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, 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:

1. the student participates in the Oklahoma Alternate Assessment Program (OAAP) and is taught using alternate methods,
2. the student's primary expressive or receptive communication is sign language,

3. the student's primary form of written or read text is Braille, or
4. 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 the 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:

1. sufficient additional in-school instructional time for the acquisition of phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension,
2. 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,
3. 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,
4. high-quality instructional materials grounded in scientifically based reading research, and

5. a means of providing every family of a student in pre-kindergarten, 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, 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:

1. describe the research-based reading intervention services the student will receive to remedy the deficiency in reading,
2. provide explicit and systematic instruction in phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, as applicable,
3. monitor the reading progress of each student's reading skills throughout the school year and adjust instruction according to the student's needs, and
4. 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:

1. the parent or legal 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 District shall notify the parent or legal guardian of any student in kindergarten, 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.

Santa Fe South Public Schools 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

1. 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,
2. 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,
3. 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,
4. 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
5. 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.

6. 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 pre-kindergarten 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