

Iowa Dyslexia Board

Final Meeting Minutes – October 20, 2021

Meeting minutes taken by Kathy Bertsch.

CALL TO ORDER

Brad Niebling called the meeting to order at 10 a.m.

An attendance roll call was taken.

Present:

- Brad Niebling, Kristen Craig, Matt Cretsinger, Deborah Reed, Shane Williams, Mark Hennigar, Katie Greving, Nina Lorimor-Easley, Kay Stork (participating remotely)

Absent:

- Kara Wishman, Corey Vorthmann

Nina Lorimor-Easley made a motion and Matt Cretsinger seconded to approve the minutes from September. The motion carried.

The board reviewed the agenda. Katie Greving requested to add an item to the agenda. Grieving requested that the Board consider actions they might want to take regarding public comment on rule changes to the Iowa Dyslexia Specialist Endorsement. This was added to the agenda in the Board Report section.

Katie Greving made a motion and Mark Hennigar seconded to approve the agenda. The motion carried.

This meeting was conducted in-person.

Bylaws

The board reviewed the drafted bylaws. Katie Greving, Deborah Reed and Kay Stork indicate they reflected conversation. The board discussed options to post the minutes in draft form prior to the next meeting for final approval. The Department will consult with legal counsel regarding this consideration.

Matt Cretsinger made a motion to approve the bylaws for legal review. Nina Lorimor-Easley seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Board Report

The board reviewed the draft Board report.

A. The Department's dyslexia consultant position

- Katie Greving inquired why the Department's dyslexia consultant position is titled “Explicit Instruction Consultant” as opposed to “Dyslexia Consultant.” Greving indicated “Dyslexia Consultant” would better align to the Task Force recommendations regarding using the term “dyslexia” in Iowa schools. Brad Niebling provided context for the “Explicit Instruction Consultant” position noting that the title would allow the consultant to engage in explicit instruction work across academic areas and the intent was not to avoid “dyslexia” in the title. Katie Greving inquired if it was within the Department’s capacity to include “dyslexia” in the title. Brad Niebling acknowledged that it is the board's role to provide recommendations to the DE regarding the position and the DE will look at the job title to make it more evident the person would be responsible for dyslexia.

B. Iowa Administrative Code for Dyslexia Specialist ([IAC 282—13.28\(36\)](#))

1. Katie Greving opened discussion about the current rules for the dyslexia specialist position. Greving indicated that the Board of Educational Examiners was proposing a revision and shared the suggested changes that Decoding Dyslexia Iowa would be requesting. Greving noted that public comment was open through 10/26/2021 and the Administrative Rules Review Committee (ARRC) was meeting on 11/9/2021 to hear the changes. Greving proposed that the Iowa Dyslexia Board vote to sign on to these proposed changes. The board entered discussion regarding the following proposed changes [red text denotes suggested change]:
 - a. 282—13.28(36)“b”(5)(5) Practicum in dyslexia. The dyslexia specialist will participate in elementary and secondary practicum experiences with instructors who have experience with and are currently serving students who display characteristics of dyslexia. ~~The cooperating teacher must be approved by the Iowa reading research center.~~ [Recommended by the Educational Examiners Board]
 - i. Greving inquired with Deborah Reed if this change would interfere with the integrity of the endorsement program. Deborah Reed, board member and director of the Iowa Reading Research Center (IRRC), provided context for this recommended change and indicated the IRRC is fine with this change as long as the IRRC has already approved the program as a whole. The board did not take action on the request to make comment on this item.
 - b. 282—13.28(36) *Dyslexia Specialist*. K-12. The applicant must have met the requirements for the standard license and have completed at least three years of post-baccalaureate teaching experience in a K-12 setting.

Applicants who have achieved dyslexia certification in another state prior to the adoption of these rules may apply for a certification review. **As with in-state Dyslexia Specialist programs, out-of-state programs that issued the certification must meet approval of the Iowa Reading Research Center.**

- i. Greving noted concern that currently persons receiving their dyslexia endorsement from a collaborating program or a program outside the state may receive the endorsement without engaging in the program requirements as approved by the IRRC. This is due to the Board of Educational Examiners (BoEE) process for accepting candidates for the endorsement from out of state. The concern is that these candidates may not have the same level of knowledge and skill due to this lack of program approval requirement. The proposed changes would address such requirements.
 - c. 282—13.28(36)“b”(3). Curriculum and instruction. The dyslexia specialist will **know how to** use appropriate instructional approaches and materials as well as integrated, comprehensive, explicit, and systematic literacy instruction to support student learning in reading and writing. **Knowledge will not be limited to preparation in a single curriculum but will include including** the following **components**:
 - i. Greving noted that some programs offer the dyslexia endorsement but limit training to a particular program/curricular material. This limits the educator’s knowledge and skills. The proposed change would address this concern.
2. Katie Greving proposed the Iowa Dyslexia Board respond to the suggested changes to address approval of out-of-state dyslexia endorsement programs and single curriculum programs. The board discussed if it has authority to make such recommended changes. Brad Niebling indicated the board has authority to make those suggested changes in its annual report to the legislature and suggested the board seek legal counsel as to if they may make such suggestions to the ARRC. Katie Greving also inquired on if the board could work with the BoEE directly on these suggestions. Shane Williams and Nina Lorimor-Easley shared their support for these suggestions to maintain integrity of the endorsement. Deborah Reed indicated that being able to go out of state opens the door to inconsistencies in addressing dyslexia that have been seen over time with other Iowa endorsements.
3. Brad Niebling proposed the suggested administrative rules changes be included in the board report and reviewed for approval at the end of the meeting once the

report was updated to address the changes. The board would need to wait to receive legal guidance before making comment to the BoEE and/or ARRC.

Developing Measurable Board Goals and Actions

A. Review Draft Board Priorities and Initial Board Actions

The Board revisited its Board authority based on Iowa Code and reviewed possible avenues of impact to address high quality work. Those include setting measurable goals, analyzing data/information and bringing forward recommendations of the Board. The Board reviewed priorities and actions outlined in September.

B. Unpack Challenges & Solutions

The board engaged in small group work to unpack the Challenges & Solutions provided by the [Dyslexia Task Force](#). They considered possible solutions and organized them into the board priorities. The board entered discussion regarding their findings.

a. Use of the Term Dyslexia

- i. Mark Hennigar and Matt Cretsinger reviewed the concern and identified two priorities:
 1. Communicate the legislation that has passed: They inquired if the definition includes dysgraphia and dyscalculia or if the Board would expand this.
 2. The Department's guidance on use of the term "dyslexia" in schools including how, when and who may use the term.
- ii. Deborah Reed noted that it is important to recognize what dyslexia is and is not, but that it is hard without the 13 categorical disabilities.
- iii. Katie Greving noted all schools should be able to use the term and understand under what situations it is advised. Greving noted that right now families are told different things and also schools do not use the term "dyslexia". When concerns about dyslexia are brought by parents, the concern is dismissed or shut down. Greving proposes that a document is developed that describes the best practices in using the term "dyslexia".
- iv. The board discussed possible methods of communication including the following: superintendent network, curriculum network and special education directors, social media, the AEA network and through educator preparation programs. The guidance should include what you can and cannot say.

b. Consistent Response to Dyslexia

- i. Katie Greving and Brad Niebling thought all actions are feasible and fit

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with priorities. Those included:

1. Having consistent guidance on effective interventions, and
 2. Guidance on diagnostic assessment after screening including diagnostic assessments for instruction.
- ii. Matt Cretsinger indicated he would like to see a diagnostic assessment that showed what was making students struggle. He would prefer to have tools that show what reading components students need as this type of diagnostics is currently not available, but does not want the Department to tell schools what they can/cannot use.
 - iii. Katie Greving noted that other states have taken a stronger stance on what is appropriate for intervention and have banned programs that are guided reading. She noted that the department seems hesitant to name programs.
 - iv. Deborah Reed noted the endorsement program is teaching a diagnostic process that is dependent on a battery of testing and that it would be unfortunate if the diagnostic processes do not align. Reed noted 8 of the 9 AEA dyslexia specialist positions are filled and Mississippi Bend calibrated with the IRRC to align qualification in their selection. One of the AEAs has already purchased the assessments required by the endorsement and would not be happy if the recommendations for diagnostic assessment are something different. She indicated it is important to be forthright about where we are instead of recreating something different.
 - v. Katie Greving noted that there are concerns that Fastbridge measures are not useful in telling what to provide for instruction.
 - vi. Deborah Reed noted that Fastbridge is not sufficiently diagnostic or accurate at identifying students at-risk for reading and would like to see a reexamination of the measure used by the state.
 - vii. Shane Williams that the measure is very helpful for school improvement conversations.
 - viii. Katie Greving noted that she was glad we have a measure to know where students are at in their reading.
 - ix. Kristen Craig noted that when she administers the measures herself she gains a lot more information about students.
 - x. Brad Niebling summarized that the board wants to take action around the idea of diagnostic assessment to identify instructional needs and then what interventions are aligned with these needs.

c. Inadequacy of Teacher Preparation and Professional Development

- i. Kristen Craig and Nina Lorimor-Easley indicated the concern continues to be a challenge. They noted that the Dyslexia Professional Learning Framework is still a good plan to address both preservice and in-service concerns. Other items of need included:
 - 1. Addressing accountability for educator engagement in the IRRC Dyslexia Overview module,
 - 2. Training of AEA personnel,
 - 3. Developing a leveled recognition program,
 - 4. Support for the Department to fulfill the dyslexia consultant role so that there is consistent ushering of this work,
- ii. Nina Lorimor-Easley inquired on how the board can know more about what is happening at the AEAs regarding dyslexia. Indicating a lot relies on the dyslexia endorsement and additional consideration should be made for ways to maintain knowledge and skills of those who have been through the endorsement.

C. Developing Measurable Goals and Actions

- a. The board considered next steps in developing measurable goals and actions. Nina Lorimor-Easley (Vice Chair) and Kathy Bertsch (Board Staff) will collaborate to develop 2-3 goals per priority area based on the October board meeting discussions for the board to review during the February meeting.
- b. Brad Niebling facilitated the board to review and confirm the board priorities. Suggestion was made to revise #2 to include the text in red below:
 - Ensuring a consistent **identification of and** response to dyslexia.

Closing

A. Announcements

There were no announcements

B. Website Updates

Kathy Bertsch, board staff, make note of the updated Dyslexia Board website which includes a place for the public to provide public comment.

C. Approval of Board Report Revisions

Nina Lorimor-Easley, Vice Chair, took over facilitating the board report approval due to Brad Niebling's conflict of interest regarding the recommendation on the table to include

recommendations for the Board of Educational Examiners (BoEE).

Katie Greving made a motion to approve the new language in the board report, Kristen Craig seconded. Seven members in favor and 0 voted against the board report. Deborah Reed and Brad Niebling abstained. The motion passed.

Katie Greving left the meeting.

D. Approval of Dyslexia Endorsement Revisions to the BoEE and ARRC

The board considered voting for the below recommended endorsements revisions but believed they did not have a quorum as 2 members (Brad Niebling and Deborah Reed) had to recuse themselves for conflict of interest and Katie Greving had left the meeting. This left just 6 voting members. The motion died.

- a. 282—13.28(36) *Dyslexia Specialist*. K-12. The applicant must have met the requirements for the standard license and have completed at least three years of post-baccalaureate teaching experience in a K-12 setting. Applicants who have achieved dyslexia certification in another state prior to the adoption of these rules may apply for a certification review. **As with in-state Dyslexia Specialist programs, out-of-state programs that issued the certification must meet approval of the Iowa Reading Research Center.**
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E. Board Report Approval Re-Opened

The board discussed how to address the dyslexia endorsement component of the board report given the fact that the board was not able to make recommendations to the BoEE and ARRC. Nina Lorimor-Easley made a motion to reopen the board report for revisions. To assure the board could approve the report, the language was reduced to allow all present members to vote on the report. Shane Williams made a motion to approve the report with the reduced language regarding the dyslexia endorsement and Matt Cretsinger seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (Katie Greving, Corey Vorthmann, Kara Wishman absent).

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Brad Niebling adjourned the meeting at 2:35 p.m.