

Dyslexia Updates



Legislative Task Force Updates

Higher Education

Educator Preparation Program Standards shall be modified to integrate the International Dyslexia Association's Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading, so to provide specificity (clarity) of the essential elements of literacy instruction. Standards changes by August 2021 and full implementation by August 2023.

Reading Specialist have updated their program standards, and the Kansas Board of Education approved these at the September 2020 meeting.

Elementary education has already incorporated these standards, and candidates in these programs have exposure to the IDA knowledge and practice standards for teachers of reading.

High Incidence Special Education made a few changes to their programming (which already closely aligned to the IDA's Knowledge and Practice Standards). Their program changes did not require board approval, as there were minimal changes to their standards.

English Language Arts Grades 5 – 12 have also made standards changes, and these did not require board approval.

Early childhood unified also made minor changes to their standards, which do not need the state board's approval and are ready to implement.

**All of the above programs have until August 2023 to have full implementation at the university level.

Candidates for K-6 teaching licenses, English Language Arts endorsements, reading specialist teaching licenses, and special education teaching licenses to pass an examination of their knowledge of the science of reading. August 2021

Candidates in K – 6 Elementary Education began taking a Praxis that includes the Science of Reading in May 2020.

English Language Arts – No test yet approved by KSDE

Reading Specialist - No test yet approved by KSDE

Special Education (High Incidence) No test yet approved by KSDE

Colleges of education in Kansas are encouraged to develop a course of study with a specialization in dyslexia and struggling readers. This course should be geared toward Science of Reading endorsement, and align with the IDA Knowledge and Practice Standards. It should include practica experiences with appropriate supervision and leadership development skills such that the person who graduates with this endorsement can train other classroom teachers and reading specialists within their school district. Course work development by July 2020.

Several universities have already begun to develop coursework for this requirement. Since this recommendation is stated as "encouraged," KSDE can monitor and continue encouraging colleges of education to implement this course of study.



Professional Learning

School systems shall provide evidence based and consistent professional learning opportunities consisting of training regarding the nature of dyslexia, an introduction to procedures to identify students who are struggling in reading, and an introduction to intervention strategies and procedures. Professional learning should consist of the following: (By August 2020) Overview of science and how science works to solve problems and create solutions including the scientific method. • Information concerning the meaning of terms research based and science based and how to identify programs that are science based. • Definition of dyslexia. • Characteristics of dyslexia • Potential outcomes if students are not taught explicitly to become competent readers, including results of additional socio- emotional difficulties. • Information regarding writing systems, including differences in transparent and opaque writing systems. • Information concerning how the English writing systems contributes to reading failure. • Dyslexia identification procedures • Dyslexia intervention strategies and how to implement them. • Dyslexia progress monitoring and progress monitoring systems.

In March 2020, KSDE provided training to all Kansas Education Service Centers, which covers the above recommendations. [Click here to see a link to slide deck.](#) Beginning in April, KSDE began intensive training with the field, and to date, has trained about 5,500 teachers; and many larger school systems in the state now have trainers on staff to conduct this training. KSDE and Kansas Service centers also continue to offer this training to the field.

Screening

Every accredited school district to screen and identify students at risk of dyslexia or demonstrating characteristics of dyslexia in

accordance with universal screening evidenced-based practices. Universal screening evidence-based practices include:

- Beginning of the year testing
- All students are screened
- Measures are scientifically reliable, efficient, and valid for risk of reading difficulties.
- Once risk is identified and immediate and effective interventions begins to ensure adequate progress continues.

In January 2020, the board of education approved the following components for Universal Screening of dyslexia:

Letter Naming Fluency to be given in Kindergarten in the Fall, Winter, and Spring
Letter Word Sound Fluency to be given in Kindergarten Fall, Winter, and Spring and in First Grade Fall. Systems may substitute first sound fluency or letter sound fluency for this assessment

*Phoneme Segmentation Fluency to be given in Kindergarten in the Winter and Spring and in First Grade in the Fall, Winter, and Spring
*Nonsense Word Fluency to be given in Kindergarten in the Spring, in First Grade in the Fall, Winter, and Spring, and to Second grade in the Fall (only if the student does not reach benchmark for oral reading fluency).

*Oral Reading Fluency to be given to First Grade in the Winter and Spring, and in grades 2 – 5 in Fall, Winter, and Spring. Grades 6 – 12 should be given a comprehension exam and those students not reaching benchmark should be given an Oral Reading Fluency Assessment to determine skill deficits.

Beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, KSDE will ask for those systems that are giving screening to record those scores in the KIDS system. All systems will be required to enter spring data for Kindergarten Phoneme Segmentation, First Grade Nonsense Word Fluency, and Second Grade Oral Reading Fluency.



School systems shall implement the Kansas Education Accreditation (KESA) model to require districts to implement a rigorous tiered system of supports (as defined in the Foundational Structures of KESA) subject to external review.

Timeline August 2021

- Foundational structures are below
- All students are involved.
- System and school-wide behavior expectations and response/discipline policy.
- Data-based decision-making framework.
- Evidence-based screeners for reading, math, behavior.
- Evidence-based curriculum for reading, math, behavior.
- Research-based interventions tiers 2 and 3.
- Fluid intervention groups.
- Buildings have master schedule providing for assessment, core, intervention, and collaborative team time.
- Family engagement is an inherent part of the tiered system of supports process.
- System-wide assessment plan.
- Regular evaluation of tiered system of supports.
- Ongoing review/revision of system policies to support framework.

These recommendations have been approved by the state board of education and are in the process of regulatory approval for KESA. KSDE does plan to begin monitoring systems for these components in the next KESA cycle. KSDE encourages building and district leadership teams to have the items above on their agendas annually.

KSBE shall develop and provide to school districts criteria for vetting and approving tools for screening and assessing students for characteristics of dyslexia. By January 2020.

KSDE has published a **screening rubric** that gives an overview of the screening process and

allows school systems to determine if their screener meets the needs of the Kansas recommendations. This tool can be found on the [KSDE Dyslexia web page](#) (click the link above to view the rubric). Admittedly, more work could be completed in this area, but due to COVID, the agency has not had the funding or personnel to continue this work.

Screening

Each accredited school district to utilize structured literacy as the explicit and evidence-based approach to teaching literacy skills to all students and promote early intervention for students with characteristics of dyslexia. KSDE should create a checklist to guide selection and implementation of structured literacy practices for accreditation purposes. KSDE should ensure school districts are made aware of information concerning structured literacy training and information currently available from TASN. Timeline August 2020/Full Implementation by all schools August 2021.

KSDE has published an **evidence-based reading instruction guideline** resource that explains the science of reading and structured literacy components. This resource also includes a checklist of structured literacy features that would be needed for any reading program (click the link to view this resource). KSDE is in the process of completing a reading curriculum review document and professional development to incorporate structured literacy in the district reading curriculum.

KSBE should direct the creation of a dyslexia handbook for use by schools in Kansas. The creation of the handbook should involve input from a broad array of stakeholders. Timeline August 2020.

The handbook was presented to the state board of education for review at their



Task Force Updates

November meeting and is on their agenda for approval in December. This handbook has been vetted to many stakeholders in the field for input. Due to COVID, there was no funding for a position or resources to complete this project by the deadline.

KSBE should identify a dyslexia coordinator within the Kansas State Department of Education.
Timeline July 2020.

Due to COVID, the Kansas legislature failed to approve the additional position for the 2021 fiscal year. The state board of education has included a budget item for this position for the 2022 fiscal year. If approved, this position will be hired and will begin in July 2021. In the meantime, agency staff has taken on the responsibility of ensuring the work of this initiative continues.

Definition of Dyslexia

Dyslexia is “a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to

other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.”

(International Dyslexia Association, 2002)

The Kansas State Board of Education approved this definition in the November 2019 meeting. This is the definition from which all of our training is created.

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