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2026-2027 District Reading Plan

District Name SC School for the Deaf and the Blind

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Section A: Five Pillars of Reading Instruction

Describe how reading assessment and instruction for all students in the district includes oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension to aid in the comprehension of texts to meet grade-level English/Language Arts standards.

As SC School for the Deaf and the Blind (SCSDB) serves students with sensory disabilities, the five pillars of reading instruction, i.e., oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, may not all be addressed with every SCSDB students; rather, reading assessment and instruction for all SCSDB students are implemented based on accessibility, the SC College and Career Ready Standards (SCCCR) for ELA, and the state-approved high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) for ELA.

Oral language, phonological awareness, and phonics assessments and instruction are typically not accessible to students who are deaf or hard of hearing. In these cases, assessment and instruction designed for students who are deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) have been implemented in tandem with the SCCCR ELA Standards and the state-approved HQIM for ELA. These specialized instructional materials incorporate learning to read and write in English while also providing instruction in fingerspelling and American Sign Language (ASL) so students can develop their expressive and receptive language skills while improving their English language and ASL fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Visually impaired students (VI) are assessed and receive instruction that addresses the five pillars of reading instruction; however, students who are totally blind are learning to read and write via UEB braille and Nemeth codes while also learning to navigate tactile graphics and manipulatives in place of visual instructional materials. Assessment and instruction for students who are VI are adapted from general and special education curricular materials and implemented in tandem with the SCCCR ELA Standards and the state-approved HQIM for ELA.

When educating students who have sensory disabilities, reading proficiency will typically take more time to achieve when compared to the time it takes their non-disabled peers. Students who are deaf and/or blind often miss out on auditory and/or visual learning opportunities due to the nature of the disability. At SCSDB, most teachers are certified to teach students who are blind and/or deaf. This specialized knowledge allows teachers to adapt materials for accessibility purposes.

At SCSDB, students in pre-kindergarten - grade 3 are assessed four times per year using an early literacy skills assessment (ELSA), which is specifically designed to document the pre-literacy and literacy skills of students who are low vision, blind, and/or deaf/hard of hearing. All students in grades K - 12 are assessed three times per year using the STAR Reading Assessment and the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System. All students in grades K - 12 are assessed in reading comprehension twice per year using the Brigance Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills II.

This year, in addition to using the SCCCR Standards for ELA and

the HQIM for ELA, all teachers on campus will use the IXL platform to assist with planning and pacing for all academic courses. This implementation includes administering the IXL Flex Diagnostic for Language Arts at the beginning of the school year, updating IXL diagnostic data weekly through student usage, and using IXL Skill Plans aligned with the SCCCR Standards for ELA, SC ELA HQIM, and the SC READY ELA assessment. K-8 students who participate in reading intervention also take the IXL Reading Screener at the beginning of the school year, and reading interventionists incorporate the IXL reading intervention lessons into sessions where appropriate.

Section B: Foundational Literacy Skills, Continued

Document how reading instruction and assessment for all students in the district are further aligned to the science of reading, structured literacy and foundational literacy skills.

Reading instruction and assessment for all SCSDB students are aligned to the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy skills, ensuring that all aspects, including teaching strategies, learning outcomes, and assessments, work together to support student learning and are implemented with consideration given to accessibility. Alignment to the science of reading ensures resources and instructional practices are based on research that explains how reading skills develop and how to teach reading specifically to the special populations we serve. Alignment to structured literacy ensures teaching methods implement a systematic and explicit approach to help students learn to read and write through evidence-based elements (phonology, sound-symbol association, syllables, morphology, syntax, and semantics) and the use of assessment data to drive instruction. Alignment to foundational literacy skills is most prominent in grades PK-5; however, as many of our students arrive with foundational skill deficits due to the nature of their disabilities, teachers employ accessible strategies to address these deficits and shore up each student's foundational literacy skills.

Section C: Intervention

Document how the district uses universal and interim assessment data, in conjunction with diagnostic assessment data, to assist schools in determining pathways of intervention for students who have failed to demonstrate grade-level reading proficiency.

At SCSD, universal and interim reading assessment data are used in conjunction with diagnostic reading assessment data to help determine which students need additional support to demonstrate grade-level reading proficiency. If the data suggest a student in pre-kindergarten-grade 8 is functioning at least one year below his/her current grade level, the school will implement reading intervention services for the student. Reading intervention services can take a variety of forms (e.g., individual, small group, whole class, pull-out, push-in, etc.), can address a variety of needs via targeted intervention, strategic intervention, or intensive intervention, and can be implemented during one or more sessions weekly with progress monitoring occurring weekly. Adaptations to a student's Reading Intervention Plan will occur when progress monitoring does not establish student growth over two consecutive data collection periods.

Each SCSD student has an IEP that states the student's strengths and needs, including those related to reading. If a student has a reading-related need, the team will implement one or more annual reading goals that require a specific number of weekly service minutes for reading instruction and progress monitoring of the goal every three weeks. Amendments to IEP goals will occur when progress monitoring does not establish appropriate student growth by the end of the second quarter.

Section D: Supporting Literacy at Home

Describe the system in place to help all parents throughout the district understand how they can support the student as a reader at home.

SCSD utilizes a system to support literacy in the home for all students in pre-kindergarten - grade 12, which starts with each student's school and teacher(s). Schools and teachers provide opportunities for parent involvement in literacy development through the use of regular phone and email communication, regular progress monitoring and reports, parent/teacher conferences, IEP meetings, and newsletters.

Section E: Progress Monitoring

Document how the district provides for progress monitoring of reading achievement and growth at the district level with decisions about intervention based on all available data to ensure grade-level proficiency in reading.

SCSDB documents progress monitoring of reading achievement and growth using the following system:

1. State-level reading data (i.e., SC READY) is shared with staff and stakeholders via individual student reports stored physically at the school level and data collection spreadsheets stored digitally at the district level.
2. Following district formative (interim) assessment testing windows, district-level reading data (i.e., STAR) is collected and shared with staff via data collection spreadsheets stored digitally. Staff may access STAR Reading Reports to drive lesson planning as needed.
3. School-level reading data is stored at the school level via physical and/or digital file systems.

Student progress is closely monitored on a daily-to-weekly basis via regular classroom-based formative and summative assessments, IXL analytics, and reading intervention progress reports. Adaptations to a student's Reading Intervention Plan will occur when progress monitoring does not establish student growth over two consecutive data collection periods (i.e., 2 weeks). All students reading below grade level have IEP goals to target reading growth. These goals utilize progress monitoring every three weeks and require an IEP amendment to the reading goal if the student does not demonstrate growth by the second quarter.

Section F: Teacher Training

Explain how the district will provide teacher training based in the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy skills to support reading achievement for all students.

SCSDB teachers are provided with many professional learning opportunities based on the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy skills to support reading achievement for all students. This is accomplished through school, district, and state-offered PD events as well as PD events offered through education companies such as edWeb and SCETV. SCSDB teachers meet regularly with reading interventionists to discuss strategies that work with their particular students and how to implement these strategies in the classroom. Reading Interventionists offer in-the-moment support for implementation of these strategies via weekly push-in services to each ELA classroom they serve. This year, Reading Interventionists will provide two PD sessions related to a STAR Reading Reports for staff members. SCSDB has Data Cohort teams that include all classroom teachers and provide support and training for all members as they use the available reading data to support reading achievement. The district will offer two instructional fairs during the 2026-2027 school year that include several sessions related to supporting reading achievement.

Section G: District Analysis of Data

Strengths

- SC School for the Deaf and the Blind (SCSDB) has implemented a systematic approach to assessment that spans the school year and utilizes multiple assessments to monitor reading progress.
 - SCSDB implemented a revised data-analysis process during the summer of 2026 to examine longitudinal growth trends. The analysis revealed that a large percentage of students typically make less than one year's academic growth during a year of instruction. This has allowed the district to identify a more precise area of focus for continuous improvement.
 - Data Cohort Teams meet monthly to analyze student reading data and determine common instructional strategies to implement across content areas.
 - Educators routinely analyze assessment data to drive instructional decisions and write lesson plans.
 - Educators continue to build literacy-rich settings which promote language and literacy development for students with sensory disabilities.
 - Educators communicate with parents and provide resources and strategies for literacy development through newsletters, emails, phone calls, postcards, and conferences.
 - Educators utilize a variety of pedagogical approaches to literacy instruction to meet the diverse needs of SCSDB students.
 - Reading Interventionists serve students in kindergarten through grade 8 to provide individual and small-group reading intervention services to students who are reading at least one year below grade level.
 - Reading Interventionists push in to classrooms weekly to help students implement new strategies in their regular classroom setting.
 - Classroom libraries have been purchased and embedded in all schools and classrooms. The classroom libraries have a wide variety of fiction and nonfiction/informational books to appeal to a variety of reading and interest levels.
 - For students in grades 6 - 12, SCSDB implemented a research project requirement that includes library instruction to help students effectively find, evaluate, and use information and research tools.
 - Students in pre-kindergarten - grade 5 are provided library instruction regularly.
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Possibilities for Growth

- SCSDb will continue to analyze longitudinal student growth data to identify trends, evaluate program effectiveness, and make informed adjustments to instructional practices and services.
- Data Cohort Teams will continue to analyze student data and implement tailored instructional strategies designed to support individual student growth and achievement.
- Educators will continue to increase learner engagement through student conferencing opportunities, shared reading and writing experiences, shorter instructional periods, and diverse high-interest texts.
- Educators will continue to engage in professional development opportunities that support a well-researched perspective of literacy development and instruction across all content areas.
- Educators will continue to approach literacy instruction as reflective practitioners and will refine strategies based on the progress and needs of students served.
- Educators will include the use of classroom libraries in instructional plans to increase student interest in reading.
- The reading intervention program will continue to develop guidelines for the use of specific data analysis procedures and the implementation of literacy checklists to drive instruction.
- Library programming will focus on developing accessible resources, creating a high-interest, literacy-rich environment, and promoting reading for pleasure.

Description Area

*Note: The two questions below are required by Act 114 (passed in 2024).

NEW: Please provide the total number of FIRST graders from the 2025-26 school year who were projected to score Does Not Meet OR Approaching Expectations on SCReady by third grade.

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NEW: Please provide the total number of SECOND graders from the 2025-26 school year who were projected to score Does Not Meet OR Approaching Expectations on SCReady by third grade.

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Section H: Previous School Year SMART Goals and Progress Toward those

Goals

Previous Goal #1

SCSDB will increase the percentage of students in kindergarten through grade eight who demonstrate growth on the STAR Reading Assessment from 75% to 80% by the spring of 2026.

*As previously discussed and agreed upon with the SCDE, SCSDB uses a modified goal due to the small sample size of third-grade students. To better measure growth, a larger sample size is necessary.

Goal #1 Progress

In the Spring of 2026, SCSDB decreased the percentage of students in kindergarten through grade eight who demonstrated growth on the STAR Reading Assessment from 75% to 65%.

Note on Progress: Although the goal was for students to demonstrate growth on the STAR Reading Assessment by the spring of 2026, year-end data reflected a decrease. These results should be interpreted in the context of the following factors:

1. The district experienced a significant influx of new students from across the state throughout the 2025-2026 school year, resulting in varying levels of instructional exposure and assessment history among the student population when comparing the population at the beginning of the school year to the population at the end of the school year. A large percentage of these new students were deaf or hard of hearing.
2. The STAR Reading Assessment is an adaptive test that presents challenges when administered to students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Because the assessment includes phonics-based items that may not be fully accessible to students whose literacy development relies on alternative pathways, assessment results may not always accurately reflect students' reading abilities. Depending on how the adaptive algorithm responds to performance on these items, subsequent questions and resulting growth scores may be impacted in ways that do not accurately represent student achievement.

Following a comprehensive review of student performance data during the summer of 2026, the district utilized a revised data-analysis process to examine longitudinal growth trends more closely. This analysis revealed that the fundamental concern extends beyond this year's outcome and is rooted in a pattern of students making less than one year's academic growth during a year of instruction. This deeper understanding has allowed the district to identify a more precise area of focus for continuous improvement.

As a result, the district will revise its reading-growth goal to emphasize increasing the number of students who achieve at least one year's growth each academic year. This goal more accurately reflects the needs identified through data analysis and will provide a more meaningful measure of progress for our student population. The district remains committed to strengthening literacy outcomes through targeted instruction, ongoing progress monitoring, and continued evaluation of assessment practices to ensure student growth is measured as accurately as possible.

Section I: Current SMART Goals and Action Steps Based on Analysis of Data

Description Area	For all districts serving third grade students, goal #1 MUST read:Third Grade Goal: Increase the percentage of third graders scoring Meets and Exceeds in the spring of [previous school year] as determined by SC READY from __% to __% in the spring of [current school year].
Current Goal #1	SCSDB will increase the percentage of K-8 students demonstrating a minimum of 1 year's worth of growth in the spring of 2026, as determined by the STAR Reading Assessment, from 22% to 35% in the spring of 2027. *As previously discussed and agreed upon with the SCDE, SCSDB uses a modified goal due to the small sample size of third-grade students. To better measure growth, a larger sample size is necessary.
Goal #1 Action Steps	• Kindergarten - Grade 8 Educators and Reading Interventionists will utilize Fall 2026 STAR Reading Assessment data in conjunction with other available data related to literacy to inform instruction and implement strategies to address the individual literacy needs of each student. • Kindergarten - Grade 8 Educators and Reading Interventionists will utilize research and professional resources/texts to improve their understanding of students' sensory disabilities and how these disabilities affect literacy development. • Kindergarten - Grade 8 Educators and Reading Interventionists will provide regular opportunities for students to read and write in all subject areas and courses. • Kindergarten - Grade 8 Educators and Reading Interventionists will assess students in the winter of 2026 and the spring of 2027 using the STAR Reading Assessment online. • Kindergarten - Grade 8 Educators and Reading Interventionists will meet regularly to discuss the strengths and needs of common students and how to consistently address these strengths and needs in reading intervention and in the regular classroom environment. • Reading Interventionists will push in to all kindergarten - Grade 8 ELA classes at least one time per week to help support the transfer of skills and support student growth.

File Upload (optional)
