

HB

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NAACP

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

Anchorage, Alaska Branch – Kevin McGee, President

January 24, 2017

Senator Hughes
Senate Education Committee
Capitol Building
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Representative Drummond
House Education Committee
Capitol Building
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: Support for SB 27 and HB 94 for a Reading Proficiency Task Force

Dear Senator Hughes and Representative Drummond,

Please consider our support for new bills SB 27 and HB 64 to create a legislative task force to recommend changes for improving reading and addressing dyslexic students. We believe the bills may help raise the academic proficiency of Alaska public school students. A plan for advancing literacy in public schools in Alaska both to meet State standards and to rise into the ranks of the rest of the U.S. is urgently needed. Senate Bill 27 and HB 64 are a step toward that plan.

Introductions

By way of introduction, the Anchorage branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) comprises long time Alaskan parents and grandparents deeply concerned about the poor track record of literacy achievement among Alaska public school students. With other groups of concerned citizens and parents, we are alarmed by chronically low reading and writing scores across the state. We and the Alaska Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (AKBIDA), Decoding Dyslexia, and the Alaska chapter of Literate Nation have first-hand experience with schools' slow response to students who find it difficult to learn to read.

To be clear at the outset, the Anchorage NAACP's scope of concern is not limited to Anchorage kids or to brown kids or to poor kids. We are concerned about bad reading and math skills generally among the 128,000 public school students in the State. We support SB 27 and HB 64 as the Legislature's step toward a remedy.

An Urgent Problem

In Alaska, poor academic achievement in general and low literacy skills in particular pose an urgent problem. Among Alaska's 128,000 public school students, almost two-thirds are behind in English language and mathematics. The attached graphs of Alaska Measures of Progress 2015 results among school districts show that 65 percent of students taking the test did not meet State standards. Applying that rate to all public school grades, indicates that some 80,000 kids are behind. That is not news, however. For many years, Alaska has consistently scored among the worst-performing states on key national reading and math tests. (Please see illustrations of National Assessment of Educational Progress in the attachments.) These bottom-of-the-barrel outcomes appear entrenched. Both the poor outcomes themselves and the absence of improvements over the years indicate a system of public education in Alaska that in our view inadequately serves students and does not meet the law.

Poor academic performance among Alaska students appears systemic and ubiquitous. It is not just a rural problem or a poor people problem or a brown people problem. Although we know, not surprisingly, that higher-income students generally perform better, in only a minor proportion of schools statewide do most students meet State standards. (See the chart of districts' 2015 AMP performance in the attachments.) Furthermore, white Alaska kids have consistently managed to score below other white kids in the U.S. Although we applaud the many bright spots of student achievement, we are concerned about the overall low level of reading, writing and math performance that characterizes Alaska public schools.

The urgency of low academic performance has recently become even sharper in light of the State's financial prospects. In the past, high State oil revenue may have made it easier to infer that improvements in education might be forthcoming. And perhaps the plentitude of good blue-collar jobs obscured the value of education in economic competition. However, the decline in both the price and production of oil strips away those two masks. Now, the decline of State revenues shows that educational improvements are more necessary and at the same time less likely. We think that neither hope and patience nor the prospect of high State revenues any longer will lead to gains in academic performance in Alaska.

These days Alaska needs to plan what it will do differently. We know that the Department of Education shares that view, based on its "Alaska State Literacy Blueprint" (2011). Among other things, for example, the Department outlined the role of certified reading or literacy specialists and collaboration with universities regarding teacher preparation in overcoming low literacy proficiency. And we are happy to learn that the Department will make its own committees to make recommendations this year for educational improvements.

The Objective

We want Alaska public school students to rise quickly into the ranks of the rest of the U.S. in reading, writing and math. We will know the goal has been achieved when we see significant gains on the order of a grade-level improvement in statewide scores as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress. In addition, we will know that Alaska's public school system is adequate when students' performance rises to the State's own grade-level academic standards. SB 27 and HB 64 may be part of the remedy.

Accountability

We are bringing the urgent problem of low academic proficiency to your attention because we believe the Legislature is accountable for academic proficiency among public school students. The good news is that under the State Constitution the Legislature is responsible for public schools. The bad news is that you are also accountable for them. Through your hands pass more than one billion dollars per year to pay for

public education. The Legislature has the authority to pay for and govern Alaska's public schools and in turn it is accountable for the result.

As background, we understand that families and individuals carry the greatest responsibility for children's education. In fact, our organization acknowledges that and works hard to support families in that regard. We know that schools can only affect what goes on within their four walls, and consequently have limits on their accountability for academic performance.

Nevertheless, academic improvement plans that may come from a task force to be created by SB 27 and HB 64 are important, and this discussion is aimed at how they may help the Legislature meet its obligations to public schools. We know that schools hold many of the keys to academic improvements even in the face of poor student preparedness because we have seen examples of those improvements from around the U.S. and in Alaska.

As further background, please know that recently we have reminded many State policy makers and school budget managers about their responsibility. We have brought it to the attention of the Governor by way of letters and at several meetings in the last two years. We spoke with Commissioners Hanley and Johnson and their top staff on several occasions as well, sometimes with the Governor in attendance. We have met with a number of legislators and their aides, reminding them of their obligation, showing them the challenge of low scores, and asking for legislation to improve the public schools, pre-K programs, and reading instruction in particular. We have spoken before the Board of Education about the need to enhance literacy education as some other states have done; we will speak to the Board again.

In our initial efforts to trace accountability for public school academic performance, we've discovered two things, as follows:

- The State has not stepped out in front to develop its own urgent, home-grown approach and to lead with its own initiatives. We've seen no strongly-voiced vision yet from the State for dramatically raising reading and math skills of tens of thousands of kids. Perhaps SB 27 and HB 64 will change that.
- The second discovery has to do with accountability as it is associated with the allocation of money. With some exceptions, neither the Department, the school districts, the Governor, nor the Legislature justify their pattern of spending more than one billion dollars of State money annually for school operations on the basis that their allocation maximizes the math and reading performance of more than one hundred thousand kids. We've seen no State or district budgeting plan that targets dramatic improvements in reading and math skills of our students. Few of the many State and local government position-holders responsible for sending money to public schools has acknowledged to us that they bear responsibility for urgent academic improvements. Perhaps SB 27 and HB 64 will change that.

By way of example, in the wake of the AMP scores and the proposed cuts to pre-K budgets last spring we asked Commissioner Hanley and later Dr. Johnson what the Department of Education would do differently to raise academic proficiency. Neither had an answer.

At the local level in Anchorage, we have also approached the School District, the municipal Assembly, and the teachers' union several times. Those groups share accountability for adequate instruction because they influence school budgeting. We've asked them to consider focusing on academic achievement in these times of program reductions. We are proud of our schools and we are on the side of the teachers and the School District. But we are not above suggesting priorities for them to re-focus on. For example, we asked them to develop a stronger teacher corps, that is, more teachers with stronger skills.

In addition, we've started approaching the University of Alaska regarding improving teacher training. Although the conversation is off to a rocky start, we will continue asking the colleges of education how they will improve K-12 literacy instruction by way of stronger teacher training. The University's colleges of education hold several keys to improved academic performance of K-12 students, we believe. By way of their charters and their budgets, the colleges are in our view accountable for the effectiveness of the teachers they produce.

An illustration of a vision without accountability for academic proficiency was provided at a meeting in Anchorage in November. Education Matters, Inc. was good enough to sponsor discussions among almost 100 educators and education advocates about their expectations for high school graduates in the 21st century. People in the room ranged from teachers, principals and administrators to politicians and policy advocates. When asked to provide their profile of a high school graduate, they offered a long list of social and personal habits which are not measured but would put the Boy Scouts to shame. Literacy and academic skills of graduates, however, which can be measured, were lost among the virtues for which the educators' could not be held accountable. Perhaps it is little wonder Alaska kids' reading scores on average have not risen if educators don't judge their own performance by it.

We are glad to know that the mission of the State Board of Education and Early Development is to "ensure quality standards-based instruction to improve academic achievement for all students." Alaska's academic standards are fine, in our view, and instruction based on them certainly is critical for academic gains. However, we are afraid that the Board's mission is far from accomplished and we were disheartened to see no plan and no action for catching up on academic achievement.

To understand that view, please consider some recent comments and budgeting decisions from the Governor. Last year Governor Walker published an opinion piece outlining his concerns about public education (see it attached). The NAACP Anchorage and the Alaska Reading Coalition applaud his intent to adequately fund education, broaden the conversation about education and do four things differently. Those improvements were strengthening early education and computer networks, reducing expenses, and helping school districts retain students. The Governor said he is a fan of vocational education and understands Alaska's low academic ranking among the states. We were certainly glad to read that in his article

On the other hand, the Governor has not walked the talk about improving education. In both of his first two years in office, Governor Walker and the Department of Education led the way in reducing public school funding. The Legislature got the message that less money for schools was all right and then reduced school funding even further. The Department also proposed to greatly reduce Alaska's limited but successful pre-K programs. However, nowhere have we heard from the Governor or the Department that dramatically raising literacy skills of tens of thousands of Alaska students is urgent. And that is in spite of the fact that reading, writing and math skills are critical to the vocational education and high school retention improvements that the Governor likes. Nowhere has he asked what Alaska or schools need to do differently to raise up academic proficiency among the 80,000 students who are behind.

Turning in your direction, our questions for the Legislature are what is your vision for Alaska public schools, and what will you do differently to fulfill that vision? What will the Legislature do to raise the reading and writing and speaking skills of 80,000 students by a grade level? Perhaps SB 27 and HB 34 will answer those questions.

The Moore Decision

To focus tightly on accountability, please consider the view that the State is legally responsible for raising

student academic proficiency. The Alaska Constitution, VII §1, requires the Legislature to maintain a system of public education, and the State courts require it to be adequate. In the view of many states' courts, adequacy is to be judged by academic results rather than simply "inputs."

In her conclusions regarding Alaska educational adequacy in the case of *Moore, et al. v. State of Alaska* in 2007, Judge Gleason said the Alaska Constitution set some limits on school management. The judge pointed out (page 175) that DEED's academic standards formed a "constitutional floor" of an adequate education. She added on page 188 that

"If generations of children within a school district are failing to achieve proficiency, if a school or a district has not adopted an appropriate curriculum to teach language arts and math that is aligned with the State's performance standards, if basic learning is not taking place for a substantial majority of a school's children, then the Constitution places the obligation upon the Legislature to insure that the State is directing its best efforts to remedy the situation."

Consider our view that if academic performance outcomes today were a criterion for judging the adequacy of public education in Alaska under the law, the public education system would be found inadequate. Almost two-thirds of students did not meet State's English and math standards according to recent statewide tests, Alaska Measures of Progress. A similar proportion did poorly in the National Assessment of Educational Progress as it has for years (see the attachments.) Alaska students' language and math skills rank near the bottom compared to other states, and a relatively low proportion of students are college or career ready. SB 27 and HB 64 may help the Legislature see the problem and turn it around.

Objections and Distractions

We've learned to expect objections and distractions from very smart, experienced, well-meaning people. Please do not let them put you off. Please avoid the temptation of attractive one-offs, nifty experiments, the allure of more parental choices, and policy fads like charter schools and vouchers. In other successful states, none of those have demonstrated that they can lift academic achievement at the scale of tens of thousands of kids. Focus instead on big, broad results and evaluate efforts on their "outcomes." Don't let the bottomless arguments over "inputs" interfere. Make education leaders responsible for their claims.

We've learned to expect several kinds of objections to our insistence on better reading scores. You may wish to consider them beforehand.

First, long-time professional educators, whether in the teacher organizations or State government, sometimes object that we are not smart enough about the legal and student challenges they face and about pedagogy to propose solutions. In response, we would ask them how they plan to raise the proficiency of 80,000 Alaska kids after decades of stagnant scores. You will find that the professional educators in Alaska have developed no statewide plan for dramatic improvements in reading proficiency.

Secondly, you may hear some in the school districts, the Department of Education and Legislature object that our proposals will cost them money. In response, we would ask them for a counter-proposal, including funding or not, that still will meet the goal of rapid, dramatic, reliable statewide academic improvement. You'll find that people's fears about money stand in the way of 80,000 kids' effort to read.

Thirdly, the Department of Education and school boards sometimes say not to worry, that they are taking on the problem with wonderful tactics and have bright spot examples to prove it, and that we should support their current efforts. We are thrilled by their successes and promising methods. But we've

learned those examples are more akin to bailing a boat with a spoon than to the large-scale approaches needed to turn around the trajectories of 80,000 Alaskan students who are behind. In addition, some of the very leaders that claim they are addressing the problem are at the same time proposing reductions to pre-K and classroom instructors.

Dyslexia

We want State law to address dyslexia. Our parent coalition's first-hand experience and research shows that dyslexia is a major source of shortcomings in learning to read. Dyslexia is an inborn disability affecting a child's capability to de-code the symbols necessary for reading and writing. The problem is found among both affluent and poor kids alike and extends into adulthood. Dyslexic kids and their families face tremendous hurdles. As much as 15 percent of the student population is likely dyslexic. However, our experience is that Alaska public schools do not recognize dyslexia yet and are not equipped to handle the challenge. Consequently, families and their students continue to suffer and Alaska's overall reading accomplishments remain low.

There is good news, however. Most dyslexic kids are otherwise bright, motivated and hard-working. With modern techniques and a lot of focused work, virtually all dyslexic kids can learn to read. Please see the attachments for reports of methods and successes. We believe that public schools are obligated to teach dyslexic kids to read and that they can do that with the proper techniques, once the challenge has been taken up.

In fact, that was the main story at our meeting in Juneau last spring with Governor Walker, Lieutenant Governor Mallot, members of the Governor's staff and two of your Department administrators. The most important member of our visiting group was a young dyslexic student. He told the Governor the story of his family's plan to leave Juneau this year in order for him to attend an Outside school that will teach him how to read. With that as background, we will ask you to sponsor regulations that recognize dyslexia.

In order to address Alaska's chronically low reading proficiency among school children, please consider a fundamental re-approach to teaching reading. We know that the Department has attempted to address Alaska's stagnant reading scores through the years. However, the most important changes have not filtered down to the classroom and do not deliver the instructional intensity and dose needed to improve reading proficiency scores statewide.

We ask you to lead the charge to design, implement and fund a five year plan for high quality reading and writing instruction aimed at our lowest-proficiency readers. The plan's objectives would be doubling the number of Alaskan students performing at the advanced reading proficiency levels and raising the majority up to meeting the State's English language standards.

As technical background, evidence-based reading instruction starts with foundational reading skills. They include phonological and phonemic awareness, letter-sound correspondence, phonics, rapid automatic naming, vocabulary, oral language and working memory (Cunningham, 2001; Connor, Alberto, Compton, & O'Connor, 2014; Moats et al., 2010). Although the importance of these skills in teaching reading may be widely acknowledged in Alaska, too many teachers lack the content knowledge and practical skills to teach reading well. (That is to say nothing about the need to raise the reading-teacher-to-pupil ratio for the 80,000 students who read poorly.) Furthermore, there is wide variation among districts' capacities to ensure that teachers become highly knowledgeable and skilled in teaching reading. We refer you to the "International Dyslexia Association Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading." It articulates the scientific knowledge considered foundational for reading instruction to let all kids, even those with dyslexia, become reading-proficient (Moats et al., 2010). You'll find full references for the citations in the attachments.

Consider as well that high quality reading and writing instruction for the lowest proficient readers frequently raises proficiency for other readers. Evidence-based reading and writing instruction for students with dyslexia by way of improvements in teacher preparation and professional development is expected to raise the reading proficiency levels for all of Alaska's pupils. Research advances elsewhere provide a consensus about how both atypical and typical children learn to read and their overlapping instructional needs. While the speed of learning and dosages of instruction may vary among children, they are similarly well-tuned to direct, systematic, and explicit instruction (Dehaene, 2009). This form of instruction is identified as critical in preventing reading difficulties such as those frequently associated with dyslexia (Connor et al., 2014). We understand that if Alaska meets the instructional needs of students with dyslexia, all students in Alaska will reap the benefits.

Consider that several regulatory and legislative approaches can provide opportunities to transform Alaska's chronically low scores in reading and writing proficiency and put Alaska's children on par with their peers in the Lower 48. The plan should consider regulatory and legislative approaches described in academic reports cited in the attachments.

After studying other states, such as Connecticut, Florida, Massachusetts, and North Carolina, we have found it easy to conclude that Alaska can improve reading proficiency as well. An example of the necessary commitment is demonstrated by Connecticut's plan to eliminate the achievement gap. Briefly, Connecticut promoted best practices in early literacy by encouraging research to determine specific reading instruments coupled with professional development (Gillis, 2012). Connecticut is now publishing the results showing double-digit percentage gains in reading grade level for first, second and third grade students (Coyne & Oldham, 2015). On a smaller scale, we also have seen that Erie Elementary School in Colorado implemented similar professional development for teachers and nearly doubled the number of students at the advanced reading proficiency level (Sauer, 2013). You may wish to consider how poor communities in Charlotte, Boston and Tampa have managed dramatic improvements in national reading scores and now rank among the best in the U.S.

Dyslexia law. As the first part of an Alaska reading plan, we will ask that Alaska join other states having a dyslexia law. Please see the table below. Alaska's reading plan could produce similar results if it were based on dyslexia laws that already benefit students with dyslexia in the United States. Those laws provide for screening, definition, interventions, pre-service teacher preparation, in-service professional development, and accommodations or a dyslexia/literacy pilot. Comprehensive efforts elsewhere involve at least three of those six elements carried out through legislative or regulatory efforts (Youman and Mather, 2015).

Dyslexia laws have proliferated in recent years and Alaska is one of the few states without one. We refer you to the fall 2016 issue of the International Dyslexia Association's journal "Perspectives on Language and Literacy." Please see the journal's articles focused on eliminating teacher education gaps for children with dyslexia (Carreker & McCombes-tolis, 2016).

Please also see a table in the attachment summarizing the recent legislative accomplishments of other states. Nineteen have defined dyslexia, for example. Seventeen states offer training for teachers in dealing with dyslexic students. Thirteen states have a larger percentage of rural residents than Alaska does, according to NAEP, and have higher 2015 fourth grade reading scores. Ranked in order of population size, those having scores higher than Alaska's score of 213 and with a larger percentage rural population are as follows:

228 Wyoming
224 Iowa

232 New Hampshire
225 North Dakota
217 Alabama
228 Kentucky
220 South Dakota
218 Arkansas
225 Montana
214 Mississippi
216 West Virginia
230 Vermont
224 Maine

Four of the 13 more-rural states, in italics, already have dyslexia laws or handbooks.

Implement disabilities act. Secondly, as part of an Alaska reading plan we will ask for implementation of the guidance that clarified regulations under the “Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)” in the October 2015 “Dear Colleague” letter from the United States Department of Education (Yudin, 2015).

Strengthen licensure standards. Thirdly, the Alaska reading plan should lead the way toward Department of Education and University of Alaska programs and State regulations for improving teacher preparation. Those regulations should ensure that significantly improved preparation in reading instruction is delivered by the University of Alaska colleges of education faculty. Those improvements would involve scientifically-evidenced faculty expertise and providing pre-service teacher candidates with a minimum of 12 to 15 credit hours in foundational reading instruction. Improvements in teacher preparation also are likely to require regulations for research-based teacher licensure exams in reading. One exam would be required for certifications that include teaching reading. A more advanced licensure exam would be required for those seeking certification as special educators or reading specialists. Massachusetts, with some of the best improvements in reading, offers an excellent example to consider. We hesitate to say how to run educational programs, but we don’t see their leaders making improvements. Perhaps SB 27 and HB 64 will change that.

The Greatest Stake

Even more kids, not necessarily just those suffering dyslexia, are behind in reading because they arrive in class poorly prepared. We know that many kids are abused, neglected, face crises, undergo trauma, are homeless, or have parents who are illiterate. In an Anchorage elementary school we visited, the principal had arranged sleeping pads in safe places for his students. He knew exactly how many were in crises each day. As we all know, such conditions contribute to poor reading skills everywhere, from Alaska to Florida. It is the mission of public schools to overcome those disadvantages.

Using Anchorage School District as an example, more than 24,000 kids there are behind in reading. In spite of that, the district eliminated four or five dozen instructor positions this year. Those students are not likely to ever catch up.

To take another example from Anchorage, consider some middle school math classes. One teacher has 27 kids per class, a typical pupil:teacher ratio planned by the Anchorage School District. The students started their school year still learning the multiplication table and were about three grade levels behind on average. The District provides no extra instruction and has no plans in that direction. On the Alaska

Measures of Progress test in 2015, 85 percent of the school's eighth graders did not meet the State math standards. Those kids likely will not catch up, but will leave high school still way behind in math.

Alaska school kids are behind academically and are becoming economically uncompetitive. To turn that around is the responsibility of the Legislature. SB 27 and HB 64 are a step in the right direction.

The good news is that we know how to teach poorly prepared kids to read. Other states have shown that it takes modern, data-driven methods and direct instruction on a large scale. You'll find success stories in cities like Tampa, Charlotte and Boston which have dramatically raised reading scores. You'll understand the methods from the results of reading research labs in Connecticut and Ohio. And here in Anchorage, the school district applies a system of screening, progress monitoring and calibrated instruction for many readers who are behind grade level. We understand that it is very effective where it is applied correctly, although we've learned it is applied less widely than it could be. We believe every kid can learn to read.

To effectively reach and teach the large numbers of poor readers with these effective methods, however, requires numbers of expert reading teachers. On that score, the news is not good. That is why we will suggest that the task force created by SB 27 and HB 64 look to other states for success stories to bring home to Alaska. We'll suggest that the task force plan how to deploy a cadre of expert reading instructors needed to raise up the reading skills of 80,000 Alaska students who are behind grade level. To help with that, we also will suggest the task force consider arranging with the University of Alaska's colleges of education to turn out hundreds more teachers trained in modern reading instruction methods.

Although SB 27 and HB 64 are focused on reading, and correctly so, the problem of low academic achievement is even larger. On the Alaska Measures of Progress test in 2015, Alaskan students scored just as poorly on math as they did in reading. To raise the reading and math proficiency of Alaska students may take serious, broad, voluntary high-quality pre-K programs as well as hundreds if not thousands more skilled elementary and secondary school teachers of reading and math. Examples from successful states show that hard work within the public schools is mainly responsible for their dramatic improvements in proficiency among millions of kids.

Next Steps for Instruction Improvement

The NAACP urges your education committees to recommend passage of SB 27 and HB 64 this session. We also urge the committees to improve the bills by amending them as follows:

- Provide for more, and more-expert reading instruction in public schools in 2017-2018.
- Require schools to demonstrate significant improvements in reading scores.
- Require the reading proficiency task force to hire professional experts, from out of state if necessary, to help conduct research.
- Approve a fiscal note to fund the task force including those professional experts.

In addition, we ask the education committees to hold hearings in parallel with HB 27 and HB 64 and to recommend State general fund budget increases to provide significant improvement in reading and math proficiency in schools statewide beginning FY 2017-2018.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mike Bronson" followed by a horizontal line.

Mike Bronson
Education Committee
NAACP Anchorage Branch

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "for" followed by a horizontal line.

Rev. W. Greene, Pastor
Education Committee
NAACP Anchorage Branch

Attachments



12350 Industry Way Ste. 202
Anchorage, AK 99515
Phone: 907-301-4588
Fax: 866-554-1366

Dear Representative Drummond and House Education Committee:

Please support House Bill 64 to create a legislative task force for improving reading proficiency statewide.

As you know, students in Alaska have scored low in English reading and writing for a long time. Now is the time for the Legislature to take the lead for important changes needed in reading instruction statewide.

I have a background in Secondary Education with a specialization in Social Studies. I have worked with many high school students in my career, it astonished me how many of them struggled to read material that was at grade level, and even below. By the time I had worked with them at the secondary level, their excitement towards learning had considerably diminished, or so it seemed. Academics had taken a back seat and it was not from a lack of support at home. As I worked with my students, I would see an incredibly brilliant individual. I wondered why reading had become so challenging, what happened in their early academic career?

When I moved up to Alaska, I started tutoring part time at a clinic that specializes in dyslexia. The answer to my question had been answered. The second student I worked with was diagnosed with dyslexia. Despite working so hard on her academics, she would consistently receive a failing grade. The first months working with me were very challenging. I would present a brief paragraph with short vowel, single syllable words, it brought her to tears. It would take us 30 minutes to read through the passage together. However, with a generous amount of praise, she was able to decode it. The program we used was an Orton-Gillingham based, multi-sensory reading and spelling program.

Three years later, she decided she would like to apply to give the speech at her 6th grade graduation ceremony. She was selected. A girl who would cry at the thought of reading in front of her peers three short years prior, had written a speech and was selected to read in front of the entire school. She did it!

With explicit, structured, sequential, multi-sensory instruction, students with dyslexia can become confident individuals who love to learn. While I have the opportunity to work at a clinic that works with over 300 clients with a dyslexia diagnosis, I know there are thousands more in Alaska who need teachers who are trained in screening, early intervention techniques.

It is time for Alaska to acknowledge the importance of literacy for all of our students.

Kind Regards,

Ashly Beckes
Anchorage, Alaska

Dyslexia Laws in the USA: An Update

by Martha Youman and Nancy Mather

"Dyslexia is Real" is the title of Tennessee's House Bill 1735, passed on January 23, 2014. This bill follows a long history of legislative initiatives that have been designed to provide various legal protections for individuals with dyslexia. The path has not been easy, but today early childhood centers, K-12 schools, universities, and the workplace in a number of proactive states provide guidelines for the identification and treatment of dyslexia. This article summarizes the current status of dyslexia laws across the country, as presented in Table 1, and provides guidelines for the initiation of change in states that have lagged behind. It is an update to our article "Dyslexia Laws in the USA," published in the *Annals of Dyslexia* (Youman & Mather, 2013).

As of December of 2015, 28 states had statewide dyslexia laws, 6 states had initiatives or resolutions related to dyslexia, and 14 states had handbooks or resource guides to inform parents and educators about proper procedures for students in public and private educational settings. The laws, particularly those being passed in the last five years, focus primarily upon a) dyslexia awareness, b) pilot programs for screening and intervention, c) teacher training, d) provision of interventions and accommodations, and e) overall rights for individuals with dyslexia.

Dyslexia Awareness

A number of states have spearheaded the recognition of dyslexia as a unique disorder with prevalence rates varying from 5% to 20% among researchers and national and international

organizations. This effort to recognize dyslexia is crucial because, unfortunately, the terminology used to describe reading disorders varies across states and settings. Individuals with dyslexia who are diagnosed in school settings fall under the category of "Specific Learning Disability (SLD)," a category within the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA 2004). Individuals with dyslexia diagnosed in clinical settings fall under the category of "Specific Learning Disorder with Impairment in Reading" as described in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-5 (DSM-5) (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Both diagnoses include dyslexia as a descriptive term within their definitions, but within school settings, the actual term *dyslexia* is rarely used in psychological and diagnostic reports. Thus, most parents of children who receive special education services at school under the category of SLD in reading have not been informed that their child has dyslexia. Similarly, if a clinical diagnosis of Specific Learning Disorder with Impairment in Reading is made in a clinical setting with DSM-5, parents and teachers may not necessarily understand that this label encompasses dyslexia. With the hopes of separating dyslexia from a large umbrella of learning disorders, the states of Alabama, Illinois, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas, have passed legislation for the recognition of a dyslexia day, week, or month. On such dates, schools and mental health practitioners are encouraged to educate others about the common characteristics of dyslexia, as well as the appropriate accommodations and interventions.

Pilot Programs for Screening and Intervention

Taking existing models for screening and intervention established in states such as Texas, a large number of states have followed suit by passing legislation to fund pilot programs for dyslexia assessment and intervention. For screening and assessment, for example, the state of Pennsylvania passed HB 198 (2013), which established a screening pilot program involving all students enrolled in full-day kindergarten in three different school districts for a period of three years. Assessment areas within the screening process include measures of phonological awareness and rapid naming. The ultimate goal of early assessment is to identify students at risk for reading failure and provide early interventions that will help students succeed in later grades.

Continued on page 16

Dyslexia Legislation and Resources in the United States

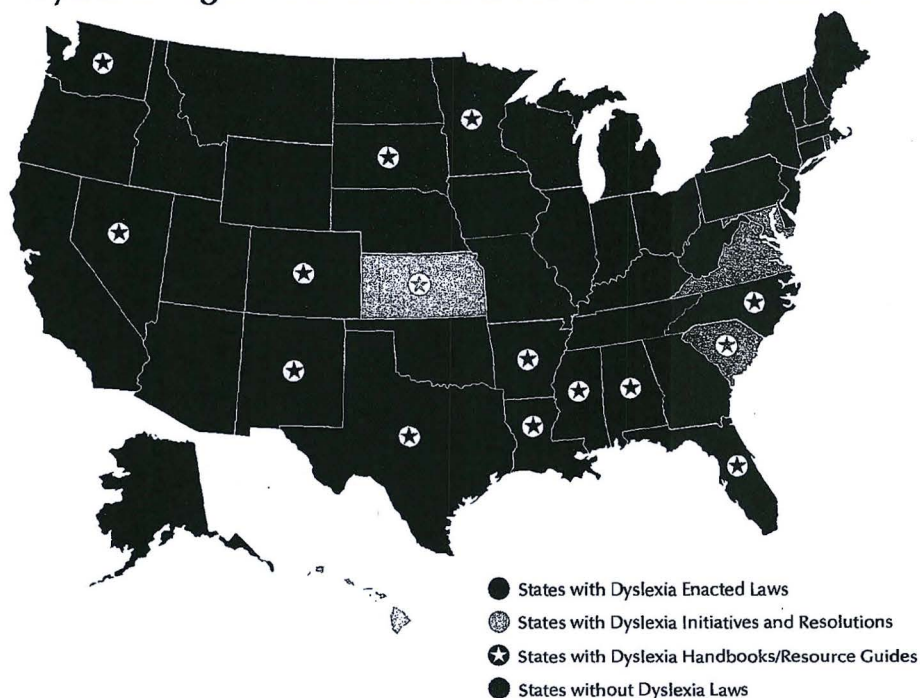


TABLE 1. U.S. Dyslexia Laws, Proposed Bills, Resolutions, Guidebooks, and Other Resources

Although the information in this table was updated in December 2015, passing dyslexia legislation is a complicated, dynamic process. If you have a question about legislation in your state, check with your state legislature.

STATE	LAW/PURPOSE	STATUS	RESOURCE GUIDES AND HANDBOOKS	OTHER INITIATIVES AND RESOLUTIONS
AK	None	None	None	None
AL	*Alabama Board of Education made changes directly to the Alabama Administrative Code without passing legislation (2015). Students screened for dyslexia and then given appropriate intervention, access to assistive technology, and accommodations in the general school population through the Response-to-Intervention (RTI) process, without the need for special education certification.	In AL Law	Alabama Dyslexia Resource Guide	Dyslexia Month
	*SB 314 (2015): Schools required to identify and educate students with dyslexia.	Failed		
AR	SB 749 (2011): Proposes K–12 screening, training, and intervention.	Failed	Dyslexia Resource Guide	None
	*SB 33 (2013): To ensure that children with dyslexia have their needs met by the public school system. Defines dyslexia and related disorders; requires screening and intervention.	Passed		
	*SB 788 (2015): Screening for dyslexia.	Passed		
AZ	*SB 1461 (2015): Provides definition of dyslexia, allows teachers to use dyslexia training toward continuing education credits, prevents grade retention of students with dyslexia based on reading scores.	Passed	None	None
CA	*AB1369 (2015): Requires update to the criteria for identifying children with dyslexia for special education services by adding “phonological processing” to the identification process for special education eligibility. Provides guidelines to be developed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the California Department of Education to assist teachers, parents, and professionals in identifying, assessing and improving educational services for students with dyslexia.	Passed	None	None
	Education Code Section 56333-56338: Students with dyslexia who do not qualify for SLD receive services in the classroom.	In CA Law		
	Education Code Section 56240-56245: Encourages education of teachers.	In CA Law		
	Family Code Section 8733: Adoption agencies to report to adoptive parents if biological parents had disabilities, including dyslexia.	In CA Law		
	Education Code Section 52853: Schools to develop programs for training in dyslexia intervention.	In CA Law		
	Education Code Section 44227.7: Higher education encouraged to provide teacher training for dyslexia and related disorders.	In CA Law		
CO	SB 245 (2011): Provides funds for in-school dyslexia training, identification, and higher education programs to train on dyslexia.	Passed	SLD Topic Brief: Dyslexia and SLD	MTSS Guidance Document
CT	HB 115 (2000): Books on tape for classrooms with students with dyslexia.	Passed	None	None
	*SB 1054 (2015): State Department of Education support for students with dyslexia identification, intervention, and teacher training.	Passed		
DE	None	None	None	None
FL	HB 1249 (2011): Waives certain requirements for high school diploma for students with disabilities, including dyslexia.	Failed	FCRR Technical Report #8	None
	HB 1329 (2011): Scholarships for students with disabilities, including dyslexia.	Passed		
	*SB 472 (2015): Defines dyslexia; Department of Education pilot.	Passed		
GA	SB 69 “ABC Initiative” (2001): Determine risk for dyslexia in K–2.	Failed	None	None
HI	SB 2217 (2010): Promotes awareness of dyslexia, assessment and identification, remedial curriculum, progress monitoring, interventions, training, and technical assistance.	Failed	None	Establish work group to develop plan to improve awareness and strengthen support for persons with dyslexia; Task Force
	*HB 675 (2013): Promotes awareness of the definition and characteristics of dyslexia and other similar learning disorders. Requires DOE to provide professional development to teachers relating to students with dyslexia. Requires the Hawaii teachers standards board to establish licensure standards for reading specialists.	Failed		

*Laws with an asterisk are new additions to our 2012 review (Youman & Mather, 2013).

Dyslexia Laws in the USA: An Update

STATE	LAW/PURPOSE	STATUS	RESOURCE GUIDES AND HANDBOOKS	OTHER INITIATIVES AND RESOLUTIONS
IA	*SF 2319 (2014): An Act relating to improving student literacy skills, including dyslexia, and providing teacher assistance.	Passed	None	None
ID	None	None	None	None
IL	HB 5344 (2010): School Recordings for students who are blind or have dyslexia.	Failed	None	Dyslexia Week; Dyslexia Month; Recognized artist Willard Wigman
	HB 4084 (2011): Pilot Project for early screening and intervention.	Failed		
	*HB 2700 (2013): requires the State Board of Education to distribute to each school board information on screening instruments available to identify students who exhibit potential indicators of dyslexia and other reading disabilities.	Failed		
	*HB 3700 (2014): Requires the State Board of Education to adopt rules that incorporate an international definition of dyslexia into the special education provisions of the Illinois Administrative Code.	Passed		
IN	*HB 1108 (2015): Dyslexia. Defines "dyslexia." Requires teacher training programs to prepare teachers to recognize that a student who is not progressing at a normal rate related to reading may need to be referred to the school's multidisciplinary team to determine the student's special learning needs, including learning needs related to dyslexia. Provides that if an education service center offers in-service training or other teacher training programs, the education service center may offer courses for teachers on dyslexia characteristics and appropriate interventions.	Passed	None	None
KS	SB 75 (2011): Screening, instruction, intervention, and development of pilot programs.	Failed	Dyslexia: What Families Need to Know	Resolution to review early screening; Review level and pace of implementation of best practices of instruction; Review teacher preparation courses; Submit a progress report by December 31, 2009
	SB 410 (2012): Schools to implement "best practices" of instruction for students with dyslexia.	Failed		
	*SB 44 (2014): Relates to the identification and instruction of pupils with dyslexia. The bill requires Kansas schools to accept the diagnosis of dyslexia from any licensed psychologist, physician, or psychiatrist and to provide services for all children with a dyslexia diagnosis.	Failed		
KY	SB 278 (2000): Dyslexia resource center.	Failed	None	None
	HB 69 (2012): Early Education Assessment and Intervention; create a new section of KRS Chapter 158 to define "aphasia," "dyscalculia," "dysgraphia," "dyslexia," "phonemic awareness," and "scientifically based research"; require the Kentucky Board of Education to promulgate administrative regulations to implement district-wide use of K-3 response-to-intervention system in reading.	In KY Law		
LA	R.S. 17:7(11): Identification and services within the general education program for students demonstrating characteristics of dyslexia; assessment, intervention, and accommodations.	In LA Law	Part XXXV. Regulations and Guidelines for Implementation of the Louisiana Law for the Education of Dyslexic Students	Resolutions to study dyslexia and review/study clarity of board regulations and guidelines relative to the education of students with dyslexia and the effectiveness of procedures for monitoring compliance of public schools and school districts

*Laws with an asterisk are new additions to our 2012 review (Youman & Mather, 2013).

STATE	LAW/PURPOSE	STATUS	RESOURCE GUIDES AND HANDBOOKS	OTHER INITIATIVES AND RESOLUTIONS
MA	Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 15A, §30, 1983: Waiver of college exams for students with dyslexia.	In MA Law	None	None
	*HB 1944/3932 (2011): High School graduation – Provides that a student with learning disabilities who fails to satisfy the requirements of the competency determination may nonetheless receive a high school diploma if specified requirements are met.	Failed		
	HB 3680 (2011): Requires teachers to get training in disorders including dyslexia.	In MA Law		
	*HB 463/SB 312 (2015): Definition of dyslexia and screening.	Pending		
MD	*HB 1252 (2012): Testing and Services – Establishes a pilot program for testing for dyslexia and related learning disorders. Requires county boards to provide specified services to students with dyslexia.	Failed	None	Dyslexia Task Force established
ME	*LD 231 (2015): Defines dyslexia, requires dyslexia screening in children in grades K-2, and creates dyslexia consultants.	Passed	None	None
MI	None	None	None	None
MN	None	None	Navigating the School System Guidebook, Minnesota Department of Education	None
MO	*SB 172 (2015): Department of Education to employ dyslexia specialists.	Failed	None	None
	*HB 921 (2015): Creates legislative task force on dyslexia.	Failed		
	*HB 1255 (2015): Requires public schools to screen for dyslexia.	Failed		
MS	Amendment to 37-23-15, Mississippi Code of 1972 (1997): Pilot programs for testing certain students for dyslexia.	Passed	Mississippi Dyslexia Handbook	Resolution to recognize significant educational implications of dyslexia and to take action to provide necessary services
	SB 2171 (2011): Dyslexia awareness license tag.	Failed		
	*HB 672 (2012): Dyslexia Therapy Scholarship. Increases the maximum number of master's candidate students eligible for a scholarship under the Dyslexia Education Scholarship Program from 10 to 20.	Passed		
	*HB 1031 (2012): Allows students enrolled in schools that do not have dyslexia programs to transfer to a different school or district.	Passed		
	*HB 1032 (2012): Dyslexia Scholarships for Teachers – A bill to establish the Mississippi Dyslexia Education Scholarship Program for the purpose of identifying and recruiting qualified university and college students from the state for schooling in education with a focus on dyslexia instruction.	Passed		
	HB 1494 (2012): Funds for educator training, including dyslexia.	Passed		
MT	None	None	None	None
NC	None	None	Dyslexia Report and Dyslexia Topic Brief	None
ND	None	None	None	None
NE	None	None	None	None
NH	None	None	None	None
NJ	AB 811 (2010): Provides for instruction in dyslexia awareness and methods of teaching students with dyslexia for candidates for teaching certificates and current teachers and paraprofessionals.	Failed	None	Dyslexia Professional Development Modules; Reading Disabilities Task Force
	*A 3606/S2441 (2013): Requires Department of Education to provide professional development opportunities related to reading disabilities; mandates K-3 and reading and special education teachers annually complete two hours of professional development related to reading disabilities.	Passed		

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Dyslexia Laws in the USA: An Update

STATE	LAW/PURPOSE	STATUS	RESOURCE GUIDES AND HANDBOOKS	OTHER INITIATIVES AND RESOLUTIONS
NJ cont.	*S 2439/A 3608 (2013): Directs State Board of Education to incorporate the International Dyslexia Association's definition of dyslexia into special education regulations. Defines dyslexia as "a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin."	Passed		Resolution urging State Board of Education to develop endorsement to the instructional certificate for teachers of students with dyslexia and to establish eligibility and training requirements for the endorsement
	*A 3605/S 2442 (2013): Requires all public school kindergarten students to be screened for dyslexia and other reading disabilities.	Passed		
NM	HB 230 (2010): Interventions for students with signs of dyslexia required.	Passed	New Mexico Dyslexia Professional Development Modules	None
NV	Section 1 – Chapter 388 of NRS (1984): Schools districts to establish reading programs.	In NV Law	Study of Dyslexia and Other Learning Disabilities	None
	*AB 341 (2015): Testing for dyslexia.	Passed		
NY	*A 09940 (2012): Dyslexia Teacher Certification – An act to amend the education law, in relation to the certification or training of teachers, administrators, and instructors in the area of dyslexia and related disorders.	Failed	None	None
OH	HB 96 (2011): Pilot Program for dyslexia screening.	Passed	None	Dyslexia Month; Dyslexia Task Force
	HB 157 (2011): Educational service centers to provide teacher professional development on dyslexia; "dyslexia specialist" to provide training for K-4 teachers in school districts and other public schools.	Passed		
OK	HB 1997 (2011): Dyslexia screening.	Failed	None	None
	HB 3073/SB 1565 (2012): Dyslexia training pilot program.	Passed		
	HB 3090 (2012): Scholarships for students with disabilities.	Passed		
	HB 1542 (2015): Screening and teacher training for students with dyslexia.	Failed		
OR	*SB 612 (2015): Focuses on teacher training, dyslexia screening, and the creation of dyslexia specialists.	Passed	None	None
	*HB 2412 (2015): Requires that educator preparation programs for early childhood, elementary, and special education include instruction on dyslexia.	Passed		
PA	HB 322 (1985–1986): Waives college entrance exams.	In PA Law	None	Dyslexia Month; Dyslexia Week
	*HB 198 (2013): Screening Pilot Program – Defines dyslexia and establishes pilot program to provide early screening and intervention services for children with risk factors for dyslexia, such as low phonemic awareness.	Passed		
RI	HB 7541 (2012): Rhode Island Dyslexia Act, defines dyslexia and the research-based interventions appropriate for students with dyslexia.	Failed	None	Dyslexia Commission
SC	None	None	Technical Assistance Guide for Dyslexia	Dyslexia Task Force
SD	None	None	The Dyslexia Handbook for Teachers and Parents in South Dakota	None

*Laws with an asterisk are new additions to our 2012 review (Youman & Mather, 2013).

STATE	LAW/PURPOSE	STATUS	RESOURCE GUIDES AND HANDBOOKS	OTHER INITIATIVES AND RESOLUTIONS
TN	*HB 1735/SB 2002 (2014): "Dyslexia is Real" defines "dyslexia" as a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin and is characterized by difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. Requires regular teacher in-service training to formally address dyslexia and similar reading disorders and provide effective instruction for students with dyslexia using appropriate scientific research and brain-based multisensory intervention methods and strategies.	Passed	None	None
TX	SB 866 (2011): Education of public school students with dyslexia, the education and training of educators who teach students with dyslexia, and the assessment of students with dyslexia attending an institution of higher education.	Passed	Texas Dyslexia Handbook	Dyslexia Day
	SB 867 (2011): Adult testing accommodations for a person with dyslexia taking a licensing examination administered by a state agency.	Passed		
	Texas Education Code (TEC) § 38.003: Screening and treatment.	In TX Law		
	Texas Education Code §28.006: Diagnose reading in K-2.	In TX Law		
	Texas Education Code §7.028(b): Compliance with dyslexia law.	In TX Law		
	Texas Administrative Code §74.28: Districts to provide procedures for identification; adherence to dyslexia handbook; purchase program for students with dyslexia.	In TX Law		
	Texas Occupations Code Chapter 403: Licensed dyslexia practitioners and therapists.	In TX Law		
	*HB 1264 (2015): New PEIMS code to identify and track students with dyslexia.	Passed		
*HB 2683/SB 1971 (2015): Licensing of dyslexia practitioners.	Failed			
UT	*HB 171 (2013): Screening – Requires reading assessments and screening for learning difficulties in public schools. This Bill defines terms; requires the State Board of Education to develop a list of indicators that indicate whether a student may be at risk for a reading difficulty or dyslexia.	Failed	None	None
	*SB 117 (2015): Allows up to five school districts or charter schools to receive \$30,000 per school to invest in training and materials for dyslexia.	Passed		
VA	HB 558 (2010): Early reading intervention services for students in grades K-3 who demonstrate deficiencies.	Failed	None	Resolution to study dyslexia screening
VT	None	None	None	None
WA	SB 6016 (2009-2010): Funds pilot projects to develop educator training programs and develop a handbook.	Passed	Washington State Dyslexia Resource Guide	None
	SB 6318 (2011-2012): Revise teacher and principal evaluation through professional development and training, dyslexia included.	Failed		
	SB 662/SB 111 (2012/2013): Dyslexia screening and intervention.	Failed		
WI	AB 584 (2009-2010): Screening deficits in phonemic awareness or rapid naming.	Failed	None	None
WV	SB 662 (2012): Pilot project for dyslexia screening and institutions of higher education to include coursework on dyslexia.	Failed	None	None
	*SB 111 (2013): A bill to amend the Code of West Virginia by adding a new section defining "dyslexia"; establishing a dyslexia screening and intervention pilot project; and establishing a dyslexia teacher training pilot program.	Failed		
	*HB 4608 (2014): Defines dyslexia and dyscalculia.	Passed		
WY	SB 39 (2012): Dyslexia screening and intervention as early as possible in K-3.	Passed	None	None
	*SF 52 (2012): Screening and Response – An act relating to reading assessment and intervention; requiring assessment and early intervention for dyslexia and other reading difficulties; requiring a report; and providing for an effective date.	Passed		

*Laws with an asterisk are new additions to our 2012 review (Youman & Mather, 2013).

One example of a pilot program that targets early intervention was developed by the state of Washington. Under the Lorraine Wojahn Dyslexia Pilot Reading Program, the state provided funds to five schools to test the effectiveness of intervention programs for students with dyslexia. In the project report, Young (2011) reported an increase from 17% to 40% passing grades on the reading portion of Washington State exams for students who participated in the intervention programs. Similar projects that incorporate both screening and interventions have been implemented in recent years in Illinois (2014), Kansas (2011), Louisiana (2010), Maryland (2012), Ohio (2012), Virginia (2010), and West Virginia (2012).

Teacher Training

To learn to read and spell, children with dyslexia require intensive instruction by highly trained teachers (Moats, 2009). A number of states have recognized the importance of teacher training and have implemented training models that specifically teach reading intervention programs effective for students with dyslexia. The terms *dyslexia specialist* and *dyslexia therapist* are becoming common language in school districts and university training programs across the country. Training has come as result of funding for pilot programs for teacher training and the establishment of standards for professionals working with students with dyslexia. The state of Texas, for example, provides opportunities for general education teachers and reading specialists to obtain a Dyslexia Practitioner License, which requires a bachelor's degree, 45 hours of coursework in Multisensory Structured Language (MSL) education, and 60 hours of supervised clinical experience in MSL instruction.

Until recently, responsibility for the cost of teacher training programs for dyslexia therapists and specialists has remained in the hands of educators who seek these credentials. A number of states, however, have passed legislation that provides funds in the form of scholarships and grants as incentives for teachers to pursue additional training. Under the Dyslexia Education Scholarship Program (HB 672; 2013), for example, the state of Mississippi awards a total of 20 yearly scholarships to teachers who wish to enroll in a dyslexia therapist program. Similarly, Mississippi HB 1032 (2012) provides scholarships to college students from the state who will participate in educational programs that have a focus on dyslexia instruction.

Provision of Interventions and Accommodations

The intervention strategies and programs that are empirically proven to work for students with dyslexia involve targeted instruction in areas such as phonemic awareness, phonics, spelling, fluency, and vocabulary (National Reading Panel, 2000; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Torgesen, Foorman, & Wagner, 2010). In an effort to ensure that children with dyslexia receive appropriate interventions and accommodations, a number of states have passed legislation explicitly requiring instruction in these areas. Legally backed, explicit intervention programs for students with dyslexia, for example, currently exist in New Mexico, Louisiana, Texas, Minnesota, Colorado, and South Dakota.

The necessity of accommodations for students with dyslexia has also been addressed in recent legislation across the United States. These accommodations often include extended time for reading tasks, not penalizing students for spelling mistakes, additional time for statewide assessments, and oral reading of questions during assessments. A specific bill in the state of Mississippi (HB 1031, 2012) even allows students with dyslexia to transfer to a different school or district if their home school does not provide programs specifically targeted for dyslexia. Other states offer specific accommodations for students with dyslexia during state exams, a trend that is also beginning to appear in recent bills and proposals. In Texas, for example, these accommodations include oral administration of questions and answer choices, periodic reading assistance on the math sections of the test, oral reading of writing prompts, and extending the testing time.

Overall Rights for Individuals with Dyslexia

With the goal of protecting and serving individuals with dyslexia, a number of states have passed legislation that spans across settings (i.e., K–12 schools, universities, and the workplace). Such laws target practices that involve, for example, transitions between institutions, the elimination of professional prerequisites and college entrance exams, and the overall respect of the limitations experienced by individuals with dyslexia. An example of such legislation is provided by an act that was proposed for the state of Kansas (SB 44; 2014), that if it had passed would have required Kansas schools to accept the diagnosis of dyslexia from any licensed psychologist, physician or psychiatrist, and to provide services for all children with a dyslexia diagnosis. Proposals such as this one promote communication between institutions and ensure equal treatment of individuals with dyslexia across settings. Another example is the Massachusetts General Law (Ch. 15A, §30, 1983), which waives the requirement of college entrance exams for students with dyslexia. For the most part, laws and regulations being passed in the U.S. have focused on procedures and services provided by public schools, but recent efforts have been mounted to increase awareness and address the needs of postsecondary students as well.

Dyslexia Legislation at the Federal Level

In July of 2015, the U.S. House Science, Space, and Technology Committee Chairman, Lamar Smith, introduced the Research Excellence and Advancements for Dyslexia Act (READ Act). The READ Act requires that the president's annual budget include five million dollars of National Science Foundation funds to be allocated to dyslexia research. Research must focus on the early identification of children and students with dyslexia, professional development about dyslexia for teachers and administrators, and curricula development. The READ Act illustrates that dyslexia has now become a nationally identified concern. Ideally, the federal government's action will lead to a more uniform approach to dyslexia research and support across states in the future.

More Work to Do

Since the publication of the article that led to the present summary of dyslexia legislation presented here (Youman & Mather, 2013), several additional states and the federal government have proposed or passed laws protecting the rights of individuals with dyslexia. This growing support for dyslexia laws is encouraging because, as Ohio State Representative Ted Celeste commented, "Many times the proper diagnosis of dyslexia is what holds students back from receiving the kind of

educational instruction most appropriate for their individual situations. Often times a student may fall through the cracks in which he or she is not "behind far enough" to qualify for special educational services." Even so, many states still lack any guidelines for the education and treatment of individuals of dyslexia. If you are interested in taking proactive action to help dyslexia become a national concern, Table 2 provides suggestions for beginning the process of enacting dyslexia laws and promoting dyslexia awareness in your state.

Continued on page 18

TABLE 2. Proposing Dyslexia State Laws and Initiatives

LAW/INITIATIVE	SUGGESTIONS
Screening for Dyslexia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Form committee or task force of professionals knowledgeable about dyslexia. 2. Propose a pilot program to determine cost, time, and procedure for dyslexia screening in public K–12 schools. Example: OH HB 96 (2011–2012) 3. Determine timeline for pilot program and indicate date of final report. 4. Present findings of pilot program in report and draft bill for universal screening for dyslexia. 5. Include specifications for special populations (e.g., ELLs, students with multiple disabilities).
Dyslexia Training for Professionals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draft bill requesting funds for in-school dyslexia training and dyslexia training in higher education programs. Example: CO SB 245 (2011) 2. Determine appropriate allocation of funds for dyslexia training. 3. Develop training standards. 4. Specify criteria for professionals working with students with dyslexia. Example: Texas Occupations Code Chapter 403
Eligibility for Accommodations and Services for Students with Dyslexia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote awareness of dyslexia under IDEA-SLD or §504 or Rehabilitation Act. 2. Develop district or school policy for eligibility of services and accommodations under IDEA or §504 for students with dyslexia. Example: CA Education Code Section 56333-56338
Classroom Instruction for Students with Dyslexia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draft bill requesting instruction for students with dyslexia using research-based programs. Example: LA R.S. 17:7(11) 2. Provide a list of approved programs for implementation in the instruction of students with dyslexia. Example: Mississippi Dyslexia Handbook 3. Develop education programs for students with dyslexia. Example: Part XXXV. Regulations and Guidelines for Implementation of the Louisiana Law for the Education of Dyslexic Students
Interventions for Students with Dyslexia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draft bill requesting interventions for students with signs of dyslexia. Example: NM HB 230 (2010) 2. Provide list of approved intervention programs to districts. Example: Intervention programs listed in dyslexia handbooks 3. Update list every five years.
Dyslexia Handbook	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Form committee or task force of professionals knowledgeable about dyslexia. 2. Develop dyslexia handbook. 3. Draft bill proposing adherence to dyslexia handbook (when state has specific dyslexia laws). Example: LA SCR 62 (2010) 4. Distribute dyslexia handbook to districts or require districts to develop a dyslexia handbook. Example: Texas Administration Code § 74.28
Students with Dyslexia in Higher Education Institutions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draft bill proposing exclusion of standardized college entrance exams for students with dyslexia. Example: MA Gen. Laws Ch. 15A, § 30 (1983) 2. Develop informational documents for students transitioning from K–12 education to institutions of higher education. Example: TX Dyslexia Handbook, Appendix K
Dyslexia Awareness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draft bill proposing declaration of dyslexia day, week, or month. 2. Provide dyslexia professional development for educators. 3. Develop dyslexia "Frequently Asked Questions – FAQs" for parents, teachers, and the community.

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University. She was born and raised in Ecuador and became interested in dyslexia after noticing similarities between her own difficulties learning English and the learning difficulties experienced by students with dyslexia. Her research and work at the University of Arizona focused primarily on the characteristics of dyslexia in different languages, the early markers of dyslexia, and dyslexia legislation across the United States and the world. You can write to Dr. Youman at meyouman81@gmail.com

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A Learning Disabilities
Simulation Kit

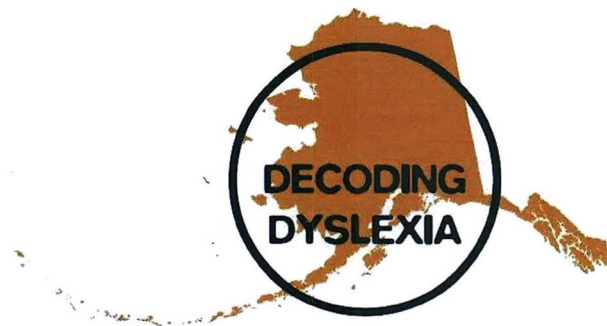
What is it like to have dyslexia?

A lively, thought-provoking group activity, **Experience Dyslexia®** is designed for anyone interested in better understanding the lives of individuals with a learning disability.

This popular simulation kit from the Northern California Branch of The International Dyslexia Association (NCBIDA) lets participants experience the challenges and frustrations faced each day by people with dyslexia.

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Dear Representative Drummond and House Education Committee:

Please support House Bill 64 to create a legislative task force for improving reading proficiency statewide.

As you know, students in Alaska have scored low in English reading and writing for a long time. The most recent data available, the results from the AMP testing in 2015, shows that 80,000 schoolchildren in Alaska are behind in reading and approximately 61% of students did not meet state standards. How can we continue to fail to meet the needs of so many Alaskan schoolchildren? Moreover, our state has no plans to raise our students into the ranks of academic proficiency.

The Legislature can take the lead for important changes needed in reading instruction statewide. Enacting a Reading and Dyslexia Task Force will shed light on the best practices of reading instruction. A nationally recognized expert can provide independent, third party expertise on sustainable and scalable curriculum. Additionally, the Task Force can lay the tracks for the implementation of improved reading instruction and recommend guidelines for compliance.

It is estimated 20% - one in five - people have dyslexia. The term dyslexia appears nowhere in our state's regulations and has only recently "existed". Appropriate intervention needs to take place to provide remediation.

Improving literacy for all children will improve academic levels. Isn't that the goal of education?

We urgently ask your support and pass this bill for Reading for All Students and the Effects of Dyslexia on Some Students Task Force.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mary Claire Kretzschmar
Co-Chair, Decoding Dyslexia AK



Representative Harriet Drummond Sponsor Statement

House Bill 64 "Reading Proficiency Task Force"

HB 64 establishes a fifteen member task force on reading proficiency and instruction with the goal of making recommendations regarding reading practices for students across the state. The task force will examine how current regulations affect reading proficiency outcomes with the goal of increasing statewide reading proficiency scores within three years.

Approximately 47,000 students in Alaska did not meet state standards in 2015. Students who cannot read by third grade are four times more likely to drop out of school than those who can read. More than \$60 billion is lost annually in American business productivity due to a lack of basic reading skills. The statistics are staggering and we must identify evidence-based approaches to instructing students affected by dyslexia.

The fifteen member task force will consist of six members from the House and Senate, the commissioner of Education and Early Development and eight members of the public.

Spring 2015
Alaska Measures of Progress
Total Numbers and Percentages of Students
Meets and Partially Meets Standards

Grade 3							
Subject	Test Year	Meets the Standards ³		Partially Meets the Standards ³		Enrollment	Participation Rate ²
		Count	Percentage ¹	Count	Percentage ¹		
English Language Arts	2015	3,405	35.5%	6,198	64.5%	9,931	96.7%
Mathematics	2015	3,908	40.6%	5,727	59.4%	9,956	96.8%

Grade 4							
Subject	Test Year	Meets the Standards ³		Partially Meets the Standards ³		Enrollment	Participation Rate ²
		Count	Percentage ¹	Count	Percentage ¹		
English Language Arts	2015	3,753	40.0%	5,622	60.0%	9,684	96.8%
Mathematics	2015	3,645	38.8%	5,746	61.2%	9,706	96.8%

Grade 5							
Subject	Test Year	Meets the Standards ³		Partially Meets the Standards ³		Enrollment	Participation Rate ²
		Count	Percentage ¹	Count	Percentage ¹		
English Language Arts	2015	3,863	42.2%	5,291	57.8%	9,470	96.6%
Mathematics	2015	3,173	34.6%	6,007	65.4%	9,503	96.6%

Grade 6							
Subject	Test Year	Meets the Standards ³		Partially Meets the Standards ³		Enrollment	Participation Rate ²
		Count	Percentage ¹	Count	Percentage ¹		
English Language Arts	2015	3,366	37.5%	5,605	62.5%	9,337	96.1%
Mathematics	2015	2,870	31.9%	6,123	68.1%	9,366	96.0%

Grade 7							
Subject	Test Year	Meets the Standards ³		Partially Meets the Standards ³		Enrollment	Participation Rate ²
		Count	Percentage ¹	Count	Percentage ¹		
English Language Arts	2015	2,681	30.0%	6,261	70.0%	9,273	96.4%
Mathematics	2015	2,662	29.7%	6,288	70.3%	9,295	96.3%

Grade 8							
Subject	Test Year	Meets the Standards ³		Partially Meets the Standards ³		Enrollment	Participation Rate ²
		Count	Percentage ¹	Count	Percentage ¹		
English Language Arts	2015	2,846	31.2%	6,270	68.8%	9,467	96.3%
Mathematics	2015	2,357	25.8%	6,792	74.2%	9,501	96.3%

Grade 9							
Subject	Test Year	Meets the Standards ³		Partially Meets the Standards ³		Enrollment	Participation Rate ²
		Count	Percentage ¹	Count	Percentage ¹		
English Language Arts	2015	2,962	32.9%	6,029	67.1%	9,548	94.2%
Mathematics	2015	2,365	26.3%	6,634	73.7%	9,580	93.9%

Grade 10							
Subject	Test Year	Meets the Standards ³		Partially Meets the Standards ³		Enrollment	Participation Rate ²
		Count	Percentage ¹	Count	Percentage ¹		
English Language Arts	2015	2,408	28.6%	6,000	71.4%	9,220	91.2%
Mathematics	2015	1,695	20.2%	6,685	79.8%	9,237	90.7%

¹ Meets and Partially Meets percentages only include students who participated in the exams.

² Participation rate is calculated by dividing the total count of students tested by the number of students enrolled on the first day of testing.

³ Meets the Standards (Level 3 and Level 4) and Partially Meets the Standards (Level 1 and Level 2).

COMMENTS ON DYSLEXIA LEGISLATION

January 26, 2017

David A. Kilpatrick, PhD (Syracuse University, 1994)

Associate Professor of Psychology

State University of New York, College at Cortland

New York State Certified School Psychologist

Author of *Essentials of Assessing, Preventing, and Correcting Reading Difficulties* (Wiley, 2015)

I have conducted over 1,000 evaluations of students with reading difficulties in 28 years with the East Syracuse-Minoa Central School District. Also, I have taught upper-level college courses in learning disabilities and educational psychology since 1994.

Having evaluated hundreds of students from who displayed significant difficulties in reading, I have had very direct experience with the issues raised by the Alaska bill that is now before the legislature. My field of school psychology typically does not provide adequate graduate exposure to the vast and heavily grant-funded area of reading research. I was not exposed to this scientific endeavor until 1997, when I had already been a practicing school psychologist for nine years. Fortunately, I had access to the research journals because I was an adjunct professor for the State University of New York at that time. Typically, scientific journals are only accessible by those working at or attending a university. I spent the next 18 years with one foot in public education and another in a university and research context. The gap between the two could not have been wider.

Multiple sources such as the American Federation of Teachers, the Journal of Learning Disabilities, the Society for Scientific Study Reading, and the federal government, have all highlighted the substantial gap between scientific research on reading and the actual classroom practice in our schools. I found that there were not many useful and reliable resources available that communicated the best available research to the teachers, administrators, and school psychologists who needed it the most. This situation prompted me to write *Essentials of Assessing, Preventing, and Overcoming Reading Disabilities*, which is functionally reading research's "greatest hits" in terms of useful information for educators. This resource has been positively reviewed by publications from the International Dyslexia Association and the National Association of School Psychologists. My extensive review of the reading literature is consistent with previous reviews, such as the National Reading Panel, but provides updated information from the intervening 15 years.

Exciting findings about reading have resulted from large federal grant initiatives. These findings show that with changes in how we teach reading, we can prevent about one half to two thirds of the reading difficulties that we currently see. Also, for children who show reading difficulties, about half or more of them can get up to grade level and stay there for the long run. And for those who continue to struggle despite these encouraging efforts, studies show they can learn to read at a higher level than we have seen from such students in the past.

The findings from the studies coming out of these federal grant initiatives were so impressive that it was determined that these outcomes needed to become more

widespread. This prompted the development of the “response to intervention” (RTI) movement. However, the sad story behind RTI is that the implementation of RTI focused on the process, the steps, the procedures, the levels, and the universal screenings, but the nature of the highly successful prevention and intervention techniques were never adequately communicated. Rather, teachers and administrators were simply told they needed to use “research-based approaches” without being told what those were. This created a vacuum that has been filled primarily by continuing with the approaches schools had been using previously, except within a new framework. As a result, reading achievement since the RTI began has been largely similar to reading achievement prior to RTI. A large-scale federal review of RTI published in November 2015 indicated that RTI remediation was not working. While disappointing, this outcome was not surprising given that there is no evidence of widespread use of the kind of instructional and intervention approaches that resulted in the highly successful outcomes that prompted the development of RTI in the first place.

It is my hope that an Alaskan task force would incorporate and foster the dissemination of the knowledge base necessary to allow children in Alaska to receive the most highly effective general educational classroom instruction and remedial interventions. I would be happy to direct any task force members toward the research with those highly successful outcomes. I have had the fortunate opportunity to see this type of instruction firsthand in some real schools that have been willing to break with tradition and apply the scientific findings. The outcomes have been nothing short of amazing. It appears that the only barrier to the use of these effective instructional approaches is the lack of familiarity with these approaches and with the benefits they can provide.

With over 28 years of experience in public education, I firmly believe that teachers and administrators are trying to do the best they can, given what they know. An Alaskan task force can assist in improving the teacher knowledge base regarding reading acquisition and the most highly effective approaches to preventing and correcting reading problems.

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Balu, R, Zhu, P., Doolittle, F., Schiller, E., Jenkins, J. & Gersten, R. (2015). *Evaluation of response to intervention practices for elementary school reading* (NCEE 2016-4000). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.

Joshi, R. M., & Cunningham, A. E. (2009). Special issue: What we know about the quality of literacy instruction. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 42(5), 397-480.

Kilpatrick, D. A. (2015). *Essentials of assessing, preventing, and overcoming reading difficulties*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

McCardle, P. & Chhabra, V. (2004). (Eds.), *The voice of evidence in reading research*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. (2000). *Report of the National Reading Panel. Teaching children to read: an evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction: Reports of the subgroups* (NIH Publication No. 00-4754). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.



Promoting literacy through research, education, and advocacy.



January 26, 2017

Representative Drummond
House Education Committee
Capital Building
Juneau, AK 99801

Senator Hughes
Senate Education Committee
Capital Building
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Support for SB 27 and HB 64 for a Reading Proficiency Task Force

Dear Senator Hughes and Representative Drummond,

The International Dyslexia Association Alaska Branch (IDA Alaska) thanks you for bring HB 64 and SB 27, READING PROFICIENCY TASK FORCE; DYSLEXIA to your respective committees for hearing. We fully support the bills.

It is quite simple. The scientific research for 40 years has brought consensus to not only reading for students with dyslexia but also reading and reading instruction for all students. The problem is getting this research into the hands of professors, teachers, and educators at all levels.

Attached, please find the Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading and the names of 25 university programs that certify they produce graduates who have the content knowledge in our standards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lori Pickett".

Lori Pickett, President IDA Alaska

Enclosures: 2 University Programs Accredited by IDA and the IDA Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading



Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading

With Commentary for Classroom Educators

**International Dyslexia Association,
Professional Standards and Practices Committee
2010**

Louisa Moats, Committee Chair
Suzanne Carreker
Rosalie Davis
Phyllis Meisel
Louise Spear-Swerling
Barbara Wilson

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of These Standards

The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) offers these standards to guide the preparation, certification, and professional development of those who teach reading and related literacy skills in classroom or other settings. The term *teacher* is used throughout this document to refer to anyone whose responsibilities include reading instruction. The standards aim to specify what any individual responsible for teaching reading should know and be able to do.

Teacher preparation programs should ascribe to a common set of professional standards for the benefit of the students they serve, including those with diverse learning needs. Adherence to these standards should assure the public that individuals who teach reading are prepared to implement evidence-based and instructionally effective practices for reading instruction.

Background: Why These Standards Are Necessary

Teaching reading effectively requires considerable knowledge and skill. In 2000, the National Reading Panel, drawing upon decades of research, issued a report that identified the five reading skills necessary to become a successful reader: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The report cited the need for highly qualified teachers, but did not spell out the knowledge and skill base necessary to teach students to become successful readers.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress consistently finds that about 36% of all fourth graders read at a level described as “below basic.” Included in this group are students living in poverty, English language learners, and students who demonstrate significant weaknesses with language processes, including but not limited to phonological processing, that are the root cause of dyslexia and related learning difficulties. Of those who are referred to special education services in public schools, approximately 85% are referred because of their problems with language, reading, and/or writing.

The Common Core State Standards, adopted by the majority of states, and other college and career readiness standards, require a shift towards more rigorous expectations for students in reading and writing. Students are required to read complex text efficiently and with high levels of comprehension. This expectation includes students with reading disabilities, and those who struggle for other reasons, such as a language barrier. The IDA Standards focus on the teacher knowledge and skills required to teach these and other standards.

Mastering the Common Core or similar college readiness standards is a challenge for many with reading difficulties. However, informed and effective classroom instruction, especially in the early grades, can prevent most reading problems from developing and ameliorate others. For those students with dyslexia or other learning difficulties, effective intervention from a well-trained instructor can lessen the impact of reading difficulties and increase student success.

How to Use These Standards

The standards outline the 1) content knowledge necessary to teach reading and writing to all students, including those who are at risk for reading difficulty; and 2) practices of effective instruction. Teachers should have the foundational knowledge of language, literacy development, and individual differences to serve all the children in their classroom.

The standards may be used for several purposes, including but not limited to:

- self-study through professional learning communities and other peer collaboration groups;
- course design within teacher certification programs;
- practicum requirements within certification programs;
- professional development efforts
- criteria for membership in IDA’s coalition of organizations that provide training and supervision of teachers, tutors, and specialists;

- criteria for the preparation of those professionals receiving referrals through IDA offices; and
- a content framework for the development of licensing or certification examinations.

How to Read the Standards

The Standards include two major sections. Section I addresses foundation concepts, knowledge of language structure, the principles of structured language teaching, administration and interpretation of assessments, knowledge of dyslexia and other learning disorders, and ethical standards for the profession. Section II addresses the application skills teachers and specialists should demonstrate.

In Section I, Standards A, B, C, and E are presented in two columns. The column on the left refers to content knowledge that can be learned and tested independent of observed teaching competency. The column on the right delineates the practical skills of teaching that depend on or that are driven by content knowledge. The exception to this format is Standard D. It includes a third column on the right that specifies in greater detail what the teacher or specialist should be able to do.

Section II addresses skills to be demonstrated in supervised practice by novice teachers in training, designated Level 1, or by specialists, designated as Level 2. The recommended standards for preparation of teachers and specialists provided in this section are distinguished by these two levels.

SECTION I: KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE STANDARDS

A. Foundation Concepts about Oral and Written Learning

Unlike learning to speak, which occurs when children hear speech in their environment, learning to read does not happen naturally. Most children must be taught foundational concepts of reading. Recently, a convergence of research has identified what children must be taught and how best to teach those skills. The skills include processing of oral language at the phonemic level, the alphabetic principle, and metacognitive strategies. Teachers need to know how to teach these skills and how to support the development of psychological processes such as executive function and working memory, and how to promote motivation to read.

Oral and written language contributes reciprocally to the development of each and both impact the ability to read and write. Receptive and expressive oral language contributes to the ability to listen and to speak; receptive understanding of written language contributes to reading comprehension while expressive use of spoken language contributes to the ability to write.

Content Knowledge	Application
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Understand and explain the language processing requirements of proficient reading and writing<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Phonological (speech sound) processing• Orthographic (print) processing• Semantic (meaning) processing• Syntactic (sentence level) processing• Discourse (connected text level) processing2. Understand and explain other aspects of cognition and behavior that affect reading and writing<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attention• Executive function• Memory• Processing speed• Graphomotor control3. Define and identify environmental, cultural, and social factors that contribute to literacy development (e.g., language spoken at home, language and literacy experiences, cultural values).	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Explain the domains of language and their importance to proficient reading and writing (Level 1).b. Explain a scientifically valid model of the language processes underlying reading and writing (Level 2).2. <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Recognize that reading difficulties coexist with other cognitive and behavioral problems (Level 1).b. Explain a scientifically valid model of other cognitive influences on reading and writing, and explain major research findings regarding the contribution of linguistic and cognitive factors to the prediction of literacy outcomes (Level 2).3. Identify (Level 1) or explain (Level 2) major research findings regarding the contribution of environmental factors to literacy outcomes.

Content Knowledge	Application
<p>4. Know and identify phases in the typical developmental progression of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral language (semantic, syntactic, pragmatic) • Phonological skill • Printed word recognition • Spelling • Reading fluency • Reading comprehension • Written expression 	<p>4. Match examples of student responses and learning behavior to phases in language and literacy development (Level 1).</p>
<p>5. Understand and explain the known causal relationships among phonological skill, phonic decoding, spelling, accurate and automatic word recognition, text reading fluency, background knowledge, verbal reasoning skill, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and writing.</p>	<p>5. Explain how a weakness in each component skill of oral language, reading, and writing may affect other related skills and processes across time (Level 2).</p>
<p>6. Know and explain how the relationships among the major components of literacy development change with reading development (i.e., changes in oral language, including phonological awareness; phonics and word recognition; spelling; reading and writing fluency; vocabulary; reading comprehension skills and strategies; written expression).</p>	<p>6. Identify the most salient instructional needs of students who are at different points of reading and writing development (Level 2).</p>
<p>7. Know reasonable goals and expectations for learners at various stages of reading and writing development.</p>	<p>7. Given case study material, explain why a student is/is not meeting goals and expectations in reading or writing for his or her age/grade (Level 1).</p>

B. Knowledge of the Structure of Language

All students require and benefit from knowledge about the structure of their language; such knowledge is essential for struggling readers. To teach students effectively, teachers need in-depth knowledge about the structure of language including the ability to recognize whether words are phonetically regular or irregular, common morphemes in words, and common sentence structure in English. Without this kind of knowledge, teachers may have difficulty interpreting assessments correctly, or they may provide unintentionally confusing instruction to students. Similarly, to teach spelling and writing effectively, teachers need a knowledge base about language structure, including sentence and discourse structure. Research suggests that for teachers to acquire an understanding of language structure, they need explicit and in-depth instruction in this area.

Content Knowledge	Application
<p>Phonology (The Speech Sound System)</p> <p>1. Identify, pronounce, classify, and compare the consonant and vowel phonemes of English.</p>	<p>1. a. Identify similar or contrasting features among phonemes (Level 1). b. Reconstruct the consonant and vowel phoneme inventories and identify the feature differences between and among phonemes (Level 2).</p>
<p>Orthography (The Spelling System)</p> <p>2. Understand the broad outline of historical influences on English spelling patterns, especially Anglo-Saxon, Latin (Romance), and Greek.</p> <p>3. Define <i>grapheme</i> as a functional correspondence unit or representation of a phoneme.</p> <p>4. Recognize and explain common orthographic rules and patterns in English.</p> <p>5. Know the difference between “high frequency” and “irregular” words.</p> <p>6. Identify, explain, and categorize six basic syllable types in English spelling.</p>	<p>2. Recognize typical words from the historical layers of English (Anglo-Saxon, Latin/Romance, Greek) (Level 1).</p> <p>3. Accurately map graphemes to phonemes in any English word (Level 1).</p> <p>4. Sort words by orthographic “choice” pattern; analyze words by suffix ending patterns and apply suffix ending rules.</p> <p>5. Identify printed words that are the exception to regular patterns and spelling principles; sort high frequency words into regular and exception words (Level 1).</p> <p>6. Sort, pronounce, and combine regular written syllables and apply the most productive syllable division principles (Level 1).</p>
<p>Morphology</p> <p>7. Identify and categorize common morphemes in English, including Anglo-Saxon compounds, inflectional suffixes, and derivational suffixes; Latin-based prefixes, roots, and derivational suffixes; and Greek-based combining forms.</p>	<p>7. a. Recognize the most common prefixes, roots, suffixes, and combining forms in English content words, and analyze words at both the syllable and morpheme levels (Level 1). b. Recognize advanced morphemes (e.g., chameleon or assimilated +prefixes) (Level 2).</p>

Semantics

8. Understand and identify examples of meaningful word relationships or semantic organization.

Syntax

9. Define and distinguish among phrases, dependent clauses, and independent clauses in sentence structure.

10. Identify the parts of speech and the grammatical role of a word in a sentence.

Discourse Organization

11. Explain the major differences between narrative and expository discourse.

12. Identify and construct expository paragraphs of varying logical structures (e.g., classification, reason, sequence).

13. Identify cohesive devices in text and inferential gaps in the surface language of text.

8. Match or identify examples of word associations, antonyms, synonyms, multiple meanings and uses, semantic overlap, and semantic feature analysis (Level 1).

9. Construct and deconstruct simple, complex, and compound sentences (Level 1).

10. a. Identify the basic parts of speech and classify words by their grammatical role in a sentence (Level 1).
b. Identify advanced grammatical concepts (e.g., infinitives, gerunds) (Level 2).

11. Classify text by genre; identify features that are characteristic of each genre, and identify graphic organizers that characterize typical structures (Level 1).

12. Identify main idea sentences, connecting words, and topics that fit each type of expository paragraph organization (Level 2).

13. Analyze text for the purpose of identifying the inferences that students must make to comprehend (Level 2).

C-1. Structured Language Teaching: Phonology

Phonological awareness, basic print concepts, and knowledge of letter sounds are important foundational areas of literacy for all students. Ample research exists to inform teaching of phonological awareness, including research on the phonological skills to emphasize in instruction, appropriate sequencing of instruction, and integrating instruction in phonological awareness with instruction in alphabet knowledge. Poor phonological awareness is a core weakness for students with dyslexia. Without early, research-based intervention, children who struggle in these areas are likely to continue to have reading difficulties. It is important for teachers to understand how to teach these foundational skills, especially to effectively prevent or ameliorate many children's reading problems, including those of students with dyslexia.

Content Knowledge	Application
1. Identify the general and specific goals of phonological skill instruction.	1. Explicitly state the goal of any phonological awareness teaching activity (Level 1).
2. Know the progression of phonological skill development (i.e., rhyme, syllable, onset-rime, phoneme differentiation).	2. a. Select and implement activities that match a student's developmental level of phonological skill (Level 1). b. Design and justify the implementation of activities that match a student's developmental level of phonological skill (Level 2).
3. Identify the differences among various phonological manipulations, including identifying, matching, blending, segmenting, substituting, and deleting sounds.	3. Demonstrate instructional activities that identify, match, blend, segment, substitute, and delete sounds (Level 1).
4. Understand the principles of phonological skill instruction: brief, multisensory, conceptual, and auditory-verbal.	4. a. Successfully produce vowel and consonant phonemes (Level 1). b. Teach articulatory features of phonemes and words; use minimally contrasting pairs of sounds and words in instruction; support instruction with manipulative materials and movement (Level 2).
5. Understand the reciprocal relationships among phonological processing, reading, spelling, and vocabulary.	5. a. Direct students' attention to speech sounds during reading, spelling, and vocabulary instruction using a mirror, discussion of articulatory features, and so on as scripted or prompted (Level 1). b. Direct students' attention to speech sounds during reading, spelling, and vocabulary instruction without scripting or prompting (Level 2).
6. Understand the phonological features of a second language or dialect, such as Spanish, and how they may interfere with English pronunciation and phonics.	6. Explicitly contrast first and second language phonological systems, as appropriate, to anticipate which sounds may be most challenging for the second language learner (Level 2).

C-2. Structured Language Teaching: Phonics and Word Recognition

The development of accurate word decoding skills—that is, the ability to read unfamiliar words by applying phonics knowledge—is an essential foundation for reading comprehension for all students. Teachers require the ability to provide explicit, systematic, appropriately sequenced instruction in phonics to all students. This is critical in helping to prevent reading problems in beginning readers. Decoding skills are often a central weakness for students with learning disabilities in reading, especially those with dyslexia. For this population, teachers should also understand the usefulness of multisensory, multimodal techniques to focus students’ attention on printed words, engage students, and enhance memory and learning.

Content Knowledge	Application
1. Know or recognize how to order phonics concepts from easier to more difficult.	1. Plan lessons with a cumulative progression of word recognition skills that build one on another (Level 1).
2. Understand principles of explicit and direct teaching: model, lead, give guided practice, and review.	2. Explicitly and effectively teach (e.g., information taught is correct, students are attentive, teacher checks for understanding, teacher scaffolds students’ learning) concepts of word recognition and phonics; apply concepts to reading single words, phrases, and connected text (Level 1).
3. State the rationale for multisensory and multimodal techniques.	3. Demonstrate the simultaneous use of two or three learning modalities (to include listening, speaking, movement, touch, reading, and/or writing) to increase engagement and enhance memory (Level 1).
4. Know the routines of a complete lesson format, from the introduction of a word recognition concept to fluent application in meaningful reading and writing.	4. Plan and effectively teach all steps in a decoding lesson, including single-word reading and connected text that is read fluently, accurately, and with appropriate intonation and expression (Level 1).
5. Understand research-based adaptations of instruction for students with weaknesses in working memory, attention, executive function, or processing speed.	5. Adapt the pace, format, content, strategy, or emphasis of instruction according to students’ pattern of response (Level 2).

C-3. Structured Language Teaching: Fluent, Automatic Reading of Text

Reading fluency is the ability to read text effortlessly and quickly as well as accurately. Fluency develops among typical readers in the primary grades. Because fluency is a useful predictor of overall reading competence, especially in elementary-aged students, a variety of fluency tasks have been developed for use in screening and progress-monitoring measures. Poor reading fluency is a very common symptom of dyslexia and other reading disabilities; problems with reading fluency can linger even when students' accuracy in word decoding has been improved through effective phonics intervention. Although fluency difficulties may sometimes be associated with processing weaknesses, considerable research supports the role of practice, wide exposure to printed words, and focused instruction in the development and remediation of fluency. To address students' fluency needs, teachers must have a range of competencies, including the ability to interpret fluency-based measures appropriately, to place students in appropriate types and levels of texts for reading instruction, to stimulate students' independent reading, and to provide systematic fluency interventions for students who require them. Assistive technology (e.g., text-to-speech software) is often employed to help students with serious fluency difficulties function in general education settings. Therefore, teachers, and particularly specialists, require knowledge about the appropriate uses of this technology.

Content Knowledge	Application
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand the role of fluency in word recognition, oral reading, silent reading, comprehension of written discourse, and motivation to read. 2. Understand reading fluency as a stage of normal reading development; as the primary symptom of some reading disorders; and as a consequence of practice and instruction. 3. Define and identify examples of text at a student's frustration, instructional, and independent reading level. 4. Know sources of activities for building fluency in component reading skills. 5. Know which instructional activities and approaches are most likely to improve fluency outcomes. 6. Understand techniques to enhance student motivation to read. 7. Understand appropriate uses of assistive technology for students with serious limitations in reading fluency. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess students' fluency rate and determine reasonable expectations for reading fluency at various stages of reading development, using research-based guidelines and appropriate state and local standards and benchmarks (Level 1). 2. Determine which students need a fluency-oriented approach to instruction, using screening, diagnostic, and progress-monitoring assessments (Level 2). 3. Match students with appropriate texts as informed by fluency rate to promote ample independent oral and silent reading (Level 1). 4. Design lesson plans that incorporate fluency-building activities into instruction at sub-word and word levels (Level 1). 5. Design lesson plans with a variety of techniques to build reading fluency, such as repeated readings of passages, alternate oral reading with a partner, reading with a tape, or rereading the same passage up to three times. (Level 1). 6. Identify student interests and needs to motivate independent reading (Level 1). 7. Make appropriate recommendations for use of assistive technology in general education classes for students with different reading profiles (e.g., dyslexia versus language disabilities) (Level 2).

C-4. Structured Language Teaching: Vocabulary

Vocabulary, or knowledge of word meanings, plays a key role in reading comprehension. Knowledge of words is multifaceted, ranging from partial recognition of the meaning of a word to deep knowledge and the ability to use the word effectively when speaking or writing. Research supports both explicit, systematic teaching of word meanings and indirect methods of instruction such as those involving inferring meanings of words from sentence context or from word parts (e.g., common roots and affixes). Teachers should know how to develop students' vocabulary knowledge through both direct and indirect methods. They also should understand the importance of wide exposure to words through reading and listening, to students' vocabulary development. For students with dyslexia and other reading problems, oral vocabulary knowledge is frequently strong, but over time, low volume of reading may tend to reduce these students' exposure to rich vocabulary relative to their typical peers. Explicit teaching of word meanings and encouragement of wide independent reading in appropriate texts are ways to help increase vocabulary development.

Content Knowledge	Application
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand the role of vocabulary development and vocabulary knowledge in comprehension. 2. Understand the role and characteristics of direct and indirect (contextual) methods of vocabulary instruction. 3. Know varied techniques for vocabulary instruction before, during, and after reading. 4. Understand that word knowledge is multifaceted. 5. Understand the sources of wide differences in students' vocabularies. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teach word meanings directly using contextual examples, structural (morpheme) analysis, antonyms and synonyms, definitions, connotations, multiple meanings, and semantic feature analysis (Levels 1 and 2). 2. Lesson planning reflects: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Selection of material for read-alouds and independent reading that will expand students' vocabulary. B. Identification of words necessary for direct teaching that should be known before the passage is read. C. Repeated encounters with new words and multiple opportunities to use new words orally and in writing. D. Recurring practice and opportunities to use new words in writing and speaking.

C-5. Structured Language Teaching: Text Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the ultimate goal of reading instruction. Reading comprehension depends not only upon the component abilities discussed in previous sections, but also upon other factors, such as background knowledge and knowledge of text structure. Comprehension, background knowledge, and motivation are closely tied. Comprehension is easier when background knowledge is high, which in turn increases motivation. Equally, readers most likely will have more background knowledge in areas in which they are motivated to read, which increases comprehension. Appendix A provides references on motivation.

In order to plan effective instruction and intervention in reading comprehension, teachers must understand the array of abilities that contribute to reading comprehension and use assessments to help pinpoint students' weaknesses. For instance, a student with dyslexia, whose reading comprehension problems are associated mainly with poor decoding and dysfluent reading, will need different emphases in intervention than will a student with poor comprehension due to weaknesses in vocabulary and oral comprehension. Teachers must be able to model and teach research-based comprehension strategies, such as summarization and the use of graphic organizers, and apply methods that promote reflective reading, metacognition, and student engagement. Oral comprehension and reading comprehension have a reciprocal relationship; effective oral comprehension facilitates reading comprehension, and wide reading contributes to the development of oral comprehension. Teachers should understand the relationships among oral language, reading comprehension, and written expression, and they should be able to use appropriate writing activities to build students' comprehension. Teachers should also have a rich understanding of children's literature and how best to utilize it with a diverse group of learners.

Content Knowledge	Application
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be familiar with teaching strategies that are appropriate before, during, and after reading and that promote reflective reading. 2. Contrast the characteristics of major text genres, including narration, exposition, and argumentation. 3. Understand the similarities and differences between written composition and text comprehension, and the usefulness of writing in building comprehension. 4. Identify in any text the phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs and "academic language" that could be a source of miscomprehension. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. State purpose for reading, elicit or provide background knowledge, and explore key vocabulary (Level 1). b. Query during text reading to foster attention to detail, inference-making, and mental model construction (Level 1). c. Use graphic organizers, note-taking strategies, retelling and summarizing, and cross-text comparisons (Level 1). 2. Lesson plans reflect a range of genres, with emphasis on narrative and expository texts (Level 1). 3. Model, practice, and share written responses to text; foster explicit connections between new learning and what was already known (Level 1). 4. Anticipate confusions and teach comprehension of figurative language, complex sentence forms, cohesive devices, and unfamiliar features of text (Level 2).

5. Understand levels of comprehension including the surface code, text base, and mental model (situation model).
6. Understand factors that contribute to deep comprehension, including background knowledge, vocabulary, verbal reasoning ability, knowledge of literary structures and conventions, and use of skills and strategies for close reading of text.

5. Plan lessons to foster comprehension of the surface code (the language), the text base (the underlying ideas), and a mental model (the larger context for the ideas) (Level 2).
6. Adjust the emphasis of lessons to accommodate learners' strengths and weaknesses and pace of learning (Level 2).

C-6. Structured Language Teaching: Handwriting, Spelling, and Written Expression

Just as teachers need to understand the component abilities that contribute to reading comprehension, they also need a componential view of written expression. Important component abilities in writing include basic writing (transcription) skills such as handwriting, keyboarding, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammatical sentence structure; text generation (composition) processes that involve translating ideas into language, such as appropriate word choice, writing clear sentences, and developing an idea across multiple sentences and paragraphs; and planning, revision and editing processes. Effective instruction in written expression depends on teachers' abilities to provide explicit, systematic teaching in each area, as well as to pinpoint an individual student's weaknesses in these different component areas of writing. Teachers must also be able to teach research-based strategies in written expression, such as those involving strategies for planning and revising compositions. They should understand the utility of multisensory methods in both handwriting and spelling instruction. Assistive technology can be especially helpful for students with writing difficulties. Teachers should recognize the appropriate uses of technology in writing (e.g., spell-checkers can be valuable but do not replace spelling instruction and have limited utility for students whose misspellings are not recognizable). Specialists should have even greater levels of knowledge about technology.

Content Knowledge	Application
<p>Handwriting</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know research-based principles for teaching letter naming and letter formation, both manuscript and cursive. 2. Know techniques for teaching handwriting fluency. 	<p>Handwriting</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use multisensory techniques to teach letter naming and letter formation in manuscript and cursive forms (Level 1). 2. Implement strategies to build fluency in letter formation, and copying and transcription of written language (Level 1).
<p>Spelling</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognize and explain the relationship between transcription skills and written expression. 2. Identify students' levels of spelling development and orthographic knowledge. 3. Recognize and explain the influences of phonological, orthographic, and morphemic knowledge on spelling. 	<p>Spelling</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explicitly and effectively teach (e.g., information taught is correct, students are attentive, teacher checks for understanding, teacher scaffolds students' learning) concepts related to spelling (e.g., a rule for adding suffixes to base words) (Level 1). 2. Select materials and/or create lessons that address students' skill levels (Level 1). 3. Analyze a student's spelling errors to determine his or her instructional needs (e.g., development of phonological skills versus learning spelling rules versus application of orthographic or morphemic knowledge in spelling) (Level 2).
<p>Written Expression</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand the major components and processes of written expression and how they interact (e.g., basic writing/ transcription skills versus text 	<p>Written Expression</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Integrate basic skill instruction with composition in writing lessons.

generation).

2. Know grade and developmental expectations for students' writing in the following areas: mechanics and conventions of writing, composition, revision, and editing processes.
 - a. Select and design activities to teach important components of writing, including mechanics/ conventions of writing, composition, and revision and editing processes.
 - b. Analyze students' writing to determine specific instructional needs.
 - c. Provide specific, constructive feedback to students targeted to students' most critical needs in writing.
 - d. Teach research-based writing strategies such as those for planning, revising, and editing text.
 - e. Teach writing (discourse) knowledge, such as the importance of writing for the intended audience, use of formal versus informal language, and various schemas for writing (e.g., reports versus narratives versus arguments).
3. Understand appropriate uses of assistive technology in written expression.
 3. Make appropriate written recommendations for the use of assistive technology in writing.

D. Interpretation and Administration of Assessments for Planning Instruction

Teachers work hard to understand what students have learned. A teacher’s ability to administer and interpret assessments accurately is essential both to planning effective instruction and to early identification of students’ learning problems. Appropriate assessments enable teachers to recognize early signs that a child is either on track or may not be progressing as expected in reading development. Effective assessment helps teachers identify students who may be at risk for dyslexia or other learning disabilities. Carefully developed assessment practices permit teachers to target instruction to meet individual student’s needs and recognize when to refer students for more extensive diagnostic assessment.

It is important to understand that there are different types of assessments for different purposes (e.g., brief but frequent assessments to monitor progress in specific skills versus more lengthy, comprehensive assessments to provide detailed diagnostic information). Such assessments are an important component of frameworks of multi-tiered systems of support or response to intervention. It is also important to recognize which type of assessment is called for in a particular situation, where to find unbiased information about the adequacy of published tests, and how to interpret this information correctly. It is important for teachers to understand basic principles of test construction and concepts such as reliability and validity. They should also understand how an individual student’s component profile may influence his or her performance on a particular test, especially on broad measures of reading comprehension and written expression. For example, a child with very slow reading is likely to perform better on an untimed measure of reading comprehension than on a stringently timed measure; a child with writing problems may perform especially poorly on a reading comprehension test that requires lengthy written responses to open-ended questions.

Understanding assessment enables teachers to help students form positive perceptions of themselves as readers and acquire a love of reading so important for academic success. Classroom teachers use assessment to ensure children are gaining the necessary foundational skills in reading so students feel confident engaging in reading for continuous, lifelong enjoyment and learning.

Content Knowledge	Application	Observable Competencies for Teaching Students with Dyslexia and Related Difficulties
1. Understand the differences among screening, diagnostic, outcome, and progress-monitoring assessments.	1. Match each type of assessment and its purpose (Level 1).	1. Administer screenings and progress monitoring assessments (Level 1)
2. Understand basic principles of test construction, including reliability, validity, and norm-referencing, and know the most well-validated screening tests designed to identify students at risk for reading difficulties.	2. Match examples of technically adequate, well-validated screening, diagnostic, outcome, and progress-monitoring assessments (Level 1).	2. Explain why individual students are or are not at risk in reading based on their performance on screening assessments (Level 1).
3. Understand the principles of progress-monitoring and the use of graphs to indicate	3. Using case study data, accurately interpret progress-monitoring graphs to decide	3. Display progress-monitoring data in graphs that are understandable to students

<p>progress.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Know the range of skills typically assessed by diagnostic surveys of phonological skills, decoding skills, oral reading skills, spelling, and writing. 5. Recognize the content and purposes of the most common diagnostic tests used by psychologists and educational evaluators. 6. Interpret measures of reading comprehension and written expression in relation to an individual child's component profile. 	<p>whether or not a student is making adequate progress (Level 1).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Using case study data, accurately interpret subtest scores from diagnostic surveys to describe a student's patterns of strengths and weaknesses and instructional needs (Level 2). 5. Find and interpret appropriate print and electronic resources for evaluating tests (Level 1). 6. Using case study data, accurately interpret a student's performance on reading comprehension or written expression measures and make appropriate instructional recommendations. 	<p>and parents (Level 1).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Administer educational diagnostic assessments using standardized procedures (Level 2). 5. Write reports that clearly and accurately summarize a student's current skills in important component areas of reading and reading comprehension (Level 2). 6. Write appropriate, specific recommendations for instruction and educational programming based on assessment data (Level 2).
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E. Knowledge of Dyslexia and Other Learning Disorders

To identify children with dyslexia and other learning disabilities, teachers need to be able to recognize the key symptoms of these disorders, as well as how the disorders differ from each other. These standards are supported by research and by accepted diagnostic guidelines. It is important that teachers recognize the following characteristics of dyslexia in relation to other reading problems and learning difficulties:

- Dyslexia is a language-based neurological disorder of learning to read and write originating from a core or basic problem with phonological processing intrinsic to the individual. Its primary symptoms are inaccurate and/or slow printed word recognition and poor spelling – problems that in turn affect reading fluency and comprehension and written expression. Other types of reading disabilities include specific difficulties with reading comprehension and/or speed of processing (reading fluency). These problems may exist in relative isolation or may overlap extensively in individuals with reading difficulties.
- Dyslexia often exists in individuals with aptitudes, talents, and abilities that enable them to be successful in many domains.
- Dyslexia often coexists with other developmental difficulties and disabilities, including problems with attention, memory, and executive function.
- Dyslexia exists on a continuum. Many students with milder forms of dyslexia are never officially diagnosed and are not eligible for special education services. They deserve appropriate instruction in the regular classroom and through other intervention programs.
- Appropriate recognition and treatment of dyslexia is the responsibility of all educators and support personnel in a school system, not just the reading or special education teacher.
- Although early intervention is the most effective approach, individuals with dyslexia and other reading difficulties can be helped at any age.
- Students who are English language learners may have dyslexia or other reading difficulties. It is important for educators to determine if a student’s difficulties are based in second language acquisition or due to a reading difficulty.

In order to plan instruction and detect older students with learning disabilities who may have been overlooked in the early grades, teachers also should understand how students’ difficulties may change over time, based on developmental patterns, experience, and instruction, and increased expectations across grades.

Content Knowledge	Application
1. Understand the most common intrinsic differences between good and poor readers (i.e., cognitive, neurobiological, and linguistic).	1. a. Recognize scientifically accepted characteristics of individuals with poor word recognition (e.g., overdependence on context to aid word recognition; inaccurate nonword reading) (Level 1). b. Identify student learning behaviors and test profiles typical of students with dyslexia and related learning difficulties. (Level 2).
2. Recognize the tenets of the NICHD/IDA definition of dyslexia.	2. Explain the reasoning or evidence behind the main points in the definition (Level 1).
3. Recognize that dyslexia and other reading difficulties exist on a continuum of severity.	3. Recognize levels of instructional intensity, duration, and scope appropriate for mild, moderate, and severe reading disabilities (Level 1).

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Identify the distinguishing characteristics of dyslexia and related reading and learning disabilities (including developmental language comprehension disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, disorders of written expression or dysgraphia, mathematics learning disorder, nonverbal learning disorders, etc.).5. Identify how symptoms of reading difficulty may change over time in response to development and instruction.6. Understand federal and state laws that pertain to learning disabilities, especially reading disabilities and dyslexia. | <ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Match symptoms of the major subgroups of poor readers as established by research, including those with dyslexia, and identify typical case study profiles of those individuals (Level 2).5. Identify predictable ways that symptoms might change as students move through the grades (Level 2).6. <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Explain the most fundamental provisions of federal and state laws pertaining to the rights of students with disabilities, especially students' rights to a free, appropriate public education, an individualized educational plan, services in the least restrictive environment, and due process (Level 1).b. Appropriately implement federal and state laws in identifying and serving students with learning disabilities, reading disabilities, and dyslexia (Level 2). |
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SECTION II: GUIDELINES PERTAINING TO SUPERVISED PRACTICE OF TEACHERS WHO WORK IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

In addition to providing the necessary knowledge base, it is equally important for teacher training programs to provide opportunities for teachers to practice effective, evidence-based teaching until they reach the expected level of expertise to ensure student success.

Training programs for pre-service teachers often distinguish levels of expertise by the skills and experience of the individual and the amount of supervised practice required for certification.

Level I individuals are practitioners with basic knowledge who:

1. implement an appropriate program with fidelity
2. formulate and implement an appropriate, differentiated lesson plan
3. demonstrate proficiency to instruct individuals with a reading disability or dyslexia

To attain Level I status, an individual must:

- pass an approved basic knowledge proficiency exam
- demonstrate (over time) instructional proficiency in all Level 1 areas outlined on IDA Knowledge and Practice Standards, Section I that is responsive to student needs
- document significant student progress with formal and informal assessments as a result of the instruction.

To attain Level II status, an individual must:

- pass an approved basic knowledge proficiency exam
- complete a one-to-one practicum with a student or small group of one to three well-matched students who have a documented reading disability. A recognized, certified instructor* provides consistent oversight and observations of instruction delivered to the same student(s) over time, and the practicum continues until expected proficiency is reached.**
- demonstrate (over time) instructional proficiency in all Level 1 and 2 areas outlined on IDA Standards, Section I that is responsive to student needs.
- provide successful instruction to several individuals with dyslexia who demonstrate varying needs and document significant student progress with formal and informal assessments as a result of the instruction.
- complete an approved educational assessment of a student with dyslexia and/or language-based reading disability, including student history and comprehensive recommendations.

*A recognized or certified instructor is an individual who has met all of the requirements of the level they supervise but who has additional content knowledge and experience in implementing and observing instruction for students with dyslexia and other reading difficulties in varied settings. A recognized instructor has been recommended by or certified by an approved trainer mentorship program that meets these standards. The trainer mentorship program has been reviewed by and approved by the IDA Standards and Practices Committee.

**Documentation of proficiency must be 1) completed by a recognized/certified instructor providing oversight in the specified program; 2) completed during full (not partial) lesson observations; and 3) must occur at various intervals throughout the instructional period with student.

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Introduction

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Section I A: Foundation Concepts about Oral and Written Learning

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Section I: C-4: Structured Language Teaching: Vocabulary

Level 1

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Level 2

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Section I: C-5: Structured Language Teaching: Text Comprehension

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Level 2

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Section I: C-6: Structured Language Teaching: Handwriting, Spelling, and Written Expression

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Section I D: Interpretation and Administration of Assessments for Planning Instruction

Level 1

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Level 2

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Section I E: Knowledge of Dyslexia and Other Learning Disorders

Level 1

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Level 2

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Appendix A: Motivation

While researchers have studied motivation from a variety of perspectives, it is clear that motivation plays a major role in reading development and achievement. If we want students to become motivated to read and to engage deeply in reading, it is critical that teachers and reading specialists help students build the strong foundational skills that are outlined in the IDA Standards. Mastery of these skills will motivate children to spend more time reading, and increased reading will increase their achievement and academic success. Teachers should also consider individual reading motivators so that students choose to engage in reading for continuous, lifelong enjoyment and learning.

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Appendix B: Children's Literature Bibliography

The following books provide an engaging way to support the early literacy skills of letter learning, letter-sound relationships and phonemic awareness.*

Alphabet for All!

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Alliteration

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- Most, B. 1998. *A Pair of Protoceratops*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace.
- Most, B. 1998. *A Trio of Triceratops*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace.

Always Time for Poetry and Verse

- Apperley, D. 2002. *Good Night, Sleep Tight, Little Bunnies*. New York, NY: Scholastic, Inc.
- Church, C.J. 2002. *Do Your Ears Hang Low?* New York, NY: The Chicken House, Scholastic Inc.
- Cotton, C. & Cartwright, R. (2002). *At the Edge of the Woods*. New York, NY: Henry Holt & Company.
- Crews, N. 2004. *The Neighborhood Mother Goose*. New York: Greenwillow Books.
- Davies, N. & Hearld, M. 2012. *Outside your Window: A First Book of Nature*.
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- Florian, D. 2012. *Poem Runs: Baseball Poems and Paintings*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.
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*Book list provided by Lisa Patrick, PhD and Patricia Scharer, PhD, The Ohio State University

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January 26, 2017

University Programs Accredited by IDA

Antioch University Midwest (Ohio)

Dyslexia Certificate Program

Clarion University (Pennsylvania)

M.S. Special Education with Reading Concentration

College of Mount Saint Joseph (Ohio)

Reading Endorsement; Master of Arts in Reading Science

Colorado College (Colorado Springs, Colorado)

Master of Arts in Teaching: Literacy Intervention Specialist Program

Dallas Baptist University (Texas)

Master of Arts in Teaching: Multisensory Instruction

Drexel University (Pennsylvania)

M.S. Special Education with Multisensory Reading Concentration

Fairleigh Dickinson (New Jersey)

Orton Gillingham Teacher Certificate

Fairfield University (Connecticut)

Certificate of Advanced Study (6th year), Reading and Language Development

Gordon College (Massachusetts)

Master of Education: Reading Specialist

MGH Institute of Health Professions (Massachusetts)

Certificate of Advanced Study in Reading; Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology: Reading Concentration

Mississippi College (Mississippi)

Master of Education: Dyslexia Therapy

Notre Dame College (Ohio)

Reading Endorsement

Ohio State University (Ohio)

Dyslexia Certificate: Structured Literacy Strand

Saint Joseph's (Pennsylvania)

Master of Science in Special Education: Urban Teaching Residency and Teacher Scholar-High Incidence programs

Simmons College (Massachusetts)

Master of Science in Education: Language and Literacy; Education Specialist Degree: Language and Literacy

Southeastern University (Florida)

Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education with Reading/ESOL Endorsements Bachelor of Science/Master of Education in Exceptional Student Education with Reading/ESOL Endorsements

Southern Connecticut State University (Connecticut)

M.S. in Reading

Southern Methodist University (Texas)

Master of Education in Reading and Writing

Teachers College, Columbia University (New York)

M.A. Reading Specialist

University of Dayton (Ohio)

Undergraduate (Early Childhood Education, Middle Childhood Education, Intervention Specialist) Graduate Reading Endorsement

University of Florida (Florida)

Unified Elementary Proteach Dual Certification

University of Central Arkansas (Arkansas)

B.S.E. Elementary Education, M.S.E. Reading

University of Southern Mississippi (Mississippi)

M. Ed. in Dyslexia Therapy

William Carey University (Mississippi)

Master of Education: Dyslexia Therapy

West Liberty University (West Virginia)

M.A. in Education, Reading Endorsement

Dear Representative Drummond and House Education Committee:

Please support House Bill 64 to create a legislative task force for improving reading proficiency statewide.

As you know, students in Alaska have scored low in English reading and writing for a long time. Now is the time for the Legislature to take the lead for important changes needed in reading instruction statewide.

Thank you,

Mike Bronson
Rev. W. Greene
NAACP Anchorage
P O Box 200089
Anchorage, Alaska 99520

Dear Representative Drummond and House Education Committee,

I am writing to ask that you will please support House Bill 64 to create a legislative task force for improving reading proficiency statewide.

My husband and son both have dyslexia. The Alaska public school system (Anchorage School District) failed my husband 20 years ago and now continues to be failing my 10 year old son by not mitigating the effects of dyslexia on reading proficiency. Knowing the hereditary nature of dyslexia, I began asking teachers if they thought my son could have dyslexia as early as kindergarten when I began seeing red flags. I had wonderful, well intentioned teachers who were puzzled by this otherwise bright, inquisitive, tenacious, student who was not progressing in reading. When I requested testing during his first grade year, I was told the district does not test for Dyslexia and after evaluation, my son did not qualify for Special Education. He was retained in first grade and after a private evaluation, was officially diagnosed with dyslexia. It was two years later that the school re-tested him and found he now qualified for special education under the category of Specific Learning Disability (SLD). Even with a strong parent advocate, it took the public school over three years to identify my son as having a learning disability, and now with an IEP for SLD, the school still refuses to write that my son has dyslexia in his IEP.

My son is now in the fourth grade and receives private tutoring to address his dyslexia. He receives no specialized reading instruction at school even though each quarter I receive a reading improvement report that places him well below average and recommends individualizing his program. His special education consists of modifications and accommodations and classroom supports.

It has been my goal to teach him to be a strong advocate for himself. By identifying his dyslexia he knows there is a reason why he struggles more than his friends and why he has to work 5 times as hard as the other students in his class to get a lesser grade. Thankfully he is tenacious enough that he hasn't given up. It breaks my heart to think of the many other students who may not have a strong parent advocate, who have the same struggles as my son yet are not being identified and have given up.

"Dyslexia is the most common specific learning disability, affecting between 3 and 17 % of the student population," (HB64 pg. 1) yet teachers and administrators will not use the word in an IEP. HB 64 will not only shed light on Dyslexia as a real issue, but will help educators identify other students without dyslexia who are non-proficient readers and help them understand how to better help all struggling readers. Now is the time for the Legislature to call on reading experts from outside our state to help guide us in making the important changes needed to address reading proficiency in Alaska. Let's not wait for our public schools to fail another generation of non-proficient readers.

Thank you,
Stacie Gracey

Dear Representative Drummond and House Education Committee:

I am in favor of HB 64.

My daughter is a smart, hard working young lady. And she has Dyslexia.

Her journey through the maze of the Anchorage School District has been arduous, frustrating, and, as far as reading literacy goes, largely unproductive, as it ultimately did not produce results on reading proficiency.

Her 1st grade teacher noticed her struggle to read proficiently. The teacher tested her and based on the results, recommended summer school. My daughter was further tested and was entered into the MSI summer program after 1st grade. She attended every day; the educator commended her on her attendance and active participation. My daughter's response was she was bored out of her mind. Moreover, she had no improvement in reading fluency.

In second grade, I kept getting push back about my concerns for my daughter's poor reading performance. "Don't worry, she'll catch up" and " You'll see, a switch will turn on" were common refrains and I was discouraged from having her tested. I was finally told by a teacher that if a parent requested a student to be tested, the district would have to comply. She also added that I was not to tell anyone that the information came from her and I was to say "A little birdie told me" if I was pressed.

An IEP was developed due to her well below level reading level. Intervention was inappropriate and ineffective: she was given remediation to address her Dyslexia. ASD does not even recognize the diagnosis, despite the fact I had a professional evaluation which determined my daughter does, in fact, have Dyslexia (paid for out of our own pocket). The reading curriculum used by the school was not helping her, if was confusing her even more When I asked for the independent, third party research to support that it was appropriate instruction for dyslexia, it could not be provided. Repeatedly, the administrators pointed to a website that was the curriculum publisher's - not an independent source. Moreover, that website said nothing about it being corrective action for Dyslexia. Through my own research, I learned the school district had purchased and trained special educators to use an Orton-Gillingham based curriculum which is appropriate intervention for Dyslexia. It was even used at another local elementary school. The

teachers and administrators at my daughter's school wanted nothing to do with it. Meanwhile, my daughter was getting more and more frustrated. She was not put in a resource class for reading; she was lumped together with children with many other disabilities more severe and unrelated to reading. She is very bright and comprehends very well. She was made to feel insignificant because her needs were not being addressed. I finally requested that she be pulled out of the recourse class. We sent her to a tutor specializing in instruction for dyslexics. She completed the program and now is reading proficiently and is a successful, confident student (solid Bs with after school sports and extracurricular activities).

The whole process was brutal, for my daughter and my family. She felt stigmatized by the other students. My heart breaks when she recalls being pulled out for the useless resource time was "the worst time of her life". All because she learns to read differently.

Education is important in our family and we got her the services that she needed. What about all the other school children in Alaska who are falling through the cracks because the school systems fail to address reading illiteracy? They are there and it is real - look at the data.

With heartfelt passion, I urge you to support HB 64.

Thank you for your consideration and all the hard work you put in.

Mary Claire Kretzschmar
maryclaire729@yahoo.com

Dear Representative Drummond and House Education Committee

I am writhing in support of HB 64 and I hope you and committee do also, in creating a legislative task force for improving reading proficiency across all regions of Alaska.

For the hundreds of millions of dollars spent on Alaska school education, we have failed the children greatly. In 2015 AMP testing 57% in grades 3 thru 10 were not proficient readers. We can and must do better for the children now and the future generations. Never never forget that the children now will be the ones taking the helm and guiding their communities and the State of Alaska into the not far off future.

The wrong can be corrected, give our great teachers the resources so they can teach proficient reading skills. Develop a model that is simple but works for all teachers and children.

I'm a Child of the Territory and was a student that was moved thru the system, having been a poor reader, writer. It was not until I was researching reading education and looking for a way to help my young daughter, Katelyn age 10 who attends school in Juneau, that I discovered the word Dyslexia and realized they were writing about me. I will not allow my daughter to be moved thru the system like the 20% that are not proficient readers by MAP scores in the local district. Its time as government leaders, community members, parents we made sure faults in the Alaska education system are corrected.

We are a big Stat, yes, with 52 school districts and several culture regions with way to many education

models, the system needs to be simplified and reading proficiency delivered.

Thank you,

David R. Scott
[PO Box 210243](#)
[Auke Bay, AK. 99821](#)

Hello,

My name is Dee Dee Feghali. I live in Anchorage Alaska. I support HB-64. I am dyslexic. I found out as an adult, after our young children were diagnosed with reading difficulties in elementary school. We had them tested and found they were dyslexic and then I found out it runs in families. We then moved to Alaska and found out it is not even a word teachers are encouraged to say in the schools here.

My dyslexic daughters work very hard each day to just do the average work that others ease through. They learned to read (with lots of extra help) but are not great readers. Often I have to read the instructions for one of my daughters so that she can know what her homework is asking her to do. This means that she cannot read well enough to read the instructions on her homework accurately. This isn't right. She nearly kills herself each day to get all her work done and get correct answers. Often she works on her 6th grade homework for 3 or 4 hours each night-- AFTER having worked in school all day. Her teachers say, "She is a great student. She works very hard." SHE DOES. And she doesn't need to continue this way. I don't want her to continue this way. I don't want others to have to continue this way either.

This task force would help identify kids, like my daughter(s), who work so hard and still struggle to read. Understanding this phenomena called dyslexia is backed up with over 40 years of research that shows our teaching professionals how to screen, identify and teach kids to read. Learning to read is a fundamental right that our schools should be held accountable for as well as evidence based data driven instructional methodologies that are proven to work for dyslexic kids and others who struggle with reading. I don't see this happening in our public schools because this "difference" is not even recognized as valid or true or real by my district. Establishing educational policy based on scientific evidence and best practices for reading seems like a good use of legislative time. Thank you for listening.

Most Sincerely,
Dee Dee Feghali

Dear Representative Drummond-

Thank you for sponsoring this bill that calls for establishing a Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Reading Instruction for All Students and on the Effects of Dyslexia on Some Students charged with evaluating and making recommendations regarding reading instructional practices for all public school students in Alaska--and the diagnosis, treatment, and education of children affected by dyslexia. This bill acknowledges recognition that Alaska is not currently meeting the needs of struggling readers, including those with dyslexia and those who are English learners. Especially in a state like Alaska, with such a large and diverse population of English learners, early screening, early identification, and early intervention are particularly critical.

English Learners

Many of the vast majority of English learners who struggle while learning a second language (Hamayan et al 2007; Gaviria and Tipton 2012) do not have an intrinsic disability. However, it is very important to identify those English

learners who do have dyslexia or a related disability—since the prevalence of disabilities in English learners should be at least equivalent to occurrence in the general population. Early identification resulting from screening and assessment, as well as appropriate and timely intervention, are supported by research (Birsh, 2011; Nevills & Wolfe, 2009; Hall & Moats, 1999; Cardenas-Hagan & Pollard-Durodola, 2007).

Unfortunately, because it is difficult to distinguish between poor English reading skills resulting from dyslexia and reduced exposure to English, English learners are typically identified as having dyslexia much later in their academic careers, if ever, in comparison with other students. This disparity contributes to an inequality in English proficiency and educational attainment, leading to income and health disparities for English learner populations (Snyder Dillow 2013; National Center for Education Statistics 2015; Zong and Batalova 2015; Education Commission of the States 2013. National Research Council and Institute of Medicine 1997.

Socio-Economic Status

In consideration of the role of environmental factors in the development of reading skills for all students, studies that have investigated the progression of phonemic awareness in children found that socio-economic status and maternal education were significantly correlated with the level of phonemic awareness of children. These correlations with socio-economic status and maternal education were found to be much stronger than those of race or ethnicity (Lonigan et al 1998; Fernandez-Fein and Baker 1997). However, this prediction of increased difficulty with learning phonemic awareness for students living in a low socio-economic environment does not mitigate the need for effective phonemic awareness instruction as a critical foundation for learning the alphabetic principle—especially for students already known to be at risk; this prediction makes the provision of this effective instruction even more imperative.

Screening and Early Intervention

Universal screening tools need to be evidence-based and user friendly to provide data that support early intervention. For each grade level, it is important that screenings target the following areas: phonemic awareness; letter knowledge; sound-symbol correspondence; single word decoding for real and pseudo-words; naming speed for colors, objects, letters and numbers; spelling; listening comprehension and oral expression; reading comprehension; oral reading fluency [accuracy-rate prosody]; and written expression, including handwriting.

All children need teachers who are knowledgeable and highly skilled in the teaching of reading. Teachers must be familiar with evidence-based strategies that have proven to be effective for all children, including English learners and students with dyslexia and related learning disabilities. Evidence from decades of scientific research has shown that with appropriate, intensive instruction, students with all but the most severe reading disabilities can be effectively taught in the early grades so that they stay on track toward academic success (Lyon 2002, 2016). **According to NICHD researchers, for 90 percent to 95 percent of poor readers, prevention and early intervention programs that combine instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency development, and reading comprehension strategies—provided by well-trained, linguistically informed teachers—can increase reading skills to average reading levels or above (Lyon, 1997).** The use of evidence-based strategies can provide students with the education they need in general education settings so that only the most severe cases will need special education services.

In 2016, the International Dyslexia Association Board of Directors identified “Structured Literacy” as a term that encompasses approaches to reading instruction that conform with IDA’s *Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading*. While there are many approaches with different names that fall under the “Structured Literacy” umbrella, all have content (*what* is taught) and principles of instruction (*how* it is taught) in common.

Early intervention has been proven to be highly beneficial for all types of disabilities. Although an official diagnosis of dyslexia may not be made until a student is reading and writing, there are many factors that parents and educators can observe, measure, and remediate long before kindergarten or first grade. Waiting until the student demonstrates a reading or spelling problem wastes precious time that could be spent building a foundation of oral language, for example, on which to build later literacy skills.

Again, thank you for your efforts in sponsoring this bill.
Sincerely,

Nancy Cushen White, Ed.D.
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Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT) and Qualified Instructor (QI) #1133 (www.altaread.org)

Board Certified Educational Therapist #10041 (www.aetonline.org)

Licensed Dyslexia Therapist #1750—Texas Department of State Health Services

Certified Dyslexia Therapist

—
International Dyslexia Association

(www.dyslexiaida.org)

Member-California AB 1369 Dyslexia Guidelines Work Group

California Learning Handicapped Specialist Credential (Life)	#TC221314—pre-school, K-12, adult
California Severely Handicapped Specialist Credential (Life)	#TC221315—pre-school, K-12, adult
California Standard Elementary Credential (Life)	#STC113534—K-9
California Administrative Services Credential (Clear)	#960146833—pre-school, K-12, adult

Crosscultural, Language and Academic Development (CLAD) Permit

#080118066—K-12

January 26, 2017

Representative Drummond
House Education Committee
Capital Building
Juneau, AK 99801

Senator Hughes
Senate Education Committee
Capital Building
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Support for SB 27 and HB 64 for a Reading Proficiency Task Force

Dear Senator Hughes and Representative Drummond,

Please consider my support for new bills SB 27 and HB 64 that create(s) a legislative task force to recommend changes that will create a sustainable and scalable plan for improving reading for all Alaska's students and addresses the specific needs of students with dyslexia. I believe that the(se) bills are the first step in a process that will raise the academic reading proficiency of Alaska's public school students.

I want to thank you for all of the work that you've done on behalf of Alaska school children and I want to give you a dose of optimism about Alaska's ability to achieve the goal of increased reading proficiency. I have not always been optimistic. However, Changes in our knowledge about reading and reading instruction have been so dramatic in the last few years that I am now fully optimistic for our state. Those changes are due to advancements in the scientific studies of reading. We now know more about how to teach reading than ever before. I say with confidence that with your strong leadership and the scientific knowledge we have we can ensure that 95 to 98% of all Alaskan students can become proficient readers.

Creation of a Reading Proficiency Task Force can translate the scientific knowledge into actionable planning and implementation to empower teachers to do what they do best, that is teach. If you recall, Senator Wielechowski invited me to present at a Lunch and Learn in Juneau on April 4, 2016 as a member of the Alaska Reading Coalition. In that [presentation](#), I explained the difficulty in translating the scientific knowledge of reading into the classrooms because of academics silos in teacher preparation programs and in professional development. This is a core problem in the low reading proficiency in Alaska and across our nation that legislative leaders like yourself are trying to mitigate.

Briefly, college professors, professional development educators, and teachers simply cannot teach what they do not know. Further, to quote Dr. Nancy Mather, Professor of Learning Disabilities at University Of Arizona said at the 2014 International Dyslexia Association conference, "We know how to teach reading. We're just not doing it." With your strong educational leadership, willingness to have crucial and difficult conversations, and the good people of Alaska we can change her quote to "Alaska knows how to teach reading. Alaska is going to do it."

Sincerely,



Posie Boggs

December 12, 2014

Good morning. I appreciate the UA Board of Regents for listening to the voices of Alaskans. Thank you. Further, I would like to thank Vice President Thomas and education Deans Lo, Mo|rot|ti, and Ryan and I'm sure many more people for their hard work on two Documents: Shaping Alaska's Future Theme II, Data Summary and The Plan for Revitalizing Teacher Education in Alaska.

My name is Posie Boggs I represent my family. I volunteer intensely for three organizations highly concerned about literacy in Alaska. They are Literate Nation Alaska Coalition, the Alaska Branch of the International Dyslexia Association, and Decoding Dyslexia Alaska. (50").

"We know how to teach reading. We're just not doing it."

A decade of reading failure, as evidenced by dismal NAEP 4th and 8th grade reading proficiency levels, can be cured by a decade of commitment to the science of reading and reading instruction. It is incumbent upon our UA system to ensure that our pre-service teachers via preparation and our current teachers via professional development are highly knowledgeable and skilled teachers of reading the minute they hit the ground in any classroom.

How do we know if the UA departments of education programs are preparing teachers well to teach reading? By adding, a laser focused metric assessing the reading and literacy courses mentioned on page 6 of the progress report On Productive Partnerships with Alaska

Schools so that you, they UA Board of Regents have a quality measure.

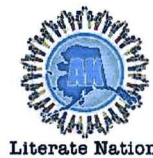
Our UA pre-service teachers must pass a Basic Reading Instruction Competence Teaching Assessment (BRICA) such as the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure MTEL Foundations of Reading (90) test with flying colors. Such a competency exam is the embodiment of the fact that “We know how to teach reading to 95-98% of children. We’re just not doing it.”

Alaska’s decade of reading failure cannot be cured without a rigorous outcome metric to ensure pre-service teachers graduate qualified and ready to teach reading on their first day of hire. “We know how to teach reading. We’re just not doing it.”

LNAKC

Literate Nation Alaska Coalition
Anchorage, Alaska - Posie Boggs, Alaska State Team Captain

September 17, 2015



Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development
801 West 10th Street, Suite 200
PO Box 110500
Juneau, AK 99811-0500

Re: Proposal to Eliminate Reading and Writing as State Standards Terms in 4 AAC 06

Dear State Board Chair and Board Members,

We strongly disagree with replacing the terms “reading and writing” with the term “English language arts” in 4 AAC 06.

What LNAKC wants

Literate Nation Alaska coalition once the state regulations to continue requiring the department to report each student's respective reading and writing scores separately on the statewide test.

Why We Want Reading and Writing Reports to report each student's respective reading and writing scores separately on the statewide test.

The state of Alaska has a historical credibility problem in the reporting of reading proficiency and in setting very low standards in reading for our students. Rolling up reading and writing into English Language Arts (ELA) does not repair Alaska's credibility problems. Transparency does.

Parents are watching carefully.

Parents simply want to know their students reading, writing, and oral language achievement reported separately. English Language Arts has always been an incomprehensible term to parents. Parent want *solid* separate information on reading, writing, and oral language. In fact, they may even want the component skills broken down into subskills such as decoding, fluency, and comprehension so that they can communicate to tutors they must likely hire due to Alaska's low reading achievements. A similar case exists for writing.

More critically, parents with students being evaluated for special education under the IDEA law will not have the de-aggregated empirical scores to establish eligibility. ELA is not a standard term on the evaluation tests given to such students. Reading levels based on age or grade are.

Parents with students in special education with reading, writing, and oral language goals will not have true data comparable to evaluate if their students are making progress on those goals. IEP teams will need specific data to back up their progress measures on a state level to gauge if they are meeting student goals.

Mailing Address: 6223 Geronimo Circle, Anchorage, Alaska 99504-1659
Phone (907) 727-5077 Fax (907) 337-0460
Email: posieboggs@literate-nation.org; Website: literate-nation.org/states/AK/

LNAKC

Literate Nation Alaska Coalition
Anchorage, Alaska - Posie Boggs, Alaska State Team Captain

Reporting only ELA scores to teachers, schools, districts, and the state legislature means that no empirical measurements are available to know if programmatic or instructional changes are needed or have been effective. Teachers would not know whether they are effective teachers of reading or teachers of writing.

Innovating districts will not have the data needed to evaluate empirically the outcomes of those innovations.

Given that the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reports separate reading and writing data, Alaska would have no direct comparison to other states. Without a direct comparison reported, Alaskan families, as has been the case in the past from previous Alaska SBA results, would have no way to compare their students reading and writing achievement to students in other states. Again, should parents have to leave the state for work they may think their student is proficient in ELA and find out their student does not meet proficiency standards in another state.

In a climate that demands transparency, it does not bode well for the State of Alaska to roll up reading and writing into ELA. It must be transparent that enough test items are in the AMP to produce an empirically independent data point for reading and writing achievement in our state.

Reading achievement must be revealed independently because it is extremely important for the legislature to understand the costs of low reading levels that impact the economics of Alaska. Reading levels are correlated directly to the number of welfare participants, correction inmates, and health care costs in Alaska. For the legislature to have an understanding of the cost of poor reading levels is one of the most critical data points in these difficult economic times.

Sincerely,



Posie Boggs
Alaska State Team Captain
Literate Nation Alaska Coalition
907.727.5077

Cc: NAACP
Governor Walker
Chair, Senate Education Committee
Chair, House Education Committee

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December 10, 2015

Dear Alaska State School Board:

However important this change in regulation is, we believe we have a larger problem in Alaska. That is, the facts surrounding teacher preparation in reading instruction in our state and nation is weak. One such factor is the Peter Effect which is based on the biblical story of the Apostle Peter, who when asked for money by a beggar replied that he could not give what he himself did not have (Acts 3:5). Referencing the work on the Peter Effect as applied to the notion of teacher preparation by Binks-Cantrell et al the following statistics and facts are alarming:

- 54.3 % of 195 teacher candidates were classed as unenthusiastic about reading
- Only 25.2% of teacher candidates reported unqualified enjoyment of reading
- Poor classroom instruction is due to poor teacher knowledge of the essential components of early reading instruction and is a major cause of reading failure.
- Teacher educators who lack an in-depth understanding of the essential components of early reading instruction were unable to give this knowledge to their teacher candidates. (Binks-Cantrell et al, 2015)

- Even In states that require passage of a Reading instruction competency exam for initial licensure, only about 60% of the teacher candidates pass the exam on the first try. This indicates that even in states with high expectations of entry teacher's reading instruction knowledge, university programs are not preparing the candidates well.
- Teacher educators who they themselves received professional development in professional development programs geared to research-based reading instruction for a minimum of three years were significantly better at passing on this knowledge to their teacher candidates.

We want the State of Alaska Board of Education to show us how Alaska is going to address the above teacher preparation n factors and ensure that every Alaskan child has a highly knowledgeable and skilled teacher of reading in K-3rd grade and reading specialists teaching those older students who are not proficient whether the children have disabilities or not. We want to see a plan that moves reading instruction in Alaska forward by providing teachers and teacher educators with what they need to be highly knowledgeable and skilled teacher of reading and reading specialists. We cannot

rely on the preparation of the many colleges of education outside of Alaska who prepare over 60% of our teachers and we can only encourage wait the University of Alaska system to catch their teacher educators up in reading science so they can pass that knowledge on to Alaskan prepared teachers. It may be revealing to have a random sample of University of Alaska prepared newly graduated teachers sit for the exams that Mass. and Connecticut require of K-3 teachers of reading if there is not an understanding of UA's teacher preparation programs.

We believe one-step forward is to place in regulations the definitions of the terms dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia so teacher educators and teacher candidates in Alaska know the importance of these terms. We also know that teacher educators and teachers who can teach these children to read will likely have the knowledge level to teach any Alaskan child to read.

We believe that until teacher educators and their candidates, teacher professional development educators and their educators are all equally prepared to be highly knowledgeable and skilled teacher of reading and reading specialists then teacher

evaluation for pay or position are invalidly measured by any test of student outcomes such as the new AMP measures. Teachers simply cannot teach what they themselves do not know. Teacher educators cannot pass on the incredibly important scientific knowledge of reading instruction to teacher candidates if they too simply do not know. Further teachers who are not enthusiastic about reading and reading instruction cannot pass on to Alaskan children the importance of and love of reading that they need to be successful in our state.

March 16, 2016

Good morning, my name is Posie Boggs. I'm involved now in six advocacy groups focused on reading proficiency for Alaskan children for example Literate Nation Alaska and the Alaska Branch of the International Dyslexia Association.

I would like to testify on SCR 1 and HB 156.

First, I would simply like The Civics Education Task Force to know a couple of little details that I think are important to their work. I would like them to know the grade level reading required for the United States original or founding documents. The Declaration of Independence requires a 12th grade reading ability, the Federalist papers require an 18th grade, college graduation reading ability, and the Constitution of the United States requires a 17th grade reading ability. Given that only 30% of Alaskan students graduate high school able to read at the 12th grade level, I think we have a little bit of a problem. School districts are not meeting the needs of our students.

Second, I would like to testify on HB 156. However, my testimony can also be related to HB 102. You just heard from a mother on HB 102 and the effects of low reading proficiency on mental health.

In HB 156, I'm very much in support of item number five, line 6 in page 2.

That states the methodology used to assign the state public school system of performance designation that compares the state public school system to public school systems in other states and countries. I believe that this the most important drivers that can in proof Alaska's dismal reading proficiency levels. Rep. Keller thank you very much for supporting matching the rigor of National standards because we can do it. I would further recommend that on page 3, line 23 be changed to assess English language arts that reports reading proficiency as a unique and separate result. What the heck is English Language Arts anyway is the question asked by parents.

However, on page 2 line 16 where it gives preference to measures that increase local control,

I have some concerns. My main concern is that reading instruction is scientifically evidenced but our teachers and *their own educators* often do not have this knowledge because the research about reading occurs outside of education. Many do not even know that it exists. If we continue to leave reading instruction up to local control this means that a school or district or school board can continue choosing to ignore and discount scientific evidence from over 35 National Institutes of Health reading research centers for over 40 years. If we do allow schools, districts, and school boards to continue current practices, Alaskan children are doomed to ridiculously low reading proficiency levels. I want the legislature to make a plan to uphold their responsibility per the Moore Case to ensure our children are proficient readers.

My masters is in Educational diagnostics and Section 8 taking a break is a good idea however, in the mean time I would also recommend that there are quick standardized reading assessment tools that schools and districts could give to students that would provide a very accurate reading proficiency score so that parents know while this transition period happens. They are low cost and group administered.

Thank you very much for your time and all that you do on behalf of our children.

Hello,

Thank you for taking public comment before starting your meeting. It is greatly appreciated that Alaska State Board of Education is eager to hear from Alaskan citizens.

My name is Posie Boggs and I am a long time Alaskan with four adult children who participated in public school, private school, and homeschool.

I also represent to nonprofit organizations, Literate Nation Alaska Coalition, The Alaska Branch of the International Dyslexia Association, and a grassroots organization named Decoding Dyslexia Alaska.

I would like to speak to teacher quality and the need for teacher certification exams that reflect highly qualified teachers of reading, especially in K-3rd grade but also across content areas.

Alaskans cannot tolerate the serial failures in literacy decade after decade. Being literate seems to me to be a right of all Alaska students and the knowledge to teach literacy, especially reading to our students seems to me a basic right for our teachers. Teachers should have a right to the foundational reading knowledge and skills that produce a literate child. According to Doctor Roche Chet see, Harvard a highly skilled kindergarten teacher justifies a salary of \$320,000 per year and it reflects a deep knowledge of reading development, reading literacy, and a highly skilled and respected professional.

Reading failure directly drives dropout rates and our statistics that the cost of one cohort of one year of dropouts is in the millions.

As you know in 2000 the national reading panel identified five imperative research research-based concepts that drive literacy and reading. You know they are phonemic awareness, deep knowledge of the alphabetic principle, fluency with text, vocabulary, and comprehension.

I also understand that the State of Alaska plans or is considering using ETS' Praxis I and II, test numbers 5038 English language arts content and knowledge elementary ad, 5039, 5041, and 5044.

I was curious if these tests covered the big five who said" I emailed Dr. Sandra Stotsky. Who agreed with me that "I do not believe there is more than approximately a 5% content match that reflects how to teach reading based on the proposed or past Alaska Standards?"

I want teachers in Alaska to be well supported in undergraduate and via PD to be able to pass and reading instruction exam as rigorous as the MTEL

5 minutes

Chair Cox, Commissioner Hanely, and Members of the AK School Board, thank you for taking my testimony today. For the record, this is Posie Boggs and I am testifying today as a Dyslexia specialist in private practice with a Masters of Science in educational diagnostics and over 20 years of experience teaching Alaska's children and adults who struggle to read and have a variety of educational experiences to read, write, spell, and do math.

I am testifying on regulation 4 ACC 06.713, Early Literacy Screening in regards to allowing the Commissioner of education to grant a to waive the early literacy screening requirements if the school or program seeking the waiver operates under an instructional model that makes early literacy screening in kindergarten or first grade inappropriate and has a formal policy adopting this instructional model.

I strongly encourage the Alaska state school board to deny this change for the following reasons:

-
- first, without such early literacy screening schools, teachers, and parents do not have a complete basis to make relevant recommendations for an initial evaluation under The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, specifically under their obligation to fulfill The Child Find requirement in Section 1412(a)(3). "Child Find must include: Children who are suspected of being a child with a disability ONE CAN NOT Suspect without screening
- Second, as we all know early identification of children who struggle to learn to read for any reason is of the utmost importance and dare I say moral obligation that trumps any educational philosophy. One only has to search the US national Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health with keywords reading and early identification to see the results of 104 scholarly articles demonstrating the importance of early identification. Similarly, a simple search in the ERIC database reveals over 400 articles about the importance of early identification of children who struggle to learn to read. At the Office of Special Education Programs website, it is explicitly clarified there are 153 results discussing Child Find and early identification.
- Third, the office of special education program website reveals a summary of "comprehensive child find system" that includes **pre-referral procedures literacy screening is imperative.**
- **I have great concerns about how this regulation change would intersect with the results of the Moore case and the Moore Settlement**
- **Finally, a more Genuine and honest regulation would be to provide parents the results of the screenings so that children can be identified as missing some basic foundational reading skills to obtain resources that they can use to intervene early for their child. I realize that this must be navigated under the IDEA law, however; now there are early intervention virtual reading coaches that a school can inexpensively provide that identified or at-risk child.**
- **The most severe cases of older children struggling in reading that I have recently had are from schools that do not teach reading until quite late and use methods that**

are based on philosophy and not the science. As I have said before in other testimony, I do not want to see another non-reading 14 year old in Alaska who if they had early intervention would never had to had 1:1 privately paid tutoring for over 120 hours at a minimum. This is unethical in my view to encourage any practice that refuses screening to identify these at-risk children.

- **Parents who choose to go to this type of school should not give up their right to early identification that their child has strong indicators of reading acquisition struggles.**

January 26, 2017

To Whom This May Concern,

Please find attached a chart outlining the education history of my three school-aged children. The information shows an aggressive and earnest attempt to locate educational programs, methodologies, tools, techniques, etc., to help my students learn to read. We tried private, public, traditional, Montessori and Waldorf methods and philosophies. We tried schools in the Anchorage School District and MatSu Borough School District. After years of academic trauma we have settled in nicely with a personalized and individual approach to education at home. My three children are thriving socially and emotionally and progressing academically as we erase years of misguided instruction. I am determined to keep their self-esteem intact as they "inhibit" incorrect teaching methods while incorporating effective learning models.

As a family, we support HB64 and sincerely hope our personal story compels you to end the trail of tears for thousands of children Alaska schools are failing. We realize our family will not benefit from the task force nor any future legislation as our time in the system has expired. If laws had been in place and enforced, my children would have benefitted significantly from early screening, early identification, and early intervention up to grade three. Years of frustration would have been avoided if screening, identification, and intervention had been policy for the school districts they encountered. The critical point for Alaska's students is training all relevant educational staff in the use of evidence-based screening and identification instruments; and identification of evidence-based, multi-sensory, direct, explicit, structured, and sequential approaches to instruction of students affected by dyslexia. Our family's journey is a prime example of what our schools lack.

We remain optimistic that the next generation of children will travel a more appropriate and enriching educational path. After all, it is the birthright of all Alaskans to have an equal opportunity to learn to read.

Thank you for your support,



Lisa R. Conner
Anchorage, Alaska

907-244-2013

email: lisa@lisaconner.com

	Casey (17)	Aaron (13)	Allyson (11)
PK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anchorage Montessori School (Anchorage/Private) • Pacific Northern Academy (Anchorage/Private) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anchorage Montessori School (Anchorage/Private) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anchorage Montessori School (Anchorage/Private) • Nanuq Montessori School (Eagle River/Private)
K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bayshore Elementary School (Anchorage/Public) • Kumon Learning Center (Anchorage/Private) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homestead Elementary School (Eagle River/Public) • Anchorage Montessori School (Anchorage/Private) • Professional Speech Therapy (Anchorage/Private) • Kumon Learning Center (Anchorage/Private) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birchtree Charter School (Palmer/Public)
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kincaid Elementary School (Anchorage/Public) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeschool (1st grade first time, Eagle River) • Professional Speech Therapy (Anchorage/Private) • Birchtree Charter School (1st grade repeated, Palmer/Public) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birchtree Charter School (Palmer/Public)
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anchorage School District Summer School (Anchorage/Public) • Anchorage Montessori School (Anchorage/Private) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cottonwood Creek Elementary (IEP created, Palmer/Public) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birchtree Charter School (Palmer/Public) • Winterberry Charter School (Anchorage/Public) • O'Malley Elementary School (IEP created, Anchorage/Public)
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anchorage Montessori School (Anchorage/Private) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MatSu School District Summer School (Wasilla/Public) • Cottonwood Creek Elementary (Wasilla/Public) • Winterberry Charter School (Anchorage/Public) • O'Malley Elementary School (Anchorage/Public) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer School Professional Tutoring (Anchorage/Private) • O'Malley Elementary School (Anchorage/Public)
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homestead Elementary School (Eagle River/Public) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • O'Malley Elementary School (Anchorage/Public) • Homeschool (Anchorage) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oceanview Elementary School (Anchorage/Public)
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeschool (Eagle River) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oceanview Elementary School (Anchorage/Public) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeschool • Professional Tutoring (Anchorage/Private)
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeschool (Eagle River) • Birchtree Charter School (Palmer/Public) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeschool • Professional Tutoring (Anchorage/Private) 	

	Casey (17)	Aaron (13)	Allyson (11)
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birchtree Charter School (Palmer/Public) 		
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birchtree Charter School (Palmer/Public) • Winterberry Charter School (Anchorage/Public) • Hanshew Middle School (Anchorage/Public) 		
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South High School (Anchorage/Public) 		
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeschool (Anchorage) 		
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeschool (Anchorage) 		

Subject: House Bill 64 for reading proficiency

Dear Representative Drummond and House Education Committee:

Please support House Bill 64 to create a legislative task force for improving reading proficiency statewide.

As you know, students in Alaska have scored low in English reading and writing for a long time. Now is the time for the Legislature to take the lead for important changes needed in reading instruction statewide.

I am retired now, but have worked in the Anchorage School District (Special Education and Title 1 School) and volunteered for over 30 years.

Working one on one with kids that have a hard time with reading, which also affect learning or working on academics, there was never enough time in the day to reach each child or the right amount of staff.

It is so very important to keep working with our children, closely when it comes to reading. So many children are just pushed ahead and lost in the system.

Our children want to learn, we just need the time to work with them.

Please look into how we can get our children ahead in reading. It not only benefits our children, but the state of Alaska.

Our children are the future, lets not forget that.

Thank you,

Judy Basler

judybug258@aol.com

26 January 2017

Senator Hughes
Senate Education Committee
Capitol Building
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Representative Drummond
House Education Committee
Capitol Building
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: Support fro SB 27 and HB 64: a reading Proficiency Task Force

I am writing in support of SB 27/HB 64, requesting the establishment of a task force on reading proficiency and instruction and the effects of dyslexia on some students.

It is vitally important for dyslexia to be recognized as the extremely prevalent (up to 20%of students) condition that it is. The statistics for the number of students who score proficient or above proficient on standardized tests are among the lowest in the nation. It is no mystery that the foundation of a child's education is laid in the primary years when it is crucial to identify struggling readers and their specific difficulties. We have all heard the saying that from kindergarten to third grade children learn to read and

from then on they read to learn.

When a child's dyslexia is not identified, and tragically, not addressed that child goes on to a painful

school experience. He not only struggles to read, but to do math, and science and social studies. But he often suffers socially as well as his classmates are surely aware of his poor reading skills and poor grades.

By middle school and high school they are unable to take part in honors classes despite their strong intellect because it takes so long to read (and reading is so unpleasant), because each writing assignment

is tantamount to torture and because they may have poor organizational skills. In missing out on those classes they have lost a wonderful learning opportunity and peer group. Similarly the group has lost out on the presence of a person with an awesome, creative dyslexic brain with an incredible capacity to think

outside the box. That child may suffer silently or act out in destructive ways.

Currently, children with dyslexia fall through the cracks in our system. In families with resources parents find tutors and programs to help, but that's the few and that's not fair in a public education. We know where a weak link exists in our educational system and it's in the identification of dyslexia in our students, especially when they are young when we can do the most to help them. Please recognize dyslexia and establish this task force. Thank you to Governor Walker who proclaimed October of 2015 and 2016 Dyslexia Awareness Month in the State of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Nancy Simpson Martin

IDA Alaska

RE: Please pass HB64 and its companion bill SB27

Dear Representative Drummond,

As a parent of adult children who struggled and suffered inadequate reading instruction I am appalled as I listen to the parents of young students who are experiencing the same education pitfalls which existed more than a decade ago. All the money, all the time which has lapsed with NO improvements, UNACCEPTABLE.

Section 1: (1) Having the information that we Alaskans have a school system which is 5th from the bottom in reading proficiency (according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress – NAEP) UNACCEPTABLE. Our children and citizens deserve better. For me as a mom experiencing less than qualified teachers who sincerely were trying they just did not have the training or the curriculum. They didn't even know what they didn't know!

Similarly, the professors at the University of Alaska who train our teachers are not highly knowledgeable and skilled teachers of reading. If they themselves are not qualified how can they possibly provide the correct instruction for our future teachers? Within the education degree program at University of Alaska there should be at least 15 credits of reading science. To meet Alaska's immediate need for highly qualified professors, the University of Alaska can partner with established reading science on line programs, as they currently do for speech language. This is important please, please approach this now and with fervor.

This task force needs to create permanency of a good reading law. We should have a fiscal note to cover the cost of nationally recognized experts to be on this task force. The value that an expert in this field brings is unquestionably what we need in Alaska.

Thank you, Representative Drummond for braving this topic with the introduction of this bill.

Best Regards,

Martha H. Gingras

Martha H. Gingras
January 24, 2017



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

October 23, 2015

Dear Colleague:

Ensuring a high-quality education for children with specific learning disabilities is a critical responsibility for all of us. I write today to focus particularly on the unique educational needs of children with dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia, which are conditions that could qualify a child as a child with a specific learning disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSERS) has received communications from stakeholders, including parents, advocacy groups, and national disability organizations, who believe that State and local educational agencies (SEAs and LEAs) are reluctant to reference or use dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia in evaluations, eligibility determinations, or in developing the individualized education program (IEP) under the IDEA. The purpose of this letter is to clarify that there is nothing in the IDEA that would prohibit the use of the terms dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia in IDEA evaluation, eligibility determinations, or IEP documents.

Under the IDEA and its implementing regulations “specific learning disability” is defined, in part, as “a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, *dyslexia*, and developmental aphasia.” See 20 U.S.C. §1401(30) and 34 CFR §300.8(c)(10) (emphasis added). While our implementing regulations contain a list of conditions under the definition “specific learning disability,” which includes dyslexia, the list is not exhaustive. However, regardless of whether a child has dyslexia or any other condition explicitly included in this definition of “specific learning disability,” or has a condition such as dyscalculia or dysgraphia not listed expressly in the definition, the LEA must conduct an evaluation in accordance with 34 CFR §§300.304-300.311 to determine whether that child meets the criteria for specific learning disability or any of the other disabilities listed in 34 CFR §300.8, which implements IDEA’s definition of “child with a disability.”

For those students who may need additional academic and behavioral supports to succeed in a general education environment, schools may choose to implement a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS), such as response to intervention (RTI) or positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS). MTSS is a schoolwide approach that addresses the needs of all students, including struggling learners and students with disabilities, and integrates assessment and intervention within a multi-level instructional and behavioral system to maximize student achievement and reduce problem behaviors.

MTSS, which includes scientific, research-based interventions, also may be used to identify children suspected of having a specific learning disability. With a multi-tiered instructional

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The Department of Education’s mission is to promote student achievement and preparedness for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

framework, schools identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes, including those who may have dyslexia, dyscalculia, or dysgraphia; monitor their progress; provide evidence-based interventions; and adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness. Children who do not, or minimally, respond to interventions must be referred for an evaluation to determine if they are eligible for special education and related services (34 CFR §300.309(c)(1)); and those children who simply need intense short-term interventions may continue to receive those interventions. OSERS reminds SEAs and LEAs about previous guidance regarding the use of MTSS, including RTI, and timely evaluations,¹ specifically that a parent may request an initial evaluation at any time to determine if a child is a child with a disability under IDEA (34 CFR §300.301(b)), and the use of MTSS, such as RTI, may not be used to delay or deny a full and individual evaluation under 34 CFR §§300.304-300.311 of a child suspected of having a disability.

In determining whether a child has a disability under the IDEA, including a specific learning disability, and is eligible to receive special education and related services because of that disability, the LEA must conduct a comprehensive evaluation under §300.304, which requires the use of a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child. This information, which includes information provided by the parent, may assist in determining: 1) whether the child is a child with a disability; and 2) the content of the child's IEP to enable the child to be involved in, and make progress in, the general education curriculum. 34 CFR §300.304(b)(1). Therefore, information about the child's learning difficulties, including the presenting difficulties related to reading, mathematics, or writing, is important in determining the nature and extent of the child's disability and educational needs. In addition, other criteria are applicable in determining whether a child has a specific learning disability. For example, the team determining eligibility considers whether the child is not achieving adequately for the child's age or to meet State-approved grade-level standards when provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the child's age or the relevant State standards in areas related to reading, mathematics, and written expression. The team also must determine that the child's underachievement is not due to lack of appropriate instruction in reading or mathematics. 34 CFR §300.309(a)(1) and (b). Section 300.311 contains requirements for specific documentation of the child's eligibility determination as a child with a specific learning disability, and includes documentation of the information described above. Therefore, there could be situations where the child's parents and the team of qualified professionals responsible for determining whether the child has a specific learning disability would find it helpful to include information about the specific condition (e.g., dyslexia, dyscalculia, or dysgraphia) in documenting how that condition relates to the child's eligibility determination. 34 CFR §§300.306(a)(1), (c)(1) and 300.308.

¹ See OSEP Memo 11-07 (January 21, 2011) available at: www.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdcltrs/osep11-07rtimemo.pdf Under 34 CFR §300.307(a)(2)-(3), as part of their criteria for determining whether a child has a specific learning disability, States must permit the use of a process based on the child's response to scientific, research-based intervention, and may permit the use of other alternative research-based procedures in making this determination.

Stakeholders also requested that SEAs and LEAs have policies in place that allow for the use of the terms dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia on a child's IEP, if a child's comprehensive evaluation supports use of these terms. There is nothing in the IDEA or our implementing regulations that prohibits the inclusion of the condition that is the basis for the child's disability determination in the child's IEP. In addition, the IEP must address the child's needs resulting from the child's disability to enable the child to advance appropriately towards attaining his or her annual IEP goals and to enable the child to be involved in, and make progress in, the general education curriculum. 34 CFR §§300.320(a)(1), (2), and (4). Therefore, if a child's dyslexia, dyscalculia, or dysgraphia is the condition that forms the basis for the determination that a child has a specific learning disability, OSERS believes that there could be situations where an IEP Team could determine that personnel responsible for IEP implementation would need to know about the condition underlying the child's disability (e.g., that a child has a weakness in decoding skills as a result of the child's dyslexia). Under 34 CFR §300.323(d), a child's IEP must be accessible to the regular education teacher and any other school personnel responsible for its implementation, and these personnel must be informed of their specific responsibilities related to implementing the IEP and the specific accommodations, modifications, and supports that must be provided for the child in accordance with the IEP. Therefore, OSERS reiterates that there is nothing in the IDEA or our implementing regulations that would prohibit IEP Teams from referencing or using dyslexia, dyscalculia, or dysgraphia in a child's IEP.

Stakeholders requested that OSERS provide SEAs and LEAs with a comprehensive guide to commonly used accommodations² in the classroom for students with specific learning disabilities, including dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia. The IDEA does not dictate the services or accommodations to be provided to individual children based solely on the disability category in which the child has been classified, or the specific condition underlying the child's disability classification. The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) funds a large network of technical assistance centers that develop materials and resources to support States, school districts, schools, and teachers to improve the provision of services to children with disabilities, including materials on the use of accommodations. The U.S. Department of Education does not mandate the use of, or endorse the content of, these products, services, materials, and/or resources; however, States and LEAs may wish to seek assistance from entities such as the National Center on Intensive Intervention at: <http://www.intensiveintervention.org>, the Center for Parent Information and Resources available at: <http://www.parentcenterhub.org>, and the National Center on Accessible Educational Materials available at: <http://aem.cast.org/>. For a complete list of OSEP-funded technical assistance centers please see: <http://ccrs.osepideasthatwork.org/>.

In implementing the IDEA requirements discussed above, OSERS encourages SEAs and LEAs to consider situations where it would be appropriate to use the terms dyslexia, dyscalculia, or dysgraphia to describe and address the child's unique, identified needs through evaluation, eligibility, and IEP documents. OSERS further encourages States to review their policies,

² Although the IDEA uses the term "accommodations" primarily in the assessment context, OSERS understands the request to refer to the various components of a free appropriate public education, including special education, related services, supplementary aids and services, and program modifications or supports for school personnel, as well as accommodations for students taking assessments.

procedures, and practices to ensure that they do not prohibit the use of the terms dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia in evaluations, eligibility, and IEP documents. Finally, in ensuring the provision of free appropriate public education, OSERS encourages SEAs to remind their LEAs of the importance of addressing the unique educational needs of children with specific learning disabilities resulting from dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia during IEP Team meetings and other meetings with parents under IDEA.

I hope this clarification is helpful to both parents and practitioners in ensuring a high-quality education for children with specific learning disabilities, including children with dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia. If you have additional questions or comments, please email them to sld@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Michael K. Yudin

Fiscal Note

State of Alaska
2017 Legislative Session

Bill Version: HB 64
Fiscal Note Number: _____
() Publish Date: _____

Identifier: HB64-LEG-COU-02-23-17
Title: READING PROFICIENCY TASK FORCE;
DYSLEXIA
Sponsor: DRUMMOND
Requester: HOUSE EDUCATION

Department: Legislature
Appropriation: Legislative Council
Allocation: Council and Subcommittees
OMB Component Number: 783

Expenditures/Revenues

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below. (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY2018	Included in	Out-Year Cost Estimates				
	Appropriation Requested	Governor's FY2018 Request	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023
OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2018	FY 2018					
Personal Services							
Travel							
Services							
Commodities							
Capital Outlay							
Grants & Benefits							
Miscellaneous							
Total Operating	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Fund Source (Operating Only)

None							
Total	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Positions

Full-time							
Part-time							
Temporary							

Change in Revenues

None							
Total	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimated SUPPLEMENTAL (FY2017) cost: 0.0 *(separate supplemental appropriation required)*
(discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

Estimated CAPITAL (FY2018) cost: 0.0 *(separate capital appropriation required)*
(discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS

Does the bill direct, or will the bill result in, regulation changes adopted by your agency?
If yes, by what date are the regulations to be adopted, amended or repealed?

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version:

Initial version. Zero Note.

Prepared By:	Jessica Geary, Finance Manager	Phone:	(907)465-6626
Division:	Legislative Affairs Agency	Date:	02/23/2017 02:00 PM
Approved By:	Pam Varni, Executive Director	Date:	02/23/17
Agency:	Legislative Affairs Agency		

FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS

STATE OF ALASKA
2017 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. HB64

Analysis

HB64 establishes a Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Reading Instruction for All Students and on the Effects of Dyslexia on Some Students within the Legislative Branch.

It consists of 15 members: three members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House, including at least one member of the minority organizational caucus; three members of the Senate appointed by the Senate President, including at least one member of the minority organizational caucus; the Commissioner of Education and Early Development, or the commissioner's designee, who serves as a nonvoting member; and eight members of the public to be appointed jointly by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate as follows: one member who is an active or retired teacher in kindergarten through grade three with significant experience teaching reading to students developing typically and atypically in the state; one member representing the Alaska Council of School Administrators who is knowledgeable about reading instruction and dyslexia; one member representing the Alaska Association of Elementary School Principals; one member representing the University of Alaska who, for both typically and atypically developing students, is a highly knowledgeable and skilled teacher of reading and demonstrates the ability to pass this knowledge and skill on to student teachers, or if a candidate meeting the criteria in this subparagraph is not available, one member who is a nationally recognized expert in teaching reading to both typically and atypically developing students who demonstrates the ability to pass this knowledge and skill on to student teachers; and four members representing nonprofit organizations that are focused on issues related to reading and education, including one member who is a parent of a child with a reading disability.

The members serve without compensation and may not receive travel and per diem expenses. The committee shall meet during and between legislative sessions telephonically. Because no travel or per diem expenses are authorized, this legislation has zero fiscal impact on the Legislature.

30-LS0345J
Glover
3/2/17

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 64(EDC)
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Offered:
Referred:

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES DRUMMOND, Gara, Talerico

A BILL
FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to the establishment of the Task Force on Reading Proficiency and**
2 **Reading Instruction for All Students and on the Effects of Dyslexia on Some Students."**

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 * **Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section
5 to read:

6 **LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.** The legislature finds that

7 (1) approximately 47,000 students in the state do not meet Alaska English
8 Language Arts standards as indicated by the Alaska Measures of Progress test, and reading
9 proficiency scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress for students in the
10 state were stagnant from 2003 through 2015;

11 (2) the results on student assessments demonstrate that the state can improve
12 reading instruction for students;

13 (3) dyslexia, the most common specific learning disability, affects between
14 three and 17 percent of the student population and accounts for approximately 80 percent of

1 all specific learning disabilities;

2 (4) the scientific consensus is that, when learning to read, typical and atypical
3 learners have overlapping instructional needs, including the need for highly knowledgeable
4 and skilled reading teachers to improve reading proficiency outcomes; and

5 (5) the residents of this state hold the legislature, the governor, and the state
6 Board of Education and Early Development accountable for student reading proficiency
7 outcomes because the legislature, the governor, and the state Board of Education and Early
8 Development are responsible for developing and implementing strongly justified education
9 budget proposals and for leading reforms of the state's public education system.

10 * **Sec. 2.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
11 read:

12 **TASK FORCE ON READING PROFICIENCY AND READING INSTRUCTION**
13 **FOR ALL STUDENTS AND ON THE EFFECTS OF DYSLEXIA ON SOME STUDENTS.**

14 (a) The Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Reading Instruction for All Students and on
15 the Effects of Dyslexia on Some Students is established as a joint task force of the Alaska
16 State Legislature. The purpose of the task force is to

17 (1) evaluate and make recommendations regarding reading instructional
18 practices for all public school students in the state and the diagnosis, treatment, and education
19 of children affected by dyslexia; and

20 (2) examine how current statutes and regulations affect reading proficiency
21 outcomes.

22 (b) The task force established under (a) of this section shall

23 (1) examine

24 (A) the effects of dyslexia on reading proficiency outcomes in the state
25 and in other jurisdictions;

26 (B) dyslexia education practices and laws in other jurisdictions;

27 (C) educational reforms related to reading that have been implemented
28 in the state and the reasons for the success or failure of those reforms at the local level;

29 (2) evaluate and recommend

30 (A) methods to improve reading proficiency and reading instruction
31 for all public school students in the state;

1 (B) legislative changes and measures to improve reading proficiency
2 outcomes;

3 (C) methods to mitigate the effects of dyslexia on reading proficiency,
4 including

5 (i) early screening, early identification, and early intervention
6 for students in preschool through grade three;

7 (ii) screening, identification, and intervention for students in
8 grades four through 12;

9 (iii) training all relevant educational staff in the use of
10 evidence-based screening and identification instruments; and

11 (3) identify evidence-based, multi-sensory, direct, explicit, structured, and
12 sequential approaches to instructing students affected by dyslexia.

13 (c) The task force shall complete interim and final reports summarizing the findings
14 and recommendations of the task force, including proposed legislation for the Alaska State
15 Legislature to consider. The task force shall submit to the governor, the state Board of
16 Education and Early Development, and the senate secretary and chief clerk of the house of
17 representatives an interim report not later than January 31, 2018, and a final report not later
18 than January 31, 2019, and notify the legislature that each report is available.

19 (d) The task force consists of 15 members as follows:

20 (1) three members of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker of
21 the house of representatives, including at least one member of the minority organizational
22 caucus;

23 (2) three members of the senate appointed by the president of the senate,
24 including at least one member of the minority organizational caucus;

25 (3) the commissioner of education and early development, or the
26 commissioner's designee, who serves as a nonvoting member; and

27 (4) eight members of the public to be appointed jointly by the speaker of the
28 house of representatives and the president of the senate as follows:

29 (A) one member who is an active or retired teacher in kindergarten
30 through grade three with significant experience teaching reading to students
31 developing typically and atypically in the state;

1 (B) one member representing either the Alaska Council of School
2 Administrators or the Association of Alaska School Boards who is knowledgeable
3 about reading instruction and dyslexia;

4 (C) one member representing the Alaska Association of Elementary
5 School Principals who is knowledgeable about reading instruction and dyslexia;

6 (D) one member representing the University of Alaska who, for both
7 typically and atypically developing students, is a highly knowledgeable and skilled
8 teacher of reading and demonstrates the ability to pass this knowledge and skill on to
9 student teachers, or if a candidate meeting the criteria in this subparagraph is not
10 available, one member who is a nationally recognized expert in teaching reading to
11 both typically and atypically developing students who demonstrates the ability to pass
12 this knowledge and skill on to student teachers; and

13 (E) four members representing nonprofit organizations that are focused
14 on issues related to reading and education, including one member who is a parent of a
15 child with a reading disability.

16 (e) The members of the task force shall select a chair from the voting members of the
17 task force. The task force meets at the call of the chair and shall meet at least six but not more
18 than 10 times annually. A majority of the members of the task force constitutes a quorum.

19 (f) A vacancy on the task force shall be filled in the same manner as the original
20 selection or appointment. If a member has a conflict of interest with respect to a matter before
21 the task force, the member may not take action on that matter. The remaining members of the
22 task force shall consult with an expert regarding the matter before the task force.

23 (g) The task force may request data and other information from the Department of
24 Education and Early Development, school districts, and other state agencies.

25 (h) The staff of the legislative members of the task force shall provide administrative
26 and other support to the task force.

27 (i) Public members of the task force serve without compensation. The task force shall
28 meet telephonically. Members of the task force are not entitled to per diem or travel expenses.

29 (j) The task force expires on January 31, 2019.

30 (k) In this section,

31 (1) "dyslexia" means a learning disability that is neurobiological in origin and

1 is characterized by difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling
2 and decoding abilities;

3 (2) "relevant educational staff" includes school psychologists, special
4 education teachers, other teachers, principals, and superintendents; and

5 (3) "task force" means the Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Reading
6 Instruction for All Students and on the Effects of Dyslexia on Some Students.



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Health and Social Services

Senior and Disabilities Services
Governor's Council on Disabilities & Special Education
Patrick J. Reinhart, Executive Director

3601 C Street, Suite 740
Anchorage, Alaska 99503
Main: 907.269.8990
Fax: 907.269.8995

Re: HB64: "An Act relating to the establishment of the Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Reading Instruction for All Students and on the Effects of Dyslexia on Some Students."

The Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education (the Council) is the Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) for Alaska as required under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Our role is to involve stakeholders to advise and assist the state on special education and related services. Members are former special education students, parents of students with disabilities; disability rights legal advocates, special education teachers and paraprofessionals, school administrators, staff from the Department of Education & Early Development (EED), and other state agencies. The day to day work of the SEAP is done by the Council's Education Committee.

The Education Committee met recently to discuss this bill, and while we support the proposed Bill, we have reservations about the membership of the task force. As Alaska's SEAP we are federally funded to assist the state in gaps in special education, and in this capacity we strongly advocate for meaningful input from a broad and knowledgeable group of vested stakeholders. This involvement needs to be from the very beginning, not tagged on later on, as is often the case with education initiatives. We were very pleased to see the addition of a parent on the task force in the new CS. While the Council was not approached prior to the drafting of the legislation, we hope, as Alaska's SEAP, that we will be able to offer our expertise as one of the non-profit members named in the CS. We have parent members of students with dyslexia and a self-advocate/parent who professionally diagnoses dyslexia. Our other concern is the glaring lack of teachers. While early detection and intervention for dyslexia and other learning disabilities that affect reading is crucial, it seems incredibly short sighted to only include a K-3 teacher. It seems remiss to have so many legislatures and administrators, but no teachers with experience in reading interventions after the important 3rd grade benchmark, or teachers who have experience with secondary students who are still struggling with reading. We do not want to put a "tiny patch" on this problem but use it as a real opportunity for improving reading skills in Alaska, and we see that including more of those with real grassroots knowledge from the beginning as the place to start.

Thank you and we look forward to assisting you in any way we can.

Handwritten signature of David Kohler in blue ink.

David Kohler
Education Committee Chair

Handwritten signature of Amy Simpson in blue ink.

Amy Simpson
Council Chair

Creating Changes that Improves the Lives of People with Disabilities