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*Guidance Regarding the 2022 Application Requesting a Waiver of Connecticut
Approved K–3 Reading Curriculum Model or Program (Waiver)*



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Background

Section 10-14hh(a) of the Connecticut General Statutes [“C.G.S.”] mandates that each local and regional board of education implement for the 2023–24 school year and each school year thereafter a reading curriculum model or program for grades Pre-Kindergarten to three (PreK–3), inclusive, that has been reviewed and recommended by the Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success at the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) in consultation with the Reading Leadership Implementation Council.

C.G.S. Sec. 10-14hh(d), however, provides that local and regional boards of education may request a waiver to implement a reading curriculum model or program *other* than a model or program reviewed and recommended pursuant to C.G.S. Sec. 10-14ii. It further provides that the Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the Director of the Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success, shall, upon the request of a local or regional board of education, grant such waiver if the Commissioner determines that the local or regional board of education requesting a waiver has demonstrated that such other reading curriculum model or program is evidenced-based and scientifically-based, and focused on competency in the following areas of reading: Oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, rapid automatic name or letter name fluency and reading comprehension.

In addition to satisfying the foregoing criteria, C.G.S. Sec. 10-14hh(d) further stipulates that the waiver shall include data collected from the reading assessments described in C.G.S. Sec. 10-14t that have been disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, eligibility for free or reduced priced lunches, students whose primary language is not English and students with disabilities, and a strategy to address remaining reading achievement gaps, as defined in C.G.S. Sec. 10-14u as the existence of a significant disparity in the academic performance of students among and between (A) racial groups, (B) ethnic groups, (C) socioeconomic groups, (D) genders, and (E) English language learners and students whose primary language is English.

This 2022 Application Requesting a Waiver of Connecticut Approved K–3 Reading Curriculum Model or Program (Waiver) was developed in alignment with the legislation and incorporates stakeholder feedback.

How to Submit a Waiver

For local and regional board of education convenience, the Waiver application has been constructed using the Qualtrics online software. The Waiver application includes grades Kindergarten through three (K–3), inclusive, as currently prekindergarten (PreK) reading curriculum models or programs are still under review.

The Waiver application must be completed by one signatory representing the local or regional board of education and submitted **by 5:00 p.m., on February 28, 2023**. The Waiver requires the signatory to:

1. Submit a detailed description that may include a compendium of documents, to demonstrate that the curriculum model or program is evidenced-based and scientifically based and focused on competency in the following areas of reading: oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, rapid automatic name, or letter name fluency and reading comprehension (C.G.S. Sec. 10-14hh).
2. Upload the completed [K-3 Reading Data Template](#) (C.G.S. Sec. 10-14hh).
3. Upload the strategy created to address reading achievement gaps as defined in C.G.S. Sec. 10-14u, in the academic performance of students among and between (A) racial groups, (B) ethnic groups, (C) socioeconomic groups, (D) genders, and (E) English language learners and students whose primary language is English (C.G.S. Sec. 10-14hh).
4. Sign a signature page.
5. Any embedded links or materials included in a submission must be easily accessed and must not require permissions or passwords. If a reviewer is unable to access or review materials submitted, the application will not be reviewed. Please note, if you are submitting multiple documents for review, you must upload a zip file of all documents.

Guidance on the Curriculum Model or Program Description

In your detailed description, provide information that demonstrates that the curriculum model or program is:

- evidenced-based and scientifically based, and
- focused on competency in the following areas of reading: Oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, rapid automatic name, or letter name fluency and reading comprehension (C.G.S. Sec. 10-14hh).

In developing a detailed description, local and regional boards of education are encouraged to use the following guiding questions as prompts to determine that such other reading curriculum model or program is evidence-based, scientifically-based, and focused on all legislated areas of reading:

- How is the curriculum model or program evidenced-based and scientifically-based?
- How does the curriculum model or program support direct, explicit instruction in all areas of reading (i.e., oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, rapid automatic name, or letter name fluency and reading comprehension)?
- How does the curriculum model or program support frequent opportunities for students to practice and gain literacy skills?
- How does the curriculum model or program allow for high-quality, daily differentiation of foundational skills so all students achieve mastery of foundational skills?
- How does the curriculum model or program provide for structured discussions that address grade-level speaking and listening standards?
- How does the curriculum model or program comprehensively address Connecticut Core Standards for English Language Arts through both explicit instruction and authentic application?
- How does the curriculum model or program include a wide range of authentic writing and explicit instruction in writing skills and strategies?
- How does the curriculum model or program provide for varied means of accessing content and demonstrating learning to meet the diverse needs of all students working above or below grade level?
- How does the curriculum model or program represent various cultures and perspectives, promote cultural affirmation, and value diverse identities, backgrounds, and perspectives?

Guidance on the K–3 Reading Data Template

Complete the K–3 Reading Data Template by following the steps outlined in the “Notes” tab of the K–3 Reading Data Template document. If the local or regional board of education administered an assessment that is different from the ones listed on the K–3 Reading Data Template’s “What Should be Reported” tab, the local or regional board of education must provide the assessment name and the corresponding data. If no assessment was administered for that specific grade in that specific spring of the fiscal year, indicate “No Assessment Administered” for that respective row in Column A (Instrument).

Please note, pursuant to C.G.S. Sec. 10-14t(a), the CSDE has revised the [Approved Menu of Research-Based Grades K-3 Universal Screening Reading Assessments](#) for mandated use by all local and regional boards of education effective July 1, 2023. These reading assessments have been approved for use by districts to identify students in K–3, inclusive, who are below proficiency in reading, and to assist in identifying, in whole or in part, students at risk for Dyslexia, as defined in Sec. 10-3d of the C.G.S., or other reading-related learning disabilities.

Guidance on the Strategy Explanation

Provide a detailed explanation of the strategy the local or regional board of education shall employ to address remaining reading achievement gaps as defined in C.G.S. Sec. 10-14u:

Achievement gaps shall mean the existence of a significant disparity in the academic performance of students among and between (A) racial groups, (B) ethnic groups, (C) socioeconomic groups, (D) genders, and (E) English language learners and students whose primary language is English.