

Iowa Dyslexia Task Force Meeting

Notes submitted by Mandi Bozarth, West Wind Education Policy Inc.

MEETING DATE AND TIMES

Thursday, November 1, 10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

ATTENDEES

Task Force Members:

Dave Tilly (Chair), Lonna Anderson, Helen Blitvich, Amy Conrad, Sue Etscheidt, Katie Greving, Elizabeth Hoksbergen, Erin Klopstad, Nina Lorimor-Easley, Kristen Orten, Kim Schmidt, Cindy Lewis

Facilitator:

Circe Stumbo

Iowa Department of Education Staff:

Kathy Bertsch, Tana Mullen

Note-Takers:

Mandi Bozarth, Bonnie Riggan

Members of the public were also in attendance.

NOTES:

The meeting was convened at 10:00 am at the Iowa City Community School District Educational Services Center, Board Rooms A and B, 1725 North Dodge St., Iowa City, IA.

Agenda Item: Introductions, review and approve agenda and notes from the October 3 and 10 meetings

There were no changes to the proposed agenda. Notes from the October 3 and 10 meetings will be approved at the November 30 meeting.

Agenda Item: Housekeeping

Task Force members discussed how they will share notes, decisions, and materials. They also discussed reimbursements for travel and expenses.

Agenda Item: Task Force charge, expected outcomes, scope of work, goals, norms/ground rules, and processes

Members passed the following decision-rules and process-rules by unanimous vote.

Rules for voting on final recommendations:

1. A quorum of 75% of members is required to hold a vote;

2. Members may call for a vote (a majority vote will close debate);
3. Decisions will be determined by a 75% vote of those present and voting or voting within 48 hours after the close of a meeting;
4. Members joining via Zoom may vote during the meeting;
5. If a member is not present, they may register their vote within 48 hours via email or electronic form that certifies who they are; If they do not vote, it will be recorded as an abstention;
6. Final votes on recommendations will be held via roll-call and published in meeting minutes through roll-call or by stating "vote passed/did not pass unanimously";
7. Final recommendations may include authored dissenting opinions;
8. Meetings will be available via Zoom with the understanding that in-person attendance is highly encouraged and preferred.

Processes for working together:

1. Decisions will be made by consensus to the greatest extent possible, using Fist to Five, to help support decision-making;
2. Sufficient time will be provided for additional learning as needed and for dissenting views to be expressed;
3. Members not present will receive the official notes and an overview of decisions to guide their vote.

Members asked if the Iowa Department of Education webpage for the Dyslexia Task Force could include a place where members of the public could offer input and where they could find information for joining a Zoom. Dave Tilly agreed to explore this possibility.

Members crafted core value statements to guide Task Force work -- the Task Force will review and finalize the core value statements at the November 30 meeting:

1. Members will be respectful and supportive of all contributions and ideas, even those which may be in divergence. Ideas will be brought together in a collaborative manner to support the very best for all children.
2. The Task Force members will base our recommendations on the evidence base/research to the greatest extent possible.
3. The Task Force members will design recommendations with the belief that all students are able to learn to read when provided with highly effective literacy instruction.
4. The Task Force will work to craft recommendations that are strategic, feasible, concrete, and bold.
5. The Task Force members agreed to honor that "we are here representing not just ourselves; we are here to serve the greater good."

Task Force members discussed a set of ground rules or norms for working together -- the ground rules/norms will be finalized at the November 30 meeting:

1. Ask questions, actively listen, and say what you have to say in the meetings;

2. Treat each other with respect;
3. Intentionally honor all voices and opinions; be timely, prepared, and present;
4. Be open minded and be willing to change our minds;
5. Come with an open heart.

Agenda Item: Identification of background resources, definitions, and major topics to cover

The Task Force members discussed how they will access and use large-scale data, what data they may need to collect and analyze, who their different stakeholder groups are, and the use of small groups of members to address different needs. The group decided to work in small groups by topic to start their work and bring findings and suggestions from small groups to whole Task Force discussions.

Task Force Members determined that they will craft survey tools to better understand what is happening around dyslexia throughout Iowa. The surveys will be aimed at gathering information from and about different stakeholders, including parents, area education agencies, teachers, administrators, and students. The Iowa Department of Education will help develop and administer the survey(s). When it is sent to stakeholders, it will state that it is to be used by the Task Force for the purposes of gaining a clearer understanding of what is happening to support the Task Force to make effective recommendations.

Task Force members decided to begin working in small groups on the topics that impact survey development. They can use their learning to explore the specific recommendations and suggested timeline they will provide to the legislature. Tilly shared that the Task Force can also add topics as necessary.

Agenda Item: Learning Component

After deliberations, Task Force members created small working-groups to advise on the questions to be developed in the survey and craft one-page briefs on the topics. The groups are:

1. Screening and Interventions
2. Symptoms, Effective, Cognitive-Linguistics, Correlates, and Definitions
3. Accommodations and Technology
4. Teacher Preparation
5. Professional Learning
6. Information Gathering (Current Practices and Concerns Survey Group)

Members created a matrix as a Google Doc for each group to share their work. They will find an expert on survey methodology to design the survey based on the small-group recommendations. Each person volunteered to work on at least one small group. They decided that small groups can work via Zoom or other ways as they progress.

Tilly stated that they can make recommendations about the definition of dyslexia but cannot change it, as it is in Iowa Code. They must work in the spirit of the definition.

Agenda Item: Public Comment

One member of the public, Samantha Zehms, asked the Task Force members to address dyslexia within the context of special education. She asked the members to consider how to position a parent to know if and how a teacher is implementing an IEP for dyslexia with fidelity. She asked them to consider the reality of the work a parent does to monitor an IEP and the challenges for getting one changed or more effectively implemented.

Agenda Item: Logistics and Scheduling

Tana Mullen from the Iowa Department of Education will send a poll to the group to reserve meeting times over the next year.

Task Force members agreed that Greving will post announcements of meetings on the Decoding Dyslexia Iowa website.

Agenda Item: Planning for November 30 Meeting

Tilly and Stumbo will craft a suggested agenda for the next meeting to share with the group for input.

Agenda Item: Meeting Evaluation

Stumbo will send a digital meeting evaluation to members to provide feedback.

Agenda Item: Meeting Adjourned

The meeting was adjourned at 3:29 pm.

Questions about these meeting notes may be referred to Dave Tilly, Deputy Director, Iowa Department of Education, at David.tilly@iowa.gov or (515) 281-3333.