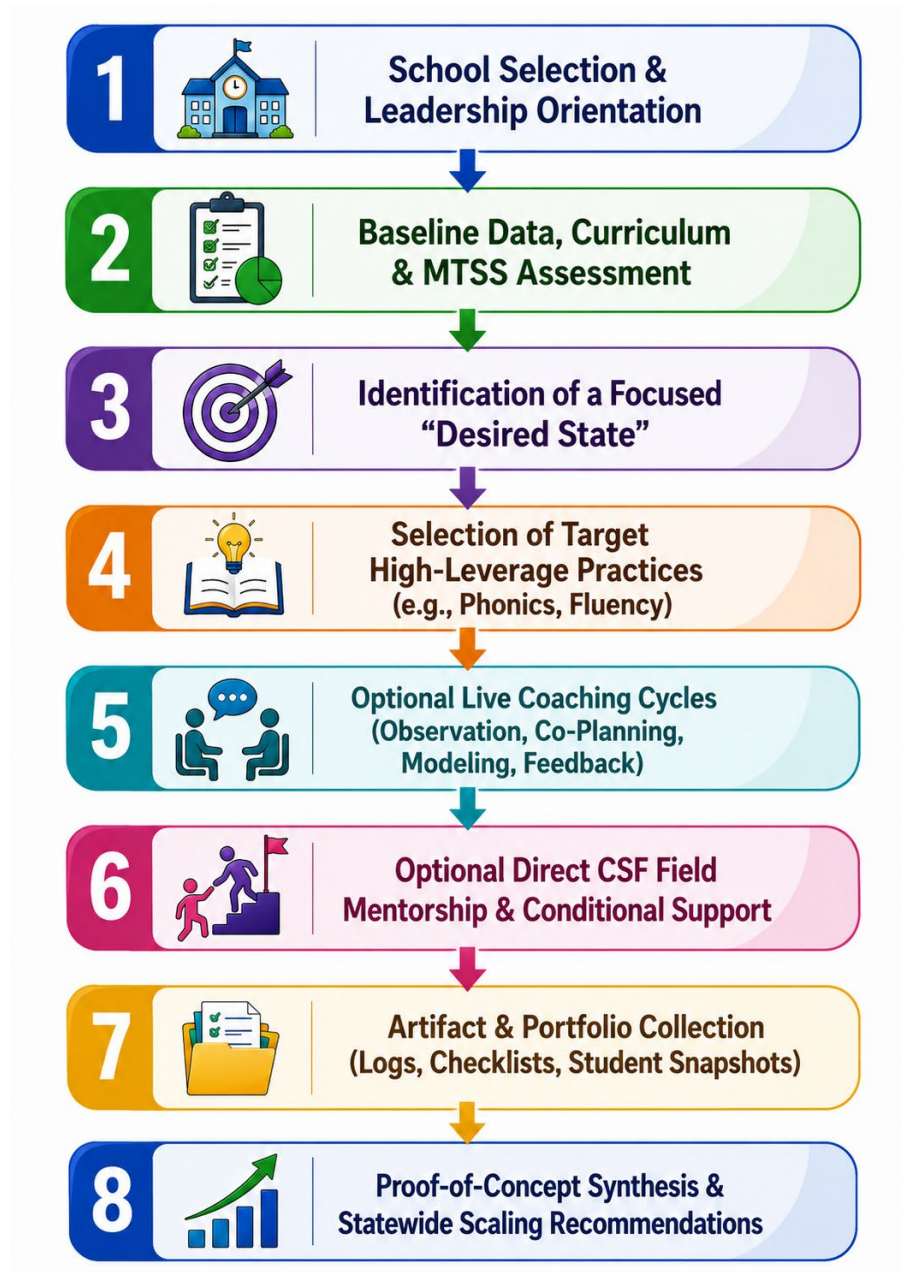
The following summary groups the detailed session and support costs into the major budget categories requested for the project.

Budget Category	Description	Amount
Session Training Costs	Sixteen training sessions/days, including summer launch sessions and monthly six-hour SORI coach training sessions (\$5,000 each). Includes session specific instructional materials, costs for 2 SORI expert coach trainers per session, and site related costs (lunch, site rental fees, etc.)	\$80,000
School-Based Support (Optional)	Twelve days of CSF side-by-side support to facilitate on-site coaching, observation, debriefing, and applied SORI expertise in paired charter schools.	\$36,000
Follow-Up Year Support (Optional)	Four follow-up sessions to support sustainability, scale-up planning, ongoing problem-solving, and additional school-site coaching expertise as needed.	\$16,000
Project Management & Tools	CSF project coordination, general training materials, electronic toolkits, templates, assessment summaries, implementation tools, and reporting.	\$30,000
In-State Travel	Travel for trainers to training sites and other in-state travel needs required to successfully complete the project.	\$20,000
Total Estimated Program Cost		\$182,000

*Note: The school-based support and follow-up year support are **optional** components intended to extend the training into applied school-site coaching support and expert implementation assistance.*

VI. Proof-of-Concept Implementation Framework

The paired school execution is designed to systematically shift coaches from theoretical understanding to clinical competency through an 8-step process:



VII. Shared Project Responsibilities

Center for the School of the Future (CSF)

- Design, schedule, and facilitate all summer intensive and monthly professional learning sessions.
- Administer, score, and synthesize the coach pre- and post-assessments into cohort profiles.
- Provide all physical and electronic training materials, toolkits, and observation rubrics.

- Deliver optional ongoing, in-person field support and consultation to coaches within their paired charter schools.
- Analyze programmatic data and deliver a final summary evaluation report with strategic scaling recommendations.

Utah State Charter School Board

- Select and secure the participation commitments of the 8–10 literacy coaches and paired schools.
- Facilitate systemic communication channels and endorse participation expectations.
- Provide clarity on target institutional deliverables, benchmarks, and reporting timelines.
- Collaborate with CSF leadership on the final project evaluation and future funding structures.

VIII. Evaluation Plan

The multi-layered evaluation model systematically monitors growth across four key levels of implementation:

- **Coach Learning:** Documented via rigorous pre- and post-assessments of Science of Reading content knowledge and instructional design.
- **Coach Application:** Measured via ongoing portfolio reviews of coaching artifacts, including optional observation notes, teacher feedback logs, action plans, and co-planning checklists.
- **School-Level Fidelity:** Evaluated using standardized implementation checklists tracking the adoption quality of the selected high-leverage literacy practices.
- **Student Metrics:** Assessed via school-level student literacy indicators and Acadience benchmark progress data where available and contextually appropriate.

While the ultimate benchmark of success is student reading proficiency, this evaluation framework ensures that coaches build the verified, long-term instructional capacity needed to sustain those student outcomes year after year. This is a systems approach intended to propel and sustain instructional changes over time.