

Dyslexia Working Group

Friday, March 13, 2026

Meeting Summary Notes

Attendees

- Dyslexia Working Group - Brian Rose, Cindy Kanuch, Sissy Peters, Mary Beth O'Hagan, Breann Smith, Patrick McGinty, Laura Swanson, Janine Runfola, Marcie Eichmann
- Colorado Department of Education - Emily Ottinger, Rachael Lovendahl, Mary Bivens, Mandy Harris, Tamara Viehl, Ellen Hunter, Paul Foster, Tammy Yetter, Rhonda Haniford
- Public - Sherri Kerekffy
- Facilitators - Kara Schmitt and Betsy Kummer

Time and Location

9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Virtual - Zoom

Helpful Links

- [Dyslexia Working Group | CDE](#)
- [Colorado Department of Education Dyslexia Handbook \(Feb. 2020\)](#)
- [Dyslexia Pilot Program](#)

Meeting Objectives

- Presentation from Educator Talent
 - Mary Bivens, CDE, Executive Director, Educator Workforce Development
- Continued work on recommendations

Meeting Activities

1. Welcome/Introductions

- Facilitators welcomed attendees and led introductions
- Facilitators reviewed virtual [meeting norms / public comment process](#)

2. Educator Talent Presentation

- Link to [Presentation](#)
- Discussion:
 - *How to get this to schools (so teachers get evaluated on Science of Reading)? [Ideas: lean into leadership development, in addition to evaluation. More PLCs. Package info differently. Target different groups.]*
 - *Evaluations are annual. (Different from observations).*

- *Provide more guidance to teachers who aren't as effective at implementing with fidelity - e.g., mentoring, real time feedback. (Need to go beyond just training).*
- *Best First Instruction - have agreed upon lens (that includes K-12, Science of Reading)*
- *Parent perspective - often must ask for specific extra supports/curriculum (provision is not automatic). Puts the burden on the family.*
- *Site visits with recent graduates are important - as well as continued mentoring/support for new teachers (Use induction programs to disseminate info and support).*
- *Focus on middle school, READ plans. Regarding the need for middle school SOR instruction needs, the CDE is creating a community of practice regarding literacy strategies for 4th - 12th grade. CDE plans to create a community of practice to support shared learning, peer collaboration, and dissemination of effective practices. This will help the Department elevate promising approaches and address literacy needs beyond early grades in a coordinated way. CDE would love the opportunity to get the DWG's feedback on how to make the community of practice approach most effective.*
- *Is there a way to approach the creation of a dyslexia designation?*
 - *Yes - ways to make that happen (through legislation or state board of Ed mandate)*
- *Texas program (masters) and/or Colorado College may have models for requiring professional training as part of their licensure/endorsement programs*
- *Idea: Make a working group that has teachers, instructional leads, principals, advocates, community members - to review educator preparation endorsement standards for reading specialist and take to Board of Ed.*
- *Can people trained identically (but outside an institute) get an endorsement? -*
 - *Defined in statute. Would require a change in statute - would need to work with a legislative liaison.*
- *Does a secondary reading endorsement still exist?*
 - *Currently there is a single k-12 reading specialist endorsement.*

3. CDE Updates

- Kindergarten School Readiness bill update
 - [HB26-1050 Optional Individualized Readiness Plan for School](#)
 - *Passed the house, headed to the senate.*
- Status of the assessment: *Vendors submitted letters of intent to apply. 65 requests. Applications are due April 6. UC Irvine will review applications.*

4. Small Group Work

- Initial drafts -2026 Recommendations

- Two groups from January:
 - **Group 1: Review legislation to identify what protocols would be helpful-** (Joined today by Janine, Mary Beth, Marcie)
 - Group 2: “Now what” flow chart - assessment and instruction [guidance on how/when certain steps/actions should happen] - No one selected to join this group during this virtual meeting
 - **Group 3: Endorsement and Designations** (Formed today in response to the presentation - Breann, Brian, Cindy, Laura, Sissy)

Group 1 Sharing:

- Tier 1 frustration- overidentification/ under identification
- Middle school/older kids- how to support? How to support staff?

Group 3 Sharing:

- Discussed routes to take endorsement vs. designation to highlight training. Possible rec (statute or CDE) Dyslexia Specialist Designation - would allow for ALTA, OG and (alternative eligibility)
- Challenge with mandating designation. Could it be optional. Acknowledge extensive training and incentivize training, not just focusing only on designation but also looking at endorsement requirements.

5. Public Comment

- Reminder of public comment process - *Post in chat: If you choose to speak during public comment, introduce yourself and where you are from. If you are speaking on behalf of an organization, identify the organization and your association. Public comments should be brief (no more than 3 minutes). DWG members do not respond to public comments during this segment of the meeting.*
- Sherri Kerekffy, Registered Nurse - *“Thank you for a great presentation today. As an Adult diagnosed with Dyslexia while attending a university level of education, there should be a psychological approach/collaboration in assisting those navigating a Dyslexia support approach. From a listening standpoint, attending these meetings feels "exclusive" and "sterile" rather than utilizing the lens of the individuals that are experiencing Dyslexia or on the spectrum. An inclusive approach should be adopted to collaborate and guide those, moving forward in problem solving in the Dyslexic cause and mission.”*

6. Closing

- Confirmed attendance for the May meeting will be May 8, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Upcoming Meetings

- Friday, May 8, 2026 - In Person, Location: TBD from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM