Instruction

Reading Instruction and Improvement

The District shall develop its curriculum to facilitate reading instruction and intervention services to address student reading needs, including, but not limited to, dyslexia. In doing so, the District will ensure that all teachers for kindergarten through grade three should be effective reading teachers as evidenced by (a) evaluations based on classroom observations and student improvement on reading assessments or (b) specialized training in reading improvement. Each student and his or her parents or guardians will be informed of the student's reading progress. It is the District's intent that each student in the District be able to read at or above grade level by third grade.

For each school year, the District shall administer an approved reading assessment three times during the school year to all students in kindergarten through grade three, except for any student receiving specialized instruction for limited English proficiency who has been receiving such instruction for less than two years, any student receiving special education services for whom such assessment would conflict with the individualized education plan, and any student receiving services under a plan pursuant to the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, for whom such assessment would conflict with such section 504 or Title II plan. The first administration of such assessment for each such school year shall occur within the first thirty days of the school year.

Any student in kindergarten, grade one, grade two, or grade three shall be identified as having a reading deficiency if such student performs below the threshold level determined pursuant to the Reading Improvement Act. A student who is identified as having a reading deficiency pursuant to the Reading Improvement Act shall remain identified as having a reading deficiency until the student performs at or above the threshold level on an approved reading assessment. Nothing in the Nebraska Reading Improvement Act shall prohibit the District from identifying any other student as having a reading deficiency.

(1) The District will provide a supplemental reading intervention program for the purpose of ensuring that students can read at or above grade level at the end of third grade. The District may work collaboratively with a reading specialist at the State Department of Education, with educational service units, with learning communities, or through interlocal agreements to develop and provide such supplemental reading intervention programs. Each supplemental reading intervention program shall:
   (a) Be provided to any student identified as having a reading deficiency;
   (b) Be implemented during regular school hours in addition to regularly scheduled reading instruction unless otherwise agreed to by a parent or guardian; and
   (c) Make available a summer reading program each summer for any student who has been enrolled in grade one or higher and is identified as continuing to have a reading deficiency at the conclusion of the school

year preceding such summer reading program. Such summer reading program may be held in conjunction with existing summer programs in the school district or in a community reading program not affiliated with the school district or may be offered online.

(2) The supplemental reading intervention program may also include:
   (a) Reading intervention techniques that are based on scientific research and best practices;
   (b) Diagnostic assessments to frequently monitor student progress throughout the school year and adjust instruction accordingly;
   (c) Intensive intervention using strategies to match the weaknesses identified in the diagnostic assessment:
      (i) Development in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension;
      (ii) Explicit and systematic instruction with detailed explanations, extensive opportunities for guided practice, and opportunities for error corrections and feedback; or
      (iii) Daily targeted individual or small-group reading intervention based on student needs as determined by diagnostic assessment data subject to planned extracurricular school activities;
   (d) Strategies and resources to assist with reading skills at home, including parent-training workshops and suggestions for parent-guided home reading; or
   (e) Access to before-school or after-school supplemental reading intervention with a teacher or tutor who has specialized training in reading intervention.

The school of any student who is identified as having a reading deficiency shall notify such student's parents or guardians either in writing or by electronic communication no later than fifteen working days after the identification of the reading deficiency that the student has been identified as having a reading deficiency and that an individual reading improvement plan will be established and shared with the parents or guardians.

Any student who is identified as having a reading deficiency shall receive an individual reading improvement plan no later than thirty days after the identification of such reading deficiency. The reading improvement plan may be created by the teacher, the principal, other pertinent school personnel, and the parents or guardians of the student and shall describe the reading intervention services the student will receive through the supplemental reading intervention program pursuant to this Policy. Each such student shall receive reading intervention services through the supplemental reading intervention program pursuant to this Policy until the student is no longer identified as having a reading deficiency.

Legal Reference: Nebraska Reading Improvement Act, Neb. Rev. Stat. Sec. 79-2601

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