DYSLEXIA DC

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) *Addressing Dyslexia and Other Reading Difficulties Amendment Act*

DC Law 23-191

Updated August 2026

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BACKGROUND

Effective March 16, 2021, DC Law 23-191 *Addressing Dyslexia and Other Reading Difficulties Amendment Act of 2020* ("the Act") established specific requirements for the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) and local education agencies (LEAs) to address the needs of students with reading difficulties. The Act specifically requires dyslexia awareness modules for educators, an approved list of screening implements, universal screening for reading difficulties in kindergarten through grade 2, the adoption of science-based literacy programs, and publicly available compliance documentation. This FAQ document focuses specifically on these elements of the Act.

https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/code/titles/38/chapters/22D

CONTACT INFORMATION

Additional information about how OSSE is supporting literacy in DC can be found here: Literacy DC. Additional information about DC Law 23-191 and guidance from OSSE can be found on the Dyslexia DC webpage: osse.dc.gov/page/Dyslexia. For questions related to the dyslexia legislation implementation, contact Dustin Tamsen, Dyslexia Specialist, at Dustin.Tamsen@dc.gov.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Dyslexia Awareness Training

1. **When is the deadline to complete the annual dyslexia awareness training?**
   The dyslexia awareness training is an annual requirement and is due at the close of the compliance cycle on Oct 31.

2. **How do educators access the dyslexia awareness training?**
   The dyslexia awareness training is hosted on OSSE's Learning Management System (LMS). Educators logging in to the LMS for the first time can create an account by following the LMS account creation guide.

   Educators who receive an error page when trying to access the LMS (e.g., 403 errors) **should first check with their school's data management or leadership team** to ensure that their credentials have been correctly uploaded to their school's All Staff Data Collection. Educators with persistent access issues can contact the LMS inbox at OSSE.LMS@dc.gov for further assistance.

3. **The legislation states that all educators must complete annual awareness training. What is OSSE's definition of all educators?**
   OSSE defines educators as any professional directly involved in the regular creation of learning environments that foster students' development. LEAs can refer to the list of the federal roles required to complete the annual dyslexia awareness training.

4. **There are staff represented on the dyslexia training dashboard in Qlik who aren't involved in the creation of learning environments (e.g., clerical staff, building managers). Do they need to complete the training?**
   The Qlik-based dyslexia training dashboard uses federal role designations to create a list of educators required to complete the annual dyslexia training. Some federal roles (e.g., School Administrators) include both staff who are required to complete the annual training (e.g., principals, vice principals, academic directors) and staff who are not required to complete the training (e.g., clerical staff, facilities managers).

   Some non-required staff may appear on the Dashboard. This is expected and does not require any action from LEAs. LEAs should certify compliance based only on the staff who are required to complete the training. There is no need to flag non-required staff for OSSE. OSSE will review Dashboard data and follow up with LEAs if any clarification or additional information is needed.

5. **Many of our service providers don't work for our school full time, are they required to complete the course?**

The federal role list outlines that the training is "encouraged but not required for the following part-time employees/contracted support staff, as they may encounter LMS access issues: school psychologists, speech-language pathologists, audiologists, special education support staff, counselors/rehabilitation counselors, occupational therapists, and physical therapists."

If these roles are full-time employees of the LEA, they should complete the dyslexia awareness training. However, these educators may not appear on the LEAs' dyslexia training dashboard.

6. **If an educator works with multiple grades (i.e., they serve pre-K and kindergarten students), are they required to take both the pre-K and K-5 dyslexia awareness modules?**
   Educators are only required to complete one module during each compliance cycle. Since the content of the dyslexia awareness modules has been differentiated to include content for supporting students of different ages, it is strongly recommended that educators take the modules associated with the age of the students they serve.

7. **When is the deadline for staff to complete the dyslexia awareness modules?**
   All educators need to complete the modules prior to an LEA certifying compliance on Oct. 31 of each year.

8. **If staff have recently completed a previous dyslexia training, do they need to complete this year's training too?**
   Any past dyslexia awareness training completed between May 15 and Oct. 31 can count toward that year's compliance reporting. For example, an educator who completed the 2025 Dyslexia Awareness Training for the first time in September 2026 does not need to complete another training ahead of the Oct. 31 deadline.

9. **I have educators who are new hires or on extended leave. Do they need to complete the dyslexia awareness modules?**
   Educators who are on staff and working within the school building as of Oct. 5 of each compliance year are required to complete the dyslexia awareness modules prior to the Oct. 31 compliance reporting deadline.

10. **Many LEAs and schools have developed and are implementing dyslexia training. Can an LEA or a school substitute their training for OSSE's?**
    The Dyslexia Legislation requires all educators employed by an LEAs to take OSSE's dyslexia awareness training.

11. **My staff took the dyslexia awareness training last school year. Do they have to do it again?**
    Yes, the dyslexia awareness module is an annual requirement. New training is released each summer. LEAs are encouraged to have staff complete the requirement during pre-service week.

12. **Where is the certificate of completion located?**
    Once staff have completed the course content in Schoology, they can locate their certificates in PowerSchool under the transcript tab. It may take up to 48 hours for an educator's completion

status to transfer to PowerSchool. Professional Learning Unit (PLU) certificates can be located by clicking on the certificate number link. LEAs do not need to upload certificates to OSSE to verify staff completions.

13. **Where is the staff survey?**
    The 2026 dyslexia awareness training does not require a survey. Educators who have completed a past training can locate the survey in PowerSchool under the transcript tab 24 hours after completing the course content in Schoology.

14. **I have staff who failed the "End of Course Quiz" for their dyslexia training, can their tests be reset?**
    There is no minimum score required to complete the "End of Course Quiz" in the 2026 training. Educators who make a submission and review the "Next Steps" page in Schoology have completed the course. Note: It may take up to 48 hours for the educator's completion status to be reflected on the dyslexia training dashboard and generate a certificate.

K-2 Training on Preventing Reading Difficulties

1. **Who is required to complete the K-2 training on preventing reading difficulties?**
   All "general educators" are required to complete the K-2 training on preventing reading difficulties. Per the legislation a general educator is defined as a "teacher, coach, or administrator who is involved in the regular creation of learning environment that fosters students' development."
   - **INCLUDE**: K-2 Classroom Teachers, Coaches, Instructional Coordinators and Supervisors, Special Education Teachers, Literacy Specialists and Interventionists, English Learners (EL) Teachers and Specialists.
   - **EXCLUDE**: Paraprofessionals, Classroom Assistants, Specials Teachers (e.g., Art, Music, Physical Education Teachers), Special Education Support Staff: Audiologists, Psychologists, Speech-Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Social Workers, Guidance Counselors, LEA-level Administrators, LEA Administrative Support Staff, School Administrative Support Staff.

2. **I have educators who are new hires or on extended leave. Do they need to complete the K-2 training on preventing reading difficulties?**
   K-2 general educators who are on staff and working within the school building up to Oct. 5 of each compliance year are required to complete the dyslexia awareness modules before Oct. 31.

3. **The Dyslexia Legislation says that the K-2 training can be provided by the LEA. What are the criteria for the LEA to meet this requirement?**
   OSSE encourages LEAs to meet this training requirement by providing professional learning directly to K-2 general educators. This can include professional learning on implementing and analyzing K-2 screener data, structured literacy, curriculum-based training, small-group instruction, and training on building instructional coherence within a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS). LEAs will be asked to provide the name of the staff who facilitated the training, the length of the training, and a summary of the training content when certifying compliance. This training can also be provided by a vendor.

4. **What training does OSSE provide for meeting the K-2 training requirement?**
   OSSE has released two trainings in support of the K-2 requirement: Screener data analysis and response, and a training on progress monitoring.

5. **Does OSSE recommend any third-party training to meet the K-2 training requirement?**
   The progress monitoring training OSSE provided last year was developed in conjunction with the IRIS Center. The IRIS Center is funded by the US Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs and is located at Vanderbilt University's Peabody College. The IRIS Center develops and disseminates free, interactive online resources to support educators in implementing evidence-based instructional and behavioral practices for all students, particularly those with disabilities or learning challenges. The IRIS Center offers further coursework on Response to Intervention (RTI), and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) that would meet the K-2 requirement. LEAs can reach out to Dustin Tamsen, Dyslexia Specialist at Dustin.Tamsen@dc.gov for further questions.

Universal Screening of K-2 Students

1. **How will OSSE assist educators in preparing to screen for reading difficulties?**
   OSSE has created a list of recommended screeners to support LEAs with the selection of a screening tool. OSSE has also posted a screener implementation guide that includes the purpose of screening, guidance on how to screen students, and guidance specific for ELs and students with learning disabilities.

2. **Many LEAs and schools already use a phonological awareness assessment. Must an LEA or school abandon an assessment for one that includes all factors required in the legislation?**
   No. However, selected screening tools must include all the factors listed in the legislation: phonological awareness, rapid naming skills, correspondence between sounds and letters, and decoding. OSSE has provided LEAs with a list of recommended screeners.

3. **Is an LEA required to use a screener on the list?**
   No. Should an LEA select a screener that is not included in the list, the LEA must be able to provide a written justification for selecting a different screener when submitting compliance paperwork in October of each year.

4. **Will OSSE provide funding to purchase universal screeners?**
   No. Each LEA is responsible for the procurement of universal screeners.

5. **How often do I need to screen K-2 students? Is once a year enough?**
   The Dyslexia Legislation specifies that LEAs shall ensure that all kindergarten through second grade students are screened for reading difficulties "using the guidance provided by OSSE." The Universal Screener Implementation Guidance for DC Law 23-191 document provided by OSSE outlines students are screened three times a school year. OSSE suggests that LEAs follow the following timeline:

Beginning of Year	September – October
Middle of Year	January – February
End of Year	Late April – May

6. **What is the LEA's responsibility to notify families of K-2 students and sharing data?**
   The legislation requires that LEAs notify the families of any students identified by their universal screener data as being at risk for reading difficulties. These notifications must include:
   - The screening results,
   - A description of the supplemental reading instruction that will be provided to the student, and
   - A request to meet and discuss individualized student support.

   OSSE strongly recommends that LEAs notify all families. OSSE has provided LEAs with templates for notifying families after each screening window. The templates are available on the Dyslexia Legislation landing page. OSSE has also developed the Dyslexia Family Guide as a resource for families that want to learn more about dyslexia and reading difficulties.

Adopting Science-Based Literacy Programs

1. **What are the requirements for adopting a science-based literacy program?**
   The Dyslexia Legislation requires that "all LEAs" adopt a science-based literacy program by the 2024-25 school year. OSSE is taking a phased approach to this requirement, beginning with K-5 core literacy programs, and literacy intervention programs for grades 6-8.

2. **What does OSSE consider to be a high-quality, science-based literacy program?**
   Science-based literacy programs effectively integrate instructional content and practices that are in alignment with established research on how to teach students how to read and write. These programs are sequential, comprehensive, and aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English language arts, which the District of Columbia adopted in 2010.
   - **Structured literacy** is a science-based instructional model that focuses on building the foundational literacy skills of phonemic awareness, letter-sound correspondences, syllables, morphology, syntax, and semantics using an explicit, systematic, and cumulative approach.[1] Structured literacy programs are effective in teaching all students how to read and write.[2] This includes students learning English as a second language, as well as students at-risk for reading difficulties.[3]

3. **What if the program or programs that my LEA uses to support literacy are not included on OSSE's list of recommended science-based literacy programs?**
   If an LEA has adopted or is currently implementing a core literacy program(s) that is **not included** on the Science-Based Literacy Programs List, LEAs may use the high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) rubric (e.g., the HQIM rubric for K-5 core literacy, the HQIM rubric for 6-8 interventions) to analyze and evaluate literacy programs for alignment to the essential components of literacy instruction. LEAs will submit completed rubrics with evidence to OSSE for review.

4. **My LEA uses several programs to teach reading. Some are on OSSE's Science-Based Literacy List, and some are not. What are the next steps?**

   Programs on OSSE's Science-Based Literacy Programs List do not need further evaluation. If an LEA is currently implementing a literacy program included on the Science-Based Literacy Programs List, the LEA will confirm the literacy program when submitting Dyslexia Legislation compliance documents in the fall. Programs that are not featured should be evaluated using OSSE's HQIM rubric then submitted with evidence for OSSE to review.

5. **Who should fill out the HQIM rubric?**
   OSSE recommends that LEAs establish a program review team to review literacy materials. This review team can include LEA administrators, literacy specialists, academic coaches, and teachers

[1] Cowen, 2016; IDA, 2018;
[2] Moats, 2019; Young, 2018
[3] Baker et al., 2014; Gersten et al., 2009

who support literacy instruction. OSSE also recommends that LEAs reach out to the publishers of their programs to ask for support in evaluating their instructional materials using the HQIM rubric. If the program review was conducted by a vendor or outside party, the evidence and rubric must be reviewed by the LEA prior to submission to OSSE. OSSE will not review submissions that are submitted directly from vendors on behalf of an LEA.

6. **Can a publisher fill out the HQIM rubric and provide evidence on behalf of an LEA?**
   Yes. LEAs are encouraged to reach out to the publishers of their literacy programs for support. If the review was conducted by a publisher, vendor, or outside party, the evidence and rubric must be reviewed by the LEA prior to submission to OSSE. OSSE will not review submissions that are submitted directly from a third party on behalf of an LEA.

7. **My LEA filled out the rubric and found that our programs meet expectations. What are the next steps?**
   LEAs submit the completed rubric with evidence to OSSE by October of that compliance year. OSSE will review submitted rubrics and evidence from winter to spring, contacting LEAs for further evidence as needed. LEAs with rubrics that provide sufficient evidence of programmatic alignment to the science of reading can certify meeting the science-based literacy program requirement the following October.

8. **My LEA filled out the rubric and found that our programs partially meet and/or don't meet expectations, what are our next steps?**
   If an LEA has an overall rating of **Partially Meets** or **Does Not Meet Expectations**, the LEA can either adopt a new program to address the deficit(s) identified by the rubric or work to refine their program to align it with the criteria of the HQIM rubric.

9. **Will OSSE provide additional funding to purchase new materials?**
   No. Each LEA is responsible for the procurement of curricular materials.

10. **Will OSSE review programs for any LEA at any time?**
    No. OSSE's Science-Based Literacy Program Review guidance outlines that materials submitted will be reviewed at OSSE's discretion and based on alignment with internal timelines and priorities.

11. **How does this impact dual language programs?**
    OSSE's HQIM lists focus on supporting English literacy. For dual language programs, OSSE strongly recommends that LEAs align evidence-based practices across both languages.

12. **The legislation states that "all LEAs shall adopt a science-based reading program." What does this mean for LEAs that serve only pre-K, high school, and adult learners?**
    OSSE is taking a phased approach to this requirement. Resources for pre-K, high school, and adult-serving LEAs will be released in later compliance years.

13. **My LEA wants to adopt a new program that's not on OSSE's list, can we submit evidence every October?**
    OSSE reviews programs during specific times based on agency priorities. OSSE intends to review one literacy program outside the current review cycle, per year. Programs may be submitted by single-site LEAs or by LEAs with multiple schools, but not directly from individual schools within an LEA. OSSE's selection process for determining which program outside the review cycle to review includes, but is not limited to, the following criteria:
        1. Strong evidence of programmatic efficacy;
        2. The possibility of being adopted and/or implemented across multiple LEAs/schools; and
        3. A rubric score demonstrating that the program meets criteria across each of the HQIM rubric's components.

    LEAs may submit programs for consideration by Oct. 31. OSSE will notify LEAs of the status of submitted literacy programs within 30 business days of submission.

Compliance and Implementation Logistics

1. **What is the timeline for the compliance process?**
   LEAs are required to submit completed compliance documents to OSSE by the compliance deadline (e.g., Oct. 31).

2. **How will LEAs be held accountable for the requirements of the legislation?**
   LEAs must submit compliance documentation demonstrating that they have met all the legislation requirements. This documentation will be submitted in the form of a letter. DCPS and public charter schools must submit this compliance letter to OSSE by Oct. 31**.** Within 10 business days of Oct. 31, OSSE will make all compliance letters publicly available on the Dyslexia Legislation Compliance page. This transparency will be the primary accountability framework for this legislation.

3. **The dyslexia legislation notes that an "array of supports" will be provided – what types of supports are available beyond the required training?**
   OSSE's literacy team hosts professional learning, offers office hours and one-on-one meetings, and produces a wide range of resources to support LEAs. Please review OSSE's Literacy Newsletter to stay up to date on all of OSSE's literacy offerings.

4. **Realistically, when does OSSE expect LEAs to complete all these requirements?**
   LEAs must complete the requirements by the start of the 2024-25 school year and each year thereafter. OSSE provides technical assistance and guidance to support the implementation of this requirement.

Compliance with IDEA

1. **Does screening for dyslexia and the application of remediation and intervention instruction eliminate the need for compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)?**
   No. The DC 23-191 does not alleviate an LEA from its obligations under the IDEA. *See* DC Code §

38-2581.05. If an LEA suspects that a child may **have** a disability, including but not limited to a specific learning disability, the LEA should refer the child for an evaluation to determine eligibility for special education and related services. The LEA must obtain parent consent before evaluation of the child. For more on this subject, read OSSE's Intersections of Dyslexia and Special Education document.