

Purpose of the READ Act

The purpose of the READ Act is to ensure all children can read at grade level by the end of third grade, and ultimately graduate from high school having attained skill levels that adequately prepare them for postsecondary studies or for the workforce. Research shows that reading at or above grade level by third grade is a critical milestone; if students do not read on grade level by third grade, they are likely to fall behind in all subject areas and are at high risk for dropping out of high school.

IMPORTANT NOTE

The READ Act is a law focusing on literacy development by ensuring we:

- Identify students who read below grade level
- Create targeted reading intervention plans
- Communicate and involve parents/families

READ Act Assessment Requirements

Identifying Students Reading Significantly Below Grade Level (SBGL)

SBGL is defined as not meeting the minimum skill levels for reading competency for the student's grade level.

- » **K-3:** SBGL determination is made by state-provided assessment cut scores.
- » **Grades 4-12:** SBGL is defined as reading more than one year below grade level. Teachers make this determination based on a body of evidence that includes a minimum of one reading assessment score.

- Districts must administer a state-approved READ Act assessment to all students in grades 1-3 and READ Act cohort students within the first 30 calendar days of school. All Kindergarten students must be assessed within the first 60 calendar days of school in order to use the data for the literacy component of TS Gold.
- A verification assessment must be administered to all students scoring SBGL within the same 30 days (60 days for Kindergarten). The verification assessment may also serve as the state-required diagnostic assessment used to create READ plans that target instruction to meet the needs of individual students. Istation (DPS-supported), iReady and STAR literacy assessments may be used as verification/diagnostic assessments.
- No K-3 student is exempt from the READ Act. This includes students with disabilities, even those with significant cognitive disabilities. Per the law, all K-3 students must be assessed using a READ Act assessment whose content they can access. All accommodations, identified in a student's IEP or 504 plan that are allowable by the vendor, meaning that they do not nullify the intent of the assessment, must be provided during the assessment.

Language of Assessment

Students should be assessed in the language in which they receive the majority of their literacy instruction. If students are assessed in both English and Spanish, teachers must indicate which language is best aligned to their students' literacy instruction.

Alternate READ Act Assessment Options

Flexibility and READ Act Assessments

The DPS Board of Education and Denver Public Schools allow schools the flexibility to choose curriculum, professional development, and assessments in order to meet the Denver 2020 Plan and achieve rigorous goals. All schools are required to administer assessments that fulfill the READ Act state requirements. School leaders may choose between the district options or state-approved options.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Declining a DPS sponsored READ Act option can significantly increase the workload of your staff.

Declining READ Act District Option

If school leaders decline district options by deciding not to use the DPS-supported READ Act assessment (Istation), the following state requirements become non-negotiable and are the responsibility of the school:

- READ Act administration timelines and requirements must be met with fidelity.
- Schools with English Learners who receive more than 50% of their literacy instruction in Spanish must use a CDE-approved Spanish assessment and must use the same vendor for both English and Spanish.
- The screener and the confirmation/verification assessment must be completed using the same tool.

Data Submission Requirements for Alternate READ Act Assessments

Data Submission for Alternative Assessments

School leaders who decline the district option must ensure their schools submit all required READ Act assessment data for each assessment window via the following protocols:

- READ Act data must be submitted to ARE/DoTS using a uniform data delivery mechanism.
- An administrator account must be provided to the READ Act Coordinator/ARE by the assessment's vendor.
- All technical aspects of the application must be in place prior to the first day of school. This includes the training of Site Technology Representatives (STRs) on all technical aspects of the application.

Contract

The following data elements must be identified in the vendor contract and included in the READ Act data submission:

- DPS school name
- DPS school number (3 digit)
- Assessment name
- Assessment administration date
- Assessment scores and proficiency bands/benchmarks
- Student last name
- Student first name
- Correct 6-digit DPS student ID number

The READ Act Site Assessment Leader (SAL) corrects student demographic data in vendor website at ARE's request.

READ Plans

READ Plan Creation

READ Plans must be created and implemented as early as possible for each student identified as SBGL in reading. The deadlines for the creation of READ plans in the 2016-2017 fall assessment window are November 18th (grades 1-12) and December 16th (Kindergarten).

Parent Communication and Involvement

The READ Act defines requirements for parent participation and communication. School staff should visit dpsare.com/read-act/ for forms, letters and other resources.

Elementary Level

- Parents of students who are performing significantly below grade level must be notified in writing within 30 days of verification. Teachers must use the READ Act form letter, which requires both the teacher's and principal's signatures. *Before the form letter goes home, teachers should attempt to contact the parent over the phone to discuss the student's status, as this may be a difficult topic for parents.*
- Per the law, K-3 teachers must complete the following during the parent meeting:
 - Use the Parent Talking Point Document to guide them in this discussion.
 - Provide parents with the Parent READ Act Information Brochure.
 - Mention retention among other intervention options. It should be noted that though retention could be considered, it is recognized as a drastic measure that is not appropriate for most children.

All Grade Levels

The READ Act requires teachers to contact the parents of students found to be SBGL in reading, and partner with them to jointly create a READ Plan. *Only after THREE documented attempts can teachers create the READ Plan without the parent and share that information with him/her upon completion. Teachers will document these attempts in OASIS.*

Questions & Comments

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