

Lisa Coons

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Educational Leadership Strengths

Instructional Leadership	Large Scale Budget Management	Educational Technology
Curriculum Development	Vendor Management	Leadership Coaching
Science of Reading Expert	Stakeholder Engagement	Professional Development
Project and Risk Management	Community Partnerships	Staff Relations

Selected Professional Accomplishments

Chief Academic Officer | Tennessee Department of Education | (June 2019-present)

- Serve as the chief academic officer for the State of Tennessee, leading all birth to grade 12 academic programming including K-12 teaching and learning in literacy/English language arts, mathematics, science, and fine arts; early childhood education; voluntary PreK; Head Start; and Response to Intervention.
- Launched a comprehensive \$120 million Reading 360 Initiative that trained over 18,000 educators, supported 100+ district high-quality literacy programs, re-designed teacher preparation programs, and provided 50,000 families with home literacy materials resulting in the highest Grade 3-8 2022 ELA statewide outcomes since 2012 despite intermittent pandemic school closures.
- Cultivated a statewide strategy that secured Tennessee's place as a national leader in the adoption and implementation of high-quality instructional materials resulting in over 97% of districts adopting English language arts materials considered high-quality.
- Implemented a \$170 million TN ALL Corps tutoring program for 155,000 at-risk students in grades 1-8 providing research based high-dosage, low-ratio tutoring to ensure accelerated learning growth and higher student achievement gains in mathematics and ELA.
- Designed and directly supported two statewide community partnership grants with multiple United Ways, Urban League and other nonprofit organizations to create a networked tutoring program serving an additional 40,000 at-risk students providing additional tutoring capacity for large urban districts.
- Restructured fiscal monitoring of district VPK budgets to increase timely expenditures by 20%, and, in turn, allowing the state to re-allocate unspent funds adding 33 classrooms statewide.
- Orchestrated a strategic research partnership with University of Tennessee establishing an independent Tennessee Reading Research Center to evaluate existing statewide reading initiatives to determine the most impactful strategies and to ensure sustainability in the implementation of effective reading instruction improvements.
- Lead and mentor an executive team of assistant commissioners, senior directors, and an office of 60+ staff members.
- Spearhead academic projects with ten inter-agency divisions, including educator preparation programming, teacher/leader evaluation, and College and Career Technical Education initiatives, to ensure coherent programming for districts across the state.

Executive Officer, District Priority Schools | Metro Nashville Public Schools | (August 2017-June 2019)

- Created an effective leadership division that supported 23 priority schools, replacing a smaller legacy system, and bolstering student attendance by an average of 15% and academic growth by 20% on NWEA MAP benchmark data.
- Directed a team of principal supervisors, student support coordinators, and literacy and math specialists; successfully executed a \$5.6M budget, providing operational support to 25 schools, 11,000 students and over 850 staff members.
- Cultivated partnerships with John Hopkins University (Attendance Works), TNTP, Vanderbilt University, and Lipscomb University to re-vision the MNPS priority schools strategic plan focusing on building community partner schools, implementing rigorous literacy and math curricula, designing intensive teacher and leader supports, and creating a robust wrap around social and emotional support system for students.
- Formulated road map for the successful exit of five schools from statewide priority status by increasing student attendance by 20% and significantly increasing academic success of students in all five schools.
- Served as an advisory member to the Nashville Mayor's Kitchen Cabinet for Priority Schools to engage multiple community entities in Nashville to build a coherent and comprehensive vision for school improvement for turn around schools.
- Established community partner relationships with city council members, Communities in Schools, Nashville Public Education Foundation, United Way, and Pencil Foundation to create school-specific strategies to fully engage families in their children's learning experiences.

Executive Director of Instructional Leadership | Tennessee Department of Education | (October 2014-August 2016)

- Oversaw visioning, content sequencing, and module development for quarterly statewide leadership courses designed to provide systematic instructional professional development for over 2100 superintendents, assistant superintendents, and principals.
- Customized and executed leadership coaching series for urban school districts to tailor instructional leadership development models impacting leadership supports for over 300 school leaders in Tennessee.
- Orchestrated 2015 statewide leadership conference including developing learning sessions and managing operations and \$2M budget; event served over 2300 attendees with an 89% highly satisfied customer rating.
- Re-structured monthly regional professional learning series for district instructional supervisors to use a collaborative problem-solving model. As a result, designed and implemented a statewide improvement science model that facilitated the analysis of literacy practices in 70% of districts.

Middle School Supervisor | Sumner County Schools | (July 2013-September 2014)

- Led instructional programming for 13 diverse county-wide middle school programs and served as co-chair for Countywide Student Intervention Implementation Committee.
- Facilitated the implementation of RTI² programming including budgeting, ordering, and managing the delivery of RTI² intervention materials to all district middle schools.
- Coached principals in curriculum planning, revising master schedules to ensure consistent intervention time, and designed cohesive intervention curriculum in math and reading.

- Facilitated countywide Professional Learning Communities for principals, assistant principals, teacher leaders, librarians, and guidance counselors in building coherent instructional and student support practices within their school.

Director of Academics | LEAD Public Schools | (April 2012-July 2013)

- Designed, oversaw, and provided direct support for instructional leadership staff, instructional coaches, special education staff, English as a Second Language services, teacher development, instructional technology oversight, and special education programs.
- Oversaw staff, \$500K budget, and training for academics to ensure effective and efficient operations of new initiatives with growing schools that served students with dynamic needs.
- Created and implemented cohesive instructional model for middle and high schools resulting in an application of state academic standards as well as designed rigorous college preparation and remediation time for students with large academic barriers and gaps.
- Retooled teacher evaluation system to include weekly walk-through observations and teacher coaching that resulted in a clear continuum of teacher development around statewide teacher evaluation indicators.
- Designed and executed yearlong professional development calendar, network assessment calendar, weekly professional development, and two-week induction programming to provide clear continuum and fidelity to the academic vision.

Assistant Superintendent | Ross Local Schools | (August 2009-April 2012)

- Designed and executed strategic planning and budgeting for the “Race to Top” Grant including ordering, invoicing, monthly board updates, and state-mandated reporting.
- Oversaw the district budget of \$2M in competitive grants, federal grants programs, and student support dollars and provided school board with monthly budget reports.
- Served as the human resources representative for all contract negotiations, staff discipline, staff recognition, and staff terminations.
- Supervised K-12 instructional programming including gifted, English as Second Language, technology, and library media services and provided monthly board reports on academic progress and achievement.

Educational and Certifications

Broad Fellowship: School of Management, Yale University (Fellowship for Education Leadership, June 2022-March 2023)

Ed. D.: David Lipscomb University (Learning Organizations and Strategic Change, Dec 2016)
 Dissertation title: The Impact of the EDI Framework and Inquiry-based Learning Strategies on Student Achievement in Middle School; Advisor: Dr. Jeanne Fain

Ed. S.: David Lipscomb University (Collaborative Professional Learning, Dec 2014)
 Project Title: Improving Literacy for all Adolescents; Advisor: Dr. Tammy Shutt

Instructional Coaching Certificate: David Lipscomb University (July 2014)

Superintendent License: University of Cincinnati/Wright State University (Aug 2011)

Principal License: University of Cincinnati/Wright State University (Aug 2006)

Administrative Specialist License: Curriculum & Instruction Wright State University (Aug 2003)

M.A.: Wright State University (Educational Technology, June 2003)
Concentrations: Educational Technology, Educational Leadership

B.S.: Wright State University (Secondary Education, June 1998)

Presentations and Publications

Coons, Lisa (February 2023). "What is the Role of an SEA in Changing Classroom Practice?" Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) Instructional Materials and Professional Development Network Convening.

Coons, Lisa (February 2023). "How has Tennessee Put it All Together: Talking with the Educator Team." Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) Instructional Materials and Professional Development Network Convening.

Coons Lisa (November 2022). Tennessee's Literacy Strategy. Excel in Ed: National Summit in Education

Coons, Lisa (October 2022). [Universal Reading Screener Spring 2022 Data](#). State Board of Education.

Coons, Lisa (August 2022). Featured in "The Surprising State Where Kids Are Making a Reading Comeback" <https://www.edpost.com/stories/the-surprising-state-where-kids-are-making-a-reading-comeback>

Coons, Lisa (August 2022). Unique Learning Needs State Board Rules Updates. State Board of Education.

Coons, Lisa (July 2022). [Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement: Funding Unique Learners](#). State Board of Education.

Coons, Lisa (July 2022). Featured in "5 Insights on Getting the 'Science of Reading' Into Classrooms." <https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/5-insights-on-getting-the-science-of-reading-into-classrooms/2022/07>

Coons, Lisa (June 15, 2022). Featured in "Cheatham County Schools chosen to pilot changes in online learning program." https://www.cheathamcountyexchange.com/news/cheatham-county-schools-chosen-to-pilot-changes-in-online-learning-program/article_4ad7b49e-eacf-11ec-bd05-1b3814941bc0.html

Coons, Lisa (April 2022). 2021-22 Statewide Testing Outcomes. State Board of Education.

Coons, Lisa (April 2022). Creating Coherent and Systematic Partnerships between TDOE and Education Preparation Providers. Council of Chief State School Officers.

- Coons, Lisa (April 2022). Featured in “County Schools Lauded for Reading.” https://www.news-herald.net/news/county-schools-lauded-for-reading/article_b12ddf27-938d-597f-ad5c-8013c125c2bd.html
- Coons, Lisa (March 4, 2022). Featured in “Tennessee Department of Education visits Harold McCormick Elementary as part of ‘Reading 360’ campaign.” <https://www.elizabethton.com/2022/03/04/tennessee-department-of-education-visits-harold-mccormick-elementary-as-part-of-reading-360-campaign/>
- Coons, Lisa (March 2022). Featured in “The Urban League of Greater Chattanooga Fights Illiteracy.” <https://nul.org/news/urban-league-greater-chattanooga-fights-illiteracy>
- Coons, Lisa (February 2022). Featured in: “Beyond ‘Maus’: How Tennessee’s schools are changing for the better.” <https://fordhaminstitute.org/national/commentary/beyond-maus-how-tennessees-schools-are-changing-better>
- Coons, Lisa (February 2022). Featured in “23,171 Knox County Parents Will Receive Texts to Help Children Learn at Home.” <https://governorsfoundation.org/23171-knox-county-parents-will-receive-texts-to-help-children-learn-at-home/>
- Coons, Lisa (February 2022). Reading 360: An Overview. Excel in Ed.
- Coons, Lisa (January 2022). Accelerating Learning through High Dosage Tutoring. What Works Summit.
- Coons, Lisa (October 2021). 2021 Statewide Academic Performance Results. State Board of Education.
- Coons, Lisa (September 2021). TN All Corps: How Superintendents Can Leverage State Dollars for Learning Acceleration. Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents State Conference.
- Coons, Lisa (September 2021). Reading 360: How to Support Systemwide Literacy Change in Your District. Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents State Conference.
- Coons, Lisa (April 2021). “What Can States Do to Improve Reading Instruction?” EdTrust Podcast. <https://edtrust.org/the-equity-line/what-can-states-do-to-improve-reading-instruction/>
- Coons, Lisa (September 2020). How to Leverage Best for All Central Resources during School Closures. Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents State Virtual Conference.
- Coons, Lisa (January 2020). Featured in “National Literacy Campaign to Visit Three Tennessee Districts to Observe Model Curriculum Implementation.” StandardsWork. <https://knowledgematterscampaign.org/national-literacy-campaign-visit-three-tennessee-districts-observe-model-curriculum-implementation/>
- Coons, Lisa (September 2019). Improving Instruction: Start with High Quality Instructional Materials. Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents State Conference.

Coons, Lisa (September 2018). "Dr. Joseph Cautions Against Quick Fixes for Under Performing Metro Schools." <https://tntribune.com/dr-joseph-cautions-against-quick-fixes-for-under-performing-metro-schools/>

Coons, Lisa (2016). The Impact of the EDI Framework and Inquiry-based Learning Strategies on Student Achievement in Middle School.

Coons, Lisa. (2016). Tennessee Department of Education 2016 statewide integrated leadership course Spring: Elementary and secondary literacy strategies.

Coons, Lisa. (2015). Tennessee Department of Education 2015 statewide integrated leadership course Winter: Elementary and Secondary. TDOE.

Coons, Lisa (2015). Tennessee Department of Education 2015 statewide integrated leadership course Fall: Elementary and Secondary. TDOE.