

Cache County School District

Policy Series 4000: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Policy No. 4120 P1

Procedure for Early Literacy

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to establish a systematic process for identifying students who are experiencing reading difficulties, providing timely interventions, communicating with parents, and complying with state literacy requirements. The district is committed to ensuring that all students receive the support necessary to become proficient readers through evidence-based instruction and intervention aligned with the Science of Reading (SoR).

The district shall provide literacy instruction and intervention practices aligned with the SoR, the Utah Core Standards for English Language Arts, and applicable requirements of the Utah State Board of Education.

Benchmark Reading Assessment

The district shall utilize Acadience Reading as the benchmark reading assessment for students in kindergarten through grade five.

Benchmark assessments shall be administered at the beginning, middle, and end of each school year in accordance with state requirements and district assessment schedules.

Benchmark assessment results shall be used to:

- identify students who are reading at, above, below, or well-below benchmark expectations;
- identify students who may require additional diagnostic assessment or intervention;
- monitor school and district literacy performance; and
- inform instructional planning and literacy intervention decisions.

Parent Notification of Benchmark Results

Benchmark reports shall be provided to parents three times annually, within 30 days following the beginning, middle, and end-of-year benchmark assessments.

K-3 students who score below or well-below grade level on a benchmark reading assessment shall be notified in writing or through the district's notification platform with the following information:

- 1) notification that the student has demonstrated a deficiency in reading;
- 2) a description of the current services the student receives;
- 3) a description of the IRP process;
- 4) notification that, if the student scores below benchmark at the end of third grade, the student is subject to retention under 53G-10-803;
- 5) notification that the benchmark reading assessment is not the sole determinant for promotion to the next grade level;
- 6) a statement that connects the child's proficiency in reading to long-term outcomes of

success;

- 7) notification that retention can benefit a student's reading proficiency; and
- 8) research related to the impact of student retention.

Diagnostic Assessment

Students whose benchmark assessment results indicate performance below benchmark or well-below benchmark shall receive additional diagnostic assessment(s) designed to identify specific literacy skill deficits.

Diagnostic assessments may evaluate areas including, but not limited to:

- 1) phonemic awareness;
- 2) phonics and decoding;
- 3) encoding and spelling; and
- 4) oral reading fluency.

Diagnostic assessment results shall be used to guide intervention planning and individualized reading plans.

Individualized Reading Plans

The district shall establish an Individualized Reading Plan (IRP) for:

- 1) any student in grades one through five whose beginning-year and/or mid-year benchmark assessment results indicate performance below benchmark or well-below benchmark; and
- 2) any kindergarten student whose mid-year or end-of-year benchmark assessment results indicate performance well-below benchmark.

The school may establish an IRP for any elementary student who may need reading support, or at the request of a parent.

The IRP shall include:

- 1) identification of the student's specific reading deficiencies;
- 2) the intervention(s) that will be provided to address identified skill deficits;
- 3) opportunities for parent involvement and support; and
- 4) a plan for monitoring and reporting progress.

The IRP shall be provided in a language that the parent or guardian can understand whenever reasonably practicable through translation, interpretation, or other appropriate communication supports.

Individualized Reading Plan Team

Each student receiving an IRP shall have an IRP Team responsible for developing, reviewing, and monitoring the student's reading plan and progress.

The IRP Team shall include:

- 1) the student's classroom teacher;
- 2) at least one parent or guardian;
- 3) for K-3 students performing well-below benchmark, the school principal or the

- principal's designee;
- 4) for students receiving special education services for a literacy-related disability through an Individualized Education Program (IEP), the student's special education teacher; and
- 5) other individuals, as determined appropriate by the school or parent, including a school counselor or other support personnel.

The IRP Team shall:

- 1) review assessment and diagnostic data;
- 2) identify the student's specific reading deficiencies;
- 3) develop and monitor the IRP;
- 4) review student progress and intervention effectiveness;
- 5) recommend modifications to interventions when appropriate; and
- 6) review benchmark assessment results and other relevant data to determine whether changes to the student's reading plan are necessary.

Individualized Reading Plan Meetings

Individualized Reading Plan Team meetings must occur within 45 calendar days of parent notification and may be conducted during scheduled parent-teacher conferences when conferences fall within the 45-day window.

When an IRP Team meeting is scheduled to occur during a parent-teacher conference, the parent or guardian shall be notified in advance that the conference will include discussion, development, review, or revision of the student's IRP.

The school shall provide reasonable notice sufficient to allow parents or guardians to prepare for participation in the IRP Team meeting.

The IRP Team shall hold additional meetings as necessary to review and revise the IRP. Meetings may occur following benchmark assessment windows, when intervention data indicates a need for adjustment, at the request of a parent or guardian, or during scheduled parent-teacher conferences in accordance with this procedure.

Student Records

IRPs and associated documentation shall be maintained as part of the student's educational record in accordance with District records retention requirements and applicable state and federal law.

Reading Interventions

Reading interventions shall be selected based on diagnostic assessment results and shall target the student's identified literacy skill deficits.

Students on an IRP shall receive evidence-based reading interventions aligned with the Science of Reading, Utah Core Standards, and the student's identified literacy skill deficits.

Interventions may be delivered through classroom instruction, small-group instruction, individual instruction, supplemental intervention programs, extended learning opportunities, or

other intervention settings determined appropriate by the school.

Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring assessments shall be given at least every two weeks to students identified as below benchmark or well-below benchmark. Progress monitoring measures shall correspond to the specific literacy skill deficits identified through diagnostic assessment and intervention planning.

Progress monitoring data shall be used to:

- 1) evaluate student growth;
- 2) determine the effectiveness of interventions;
- 3) inform instructional adjustments; and
- 4) guide revisions to the IRP.

Parent Communication and Progress Reporting

Parents or guardians of students with an IRP shall receive monthly progress reports regarding student literacy growth and intervention progress.

Progress reports, notices, and other communications related to a student's IRP shall be provided in a language that the parent or guardian can understand whenever reasonably practicable through translation, interpretation, or other appropriate communication supports.

Progress reports may be delivered electronically, through the district's parent communication system, or by other methods approved by the school.

Promotion and Retention

The district recognizes that students learn and progress at different rates and that reading difficulties are best addressed through early identification, targeted intervention, ongoing progress monitoring, and collaboration among educators and families.

The purpose of discussing promotion or retention is to ensure that students receive the instruction and support necessary for future academic success. Retention is not considered an intervention by itself; rather, it provides additional time for intensive literacy instruction and support when required by law or when determined to be in the student's educational best interest.

As required by Utah law, retention shall be considered for:

- 1) a kindergarten student who scores well below benchmark on a mid-year or end-of-year benchmark assessment;
- 2) a grade 1 student who scores well below benchmark on the end-of-year benchmark assessment and who has not demonstrated sufficient progress despite receiving interventions through an Individualized Reading Plan;
- 3) a grade 2 student who scores well below benchmark on the end-of-year benchmark assessment and who has not demonstrated sufficient progress despite receiving interventions through an Individualized Reading Plan; and
- 4) a grade 3 student who, beginning with the 2029-2030 school year, scores below

benchmark on the end-of-year benchmark assessment and does not qualify for a good-cause exemption or otherwise meet the promotion requirements established in Utah law. A good-cause exemption is an exemption authorized by Utah law that permits promotion under specific circumstances. Students who may be eligible for a good-cause exemption may include:

- 1) the student scores below benchmark, but not well below benchmark, on the benchmark reading assessment and makes typical academic progress on the benchmark reading assessment;
- 2) the school provides intensive reading interventions during the summer between grade 3 and grade 4, and the student improves to at benchmark or above benchmark on a benchmark reading assessment that the school administers during the summer;
- 3) the student is an English learner with limited English proficiency and fewer than three years of instruction in an English language learner program;
- 4) the student has an IEP or Section 504 accommodation plan and if the student's IEP or Section 504 accommodation plan indicates that participation in the benchmark reading assessment is not appropriate, if the student has received intensive reading interventions for two or more years, or if the student has been retained in any of kindergarten or grades 1 through 3;
- 5) the student demonstrates an acceptable level of reading proficiency on an alternative standardized assessment that the District Elementary Literacy Leadership Committee approves or by making above typical academic progress for multiple years on the benchmark reading assessment;
- 6) the student demonstrates through a student portfolio that the student is performing at an equivalent standard of proficiency based on other measures that the individualized reading plan determines;
- 7) the student still demonstrates a reading deficiency after receiving intensive reading interventions for two or more years and after having been retained in any of kindergarten or grades 1 through 3; or
- 8) the student moved to a school for or during grade 3 and had not previously received an individualized reading plan or received intensive reading interventions previously.

Parents shall be informed whenever a student's reading performance indicates that retention may need to be considered under state law. Schools shall communicate with parents regarding the student's reading progress, interventions provided, available supports, and any statutory promotion or retention requirements.

Promotion and retention decisions shall be made in accordance with Utah law, applicable State Board of Education guidance, assessment data, student progress information, Individualized Reading Plan documentation, and any applicable exemption provisions.

Prior to any retention decision required by law, the Individualized Reading Plan Team shall review available student data, intervention history, exemption provisions, and parent input to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and consideration of the student's educational needs.

In making recommendations regarding promotion or retention, the Individualized Reading Plan Team may consider:

- 1) benchmark assessment performance and progress-monitoring data;
- 2) diagnostic assessment results and identified literacy skill deficits;
- 3) the student's response to interventions and rate of progress over time;
- 4) the intensity, duration, and fidelity of interventions provided;
- 5) classroom performance and teacher observations;
- 6) attendance patterns that may have affected learning opportunities;
- 7) the student's age, developmental needs, and social-emotional considerations;
- 8) information provided by parents or guardians;
- 9) special education, Section 504, multilingual learner, or other individual student circumstances; and
- 10) any good-cause exemptions or alternative measures of proficiency permitted by state law.

When retention is required by law or recommended by the Individualized Reading Plan Team, the school shall work collaboratively with the parent or guardian to develop a plan that provides intensive literacy support designed to improve the student's likelihood of future academic success

Responsibilities

School administrators shall ensure implementation of this procedure and compliance with state literacy requirements.

Teachers, school support leaders, and other designated personnel shall administer assessments, implement interventions, monitor progress, maintain documentation, and communicate with parents as required by this procedure.

The Teaching and Learning Department and the District Literacy Committee shall establish any additional guidance necessary to implement this procedure.

Updated September 17, 2026