

INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

Policy 6215
(Regulation 6215)

Instruction

Reading Success

The District is committed to taking substantial procedures for maximizing student success in reading. As set forth in the accompanying Regulation 6215, these procedures include but are not limited to reading proficiency/readiness screening; provision of intensive reading instruction particularly to students exhibiting a substantial reading deficiency and informing and involving parents/guardians in improvement of student reading proficiency/readiness.

The District will provide reading instruction with phonics as the primary instructional strategy for decoding and encoding. Moreover, the District will not rely primarily on strategies based upon the three-cueing system model (MSV) and similar models of reading or visual memory. However, reading instruction may include visual instruction and strategies that improve background and experiential knowledge, add context, and increase oral language and vocabulary to support comprehension. Such visual and strategies will not be used to teach word reading.

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Reading Success

Beginning January 1, 2023 and in order to improve the reading proficiency and readiness of District students, the District has adopted the following procedures.

Reading Assessment

Utilizing a state-approved reading assessment, the District will assess the level of reading readiness for all students enrolled in Kindergarten through grade 3. Such assessments will occur at the beginning and end of each school year. Newly enrolled students in grades 1 through 5 shall be assessed at the time of enrollment.

Reading Success Plans

At the beginning of each school year the District will provide a Reading Success Plan (hereinafter the “Plan”) to eligible students. The Plan will be consistent with the guidelines issued by DESE to include but not be limited to measures of reading proficiency, strategies for addressing reading deficiencies, timelines for measuring improvement and information on screening.

Such “Plans” will be provided to any student who:

1. Exhibits a “substantial deficiency” in reading which creates a barrier to the student’s progress in learning to read. A “substantial deficiency” means a student who is one or more grade levels behind in reading or reading readiness; or
2. Has been identified as being at risk of dyslexia in the statewide dyslexia screening or has a formal dyslexia diagnosis.
3. Students entering the District after the start of school if indicated in the enrolling student’s most recent assessment, or as otherwise identified by teacher observation.

The student’s reading proficiency will be reassessed on the District’s assessment instrument. The student will continue to be provided with intensive reading instruction under a Reading Success Plan until the reading deficiency is remedied.

Parental Notification

The District will annually notify the parents/guardians of any Kindergarten through 3rd grade student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading. Such notice will be in writing or in a different modality based on the need of the parent/guardian. The written notification will include:

1. Identification of these students as having a substantial reading deficiency.
2. Description of the services currently provided to these students.

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3. Description of the proposed supplemental instructional services and supports to be provided for mediation purposes.
4. Explanation that the instruction to be used with students identified as being at risk of dyslexia or is diagnosed with dyslexia will be explicit, systematic, and diagnostic and based on phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, morphology, syntax and semantics.
5. Strategies for parents/guardians to use in helping their child succeed in reading proficiency including the promotion of parent-guided home reading.
6. Opportunity to attend a District summer reading program if such program is provided.

For students exhibiting a substantial reading deficiency at the end of 3rd grade, District staff will meet with the student's parents/guardians to discuss whether the student should be retained in grade level. A decision to promote or retain such students will be made only after direct personal consultation with the student's parents/guardians and after formulation of a specific plan of action to remedy the student's reading deficiency. The promotion/retention decision will consider all relevant elements of the student's education and development.

Intensive Instructional Services

Students identified as having a substantial deficiency in reading, has been identified as at-risk for dyslexia, or has a diagnosis of dyslexia will be provided with intensive instructional services and supports specified in a reading success plan to remediate the identified areas of reading deficiency which may include, but is not limited to:

1. Small groups or individual instruction.
2. Reduced teacher-student ratios.
3. More frequent progress mentoring.
4. Tutoring or mentoring.
5. Extended school day, week or year.
6. Summer reading program.

No less than four (4) times per year, parents/guardians of such students will be notified of their student's academic progress. Parents/guardians will also be provided with a Plan that includes suggestions for regular parent-guided home reading.

Such students in grades Kindergarten through grade 5 will be provided intensive reading instruction through a reading development initiative which will comply with all of the following criteria:

1. Assessment that measures phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension; and
2. A reading curriculum that, at a minimum, has the following specifications:
 - a) Assists students in developing the skills to read.
 - b) Provides skill development in phonetic awareness.
 - c) Scientifically based reliable assessment.
 - d) Provides initial and ongoing analysis of each student's reading progress.

- e) Provides a curriculum in core academic subjects to assist the student in meeting proficiency levels in all academic subjects.

School Improvement Plans

The District will address reading proficiency as part of its school improvement plan, which will draw upon assessments referenced in this Regulation as well as the prevalence of deficiencies.

As part of its Plan, the District will review chronic elementary absenteeism for its impact on literacy development. If more than fifteen (15%) percent of an attendance center's students are not at grade level in reading by the end of the 3rd grade, the Plan will include strategies to reduce that percentage.

Professional Development

The District will provide professional development services to enhance the skills of elementary teachers on responding to student's unique reading issues and needs and to increase the use of evidence-based strategies.

Reporting

The District will annually report to DESE the specific intensive reading interventions and supports implemented by the District as well as reporting on reading assessment data collected for grades K through 5. The District's report will confirm to DESE's required components or requested reports.

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