Chapter 56

K-3 Reading Assessment and Intervention

Section 1. Authority. These rules are promulgated by the Wyoming Department of Education under the authority of Wyoming Statute 21-3-401(d) governing the requirements for kindergarten through third grade reading assessment and intervention.

Section 2. Definitions.

a) “Diagnostic Assessment” refers to a tool administered to an individual student in order to determine strengths and pinpoint specific areas of need in order to guide instruction or intervention.

b) “Evidence Based” practices refer to assessment, instruction, and intervention practices that have been tested and described through rigorously designed, peer reviewed research studies using quantitative and qualitative approaches and have been rigorously studied over time through multiple opportunities and contexts.

c) “Foundational Reading Skills” include skills needed in order to be proficient and automatic in word recognition including phonological awareness, decoding, and sight recognition.

d) “Language Comprehension” includes elements to support the comprehension of oral or written words including background knowledge, vocabulary, language structures, verbal reasoning, and literacy knowledge.

e) “Oral Reading Fluency” refers to the ability to read text accurately, with sufficient speed, prosody, and expression. It is an essential component because it permits the reader to focus on constructing meaning from the text rather than on decoding words.

f) “Phonemic Awareness” is the most complex of the phonological awareness skills. It is the conscious awareness of the individual speech sounds (consonants and vowels) in spoken syllables and the ability to consciously manipulate those sounds including isolating, blending, segmenting, adding, deleting, and substituting the smallest units of sound in spoken words.

g) “Phonological Awareness” is the conscious awareness of and ability to manipulate all levels of the speech sound system, including recognizing and producing rhymes, word boundaries, stress patterns, syllables, onset-rime units, and phonemes as well as whole words within sentences.

h) “Phonics” is the study of the relationships between letters and the sounds they represent; phonics also may be used as a descriptor of code-based instruction.
i) “Progress Monitoring” is the use of reliable and valid measures to systematically and regularly assess a student’s performance over time to measure responsiveness to reading instruction or intervention.

Section 3. Universal Screening. The screening criteria outlined below summarize the requirements for Wyoming school districts and schools governed by Wyoming districts.

(a) **Universal Screener Criteria:** For the purpose of detecting signs of reading difficulties including, but not limited to, dyslexia or other reading deficiencies, school districts will use a WDE approved screening instrument or instruments. All screening instruments for this purpose are required to abide by the following criteria:

   (i) **Brief:** the required screening process should take approximately 10 minutes at each screening period per student.

   (ii) **Targeted:** provide criterion or indicator referenced data based on the performance of predetermined criteria. Wyoming Department of Education required screening indicators (criteria) as defined in section 4(c) below.

   (iii) **Standardized:**

       (A) The assessment is given in the same manner to all students including questions, process, and scoring.

       (B) The assessment is not adaptive in that it does not adjust the difficulty or complexity of the items presented to the student based on the prior performance of the student.

   (iv) **Predictive:** has a high level of predictability of which students are most likely to reach grade level expectations given their current progress and those most likely to have reading difficulties.

   (v) **Reliable:** the measure is likely to yield the same result if it were to be given several times on the same day in the same context.

   (vi) **Valid:** the test measures what it is intended to measure (construct validity), corresponds well to other known valid measures (concurrent validity), and predicts with good accuracy how students are likely to perform on the state outcome accountability measure (predictive validity).

   (vii) If districts would like to use a screening instrument not on the pre-approved list, they must complete an approval request and have the screening instrument evaluated and approved prior to implementing the chosen screening instrument for purposes of meeting the statutory requirements.
(b) **Screening Process:** Districts will use universal screening to determine the performance of all students on early reading predictive skills. This will provide data that informs decisions regarding further assessment that could lead to instruction and intervention.

(i) Screeners will be administered to all kindergarten, first, second, and third grade students three (3) times each school year (beginning, middle, end).

(ii) Districts are required to use cut scores as determined by the publisher of the screening tool to identify levels of risk. On an early reading screening assessment, cut scores will describe the likelihood of a student developing or not developing adequate reading skills.

(iii) Districts will use the screening data to determine the need for further diagnostic assessment per individual student results.

   (A) A cut score at the “minimal” or “low risk” level is a screening and progress monitoring target established to be equivalent to any score at or above the 40th percentile. This score will be considered identification of a student performing at a proficient level on predictive reading skills (i.e.: this student will most likely develop adequate word reading skills, sometimes referred to as “benchmark”).

   (B) A cut score of “moderate” or “some risk” level is a screening and progress monitoring target established to be equivalent to scores between the 40th and 20th percentile. This score may require further diagnostic testing and possible related intervention. If interventions are determined necessary, communication with parents and an individualized or group reading plan is required.

   (C) A cut score at the “at risk” or “high risk” level is a screening and progress monitoring target established to be equivalent to scores below the 20th percentile. This score will require: further diagnostic testing, related intervention, communication with parents, and an individualized reading plan. These students are predicted to not make adequate reading progress in word reading skills, and are highly likely to show reading difficulties in the future without the provision of appropriate intervention.

(iv) Districts will implement, as part of its Multi-Tiered System of Support, a Data Based Decision Making model to determine student need.

   (A) Districts will collect and analyze data throughout the assessment and intervention process including implementing a progress monitoring protocol with fidelity.

   (B) This data will be the basis of decision making regarding early foundational reading skills core curriculum, implementation, intervention intensity, frequency, content, implementation fidelity, and the need for further assessments.

(v) Districts will use screening data to evaluate the effectiveness of comprehensive Tier 1 core instruction and curriculum used with all students at a particular grade level.
A core curriculum is effective in content and instruction, if at least 80% of the students will benefit from the core curriculum and not require further intervention.

If a universal early reading screener finds more than 20% of students to be in the “at risk” or “high risk” category, districts are required to evaluate the data, the content, and the implementation of Tier 1 foundational reading skills core curriculum and instruction including fidelity of implementation, pacing, intensity, frequency, structure, and differentiation.

Universal screening of early reading predictive skills will act as a prevention model to address student need prior to failure.

Universal screening will measure the effectiveness of district systems.

Identify the need for or the effectiveness of the district’s problem-solving framework.

Measure the effectiveness of the districts Multi-Tiered System of Support processes such as Tier 1 foundational reading skills core curriculum and instruction, Tier 2 targeted evidence-based interventions, and/or Tier 3 intensive evidence-based intervention time, frequency, intensity, content, process, fidelity, and use of assessment tools.

Allow for the analysis of the effectiveness of the data driven decision making process.

Allow for the analysis of funding, support structure, professional development, and resources.

Screening Indicators: Screening instruments will measure the following core kindergarten through grade three foundational and predictive reading skills.

- Phonemic (Phonological) Awareness: Kindergarten - fall, winter, spring. 1st grade - fall.
- Alphabetic Principle (Phonics and Decoding): Kindergarten - fall, winter, spring. 1st grade - fall, winter, spring. 2nd grade - fall.
- Oral Reading Fluency: 1st grade - winter, spring. 2nd grade - fall, winter, spring. 3rd grade - fall, winter, spring.
- Reading Comprehension: 2nd grade - fall, winter, spring. 3rd grade - fall, winter, spring.
- Additional areas may be screened as required by the screening instrument or by district decision.
Section 4: Evidence based intervention and curriculum for the teaching of early reading foundational skills.

(a) Must be implemented with fidelity.

(b) Administered in kindergarten through grade three (3).

(c) Evidence based core curriculum will be aligned to:

   (i) State identified content standards.

   (ii) Evidence Based Interventions to facilitate the remediation of reading difficulties as early as possible.

   (iii) This alignment will be done with the purpose of meeting the needs of all students within the Tier 1 setting, as in Section 4(b)(v).

(d) The evidence-based intervention and curriculum program, along with the assessments described in Section 4, will take place within a multi-tiered system.

Section 5: Individual Reading Plan and Parental Notification

(a) For any student showing signs of reading difficulty as described above in Section 4(b), districts will provide a copy of the results with an explanation to the parent, guardian, or other person having control of the student as soon as practicable after the screening is complete.

   (i) After completion of an appropriate diagnostic assessment as described in Section 4(b), any student showing signs of reading difficulty will be placed on an individualized reading plan.

      (A) An evidence-based intervention program (or resources) to address individual student needs will be used.

      (B) The individualized reading plan may include a group reading plan.

      (C) The district will provide a copy of the student’s individualized reading plan to the guardians.

      (D) If the student is an English Learner, the individualized reading plan may be combined with the English learning plan or drafted separately.

      (E) If a student has an active Individualized Education Program (IEP) which addresses reading difficulties, the IEP will be deemed sufficient to meet this requirement.
Section 6: Professional Development: Each school district will require each district employee providing instruction in grades kindergarten through three to have received or receive professional development in evidence-based literacy instruction and intervention and in identifying the signs of reading difficulties including but not limited to dyslexia and other reading deficiencies.

(a) Professional Development Content Components in evidence-based literacy instruction, intervention, and the signs of reading difficulties:

(i) Competency 1: Essential Knowledge, Practice, and Responsibility

(A) Understand the basic tenets of skilled reading including foundational word reading skills and language comprehension.

(B) Understand and recognize the most common differences between good and poor readers in order to identify students who may be exhibiting reading difficulties (including word reading skills and language comprehension).

(C) Understand the components of early reading development including neurobiology, cognitive processes, language processing, impacts of environmental, cultural, and social factors, and need for explicit instruction.

(D) Understand data-based decision making and data literacy.

(E) Understand application of collaborative, problem solving approaches.

(ii) Competency 2: Assessment - Identify and Respond

(A) Understand the differences among and purposes for screening, progress-monitoring, diagnostic, formative, and outcome assessments.

(B) Know and use screening, diagnostic and progress monitoring tools with fidelity and make decisions about core instruction and/or interventions.

(iii) Competency 3: Instruction - Implementation and Differentiation

(A) Understand and apply general principles and practices of foundational reading skills and literacy teaching including explicit, systematic, cumulative, teacher-directed core instruction.

(B) Understand and apply instruction in order to differentiate to meet cognitive, linguistics, sociocultural, and behavioral aspects of learning.
(C) Understand and apply the progression of phonemic-awareness skill development, across age and grade.

(D) Understand and apply systematic, cumulative, and explicit teaching of basic decoding and spelling skills.

(E) Understand and apply fluent word-level skills in automatic word reading, oral reading fluency, reading comprehension, and motivation to read.

(F) Understand and apply vocabulary development and vocabulary knowledge in oral and written language comprehension.

(G) Understand and apply explicit comprehension strategy instruction and background knowledge building approaches as supported by research.

(H) Understand and apply developmental phases of the writing process and written expression.

(iv) Competency 4: Intervention and Remediation

(A) Understand and apply assessment processes at all levels: select, implement, interpret, and communicate results from a variety of assessments in each component of literacy.

(B) Identify the implications of brain research as it relates to reading, written expression, and comprehension for struggling readers.

(C) Recognize, understand, and apply at the individual student level the importance of the developmental sequence of all aspects of language, the relationship between cognition and behavior, and the reciprocal relationship among all aspects of foundational reading skills.

(v) Districts may request an exception to the Wyoming Department of Education if the staff and/or the district feels the staff member has sufficient training to meet these criteria in a manner different from rules.

(b) Educators will receive professional development based on their role in the district.

(i) Role 1: Educators and staff supporting, but not providing direct reading instruction (i.e., PE, art, music, certified librarian, paraprofessionals/aides, etc.).

(ii) Role 2: Educators directly providing instruction in foundational reading and language skills (i.e., K-3 classroom teachers).
(iii) Role 3: Educators providing direct instruction or intervention for students in Tier 2 or Tier 3 (i.e., special education teachers, reading interventionists).

(iv) Interns, apprentices will be required to receive professional development for the role in which they are functioning.

(v) If staff carry more than one role, they are required to fulfill the competency requirements of the role with the greater requirements.

(c) Professional Development Time Requirements: It is the responsibility of each district to track employee professional development time and activities. Educators are required to be trained every three years. Requirements are based on a three-year cycle.

(i) Training in years one through three (first cycle)

(A) Role 1 Staff: 3.5 hours in competency 1

(B) Role 2 Staff: 10.5 hours in competency 1, 7 hours in competency 2, 10.5 hours in competency 3 and 4 combined.

(C) Role 3 Staff: 10.5 hours in competency 1, 7 hours in competency 2, 10.5 hours in competency 4.

(ii) Training in three-year cycles following the first cycle (years 4-6 and beyond).

(A) Role 1 Staff: 3.5 hours every three years in competency 1, 3, and 4 combined with a focus on context-specific literacy support strategies.

(B) Role 2 Staff: 10.5 hours every three years in competency 1, 2, 3, and 4 combined, differentiated based on district need.

(C) Role 3 Staff: 10.5 hours every three years in competency 1, 2, 3, and 4 combined, differentiated based on district need.

(iii) Districts will be required to provide an initial professional development plan and annually submit any changes to that plan to the WDE no later than August 15 of each year.

Section 7: Reporting Requirements and Documentation: Each district will report annually to the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) the progress of each of its schools toward achieving the goal of 85% of all students reading at grade level upon completion of grade three.

(a) Districts will keep and report data and a District Literacy Plan as required to be submitted annually to the WDE.
(b) Districts will keep on file at the local level, all individual learning plans developed for each student as required by this chapter.

(c) Districts will keep records of all professional development for staff as required by this chapter.

(d) Upon request, districts will provide documentation to the WDE for monitoring purposes.