

Iowa Dyslexia Board DRAFT

DRAFT Meeting Minutes – September 7, 2022

Meeting minutes taken by Kathy Bertsch.

CALL TO ORDER

Nina Lorimor-Easley, board vice chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Present: Barb Anderson, Matt Cretsinger, Stephanie Edgren, Katie Greving, Mark Hennigar, Nina Lorimor-Easley, James Northwick, Kay Stork, Ben Walizer, Shane Williams, Tammy Wilgenbusch, Kara Wishman.

Absent: Kristen Craig

The board recognized Nina Lorimor-Easley as acting board chair due to the resignation of Brad Niebling.

1. Welcome

- a. **Introductions:** The board welcomed the following new members:
 - i. Barb Anderson, designee of the Iowa Department of Education
 - ii. Stephanie Edgren, William Penn University, Institute of Higher Education (IHE) representative
 - iii. Ben Walizer, IRRC Representative
 - iv. Tammy Wilgenbusch, University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital, psychologist
- b. **Public Comment:** There was no public comment.
- c. **Approve Agenda:** Shane Williams moved to approve the meeting agenda and Matt Cretsinger seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- d. **Approve Meeting Minutes from May:** James Northwick moved to approve the May meeting minutes and Stephanie Edgren seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- e. **Chair Election:** The Board entertained nominations for Board chair. Katie Greving and Nina Lorimor-Easley were nominated. Katie Greving declined the nomination. Nina Lorimor-Easley accepted the nomination. Shane Williams motioned to close nominations, Katie Greving seconded the motion. The board opened a roll call vote to approve Nina Lorimor-Easley for board chair. The motion carried with all in favor. Nina Lorimor-Easley is board chair through 6/30/2023.
- f. **Vice Chair Election:** Due to Nina Lorimor-Easley's assignment to board chair, the Board entertained nominations for Board vice chair. Barb Anderson was nominated, Mark Hennigar seconded the nomination. The motion carried. Mark Hennigar motioned to close nominations and Tammy Wilgenbusch seconded the nomination. The motion carried. The board opened a roll call vote to approve Barb Anderson for board vice chair. The motion carried with all in favor. Barb Anderson is board chair through 6/30/2023.

g. Board Member Announcements/updates

- i. Tammy Wilgenbusch shared that she is president of the Iowa branch of the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) and is looking forward to supporting dyslexia work through Iowa IDA.
- ii. Stephanie Edgren shared that she is on the literacy leadership team for the Iowa Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (IACTE) and is hoping these connections are beneficial to the Board's work. She also announced that she is part of a group that is planning a pre-conference to the Reading League conference for university faculty that is focused on the science of reading ([The Summit on the Science of Reading in Higher Education](#)).
- iii. Katie Greving announced that [Decoding Dyslexia Iowa's Educator Conference](#) is coming up in October.
- iv. The board discussed how important it is to connect teachers and IHEs to the science of reading so it is good to see how so many educators are engaging in this work.
- v. Nina Lorimor-Easley shared that the first dyslexia specialist cohort is doing their final practicums across the state and are ready to go forward and share their knowledge. The endorsement ensures structured literacy can be provided no matter what curricular materials a school is using.
- vi. Ben Walizer shared that the second dyslexia specialist cohort is beginning. The IRRRC has been working to find a masters level program to partner with the endorsement. They believe they have one and hope to be able to announce this collaboration soon. They are also looking at developing a possible science of reading endorsement. The board discussed if/who might be required to receive a science of reading endorsement and how this would differ from other endorsements.
- vii. The board discussed challenges around improving the current reading endorsement. They discussed how a new endorsement with a focus on the science of reading would be an alternative approach. The board discussed logistics with how a university would handle a new endorsement and possible work the board could do in sharing how the current endorsements are/are not meeting student and school needs.
- viii. Katie Greving announced that Decoding Dyslexia Iowa has made a formal request to the Governor's office for scholarships for the dyslexia endorsement.

2. Report from the Department

a. Dyslexia Consultant Position

- i. Barb Anderson shared the status of hiring for the Department's dyslexia consultant position. The Department made an offer for the position during the summer search, however the candidate declined the offer. The Department is currently in another search cycle. Barb Anderson provided an overview of the dyslexia specific requirements, selective qualifications and minimum qualifications. The Board inquired on the number of applicants. The Department will seek clarification from human resources on what statistics they may share regarding the search.

- b. Department Dyslexia Guidance Website
- i. Barb Anderson shared the new draft of the Department Dyslexia website that was developed after Board feedback last spring. The Department would like the website to go live for Dyslexia Awareness month (October). Several Board members emphasized that it is expected that the Department develop formal guidance in addition to the website. The Department acknowledged that this is a first step and additional guidance is expected moving forward and focused on the following Department priorities:
 - Priority 1: Develop guidance, tools and resources to help educators understand how the term “dyslexia” can be used in Iowa schools and how to partner with families about concerns around dyslexia.
 - Priority 2: Develop guidance, tools and resources for informal diagnostic assessment for students at risk for reading difficulties. Such assessments would be used to inform intervention including dyslexia specific interventions for students with dyslexia/characteristics of dyslexia.
 - Priority 3: Develop guidance, tools and resources that detail the elements of explicit and systematic literacy instruction for students with dyslexia/characteristics of dyslexia.
 - ii. The Department sought additional feedback from the Board on the newly revised Dyslexia Guidance Website including what they particularly like, what requires immediate revision and suggestions for next steps/supporting dyslexia and ideas for Dyslexia awareness month. Highlights from the discussion include:
 - The website being much easier to read and much more polished,
 - The need to add a mental health section,
 - The importance of communicating this information through educator networks,
 - The suggestion to include guidance on the [qualifications of professionals from IDA](#),
 - The need to provide more details for educators about specific diagnostic assessment and intervention components that formally address dyslexia,
 - The need for additional guidance on Specific Learning Disability evaluation,
 - Clarity and misunderstandings of terms such as research-based versus evidence-based,
 - Consideration for adding information about how the brain learns to read,
 - The need to be more straightforward about educators saying “dyslexia” in schools,
 - Consideration for messaging the work within Multi-Tiered System of Supports including messaging that structured literacy needs to be at all three tiers of instruction,
 - Including some IRRC supports including: assistive technology evaluation, curriculum evaluation tools and direct consult for curriculum evaluation, and
 - Working with the IRRC to coordinate messaging during dyslexia awareness month with a focus on addressing key challenges.
 - iii. The board entered discussion regarding strategies that formally address dyslexia. They discussed how some states have identified specific programs but

that this may be problematic from a local decision making perspective. They also discussed how some states started by identifying the characteristics of effective programs, but evolved to identifying those specific programs because less effective programs began including this language in their promotional materials without truly addressing explicit and systematic instruction.

- iv. Barb Anderson closed the discussion sharing that suggestions would be taken to Department management and be considered moving forward.

3. Legislative Report Draft

- a. The board reviewed and made suggestions for revision to the drafted report.
 - i. The board discussed recommending specific texts to IHEs to support dyslexia and explicit and systematic reading instruction. They also discussed how to gather information about use of evidence-based intervention programs. These items were tabled.
 - ii. Katie Greving asked if it could be included if each AEA has a designated position called “dyslexia specialist”. Shane Williams shared that each AEA has a person with that qualification and their titles may be different from one AEA to another based on their union negotiations. Katie Greving indicated it would be important to know who the dyslexia specialist is at each AEA. Shane Williams shared that since this position is so new and those in the endorsement program are just finishing this winter, in a year from now the AEAs may have more perspective on roles and expectations for the AEA dyslexia specialists. The topic was tabled.
 - iii. The board discussed if school administrators should also have required dyslexia overview training. The board added this recommendation to the report.
- b. The report will be revised between now and the next meeting.

4. Dyslexia Endorsement Program Approval

- a. Ben Walizer, representative from the IRRC shared that there are several IHEs that are in the process of developing a dyslexia endorsement program. The IRRC believes there may be a conflict of interest in that the IRRC is required to approve dyslexia endorsement programs while at the same time the University of Iowa is admitting students to their own dyslexia endorsement program. Ben Walizer proposed that the Dyslexia Board be part of the approval process to provide a second opinion.
- b. The board entered discussion on logistics for being a part of the program approval process. Discussion included:
 - i. Possible law or rule changes that may be necessary (i.e., the Board is legislated through 2025, the IRRC is currently required by law and rule to approve programs).
 - ii. What this would look like for the Board (i.e., the IRRC bringing all program information to the board and then using the Board’s feedback to make a recommendation; having a standing board agenda item on program approvals; needing to go into closed session for approvals).
- c. Thomas Mayes, Department legal counsel, provided some context for the board. Regarding conflict of interest, he noted that the IRRC is hosted by the University of Iowa

but under the direction of the Department of Education. The law says IRRC is the approving body and any concerns regarding a conflict of interest would be addressed through the complaint process with the burden of proof being on the education preparation program to prove during the appeal process with the IRRC and the State Board. At this point, the Dyslexia Board can provide advice to the IRRC but the IRRC is required to make the decisions regarding dyslexia program approval. If the Dyslexia Board wanted to move forward with considering a different role, this would be a venture between the IRRC, State Board and Dyslexia Board.

- d. Additional discussion included alternatively providing input to the IRRC on the minimum criteria for programs.
- e. The board proposed inviting Thomas Mayes, Department legal counsel, to the October board meeting for further discussion. Other topics to discuss with Thomas Mayes include legislated ending of the dyslexia Board, implications for appeals, who drafts code language for this and how to engage the necessary entities in further discussion.

5. 2022-2023 Board Actions

- a. The board reviewed actions for IHEs.
 - i. The board discussed providing preservice programs with information about the characteristics of dyslexia and the [knowledge and practice standards](#).
- b. The board realigned drafted actions and subcommittees to focus the work on the following areas: Communication, IHE, Data Mining, Assessment Discovery, Instruction Discovery.
- c. Subcommittee assignments were proposed.
 - i. Communication: Matt Cretsinger (chair), Shane Williams, Barb Anderson, Mark Hennigar.
 - ii. IHEs: Stephanie Edgren (chair), Nina Lorimor-Easley, Shane Williams, James Northwick.
 - iii. Data Mining: Tammy Wilgenbusch (chair), Katie Greving, Kara Wishman, Ben Walizer
 - iv. Assessment Discovery: Kay Stork (chair), Tammy Wilgenbusch, Matt Cretsinger, Nina Lorimor-Easley.
 - v. Instruction Discovery: Stephanie Edgren (chair), Kay Stork, Ben Walizer, Kristen Craig (pending approval)

6. Adjourn

- a. Shane Williams motioned to close the meeting. Matt Cretsinger seconded the motion. The motion carried. The board adjourned at 2:30.