

**DRAFT ONLY
NOT APPROVED FOR
INTRODUCTION**

HOUSE BILL NO.

K-12 language and literacy program.

Sponsored by: Joint Education Interim Committee

A BILL

for

1 AN ACT relating to language and literacy competency;
2 providing definitions; specifying screeners, assessments,
3 diagnostics and screening requirements; requiring
4 professional development; establishing school district
5 duties; requiring parental notice; requiring individual
6 reading plans for students with reading difficulties or at
7 risk for poor reading outcomes; specifying additional
8 duties for the professional teaching standards board;
9 modifying licensure and renewal requirements for teachers;
10 requiring reports; establishing additional duties for the
11 department of education; authorizing the state
12 superintendent of public instruction to create a language
13 and literacy division; requiring rulemaking; repealing

1 provisions; making conforming amendments; and providing for
2 an effective date.

3

4 *Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Wyoming:*

5

6 **Section 1.** W.S. 21-3-402 through 21-3-405 are created
7 to read:

8

9

ARTICLE 4

10

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

11

12 **21-3-402. Wyoming language and literacy program;**
13 **purpose.**

14

15 (a) The Wyoming language and literacy program is
16 created.

17

18 (b) The purpose of this act is to ensure that every
19 student in kindergarten through grade twelve (12) develops
20 strong language and literacy skills by establishing a
21 comprehensive system of evidence based language and
22 literacy instruction, assessment, intervention and
23 professional development that supports educators, engages

1 families and promotes literacy proficiency for all Wyoming
2 students.

3

4 **21-3-403. Definitions.**

5

6 (a) As used in this article:

7

8 (i) "Department" means the state department of
9 education created pursuant to W.S. 21-2-104;

10

11 (ii) "Developmental language disorder" or "DLD"
12 means a primary language disorder that is not attributable
13 to a known biomedical condition and is characterized by
14 persistent difficulties learning, understanding or using
15 language that cause functional impairment in everyday
16 activities. The disorder may affect speaking, listening,
17 reading and writing, may co-occur with other
18 neurodevelopmental conditions and typically persists from
19 early childhood into adulthood;

20

21 (iii) "Diagnostic assessment" means a valid and
22 reliable specialized assessment used to evaluate specific
23 areas of language and literacy for students with reading

1 difficulties or at risk for poor reading outcomes and
2 provide data to inform individualized reading plans and
3 evidence based language and literacy instruction and
4 intervention;

5

6 (iv) "District language and literacy plan" or
7 "DLLP" means a school district's written comprehensive
8 strategy, including professional development, progress
9 monitoring and family engagement and intervention, to
10 identify students with reading difficulties and deliver
11 evidence based language and literacy instruction through a
12 multitiered system of support for students with reading
13 difficulties or at risk for poor reading outcomes;

14

15 (v) "Dyslexia" means a specific learning
16 disability neurobiological in origin, characterized by
17 difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and
18 by poor spelling and decoding abilities, typically
19 resulting from a deficit in the phonological component of
20 language and often unexpected in relation to other
21 cognitive abilities and the provision of effective
22 classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include
23 problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading

1 experience that may impede growth of vocabulary and
2 background knowledge;

3

4 (vi) "Dyslexia screener" means a valid and
5 reliable brief assessment used to identify students who may
6 have characteristics associated with dyslexia and aligned
7 with evidence based language and literacy instruction. A
8 dyslexia screener does not diagnose dyslexia;

9

10 (vii) "Evidence based language and literacy
11 instruction" means explicit, systematic, cumulative and
12 diagnostic instruction grounded in the science of reading
13 that develops accurate and fluent word recognition and
14 language comprehension. Instruction includes, as
15 appropriate to developmental level, phonological and
16 phonemic awareness, sound-symbol association, decoding and
17 encoding, syllable structure, morphology, syntax,
18 semantics, vocabulary development, oral reading fluency,
19 background knowledge and discourse-level comprehension,
20 coordinated to support fluent word recognition, deep
21 comprehension and effective written expression;

22

1 (viii) "Grade level reading proficiency" means
2 as defined by the state superintendent and adopted in rule;

3

4 (ix) "High-quality instructional materials and
5 practices" means curriculum, instructional methods and
6 teaching tools aligned with evidence based language and
7 literacy instruction and supported by strong or moderate
8 evidence of effectiveness;

9

10 (x) "Individualized reading plan" or "IRP" means
11 a written plan developed for an individual student
12 identified as having reading difficulties or at risk for
13 poor reading outcomes that includes evidence based language
14 and literacy instruction and intervention, measurable goals
15 and progress monitoring;

16

17 (xi) "Literacy proficiency" means the ability to
18 read, write, speak and understand language with accuracy,
19 automaticity and effective expression in order to
20 comprehend and communicate across content areas. Literacy
21 proficiency includes reading fluency, which consists of
22 rate, accuracy and expression, and integration of
23 vocabulary knowledge, background knowledge and language

1 comprehension that support proficient reading and written
2 expression;

3

4 (xii) "Multitiered system of support" or "MTSS"
5 means a tiered framework that provides universal, targeted
6 and intensive levels of academic and behavioral support and
7 evidence based language and literacy instruction, and uses
8 screeners and diagnostic assessments, data-based decision
9 making and progress monitoring to improve outcomes for all
10 students;

11

12 (xiii) "Reading difficulties" means conditions
13 or patterns of learning that interfere with the development
14 of accurate and fluent word recognition, spelling or
15 comprehension, including but not limited to dyslexia and
16 developmental language disorder, as demonstrated by a
17 student's performance on a screener or diagnostic
18 assessment;

19

20 (xiv) "State superintendent" means the state
21 superintendent of public instruction;

22

1 (xv) "Three-cueing system" means any model of
2 teaching students to read based on meaning, structure and
3 syntax and visual cues;

4

5 (xvi) "Universal screener" means a valid and
6 reliable brief assessment used to identify students with
7 reading difficulties or at risk for poor reading outcomes
8 that is aligned with evidence based language and literacy
9 instruction.

10

11 **21-3-404. School district language and literacy**
12 **plans; administration of screeners and diagnostic**
13 **assessments; multitiered system of support; individualized**
14 **reading plans.**

15

16 (a) Each school district shall adopt and implement a
17 DLLP to ensure language and literacy competency and
18 literacy proficiency for students in kindergarten through
19 grade twelve (12). The DLLP shall, at a minimum:

20

21 (i) Use universal and dyslexia screeners and
22 diagnostic assessments to assess and identify students with
23 reading difficulties and students at risk for poor reading

1 outcomes. After administration of a screener or diagnostic
2 assessment, each school district shall provide the results
3 of the student's performance on the screener or assessment
4 administered pursuant to this paragraph to the student's
5 parent or guardian. Screeners and diagnostic assessments
6 shall be approved by the state superintendent pursuant to
7 W.S. 21-3-405(a)(i) and shall be administered as follows:

8

9 (A) A dyslexia screener, once each fall,
10 for all students in kindergarten through grade two (2);

11

12 (B) A universal screener, three (3) times
13 each school year, for all students in kindergarten through
14 grade three (3);

15

16 (C) A universal screener, once each school
17 year, for all students in grades four (4) through twelve
18 (12) who have not demonstrated grade level reading
19 proficiency, for any student transferring into an
20 elementary or secondary public school in the state and for
21 any student identified as not proficient or at risk for
22 poor reading outcomes through district procedures or recent
23 assessments;

1

2 (D) Diagnostic assessments as appropriate
3 for any student identified with a reading difficulty or at
4 risk for poor reading outcomes.

5

6 (ii) Use high quality instructional materials
7 and practices aligned with the science of reading, as
8 defined by rule of the state superintendent, to deliver
9 evidence based language and literacy instruction;

10

11 (iii) Deploy an MTSS that ensures comprehensive
12 and effective evidence based language and literacy
13 instruction and intervention to improve the literacy
14 proficiency of all students. The MTSS shall, at a minimum,
15 include:

16

17 (A) Tier I, to provide explicit and
18 systematic evidence based language and literacy instruction
19 for all students in kindergarten through grade twelve (12);

20

21 (B) Tier II, to provide supplemental
22 evidence based language and literacy instruction with

1 targeted assistance and ongoing progress monitoring for
2 students with reading difficulties;

3

4 (C) Tier III, to deliver intensive and
5 individualized evidence based language and literacy
6 instruction and intervention for students with significant
7 and persistent reading difficulties.

8

9 (iv) Implement an IRP for each student
10 identified as having reading difficulties or at risk for
11 poor reading outcomes. An individualized education program
12 (IEP) prepared for a student pursuant to the federal
13 Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act shall be
14 deemed an IRP for purposes of this paragraph. The IRP
15 shall:

16

17 (A) Specify evidence based language and
18 literacy instruction specific to the student's reading
19 difficulties;

20

21 (B) Identify measurable language, literacy
22 and reading goals and progress monitoring methods;

23

1 (C) Be integrated into the student's
2 educational record;

3

4 (D) Be developed in collaboration with the
5 student's parent or guardian and implemented within thirty
6 (30) calendar days after identification of a student with
7 reading difficulties or at risk for poor reading outcomes
8 pursuant to paragraph (i) of this subsection. The school
9 district shall notify the student's parent or guardian of
10 the student's progress quarterly during the applicable
11 school year.

12

13 (v) Prohibit the use of the three-cueing system
14 as a basis for teaching word recognition or decoding.

15

16 (b) Each school district with sixty percent (60%) or
17 more students not demonstrating grade level reading
18 proficiency, as defined by rule of the state
19 superintendent, shall provide summer literacy camps or
20 extended supports, including after school support and
21 tutoring, for all students in grades one (1) through three
22 (3) with an IRP. The instruction required pursuant to this
23 subsection shall consist of appropriate, evidence based

1 language and literacy instruction aligned with each
2 student's individualized reading plan and shall include a
3 minimum of seventy (70) hours of additional instruction
4 beyond that delivered during the regular course of the
5 school year.

6

7 (c) Each school district shall ensure any person
8 employed by the school district receives job embedded,
9 practice based and ongoing literacy related professional
10 development appropriate to their role and level of
11 responsibility. The minimum professional development shall
12 include opportunities for literacy coaching and leadership
13 development to support effective implementation of evidence
14 based language and literacy instruction. The hours and
15 content requirements shall be as defined by rule of the
16 state superintendent pursuant to W.S. 21-3-405(a)(ii).

17

18 (d) Not later than August 15 each year, for the prior
19 school year, each school district shall report to the
20 department:

21

22 (i) The percentage of students not achieving
23 grade level reading proficiency;

1

2 (ii) The average growth, by grade, for the
3 lowest performing ten percent (10%) of students in relation
4 to grade level reading proficiency;

5

6 (iii) A list of the evidence based language and
7 literacy instruction and high-quality instructional
8 materials and practices utilized by the school district;

9

10 (iv) The qualifications, as defined by rule of
11 the state superintendent, of any person employed by the
12 school district that delivers language and literacy
13 instruction to students.

14

15 **21-3-405. Additional duties of the state**
16 **superintendent; rulemaking authority.**

17

18 (a) The state superintendent shall, by rule:

19

20 (i) Identify universal and dyslexia screeners,
21 diagnostic assessments, evidence based language and
22 literacy instruction and high-quality instructional
23 materials and practices to be utilized by school districts.

1 School districts may request the state superintendent
2 approve use of alternatives not incorporated in rule in the
3 manner and form required by the state superintendent;

4

5 (ii) Establish professional development
6 requirements related to effective language and literacy
7 instruction for all school district personnel,
8 differentiated by their role, level of responsibility, and
9 grade level in supporting literacy proficiency;

10

11 (iii) Define terms necessary for the
12 administration and implementation of this act, including
13 but not limited to, "grade level reading proficiency",
14 "qualifications", "significant and persistent reading
15 difficulties", the "science of reading", "progress
16 monitoring" and "at risk for poor reading outcomes".

17

18 (iv) Ensure school districts comply with the
19 requirements of this act through monitoring and providing
20 technical assistance to school districts. The rules shall
21 identify policies and procedures for imposition of
22 corrective action plans for school districts failing to
23 adhere to the requirements of this act.

1

2 (b) The state superintendent shall post the
3 information reported by school districts pursuant to W.S.
4 21-3-404(d) to the department's website.

5

6 **Section 2.** W.S. 21-2-802(a)(intro), (ii) and by
7 creating new subparagraphs (E) and (F) and 21-3-
8 110(a)(xxiii) are amended to read:

9

10 **21-2-802. Powers and duties; teacher certification;**
11 **suspension and revocation; certification fees; disposition**
12 **of collected fees; required data submissions to department**
13 **of education.**

14

15 (a) The board shall promulgate rules: ~~—~~ and
16 ~~regulations:~~

17

18 (ii) In addition to paragraph (a)(i) of this
19 section, the board shall by rule ~~and regulation~~ provide
20 for:

21

22 (E) Teachers licensed after July 1, 2027,
23 shall demonstrate literacy competency appropriate to their

instructional role and grade band as a condition of initial licensure. Teachers licensed on or before July 1, 2027, shall demonstrate literacy competency appropriate to their instructional role and grade band upon renewal of a license. For purposes of this subparagraph, "literacy competency" shall be as defined by rule of the board. The board may issue provisional licenses for a limited period of time to comply with the requirements of this subparagraph;

(F) A reading specialist endorsement aligned with evidence based language and literacy instruction as defined by W.S. 21-3-403(a)(vii).

21-3-110. Duties of boards of trustees.

(a) The board of trustees in each school district shall:

(xxiii) Implement and administer the ~~reading screening and intervention~~ Wyoming language and literacy program for students in kindergarten through grade ~~three~~

1 ~~(3)~~ twelve (12) as required by ~~W.S. 21-3-401~~ 21-3-402 et
2 seq.;

3

4 **Section 3.**

5

6 (a) The state superintendent of public instruction
7 may utilize resources as necessary to establish a literacy
8 division within the department of education and contract
9 for services to support the literacy division to administer
10 the Wyoming language and literacy program as created by
11 section 1 of this act. The literacy division shall:

12

13 (i) Maintain a list of approved universal and
14 dyslexia screeners, diagnostic assessments, evidence based
15 language and literacy instruction and high-quality
16 instructional materials and practices and review requests
17 by school districts to utilize alternative screeners,
18 assessments, instructional material or high-quality
19 instructional materials and practices;

20

21 (ii) Provide technical assistance to school
22 districts;

23

1 (iii) Support research efforts;

2

3 (iv) Publish data and reports collected pursuant
4 to W.S. 21-3-404(d);

5

6 (v) Monitor school districts' compliance with the
7 Wyoming language and literacy program, as created by
8 section 1 of this act and take corrective action as
9 necessary.

10

11 **Section 4.** W.S. 21-3-401 is repealed.

12

13 **Section 5.** This act is effective July 1, 2026.

14

15 (END)