



OFFICE OF DYSLEXIA AND READING DISABILITIES STRATEGIC PLAN

June 2025

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THE OFFICE

The Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities (ODRD) was established in 2021 with the enactment of [Connecticut General Statutes \(C.G.S.\) Section 10-14z](#). The office is administratively situated within the Talent Office of the Connecticut State Department of Education and is responsible for verifying the implementation of Connecticut's dyslexia and structured literacy laws and supporting related regulations and policies.

Mission: Our “Why”

The ODRD envisions Connecticut educator preparation programs that lead the nation in preparing exceptional teachers of reading and all public schools as the standard of excellence for students with dyslexia and other reading disabilities.

Our mission, below, is aligned with the Connecticut State Board of Education's *Comprehensive Plan for Education 2023-28*, which identifies strategic priorities designed to help meet the challenge of effectively preparing students for learning, life, and work beyond school:

The ODRD is committed to providing – through leadership and service - insight, expertise, training, encouragement, and resources to assist those in the education and related communities to succeed in helping all Connecticut students with dyslexia and other reading disabilities develop the reading and writing skills necessary to become effective lifelong learners, able to acquire the skills and knowledge they will need to succeed in college, career, and civic life.

Actions: Our “How”

The ODRD partners with interest holders to advance initiatives designed to ensure that Connecticut's general and special educators are well prepared and supported to effectively prepare each student, including students with dyslexia and other reading disabilities, for learning, life, and work beyond school.

In everything we do, the ODRD is committed to:

- ✓ innovative work rooted in scientific reasoning and research;
- ✓ collaborating across interest holder groups; and
- ✓ advocating for decisions and actions that promote equitable student access, opportunity, and outcomes.

INTRODUCTION

The Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities' (ODRD) inaugural Strategic Plan addresses three priorities, which highlight the core legislative charges of the office and outline aligned supports designed to ensure the success and sustainability of each initiative. These priorities will guide the office through the year 2028 and are aligned with the Connecticut State Board of Education's priority that "all learners are supported, including those with high needs, and have equitable access to education regardless of background or advantage, as well as access to great teachers and leaders, and a diverse educational workforce," as articulated in the *Comprehensive Plan for Education 2023-28*:

Strategic Priority 1: Educator preparation providers and local education agencies implement instruction aligned to scientific evidence-based knowledge and practices for structured literacy and dyslexia.

Strategic Priority 2: Educator preparation, professional learning, and credentialing are accountable to scientific evidence-based reading research in programming and procedures.

Strategic Priority 3: Families and school districts are supported with information and assistance regarding the detection and recognition of, and structured literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia.

These priorities were identified following meetings with interest holder groups and representatives, and the completion of an extensive environmental audit that included a review and analysis of a wide-range of Connecticut Department of Education policy, guidance, regulatory, and federal reporting documents; testimony submitted on behalf of Connecticut's dyslexia-specific legislation ([P.A. 14-39](#); [P.A. 15-97](#); [P.A. 16-92](#); [P.A. 17-3](#); [S.A. 19-8](#); [P.A. 21-168](#)); customized data reports prepared for the ODRD by the Connecticut State Department of Education Performance Office; national reports that reference Connecticut's educator preparation and professional learning practices; and public feedback.

What follows is a description of the actions and intended outcomes associated with each priority, including actions that address legislative charges assigned to the office by [C.G.S. Sections 10-14z through 10-14dd](#), and responsibilities designated to the office by the Bureau of Special Education (BSE). Successful attainment of ambitious outcomes necessitates close collaboration across the agency. The ODRD intends to address the actions described below in collaboration with agency colleagues to support the success of shared goals aligned with State Board of Education priorities. The office works closely with colleagues in the Talent Office, Bureau of Special Education, Academic Office, including the Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success, Office of Student Support Services, Performance Office, and others across the agency. Aligned initiatives help to ensure equitable access to education for all learners, including those identified with SLD/Dyslexia and other reading disabilities, strengthen school, family, and community relationships, and prepare all students for learning, life, and work beyond school.

RATIONALE

Literacy is a human right and serves as the foundation for how we learn, work, make decisions, engage with our communities, socialize, and care for ourselves. For many children with dyslexia, basic literacy has been out of reach. The work of the ODRD, outlined in this Strategic Plan, is organized to achieve our mission through addressing the needs of students with dyslexia, their families and communities, and the educators who teach them. Three strategic priorities orient the work of the office to meet legislative charges, provide support for successful implementation of initiatives, and achieve outcomes aligned with the needs of interest holders across the state. These strategic priorities highlight the core statutory responsibilities of the office while providing opportunities to respond flexibly to changing needs of interest holders and support shared goals of improved literacy outcomes across Connecticut State Department of Education initiatives.

The core priorities of the office reflect the legislative charges established in [C.G.S. Sections 10-14z through 10-14dd](#), and responsibilities designated to the office by the Bureau of Special Education (BSE) related to the information and assistance provision of [C.G.S. Section 10-3d](#). The actions described below directly address those legislative charges and detail opportunities to advance each strategic priority through initiatives that support successful and sustainable implementation.

Strategic Priority 1 includes actions that bring clarity to the essential evidence-based knowledge and practices required for educators to successfully develop the reading and writing skills of students with dyslexia and other reading disabilities. This includes the development of a comprehensive set of evidence-based structured literacy and dyslexia competencies to be achieved by educators and the dissemination of related resources for educator preparation providers, educator preparation program faculty, and local and regional boards of education. The actions included under Strategic Priority 1 are intended to ensure that Connecticut-trained educators are well prepared to meet the challenge of effectively preparing each student, including students with dyslexia and other reading disabilities, for learning, life, and work beyond school.

Strategic Priority 2 includes actions to verify compliance with legislative requirements in educator preparation, professional learning, and credentialing that are aligned with scientific evidence-based reading research. This includes verification that dyslexia-focused legislative requirements have been implemented in educator preparation programs and completed by certification applicants, and that webinars and trainings developed or endorsed by the Connecticut State Department of Education are aligned to the structured literacy and dyslexia competencies. The actions included under Strategic Priority 2 are intended to ensure accountability to scientific evidence-based reading research through verification of the implementation of programming that is aligned with the scientific evidence base.

Strategic Priority 3 includes actions to support the needs of students with dyslexia, their families and communities, and the educators who teach them by providing information and assistance to Connecticut families and school districts. This includes direct assistance and the development of

guidance resources, presentations, and other professional, family, and community learning opportunities related to dyslexia and reading disabilities. The actions included under Strategic Priority 3 are intended to flexibly respond to the stated needs of students, families, communities, and educators and expand the capacity of school districts to meet the challenge of effectively preparing each student, including students with dyslexia and other reading disabilities, for learning, life, and work beyond school.

The Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities' inaugural strategic priorities advance the office toward realizing the vision that all public schools are regarded as the standard of excellence for students with dyslexia and other reading disabilities. As this plan is implemented, all work across the office will be aligned with the vision and mission articulated here and carried out with consideration for team values.

Strategic Priority 1

Educator preparation providers and local education agencies implement instruction aligned to scientific evidence-based knowledge and practices for structured literacy and dyslexia.

ACTIONS

The ODRD will advance the following actions to support educator preparation providers and local education agencies in implementing instruction aligned to scientific evidence-based knowledge and practices for structured literacy and dyslexia:

- 1.1** Develop, maintain, and update as needed, a comprehensive set of evidence-based structured literacy and dyslexia competencies to be achieved by an educator based on certification type and endorsement level. [C.G.S. Section 10-14z\(d\)\(1\)](#)
- 1.2** Develop and update as necessary, a list of sample course assignments and evaluations aligned with the adopted structured literacy and dyslexia competencies for educator preparation program (EPP) consideration. [C.G.S. Section 10-14z\(d\)\(2\)](#)
- 1.3** Develop and update as necessary, model in-service professional learning programs aligned with the adopted structured literacy and dyslexia competencies for use by local and regional boards of education. [C.G.S. Section 10-14z\(d\)\(3\)](#)
- 1.4** Provide ongoing information, assistance, and guidance, including professional learning opportunities and resources, to educator preparation programs to support the successful implementation of the adopted structured literacy and dyslexia competencies.
- 1.5** Align complementary initiatives (e.g., Educator Effectives Guidelines 2023, Teacher Education and Mentoring), with consideration for the adopted structured literacy and dyslexia competencies, to create a bridge from pre-service teacher education to in-service teacher education.
- 1.6** Disseminate and support the implementation of model in-service professional learning programs, and support schools, districts, and agency partners in providing professional learning opportunities that are aligned with the adopted structured literacy and dyslexia competencies.
- 1.7** Develop a Community of Practice for education professionals providing reading and writing interventions and specialized reading and writing instruction to students identified as at-risk for and with dyslexia.

OUTCOMES

The ODRD expects these actions will advance the Connecticut State Board of Education's priority that all learners are supported, including those with high needs, and have equitable access to education regardless of background or advantage, as well as access to great teachers and leaders, and a diverse educational workforce. Specific outcomes include:

- 1.8** Developed and disseminated a comprehensive set of evidence-based structured literacy and dyslexia competencies to be achieved by an educator based on certification type and endorsement level.
- 1.9** Developed a list of sample course assignments and evaluations aligned with the adopted structured literacy competency targets for educator preparation program (EPP) consideration.

- 1.10** Developed and disseminated model in-service professional learning programs for use by local and regional boards of education.
- 1.11** Developed and disseminated resources, presentations, and other professional learning opportunities for educator preparation programs and faculty to support the successful implementation of structured literacy and dyslexia competencies.
- 1.12** Aligned complementary initiatives (e.g., Educator Effectiveness Guidelines 2023, Teacher Education and Mentoring).
- 1.13** Support provided for schools, districts, and agency partners providing professional learning opportunities that are aligned with the adopted structured literacy and dyslexia competencies.
- 1.14** Community of Practice for education professionals providing reading and writing interventions and specialized reading and writing instruction to students identified as at risk for and with dyslexia developed.

Strategic Priority 2

Educator preparation, professional learning, and credentialing are accountable to scientific evidence-based reading research in programming and procedures.

ACTIONS

The ODRD will advance the following actions to ensure accountability to scientific evidence-based reading research in educator preparation, professional learning, and credentialing:

- 2.1** Develop compliance measures and audit procedures to determine the compliance of educator preparation programs with Connecticut's dyslexia-specific legislation and submit to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly specified in [C.G.S. Section 10-14z\(c\)](#).
- 2.2** Verify compliance of educator preparation programs that submit an application for initial or continued approval to the State Board of Education using developed compliance measures and audit procedures and submit an annual report on compliance verification to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly specified in [C.G.S. Section 10-14aa\(a\)](#).
- 2.3** Review and recommend changes, as necessary, to the State Board of Education's process for approval of educator preparation programs related to compliance verification. [C.G.S. Section 10-14z\(a\)\(2\)](#)
- 2.4** Review, and request updates as necessary, to Connecticut State Department of Education developed or endorsed webinar modules and trainings to align such webinar modules and trainings to the compliance measures, and report on the status of compliance to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly specified in [C.G.S. Section 10-14aa\(d\)](#).
- 2.5** Develop a certification requirement verification process that meets the requirements of [C.G.S. Section 10-14cc](#) to promote sustained accountability to dyslexia-related certification applicant requirements.
- 2.6** Verify that an applicant for an initial educator certificate who has graduated from an educator preparation program in the state has completed not fewer than twelve clock hours of instruction in the detection and recognition of, and evidence-based structured literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia, in consultation with the Talent Office. [C.G.S. Section 10-14cc\(1\)](#)
- 2.7** Verify that an applicant for an initial educator certificate who seeks an endorsement for comprehensive special education or integrated early childhood and special education completes supervised practicum or student teaching experience requirements, pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-145d(i)(2), in consultation with the Talent Office. [C.G.S. Section 10-14cc\(2\)](#)
- 2.8** Provide information pertaining to educator preparation program compliance verification to the State Board of Education as requested. [C.G.S. Section 10-14bb](#)
- 2.9** Provide guidance to educator preparation programs on how to provide verification that any supervisor of the required practicum hours has obtained at least four of the qualifications listed in [C.G.S. Section 10-14dd](#).

OUTCOMES

The ODRD expects these actions will advance the Connecticut State Board of Education's priority that all learners are supported, including those with high needs, and have equitable access to education regardless of background or advantage, as well as access to great teachers and leaders, and a diverse educational workforce. Specific outcomes include:

- 2.10** Developed compliance measures and audit procedures submitted to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly specified in [C.G.S. Section 10-14z\(c\)](#).
- 2.11** Completed compliance verification reports for educator preparation programs that submit an application for initial or continued approval to the State Board of Education, submitted to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly specified in [C.G.S. Section 10-14aa\(a\)](#).
- 2.12** Completed review of State Board of Education's process for approval of educator preparation programs and changes recommended, as necessary, related to compliance verification.
- 2.13** Completed review of webinar modules and trainings developed or endorsed by the Connecticut State Department of Education and updates requested as necessary for the purpose of aligning webinar modules and trainings to the compliance measures, with annual report submitted to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly specified in [C.G.S. Section 10-14aa\(d\)](#).
- 2.14** Developed certification requirement verification process that meets the requirements of [C.G.S. Section 10-14cc](#).
- 2.15** Completed verifications of dyslexia-related requirements for applicants for initial educator certificates, as specified in [C.G.S. Section 10-14cc](#).
- 2.16** Information pertaining to educator preparation program compliance verification provided to the State Board of Education, as requested.
- 2.17** Guidance provided to educator preparation programs on how to provide verification that any supervisor of the required practicum hours has obtained at least four of the qualifications listed in [C.G.S. Section 10-14dd](#).

Strategic Priority 3

Families and school districts are supported with information and assistance relating to the detection and recognition of, and structured literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia.

ACTIONS

The ODRD will advance the following actions to support families and school districts with information and assistance relating to the detection and recognition of, and structured literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia:

- 3.1** Provide information and assistance to local and regional boards of education and families of students relating to the detection and recognition of, and evidence-based structured literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia. [C.G.S. Section 10-3d](#)
- 3.2** Identify existing and develop new information and guidance resources to promote shared understandings between local and regional boards of education and the families of students regarding the detection and recognition of and evidence-based structured literacy interventions for students with dyslexia.
- 3.3** Create and promote a statewide dyslexia awareness collaborative in partnership with representatives from state, community-based, and non-profit agencies, including but not limited to the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC), Decoding Dyslexia-CT (DD-CT), the African Caribbean American Parents of Children with Disabilities, Inc. (AFCAMP), the State Education Resource Center (SERC), the Regional Educational Service Centers (RESC) Alliance, and the Connecticut Council of Administrators of Special Education (ConnCASE).
- 3.4** Develop, disseminate, and support school and district application of guidance resources for writing quality Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) for students identified with SLD/Dyslexia and other reading disabilities that are aligned with (1) the state's academic content standards for the grade in which the student is enrolled; and (2) the student's present levels of performance, with the Bureau of Special Education.
- 3.5** Develop, disseminate, and support guidance for local and regional boards of education on special education staffing and service delivery models designed to meet the individualized and intensive reading and writing needs of students with SLD/Dyslexia and other reading disabilities, with consideration for identified special education staffing shortages, with the Bureau of Special Education.
- 3.6** Develop, disseminate, and support guidance on best practices for general educators supporting students with SLD/Dyslexia in the inclusive classroom setting, with the Bureau of Special Education.
- 3.7** Contribute to the development of, and contribute reporting related to, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), with attention to improving achievement, performance, and transition outcomes for students with disabilities.
- 3.8** Maintain a collaborative partnership with Connecticut's Parent Training and Information Center (Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center) by providing training and ongoing consultation support to the Bureau of Special Education Call Center and Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center staff to ensure alignment of information and assistance provided to local and regional boards of education and families regarding the detection and recognition of,

and evidence-based structured literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia, and by developing parent learning opportunities that are responsive to the needs of the community and increase awareness of scientific evidence-based reading research.

- 3.9** Propose professional learning opportunities for IDEA funding that are responsive to the needs of the community and increase the capacity of educators to meet the needs of students with dyslexia and other reading disabilities, in consultation with the State Education Resource Center and the Regional Educational Service Center Alliance.

OUTCOMES

The ODRD expects these actions will advance the Connecticut State Board of Education's priority that all learners are supported, including those with high needs, and have equitable access to education regardless of background or advantage, as well as access to great teachers and leaders, and a diverse educational workforce. Specific outcomes include:

- 3.10** Information and assistance provided to local and regional boards of education and families of students relating to the detection and recognition of, and evidence-based structured literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia.
- 3.11** Identified and developed information and guidance resources to promote shared understandings between local and regional boards of education and the families of students regarding the detection and recognition of and evidence-based structured literacy interventions for students with dyslexia.
- 3.12** Statewide dyslexia awareness collaborative created and promoted, in partnership with representatives from state, community-based, and non-profit agencies.
- 3.13** Developed and disseminated guidance resources for writing quality IEPs for students identified with SLD/Dyslexia and other reading disabilities, with application support.
- 3.14** Developed, disseminated, and supported guidance to local and regional boards of education on special education staffing and service delivery models designed to meet the individualized and intensive reading and writing needs of students with SLD/Dyslexia and other reading disabilities.
- 3.15** Developed, disseminated, and supported best practice guidelines for how general educators can support students with SLD/Dyslexia in the inclusive classroom setting.
- 3.16** Completed contributions to the IDEA Part B Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), with attention to improving achievement, performance, and transition outcomes for students with disabilities.
- 3.17** Maintained collaborative partnership with Connecticut's Parent Training and Information Center (Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center), with training and consultation support provided and parent learning opportunities developed.
- 3.18** Professional learning opportunities proposed for IDEA funding.

CONCLUSION

The ODRD wishes to thank the families, educators, advocates, and colleagues who shared thoughtful feedback that shaped the development of our inaugural Strategic Plan. This plan positions us to meet the legislative charges of the office with sustainable implementation of initiatives that advance our mission and align with State Board of Education priorities. In alignment with the State Board of Education, we will approach this work with a growth mindset. We expect to find areas for extension and refinement as we continue to listen to and learn from students with dyslexia and other reading disabilities and their families, educators, and communities. We move forward in this plan to advance our mission with optimism, enthusiasm, and gratitude for the students who have inspired us to know better and do better.