



For More Information Contact:
 Tammi Hope, Director of Program Development
 316-684-7323 or thope@funlearn.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
 March 13, 2025

Patterson Family Foundation Awards Grant to Enhance Bilingual Literacy in Rural Kansas

WICHITA, Kan. — The Phillips Fundamental Learning Center (PFLC) is proud to announce the receipt of a grant from the Patterson Family Foundation, underscoring their steadfast commitment to bolstering education in rural communities. This generous grant builds upon the success of a previous one, which empowered PFLC to establish the Points of Light initiative across Kansas, furthering efforts to support and develop educators in underserved areas.

With this new investment, PFLC will expand bilingual literacy education for Spanish-speaking students in rural Kansas counties with populations under 50,000. By providing specialized Structured Literacy training, this initiative aims to equip educators with the necessary tools to deliver high-quality instruction, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to succeed.

The urgency of this initiative is highlighted by recent data: In 2024, only 28% of Kansas fourth graders achieved reading proficiency, with Hispanic students at a mere 17%, according to the 2024 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

To address this critical need, PFLC is launching a comprehensive bilingual literacy training program through the Andeel Teacher Literacy Institute (ATLI), in collaboration with Dr. Elsa Hagen-Cardenas of Valley Speech Language and Learning Center, developers of the Esperanza and WELLS curricula. This two-year, multisensory Structured Literacy program will prepare educators to effectively teach reading, writing, and spelling to Spanish-speaking students. Upon completion, participants may sit for the exam to earn the esteemed Certified Academic Language Practitioner (CALP) Bilingual certification with the Academic Language Therapy Association or the Certified Structured Literacy Dyslexia Interventionist (C-SLDI) certification through the Center for Effective Reading Instruction.

“This grant is transformative,” said Jeanine Phillips, Executive Director of PFLC. “By empowering educators with specialized training, we’re ensuring that Spanish-speaking students in rural Kansas receive the quality literacy education they deserve. We are deeply grateful to the Patterson Family Foundation for making this initiative possible and for their unwavering support of education in our state.”

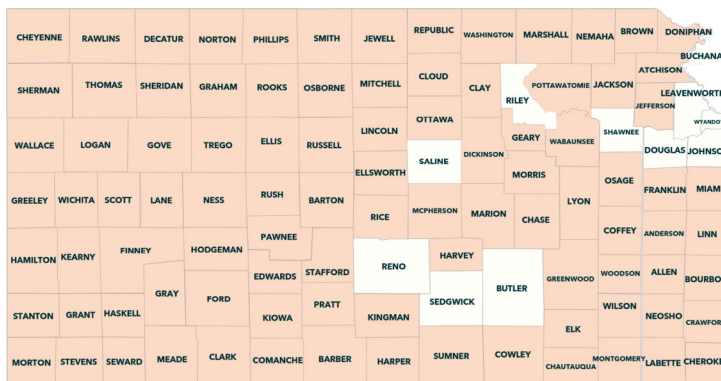
PFLC is now accepting applications for 20 dedicated bilingual educators to join the inaugural training cohort launching in Summer 2025. This fully funded opportunity is poised to make a significant impact on bilingual education across rural Kansas. Eligible educators must reside within the Patterson Family Foundation’s catchment areas (see attached map for eligible Kansas counties).

Apply Now – Limited Spots Available

Contact: Sydney Marler, ATLI Registrar
 Phone: (316) 684-7323
 Email: smarler@funlearn.org
 Website: <https://www.funlearn.org/pointsoflight>

Note: This press release incorporates data from the 2024 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) to emphasize the critical need for this initiative.

 -30-



IN PFF CATCHMENT
 OUTSIDE PFF CATCHMENT

PATTERSON