TITLE 200 – Board of Education

CHAPTER 20 - COUNCIL ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

SUBCHAPTER 20 - EDUCTAOR QUALITY AND CERTIFICATION

Part 6 - Right to Read

6.1 Authority and Purpose

A. This Part is promulgated pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws Chapter 16-11.4-6.

B. The purpose of this part is to establish rules to ensure that teachers have proficient knowledge and skills to teach reading consistent with the best practices of the Science of Reading and Structured Literacy instruction.

6.2 Definitions

A. "Awareness expectations" means teachers are required to exhibit awareness in the knowledge and practices of the Science of Reading and Structured Literacy. Essential components of awareness are aligned with the Literacy/Dyslexia Competencies.

B. "Awareness training expectations" means awareness training meets the essential components of the Literacy/Dyslexia Competencies within a ten-hour course. This course provides teachers with an enhanced knowledge of how reading works and an understanding of the subskills of reading, enabling equitable access to evidence-based reading instruction.

C. "Literacy/Dyslexia competencies" means the competencies articulate teacher knowledge and practices of the Science of Reading and Structured Literacy. Each competency includes components/concepts that must be addressed within approved provider programs. The depth and breadth of content defines the difference between awareness and proficiency expectations...

1. Competency I - Demonstrate and apply foundational knowledge on the Science of Reading development and reading difficulties derived from interdisciplinary research with special emphasis on language/literacy needs of students with dyslexia and other language-based learning disabilities.

2. Competency II - Differentiate, accommodate, and scaffold instruction to address the reading difficulties demonstrated by students with dyslexia and other language-based learning disabilities.

3. Competency III - Select and conduct assessments within a Response to Intervention (RTI) or Multi-Tiered Systems of Support Framework (MTSS),

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analyze assessment data to inform instruction, and communicate findings with students, families, and other teachers.

4. Competency IV - Implement Structured Literacy instruction in all major skill domains (phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics and word recognition, automatic and fluent reading of text, vocabulary, listening and reading comprehension, and written expression) and review instruction based on analysis of student data.

D. "Probationary status" means assigned to an LEA for failure to provide appropriate Right to Read Act professional learning for teachers and/or employs a teacher in violation of the Right to Read Act expectations. If an LEA is placed on probationary status, that LEA's public Report Card will state such until the LEA rectifies the reasons for which they were placed on probationary status. When an LEA is placed on probationary status, they must send a letter to families indicating they have been placed on probationary status and the reasons for this.

E. "Proficiency expectations" means teachers are required to exhibit proficiency in the knowledge and practices of the Science of Reading and Structured Literacy. Proficiency expectations align with the Literacy/Dyslexia Competencies.

F. "Proficiency training expectations" means RIDE-approved proficiency trainings meet the depth and breadth of the Literacy/Dyslexia Competencies through rigorous training with a classroom application component. Upon completion of a RIDE approved proficiency training, teachers are eligible to apply for a Literacy/Dyslexia Endorsement, at zero cost to the teacher.

G. "Related academic discipline" means a graduate level degree equivalent to a master's in reading. Colleges and universities have the freedom to name majors as they see fit; therefore, this language allows for a transcript to demonstrate completion of a graduate level master's in reading (e.g., Master in Literacy, Master in Curriculum & Instruction with Concentration in Reading).

H. "Science of reading" means empirically based instruction that is grounded in the study of the relationship between cognitive science and educational outcomes.

I. "Structured literacy" means an approach to teaching that integrates speaking, listening, reading, and writing by providing explicit, systematic, diagnostic-prescriptive instruction in phonological and phonemic awareness, sound-symbol correspondence (phonics), syllables, morphology, semantics, and syntax.

6.3 Requirements

A. Pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-11.4-6(b), by September 1, 2025, and each subsequent year, teachers employed in Rhode Island public schools must

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demonstrate proficiency or awareness in the knowledge and practices in the Science of Reading and Structured Literacy instruction.

B. A teacher's current teaching role determines the need for either proficiency or awareness training.

1. The following teacher roles require proficiency training: General Education—Early Childhood and Elementary; Special Education—Early Childhood, Elementary Grades, Middle Grades, and Secondary Grades; ESOL Teacher and ESOL Specialist/Consultant; Bilingual/Dual Language; Reading Specialist/Consultant; Reading Coach.

2. The following teacher roles require awareness training: Middle Grades—English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies; Secondary Grades—English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Business Education, Career & Technical Education; All Grades—Art, Dance, Family Consumer Science, Health, Music, Physical Education, Technology, Theater, Library Media Studies, School Nurse, and World Language.

C. By May 2025, a person who completes a state-approved Educator Preparation Program in Early Childhood, Elementary, Early Childhood Special Education, Elementary Special Education, Middle Grades Special Education, Secondary Grades Special Education, ESOL, Bilingual/Dual Language, or Reading Specialist must meet proficiency requirements.

D. By May 2025, a person who completes a state-approved Educator Preparation Program in Middle Grades: English, Mathematics, Science, or Social Studies; Secondary Grades: English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Business Education or Career & Technical Education; and All Grades: Art, Dance, Family Consumer Science, Health, Music, Physical Education, Technology, Theater, Library Media Studies, School Nurse or a World Language must meet awareness requirements.

E. Out-of-state teachers will have one (1) year from date of appointment to meet proficiency or awareness requirements.

1. Any educator from another state who participates in a Rhode Island Department of Education-approved proficiency training program that extends beyond one (1) year may complete the requirement within two (2) years.

F. Teachers working in roles that require awareness and move to a role requiring proficiency will have one (1) year from date of appointment to meet proficiency requirements.

1. Any teacher whose role changes and participates in a RIDE approved proficiency training that extends beyond one (1) year may complete the requirement within two (2) years.

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G. Teachers working on a preliminary certification will work toward meeting proficiency and awareness requirements while working under preliminary certification.

6.3.1 Meeting Requirements

A. Teachers demonstrate proficiency expectations pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-11.4-6(l).

B. Teachers demonstrate awareness expectations pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-11.4-6(l).

C. By August 15, 2025, pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-11.4-6(g), if a teacher does not meet proficiency or awareness requirements, LEAs may not place that teacher in a role requiring proficiency or awareness pursuant and must do one of the following:

1. Grant teachers who were unable to complete proficiency training due to extenuating circumstances one (1) additional year to do so and remain in a position requiring proficiency.

2. An LEA may temporarily suspend a teacher without pay for a period of time that allows them to meet proficiency or awareness requirements.

    a. Teachers may appeal in accordance with applicable state statutes and local CBAs.

3. Initiate nonrenewal or dismissal from the employing LEA.

    a. Teachers may appeal in accordance with applicable state statutes and local CBAs.

6.4 Approved Professional Learning

Approval of professional learning providers to meet proficiency and awareness expectations will be based on the Literacy Dyslexia Competencies.

6.5 Local Education Agency (LEA) Responsibilities

A. LEAs shall provide professional learning pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-11.4-6(d) at no cost to the teacher in the Science of Reading and Structured Literacy for teachers needing proficiency and awareness training.

1. LEAs shall be responsible for paying the costs associated with one (1) administration of the RIDE-approved proficiency test for teachers who elect to demonstrate proficiency through the testing pathway.

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B. Trainings will be completed during the workday pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-11.4-6(m).

C. LEAs shall be able to replace up to three (3) student instructional days per school year, through the 2024-2025 school year pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-11.4-6(n).

1. If LEAs plan to replace a student instructional day, the day may only be used to address professional learning to meet the Right to Read Act expectations.

2. Student distance learning days may not be used for these professional learning days to meet Right to Read Act expectations.

6.5.1 Probationary Status

A. Pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-11.4-6(e) an LEA that does not provide professional learning opportunities for teachers to meet the requirements of the Right to Read Act as defined § 6.5 of this Part shall be placed on probationary status.

1. If placed on probationary status, the LEA must send written notification within thirty (30) days to families articulating the reason(s) for the LEA being placed on probationary status.

2. The LEA must also develop and post a plan approved by their school committee on their website about how they plan to meet the requirements of the Right to Read Act.

3. RIDE will monitor any LEA on probationary status.

4. If placed on probationary status, LEAs must use federal funds to meet the professional learning expectations of the Right to Read Act.

6.6 Educator Preparation Program (EPP) Responsibilities

A. By June 30, 2023, each RIDE-approved educator preparation program must submit materials demonstrating how they prepare candidates to meet proficiency and awareness requirements for approval from RIDE.

B. By June 30, 2024, pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-11.4-6(c) each RIDE-approved educator preparation program shall post on its website information describing its program to prepare teachers to teach reading using the Science of Reading and Structured Literacy instruction.

C. By July 31, 2024, pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-11.4-6(h) each RIDE-approved educator preparation program shall include in its Index Report to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education a description of programs

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that prepare teachers to teach using the Science of Reading and Structured Literacy.

D. By May 2025, pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-11.4-6(b) any individual completing a RIDE-approved educator preparation program must meet proficiency or awareness requirements as a condition for graduation.

1. Programs must align with expectations pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-11.4-6(c).

6.6.1 EPP Non-Compliance

A. A provider of a RIDE-approved educator preparation program that does not comply with the expectations of the Right to Read Act may be subject to penalties pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-11.4-6(j).

B. A provider of a RIDE-approved educator preparation program that does not comply with the expectations of the Right to Read Act is required to notify candidates and post this information on their website within 30 days of noncompliance notification from RIDE.

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