

STRONG READERS ACT

It is essential for children enrolled in the district to read early and well in elementary school. To facilitate proficient reading skills for its students, the district employs scientifically-based and researched methodology in reading instruction in addition to regular and periodic measurements of elementary school reading improvement, and accountability in each level of the educational system to increase the number of students reading at or above grade level.

District students will receive a well-rounded education that is focused on building deep foundations in reading, writing, and mathematics with all district teachers of reading in kindergarten through third grade incorporating into instruction the five elements of reading instruction which are phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

In order for the District to identify students who have a reading deficiency including identifying students with characteristics of dyslexia, each student enrolled in kindergarten and first, second, and third grade at the district shall be screened at the beginning, middle, and end of each school year for reading skills including, but not limited to, phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. A screening instrument approved by the State Board of Education, in consultation with the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability and the Secretary of Education, shall be utilized.

An exemption to the screening requirement may be provided to students who have documented evidence that they meet at least one of the following criteria as related to the provision of classroom instruction:

- a. the student participates in the Oklahoma Alternate Assessment Program (OAAP) and is taught using alternate methods,
- b. the student's primary expressive or receptive communication is sign language,
- c. the student's primary form of written or read text is Braille, or
- d. the student's primary expressive or receptive language is not English, the student is identified as an English learner using a state-approved identification assessment, and the student has had less than one (1) school year of instruction in an English-learner program.

For any student granted an exemption from the screening requirement, the district shall maintain ongoing evidence of student progression toward English language acquisition with the same frequency as administration of screening assessments. Evidence may include, but not be limited to, student progression toward OAAP reading essential elements,

proficiency in sign language and reading comprehension, and proficiency in Braille and reading comprehension.

Any student administered a screening instrument and found not to be meeting grade-level targets shall be provided a program of reading instruction designed to enable the student to acquire the appropriate grade-level reading skills. The program of reading instruction shall be based on scientific reading research and align with the subject matter standards adopted by the State Board of Education. A program of reading instruction shall include:

- a. sufficient additional in-school instructional time for the acquisition of phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension,
- b. if necessary and if funding is available, tutorial instruction after regular school hours, on Saturdays, and during summer; however, such instruction may not be counted toward the one-hundred-eighty-day or one-thousand-eighty-hour school year,
- c. assessments identified for diagnostic purposes and periodic monitoring to measure the acquisition of reading skills including, but not limited to, phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, as identified in the student's program of reading instruction,
- d. high-quality instructional materials grounded in scientifically based reading research, and
- e. a means of providing every family of a student in prekindergarten, kindergarten, and first, second, and third grade access to free online evidence-based literacy instruction resources to support the student's literacy development at home.

A student enrolled in kindergarten or first, second, or third grade who exhibits a deficiency in reading at any time based on the screening instrument shall receive an individual reading intervention plan no later than thirty (30) days after the identification of the deficiency in reading. The reading intervention plan shall be provided in addition to core reading instruction that is provided to all students. The reading intervention plan shall:

- a. describe the research-based reading intervention services the student will receive to remedy the deficiency in reading,
- b. provide explicit and systematic instruction in phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, as applicable,
- c. monitor the reading progress of each student's reading skills throughout the school year and adjust instruction according to the student's needs, and

- d. continue until the student is determined to be meeting grade-level targets in reading based on screening instruments or assessments administered under this policy.

The reading intervention plan for each student identified with a deficiency in reading shall be developed by a Student Reading Proficiency Team and shall include supplemental instructional services and supports. Each team shall be composed of:

- a. the parent or legal guardian of the student,
- b. the teacher assigned to the student who had responsibility for reading instruction in that academic year,
- c. a teacher who is responsible for reading instruction and is assigned to teach in the next grade level of the student, and
- d. a certified reading specialist, if one is available.

The district shall notify the parent or legal guardian of any student in kindergarten or first, second, or third grade who exhibits a deficiency in reading at any time based on the screening instrument administered pursuant to this policy. The notification shall occur no later than thirty (30) days after the identification of the deficiency in reading.

District Strong Readers Plan:

The district shall adopt and implement a strong readers plan with input from school administrators, teachers, and parents and legal guardians and, if possible, a reading specialist. The plan shall be submitted electronically to, and approved by, the State Board of Education. The plan shall be updated annually. The district is not required to electronically submit the annual updates to the State Board if the last plan submitted to the State Board was approved and expenditures for the program include only expenses relating to individual and small group tutoring, purchase of and training in the use of screening and assessment measures, summer school programs and Saturday school programs. If any expenditure for the program is deleted or changed or any other type of expenditure for the program is implemented, the district shall submit the latest annual update to the State Board for approval.

The district strong readers plan shall include a plan for each site which includes an analysis of the data provided by the Oklahoma School Testing Program and other reading assessments utilized as required under this policy, and which outlines how each school site will comply with the provisions of the Strong Readers Act.

Students Demonstrating Proficiency:

Any first-grade, second-grade, or third-grade student who demonstrates proficiency in reading through a grade-level appropriate screening instrument approved pursuant to this policy shall not require a program of reading instruction or an individual reading intervention plan. After a student has demonstrated proficiency through a screening instrument, the district shall provide notification to the parent or legal guardian of the student that the student has satisfied the requirements of the Strong Readers Act. The

district shall continue to monitor the student in the next successive grade level to ensure he or she maintains proficiency.

Intensive Intervention Services:

Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, if a third-grade student is identified at any point of the academic year as having a significant reading deficiency, which shall be defined as not meeting grade-level targets on a screening instrument administered pursuant to this policy, the district shall provide the student with intensive intervention services for the appropriate amount of the instructional day consistent with the individual reading intervention plan developed pursuant to this policy and as determined by the Student Reading Proficiency Team. Intensive intervention services shall continue until the student demonstrates proficiency at the student's grade level based on a screening instrument administered pursuant to this policy.

The district shall annually report in an electronic format to the State Department of Education, the Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, and the Secretary of Education the number of students in kindergarten through third grade per grade level who exhibit grade-level reading proficiency, the number of students per grade level who received intensive intervention services pursuant to this policy, the number of students per grade level who attended a summer academy as provided for in Section 1210.508E of Title 70, the number of students per grade level who exhibited improved reading proficiency after completion of intensive intervention services, and the number of students per grade level who are still in need of intensive intervention services.

The parent of any student who is found to have a reading deficiency and is not meeting grade-level reading targets and has been provided a program of reading instruction as provided for in this policy shall be notified in writing of the following:

1. That the student has been identified as having a substantial deficiency in reading;
2. A description of the current services that are provided to the student;
3. A description of the proposed intensive intervention services and supports that will be provided to the student that are designed to remediate the identified area of reading deficiency;
4. That a student who is promoted to the fourth grade shall receive supplemental intensive intervention services;
5. Strategies for parents to use in helping their child succeed in reading proficiency; and
6. The grade-level performance scores of the student.

No student may be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion.

Reporting Requirements:

The district shall annually publish on the school website, and report electronically to the State Department of Education, the Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, and the Secretary of Education by **September 1** of each year the following information on the prior school year:

- a. expenditures related to implementing the provisions of this policy, the number of staff implementing the provisions of this policy, and average daily classroom time devoted to implementing the provisions of this policy,
- b. by grade, the number and percentage of all students in kindergarten through third grade who did not meet grade-level targets based on a screening instrument administered pursuant to this policy,
- c. by grade, the number and percentage of all students in kindergarten through third grade who have been enrolled in the district for fewer than two (2) years,
- d. by grade, the number and percentage of students in kindergarten through third grade who demonstrated grade-level proficiency based on a screening instrument administered pursuant to this policy, and
- e. by grade, the number and percentage of students in kindergarten through third grade who are on an individualized education program (IEP) in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and who demonstrated grade-level proficiency based on a screening instrument administered pursuant to this policy or an alternative assessment prescribed by the student's IEP.

Copies of the results of the screening instruments administered shall be made a part of the permanent record of each student.

Professional Development:

If the district receives more than Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500.00) in funds allocated to provide remediation and intervention in reading prekindergarten through grade five, the district shall spend no less than ten percent (10%) to provide professional development for teachers teaching prekindergarten through grade five. The professional development shall include training in the science of reading including how students learn to read; training in providing explicit and systematic instruction in phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension; implementing reading strategies that research has shown to be successful in improving reading among students with reading difficulties; and instructional materials required for implementation.

Summer Academy:

If a teacher determines that a student in kindergarten or first through third grade is not reading at grade level by the end of the second quarter of the school year, the parent or legal guardian of the student shall be notified of:

1. The reading level of the student;
2. The program of reading instruction for the student as required pursuant to the Strong Readers Act; and
3. The potential need for the student to participate in a summer academy or other program designed to assist the student in attaining grade-level reading skills.

A teacher who determines a student in kindergarten or first through third grade is not meeting grade-level targets for reading may, after consultation with the parent or legal guardian of the student, recommend that the student participate in and complete a summer academy or other program.

The district's summer academy program shall be designed to ensure that participating students successfully complete grade-level competencies in reading to enhance next-grade readiness. A summer academy reading program shall incorporate the content of a scientifically research-based professional development program administered by the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability or a scientifically research-based reading program administered by the State Board of Education and is taught by teachers who have successfully completed professional development in the reading program or who are certified as reading specialists.

The district may approve an option for students who are unable to attend a summer academy. The optional program may include, but is not limited to, an approved private provider of instruction, approved computer-based or Internet-based instruction, or an approved program of reading instruction monitored by the parent or legal guardian. The district shall not be required to pay for the optional program, but shall clearly communicate to the parent or legal guardian the expectations of the program and any costs that may be involved.

Subject to the availability of funds, the requirements of this section may be expanded to apply to students in fourth through eighth grades.

Dyslexia Screening:

Any student enrolled in kindergarten, first, second, or third grade who is assessed through the Strong Readers Act and who is not meeting grade-level targets in reading after the beginning-of-the-year assessment shall be screened for dyslexia. Screening also may be requested for a student by his or her parent or legal guardian, teacher, counselor, speech-language pathologist, or school psychologist.

Screening shall be conducted in accordance with the policies developed by the State Board of Education and the Oklahoma Dyslexia Handbook, including policies and information developed relating to universal screening of kindergarten students for characteristics of dyslexia.

The district shall provide the following data to the State Department of Education by June 30 each year:

1. The number of students by grade level in kindergarten through grade three who were screened for dyslexia in a school year;
2. The number of students by grade level in kindergarten through grade three who were newly identified as having characteristics of dyslexia in a school year;
3. The process or tools used to evaluate student progress;
4. The number of trained school system personnel or licensed professionals used to administer the qualified dyslexia screening tool;
5. The number of students in kindergarten through grade three who were participating in interventions within the school setting and the number of students participating in interventions outside the school setting; and
6. The programs used by districts for intervention within the school setting.

Reference: 70 O.S. § 1210.508A, et seq.
70 O.S. § 1210.520

READING SUFFICIENCY ACT TESTING AND PROCEDURES

~~Every student enrolled in kindergarten shall be assessed at the beginning, middle and end of each school year using a screening instrument approved by the State Board of Education for the acquisition of reading skills including, but not limited to, phonemic awareness, letter recognition, and oral language skills as identified in the subject matter standards adopted by the State Board of Education. Every first, second, and third grade student shall be assessed at the beginning, middle and end of each school year using a screening instrument approved by the State Board of Education for the acquisition of reading skills including, but not limited to, phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, for the grade level in which enrolled. Any student who is assessed and who is not meeting grade-level targets in reading shall be provided a program of reading instruction designed to enable the student to acquire the appropriate grade level of reading skills.~~

Progress of Reading Instruction and Proficiency Team

~~The program of reading instruction shall align with the State subject matter standards, shall be based on a three-tiered Response to Intervention ("RtI") model, and shall include~~

~~provisions of the Reading Enhancement and Acceleration Development (READ) Initiative adopted by the school district. The plan may include, but is not limited to:~~

- ~~1. Sufficient additional in-school instructional time sufficient for the acquisition of phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, and~~
- ~~2. If necessary, tutorial instruction after regular school hours, on Saturdays, and during the summer,~~
- ~~3. Assessments identified for diagnostic purposes and periodic monitoring to measure the acquisition of reading skills as identified in the student's program of reading instruction.~~

~~A student enrolled in first or second grades who has been assessed and found not to be meeting grade-level targets in reading shall be entitled to supplemental instructional services and supports in reading until the student is determined by the results of a screening instrument to be meeting grade-level targets in reading. The program of reading instruction for each student shall be developed by a Student Reading Proficiency Team and shall include supplemental instructional services and supports. Each team shall be composed of the:~~

- ~~1. The parent or guardian of the student,~~
- ~~2. The teacher assigned to the student who had responsibility for reading instruction in that academic year,~~
- ~~3. A teacher who is responsible for reading instruction and is assigned to teach in the next grade level of the student, and~~
- ~~4. A certified reading specialist, if one is available.~~

~~The reading progress of kindergarten students at risk for reading difficulties at the beginning of the school year shall be monitored throughout the school year and measured mid-year and at year-end. Kindergarten students who are not meeting grade-level targets by mid-year in reading shall be provided a program of reading instruction designed to enable the student to acquire the appropriate grade-level reading skills.~~

~~A Probationary Promotion Reading Proficiency Team may evaluate a student for probationary promotion if the student is enrolled in third grade, is not eligible for automatic promotion, and does not meet the criteria established by the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability on the reading portion of the third-grade statewide criterion-referenced test. The Probationary Promotion Reading Proficiency Team shall be composed of:~~

- ~~1. The parent or guardian of the student,~~
- ~~2. The teacher assigned to the student who had responsibility for reading instruction in that academic year,~~

3. ~~A teacher who is responsible for reading instruction and is assigned to teach in the next grade level of the student, and~~
4. ~~A certified reading specialist.~~

~~The principal and superintendent must approve the probationary promotion. For a student who is approved for probationary promotion, the Probationary Promotion Reading Proficiency Team shall continue to review the student's reading performance and repeat the evaluation and recommendation process each academic year until the student demonstrates he or she is meeting grade-level targets on an approved screening instrument such that the student is on track to be college and career ready.~~

~~Throughout the school year, progress monitoring shall continue; and diagnostic assessment, if determined appropriate, shall be provided. Year-end reading skills shall be measured to determine reading success. The program of reading instruction shall continue until the student is determined to be meeting grade-level targets by the results of approved reading assessments. If a reading instruction program is being provided for a student on an Individualized Education Program (IEP), a special education teacher must be consulted and the plan may be a separate document from the IEP, or an IEP team meeting may be convened and the plan could then be included in the student's IEP.~~

~~Grade Promotion After Participation in Summer Academy Programs~~

~~If, by the end of the second quarter of the school year, a teacher determines that a third-grade student is not reading at grade level, the parent or guardian shall be notified of the student's current reading level, the proposed program of reading instruction for the student, and the potential need for the student to participate in a summer academy (if offered by the district that school year) or other program designed to assist the student in attaining grade-level reading skills.~~

~~A teacher who determines that a third-grade student is unable to meet the reading competencies required for completion of third grade may, after consultation with the parent or guardian of the student, recommend that the promotion of the student to the fourth grade be contingent upon the participation in and successful completion of the required reading competencies at a summer academy or other program. If the student does not participate in the summer academy or other program or does not successfully complete the reading competencies in the summer academy or other program, the student shall be retained in the third grade.~~

~~Program of Reading Instruction and Retention~~

~~For any third-grade student not reading at grade level, as determined by the screening instruments for the acquisition of reading skills approved by the State Board of Education, a new program of reading instruction shall be developed and implemented. The new program of reading instruction shall include provisions of the READ Initiative adopted by the school district and may include specialized tutoring.~~

~~The minimum criteria for grade-level performance of third-grade students pursuant to the Reading Sufficiency Act shall be that students are able to read and comprehend grade-level text. To determine the promotion and retention of third-grade students pursuant to the Reading Sufficiency Act, the State Board of Education shall use only the scores for the~~

~~standards for reading foundations/processes and vocabulary portions of the statewide third-grade assessment administered pursuant to 70 O.S. Section 1210.508 and shall not use the scores from the other language arts portions of the assessment. The performance levels established by the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability pursuant to Section 1210.508 shall ensure that students meeting the performance-level criteria are performing at grade level on the reading foundations and vocabulary portions of the statewide third-grade assessment.~~

~~Each program of reading instruction shall be based upon a three-tiered Response to Intervention ("RtI") model and shall include:~~

- ~~1. For students identified for Tier I intervention, a minimum of ninety (90) minutes of uninterrupted daily scientific-research-based reading instruction;~~
- ~~2. For students identified for Tier II intervention, at least an amount of uninterrupted scientific-research-based reading instructional time that is:~~
 - ~~A. Based on specific student needs;~~
 - ~~B. Reflects the needed intensity and/or frequency as identified on a screening tool, diagnostic assessment and/or progress monitoring instrument; and~~
 - ~~C. Is determined by the classroom teacher reading specialist (if available) and building principal.~~
- ~~3. For students identified for Tier III intervention, at least forty-five (45) to sixty (60) minutes of additional uninterrupted daily scientific-research-based reading instruction in addition to the ninety (90) minutes of uninterrupted daily reading instruction provided under Tier I.~~

~~The parent of any student who is found to have a reading deficiency and is not meeting grade-level reading targets, and has been provided a reading assessment plan, shall be notified in writing of the following:~~

- ~~1. That the student has been identified as having a substantial deficiency in reading;~~
- ~~2. A description of the current services being provided to the student pursuant to a conjoint measure model such that a reader and a text are placed on the same scale;~~
- ~~3. A description of the proposed supplemental instructional services designed to remediate the reading deficiency that will be provided to the student;~~
- ~~4. That the student will **not** be promoted to the fourth grade if the reading deficiency is not remediated by the end of the third grade, unless the student is otherwise promoted pursuant to the school district's Student Retention and Promotion Policy or is exempt for good cause;~~

- ~~5. Strategies for parents to use in helping their child succeed in reading proficiency;~~
- ~~6. The grade-level performance scores of the student;~~
- ~~7. That, while the results of statewide assessments are the initial determinant, they are not the sole determiner of promotion and that portfolio reviews and assessments are also available in considering promotion or retention; and~~
- ~~8. The specific criteria and policies of the school district for mid-year promotion.~~

~~Only the scores from the reading comprehension portions of the third-grade criterion-referenced test shall be used to determine the promotion and retention of third-grade students pursuant to the Reading Sufficiency Act. For students who do not meet the academic requirements for promotion, the school district may promote the student only as provided for in the school district's Student Retention and Promotion Policy. For details on the good-cause exceptions and other requests to exempt students from the academic requirements for promotion, see the school district's Student Promotion and Retention Policy.~~

~~Students who do not meet the performance criteria established by the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability on the reading portions of the statewide third-grade assessment and who are not subject to a good-cause exemption, and who do not qualify for promotion or "probationary promotion", shall be retained in the third grade and provided intensive instructional services and supports.~~

Instruction and Interventions for Retained Students

~~The school district shall conduct a review of the reading instruction program for all students who do not meet the performance criteria established by the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability on the reading portions of the statewide assessment administered to the student. The review shall address additional supports and services needed to remediate the identified areas of reading deficiency. A student portfolio shall be completed for each retained student.~~

~~Students retained due to a reading deficiency will be provided intensive interventions in reading as well as intensive instructional services and supports to remediate the identified areas of reading deficiency, including a minimum of ninety (90) minutes of daily, uninterrupted, scientific-research based reading instruction. Retained students shall be provided other strategies prescribed by the school district, which may include, but are not limited to:~~

- ~~1. — small group instruction,~~
- ~~2. — reduced teacher-student ratios,~~
- ~~3. — more frequent progress monitoring,~~
- ~~4. — tutoring or mentoring,~~
- ~~5. — transition classes containing third and fourth grade students,~~
- ~~6. — extended school day, week, or year, and~~
- ~~7. — summer reading academies, if available.~~

~~Additionally, students who are retained will be provided a high-performing teacher who can address the needs of the student, based on student performance data and above-satisfactory performance appraisals. In addition to the required reading enhancement and acceleration strategies, students who are retained will be provided at least one of the following instructional options:~~

- ~~1. — supplemental tutoring in scientific research-based reading programs in addition to the regular reading block, including tutoring before or after school,~~
- ~~2. — a parent-guided "Read at Home" assistance plan developed by the State Department of Education,~~
- ~~3. — a mentor or tutor with specialized reading training.~~

~~The school district may, in accordance with rules of the State Board of Education, use screening assessments, alternative assessments, or portfolio reviews in order to reevaluate a retained third grade student for mid-year promotion to the fourth grade. See the school district's Promotion and Retention Policy for details on mid-year promotion.~~

Copies of the results of all assessments administered shall be made a part of the student's permanent record.

Reading Enhancement and Acceleration Development (READ) Initiative

The school district establishes the following READ Initiative. The focus of the school district's READ Initiative is to prevent the retention of third grade students by offering intensive accelerated reading instruction to third grade students who have failed to meet the reading standards for promotion to fourth grade, and to kindergarten through third grade students who are exhibiting a reading deficiency.

The school district's READ Initiative will be provided to all kindergarten through third grade students at risk of retention as identified by the reading assessments administered to the student. The school district's READ Initiative program will be provided during regular school hours in addition to the regular reading instruction and will provide a reading curriculum that at a minimum, meets the following specifications:

1. — assists students assessed as exhibiting a reading deficiency in developing the ability to read at grade level;
2. — provides skill development in phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension;
3. — provides scientific research-based and reliable assessment;
4. — provides initial and ongoing analysis of the reading progress of each student;
5. — is implemented during regular school hours;
6. — establishes at each school an Intensive Acceleration Class for retained third-grade students who subsequently do not meet the performance criteria established by the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability on the reading portions of the statewide assessment. The focus of the Intensive Acceleration Class shall be to increase the reading level of a child at least two grade levels in one school year.
7. — provide reports to the State Department of Education, upon request, on the specific intensive reading interventions and support implemented;
8. — provide to a student who has been retained in the third grade and has received intensive instructional services but is still not ready for grade promotion, the option of being placed in a transitional instructional setting. A transitional instructional setting shall specifically be designed to produce learning gains sufficient to meet fourth grade performance standards while remediating the student's areas of reading deficiency.

The Intensive Acceleration Class shall:

1. — be provided to any student in the third grade who does not meet the performance criteria established by the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability on the reading portion of the statewide assessments and

who was retained in the third grade the prior year because of not meeting the performance criteria established by the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability on the reading portions of the statewide assessments,

2. ~~have a reduced student-teacher ratio,~~
3. ~~provide an uninterrupted reading instruction for the majority of student contact time each day and incorporate opportunities to master the fourth-grade state standards in other core subject areas,~~
4. ~~use a reading program that is scientific-research-based and has proven results in accelerating student reading achievement within the same school year,~~
5. ~~provide intensive language and vocabulary instruction using a scientific-research-based program, including use of a speech-language therapist,~~
6. ~~include weekly progress monitoring measures to ensure progress is being made, and~~

Board of Education Reporting Requirements

The board of education will annually publish on the district's website, and report in writing in the format prescribed by the State Department of Education, to the State Board of Education by September 1 of each year the following information on the prior school year:

1. ~~the progression of the district's students identified as having reading deficiencies and the policies and procedures of the school district on student retention and promotion,~~
2. ~~the number and percentage of all students in grade three that did not meet the performance criteria established by the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability on the reading portion of the statewide assessment,~~
3. ~~by grade, the number and percentage of all students retained in grades three through ten,~~
4. ~~information on the total number and percentage of students who were promoted for good cause, by each category of good cause as specified in the District's Promotion and Retention Policy, and~~
5. ~~any revisions to the policies of the school district on student retention and promotion from the prior year.~~

Reference: OKLA. STAT. tit. 70, § 1210-508C, OKLA. STAT. tit. 70, § 1210-508E