



This document contains official guidance for §279.68. Guidance dated December 12, 2013 should not be used.

Purpose

The purpose of this guidance is to aid Iowa's public school districts in interpreting and implementing recently enacted Iowa Code §279.68 regarding early literacy progression. The Iowa Department of Education has also interpreted §279.68 in IAC 281—62. The requirements of Iowa Code §279.68 and IAC 281—62 apply to all public school districts in Iowa.

The general requirements of §279.68 and IAC 281—62 are: provision of universal screening in reading for students in kindergarten through third grade; progress monitoring for students who exhibit a substantial deficiency in reading; the provision of intensive instruction – including 90 minutes daily of scientific, research-based reading instruction - for students who exhibit a substantial deficiency in reading; notice to parents that a student exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading, including strategies the parents can use at home to help the child succeed; notice to parents of such a student's subsequent progress; provision of an evidence-based summer reading program for students who exhibit a substantial deficiency in reading; retention of any student who is not proficient in reading by the end of the third grade, did not attend the summer reading program, and does not qualify for a good cause exemption from the retention requirement. Some of these requirements go into effect immediately and are expected to be implemented no later than August 1, 2014. Others, such as the requirements for retention and the summer reading program, do not go into effect until May 1, 2017. Please refer to the table below for the deadline for each specific requirement.

The specific requirements and permitted actions are listed in table form along with the Iowa Code and Iowa Administrative Rule citations that apply. Further information in this document includes: Additional guidance, Frequently Asked Questions and Definitions.

Requirements

Table 1 lists actions by public school districts that are **required** per §279.68 and IAC 281—62.

Table 1: Code Citation, District Action Required, and Deadline.

Item	Iowa Code citation	Iowa Administrative Code citation	Action required of district	Deadline
1	279.68(1)(a)	IAC 281—62.2	Assess all K-3 students at the beginning of the school year and intermittently throughout the year using a Department-approved universal screening assessment.	No later than August 1, 2014.
2	279.68(1)(a)	IAC 281—62.2	Provide periodic assessments of students who exhibit a substantial deficiency in reading for the purpose of progress monitoring using a Department-approved progress monitoring assessment.	No later than August 1, 2014.
3	279.68(1)(a)	IAC 281—62.2	Use Department- determined benchmarks for basic levels of reading proficiency.	No later than August 1, 2014.
4	256B	IAC 281—62.3(6)	Permit a student with a disability who has been determined to require an alternate assessment aligned to alternate academic achievement standards in reading to take an alternate reading assessment ¹ that includes progress monitoring	No later than August 1, 2014.
5	279.68(2)(a)	IAC 281—62.6(1)	Provide intensive reading instruction, including a minimum of 90 minutes a day of scientific, research- based reading instruction, to any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading. This instruction may also include but is not limited to the following strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group instruction • Reduced teacher- student ratios • More frequent progress monitoring • Tutoring or mentoring • Extended school day, week, or year • Summer reading programs 	No later than August 1, 2014.
6	279.68(2)(d)	IAC 281—62.6(3)	Provide a reading curriculum for students with substantial deficiencies in reading that does all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists students in developing skills to read at grade level • Provides skill development in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension • Is implemented by certified instructional staff with appropriate training and professional development • Is implemented during regular school hours • Provides a curriculum in core academic subjects to assist the students in maintaining or meeting proficiency in all subjects 	No later than August 1, 2014.
7	279.68(1)(a)	IAC 281—62.4(3)	Continue to provide a student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading with intensive reading instruction until the reading deficiency is remedied.	No later than August 1, 2014.
8	279.68(1)(a)	IAC 281—62.4(1)	In determining whether or not a student demonstrates a substantial deficiency in reading, the district shall consider whether both of the following apply: (1) the student's performance is below a set standard on an approved assessment and, (2) the student's progress on an approved assessment is minimal. The Department will issue specific guidance regarding the use of these criteria with all approved assessments.	No later than August 1, 2014.

¹ It is important to note that the alternate assessment addresses literacy, and not just reading.

Item	Iowa Code citation	Iowa Administrative Code citation	Action required of district	Deadline
9	279.68(1)(b)	IAC 281—62.4(4)	Notify the parent or guardian of any student determined to have a substantial deficiency in reading annually (1) that their student has been identified as having a substantial deficiency, (2) of the services currently provided to the student, (3) what proposed supplemental instructional services and supports the district will provide to the student to remediate the reading deficiency, and (4) strategies parents/guardians can use to help the child succeed	No later than August 1, 2014.
10	279.68(2)(b)	IAC 281—62.6(4)	Apprise the parent or guardian of any student determined to have a substantial deficiency in reading of their student's academic progress and other useful information.	No later than August 1, 2014.
11	279.68(2)(c)	IAC 281—62.6(4)	Provide the parent or guardian of any student determined to have a substantial deficiency in reading with a plan outlined in a parent contract.	No later than August 1, 2014.
12	279.68(2)(f)	IAC 281—62.6(5) IAC 281—62.10(2)	Report the following to the Department of Education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specific reading interventions and supports implemented by the district • data on universal screening and progress monitoring 	No later than August 1, 2014.
13	279.68(4)(a)	IAC 281—62.9(1)	Address reading proficiency as part of the district's Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) using data from universal screening and progress monitoring assessments at the classroom and school levels and analyzed by other student characteristics.	No later than August 1, 2014.
14	279.68(4)(a)	IAC 281—62.9(2)	Review chronic early elementary absenteeism for its impact on literacy development as part of the CSIP.	No later than August 1, 2014.
15	279.68(4)(a)	IAC 281—62.9(3)	If more than 15% of an attendance center's students are not proficient by the end of 3 rd grade, the CSIP is required to include strategies to increase the percent proficient in reading, including school and community strategies.	No later than August 1, 2014.
16	279.68(1)(c)	IAC 281—62.5(1)	Notify the parent/guardian of a student whose reading deficiency has not been remedied by the end of 3 rd grade that they may enroll their student in an intensive summer reading program.	Beginning May 1, 2017 (unless the district applies for and is granted a waiver from the Department)
17	279.68(2)(e)	IAC 281—62.5(3)	Offer and provide an intensive summer reading program for any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading. The summer reading program must meet the standards and implementation guidelines established by the Iowa Reading Research Center (IRRC).	Beginning May 1, 2017.
18	279.68(1)(c) 279.68(5)	IAC 281—62.5(2)	Retain in the 3 rd grade any student who is not proficient in reading by the end of 3 rd grade on the universal screening assessment unless the student meets any of the following criteria: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the student completed the intensive summer reading program 	Beginning May 1, 2017

Item	Iowa Code citation	Iowa Administrative Code citation	Action required of district	Deadline
18	279.68(1)(c) 279.68(5)	IAC 281—62.5(2)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. the student is a Limited English proficient student with less than two years of instruction in an ESL program 3. the student has an IEP and the student's IEP indicates that participation in the assessments required by 279.68 is not appropriate 4. the student has demonstrated an acceptable level of performance on an alternative assessment based on scientifically- based research 5. the student has demonstrated mastery through a portfolio review that meets Department- required criteria 6. the student was previously retained and has received intensive remediation in reading for at least two years 	Beginning May 1, 2017.
19	279.68(5)(b)	IAC 281—62.4(1)	Document requests for good cause exemption from retention with evidence presented by the student's teacher to the school principal that the student's promotion is appropriate and is based on the student's academic record. Evidence may include the student's IEP, report card, or portfolio.	Beginning May 1, 2017
20	279.68(1)(c)	IAC 281—62.5(3)	Continue to provide intensive reading instruction to a student who is promoted to grade four but is not yet proficient in reading until the student's reading deficiency is remediated.	Beginning May 1, 2017

Permitted Actions

Table 2 lists actions by public school districts that are permitted per §279.68 and IAC 281—62.

Table 2: Code Citation, District Action Permitted, and Deadline.

Item	Iowa Code citation	Iowa Administrative Code citation	Action permitted by district	Deadline
21	279.68(5)(a)(3)	IAC 281—62.3(2)	In addition to universal screening and progress monitoring using approved assessments, the district may use an alternative assessment to determine an individual student's proficiency in reading. The alternative assessment must be based on scientifically-based research and reasonably calculated to provide information about the child's reading.	Beginning May 1, 2017
22	279.68(5)(a)(4)	IAC 281—62.3(3)	In addition to universal screening and progress monitoring using approved assessments, the district may use a portfolio review of student work to determine reading mastery. The portfolio review must use standard criteria based on scientifically-based research. The Department will maintain a list of portfolio review criteria.	Beginning May 1, 2017
23	279.68(1)(a)	IAC 281—62.3(4)	In addition to conducting universal screening and progress monitoring using approved assessments, the district may use teacher observation to determine that a student should be initially identified as having a substantial deficiency in reading proficiency. Teacher observation may not be used to determine that a student continues to have a substantial deficiency. Teacher observation must be based on Department-approved observation criteria.	Beginning August 1, 2014

Table 3 provides updated guidance for public school districts on **required** and **permitted** actions per §279.68 and IAC 281—62.

Table 3: Item Number, District Action Required or Permitted, and Updated Guidance.

Item	Action required of district	Guidance [Updated August 26, 2014]
1	Assess all K-3 students at the beginning of the school year and intermittently throughout the year using a Department-approved universal screening assessment.	Universal screening data are collected within Iowa TIER for districts using Formative Assessment System for Teachers [FAST]. For districts using an approved assessment other than FAST, access to Iowa TIER is not yet available. Therefore districts will be required to upload student-level universal screening data to the Department within 2-4 weeks after the close of each assessment period using a specified spreadsheet format [Fall, Winter, Spring]. Additional guidance on the required data elements and process for upload will be available by Fall 2014.
2	Provide periodic assessments of students who exhibit a substantial deficiency in reading for the purpose of progress monitoring using a Department-approved progress monitoring assessment.	<p>A student with a substantial deficiency in reading is a student whose reading performance is below a standard set on an approved assessment and whose progress on an approved assessment is minimal. Students are considered to have a substantial deficiency in reading when they meet either of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Score below the vendor benchmark during a universal screening period directly after a screening period in which they were considered at-risk of being substantially deficient. • Score below the vendor benchmark for two consecutive universal screening periods. <p>Districts are required to monitor the progress of – and provide additional intervention for – students who struggle with reading. There are two levels of risk that require some action for individual students:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Progress Monitoring and Intervention Requirements for Students Who Are Substantially Deficient <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students who are identified as substantially deficient are required to receive weekly progress monitoring. This will allow schools to monitor the improvement students are making toward end of year goals (i.e., spring benchmark) given the intervention they receive. • All students identified as substantially deficient are required to receive intervention to remediate their reading difficulties. This intervention is required to continue until the student demonstrates reading proficiency by meeting benchmark during a universal screening period. 2. Progress Monitoring and Intervention Requirements for Students Who Are At-Risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students who are identified as at-risk of having a substantial deficiency are required to receive weekly progress monitoring. This will allow schools to monitor the student’s progress to ensure he or she is on track to meet end of the year reading goals (i.e., spring benchmarks). • Intervention for students who are at-risk is highly recommended. If multiple data points suggest a student is not on track to meet end of year goals (i.e., spring benchmarks), interventions should be implemented for the at-risk student. <p>Examples Across Universal Screening Periods If a student met benchmark on the previous universal screening assessment and on the current universal screening s/he scores...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at or above the benchmark, then s/he is not at-risk and considered appropriately progressing and no action is required. • below the benchmark, then s/he is at-risk for substantial deficiency in reading and weekly progress monitoring is required but no intervention.

Item	Action required of district	Guidance [Updated August 26, 2014]																				
2	Provide periodic assessments of students who exhibit a substantial deficiency in reading for the purpose of progress monitoring using a Department-approved progress monitoring assessment.	<p>If a student was identified as substantially deficient on the previous universal screening assessment and on the current universal screening s/he scores...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at or above the benchmark, then s/he is at-risk for substantial deficiency in reading and weekly progress monitoring is required but no intervention. • below the benchmark, then s/he continues to be substantially deficient in reading and both weekly progress monitoring and intervention are required. <p>If a student was identified as at-risk on the previous universal screening assessment and on the current universal screening s/he scores...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at or above the benchmark, then s/he is no longer considered at-risk and considered appropriately progressing and no action is required. • below the benchmark, then s/he is substantially deficient in reading and both weekly progress monitoring and intervention are required. <p>Table 4 below provides guidance on universal screening, progress monitoring, instruction and parental notice requirements.</p> <p>Table 4. <i>Assessment and support for students who are appropriately progressing, at-risk or who exhibit a substantial deficiency in reading.</i></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="634 810 1539 1633"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Students who are Appropriately Progressing</th> <th>Students who are At-Risk for a Substantial Deficiency in Reading</th> <th>Student who exhibit a Substantial Deficiency in Reading</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Universal Screening</td> <td>All students 3 x's per year</td> <td>All students 3 x's per year</td> <td>All students 3 x's per year</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Progress Monitoring</td> <td>Not Required</td> <td>Required Weekly</td> <td>Required Weekly</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Instruction</td> <td>Universal Tier</td> <td>Universal Tier with additional intensive instruction <u>recommended</u></td> <td>Universal Tier with additional intensive instruction <u>required</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Parent Notice</td> <td>District adopted process for communicating student performance and progress</td> <td>District adopted process for communicating student performance and progress – Notice specific to performance on universal screening and any services to be provided is <u>recommended</u>.</td> <td>District adopted process for communicating student performance and progress – Notice to parents specific to performance on universal screening, services to be provided, recommended strategies, progress, and parent contract information is <u>required</u></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Progress monitoring data and reading interventions and supports are collected within Iowa TIER for districts using Formative Assessment System for Teachers [FAST]. For districts using an approved assessment other than FAST, access to Iowa TIER is not yet available. Therefore districts will be required to upload progress monitoring data and a list of reading interventions and supports provided to students with their Spring universal screening upload. Additional guidance on the required data elements and process for upload will be available by Fall 2014.</p>		Students who are Appropriately Progressing	Students who are At-Risk for a Substantial Deficiency in Reading	Student who exhibit a Substantial Deficiency in Reading	Universal Screening	All students 3 x's per year	All students 3 x's per year	All students 3 x's per year	Progress Monitoring	Not Required	Required Weekly	Required Weekly	Instruction	Universal Tier	Universal Tier with additional intensive instruction <u>recommended</u>	Universal Tier with additional intensive instruction <u>required</u>	Parent Notice	District adopted process for communicating student performance and progress	District adopted process for communicating student performance and progress – Notice specific to performance on universal screening and any services to be provided is <u>recommended</u> .	District adopted process for communicating student performance and progress – Notice to parents specific to performance on universal screening, services to be provided, recommended strategies, progress, and parent contract information is <u>required</u>
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Item	Action required of district	Guidance [Updated August 26, 2014]
3	Use Department- determined benchmarks for basic levels of reading proficiency.	For schools using the Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST) and Individual Growth and Development Indicators (IGDIs) the benchmarks are programmed into the Iowa TIER data system. For schools using other department approved assessments, it is required that districts follow the benchmarks established by the test developers that are appropriate for that grade level and assessment.
4	Permit a student with a disability who has been determined to require an alternate assessment aligned to alternate academic achievement standards in reading to take an alternate assessment in addition to the universal screening and progress monitoring assessments required by 279.68 and IAC—62.	For students whose IEP identify an Alternate Assessment in reading, the state Alternate Assessment meets the universal screening and progress monitoring requirements.
5	Provide intensive reading instruction, including a minimum of 90 minutes a day of scientific, research- based reading instruction, to any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading. This instruction may also include but is not limited to the following strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group instruction • Reduced teacher- student ratios • More frequent progress monitoring • Tutoring or mentoring • Extended school day, week, or year • Summer reading programs 	<p>For students who exhibit a substantial deficiency in reading, 90 minutes of research-based reading instruction, a district’s core literacy block satisfies the requirement to provide this service. If a district’s core instruction is not at least 90 minutes and composed of scientific, research-based reading instruction, then it is required that the district implement such a program for students with a substantial deficiency in reading.</p> <p>Districts must provide additional instruction or support to students identified as being substantially deficient in reading beyond the 90-minute requirement, which may include but is not limited to small group instruction; reduced teacher-student ratios; more frequent progress monitoring; tutoring or mentoring; extended school-day, week, or year; and summer reading programs.</p> <p>The Iowa Reading Research Center provides districts and parents resources to use specific to scientific, research-based core instruction. [http://www.iowareadingresearch.org]</p> <p>During the 2014-2015 school year, the Iowa Department of Education, in collaboration with Collaborating for Iowa’s Kids, and the Iowa Reading Research Center, will provide districts information regarding the identification of evidence-based instructional materials.</p>
6	Provide a reading curriculum for students with substantial deficiencies in reading that does all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists students in developing skills to read at grade level • Provides skill development in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension • Is implemented by certified instructional staff with appropriate training and professional development 	<p>The Iowa Reading Research Center provides districts and parents resources to use specific to scientific, research-based core instruction. [http://www.iowareadingresearch.org]</p> <p>During the 2014-2015 school year, the Iowa Department of Education, in collaboration with Collaborating for Iowa’s Kids, and the Iowa Reading Research Center, will provide districts information regarding the identification of evidence-based instructional materials.</p>

Item	Action required of district	Guidance [Updated August 26, 2014]
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is implemented during regular school hours • Provides a curriculum in core academic subjects to assist the students in maintaining or meeting proficiency in all subjects 	
7	Continue to provide a student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading with intensive reading instruction until the reading deficiency is remedied.	Districts must continue to provide intensive reading instruction to any student who exhibits substantial deficiency until the student no longer performs below the benchmark on the universal screening measure and/or meets proficiency on the statewide accountability assessment. This includes all students, from kindergarten through twelfth grade in Iowa's public schools.
8	In determining whether or not a student demonstrates a substantial deficiency in reading, the district shall consider whether both of the following apply: (1) the student's performance is below a set standard on an approved assessment and, (2) the student's progress on an approved assessment is minimal. The Department will issue specific guidance regarding the use of these criteria with all approved assessments.	<p>Identification of students as having a substantial deficiency occurs when a student scores below benchmark on two consecutive universal screening administrations within or across school years. Teacher observation may be used to initially identify that a student has a substantial deficiency in reading. In the 2014-2015 school year, teacher observation may be used after the Winter universal screening period. Teacher observation may not be used to determine a student does not have a substantial deficiency in reading.</p> <p>Identification of a student as being at-risk as having a substantial deficiency occurs when a student scores below benchmark on one universal screening administration.</p> <p>A student is adequately progressing when they score at or above benchmark on two consecutive universal screening administrations within or across years.</p>
9	Notify the parent or guardian of any student determined to have a substantial deficiency in reading annually (1) that their student has been identified as having a substantial deficiency, (2) of the services currently provided to the student, (3) what proposed supplemental instructional services and supports the district will provide to the student to remediate the reading deficiency, and (4) strategies parents/guardians can use to help the child succeed	<p>Parents must be notified annually if their child(ren) is/are determined to have a substantial deficiency in reading. Identification of students as having a substantial deficiency occurs when a student scores below benchmark on two consecutive universal screening administrations within or across school years. In the 2014-2015 school year, students scoring below benchmark on both Fall and Winter [or on both Winter and Spring] universal screening administrations are considered substantially deficient in reading - and parents must then be notified as such.</p> <p>Notification letters need to include universal screening data that indicates their child(ren) is/are below benchmark, current services and proposed supplemental services that will be provided to the student to remediate substantial deficiency, and strategies parents/guardians may implement at home.</p> <p>It is strongly recommended that districts schedule Early Literacy Progression meetings with parents/guardians in order to discuss the identification of their child(ren) as substantially deficient and use this time to review the information in the letter as well as begin the process of establishing a parent contract.</p> <p>An example parent letter and contract will be provided to districts Fall 2014.</p>
10	Apprise the parent or guardian of any student determined to have a substantial deficiency in reading of their student's academic progress and other useful information.	It is recommended districts provide quarterly progress reports to parents/guardians of a child(ren) identified as substantially deficient. An example progress report will be provided to districts Fall 2014.

Item	Action required of district	Guidance [Updated August 26, 2014]
11	Provide the parent or guardian of any student determined to have a substantial deficiency in reading with a plan outlined in a parent contract.	<p>It is strongly recommended that districts schedule Early Literacy Progression meetings with parents/guardians to discuss the district process to establish a parent contract.</p> <p>An example parent letter and contract will be provided to districts Fall 2014.</p>
12	<p>Report the following to the Department of Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specific reading interventions and supports implemented by the district • data on universal screening and progress monitoring 	<p>Data regarding specific reading interventions and supports, as well as universal screening and progress monitoring data are collected within Iowa TIER for districts using Formative Assessment System for Teachers [FAST].</p> <p>For schools using Iowa TIER and the FAST assessments, required data are already documented within the system. The Universal Screening tab contains all student universal screening data. The progress monitoring tab contains all progress monitoring data and the Interventions tab allows you to save (referred to as bank within the system) interventions used and assign students to them.</p> <p>For districts using an approved assessment other than FAST, access to Iowa TIER is not yet available. Therefore districts will be required to upload a list of reading interventions and supports provided to students with their Spring universal screening upload. Universal screening data are required to be uploaded at the student-level within 2-4 weeks after the close of each assessment period using a specified spreadsheet format. Additional guidance on the required data elements and process for upload will be available by Fall 2014.</p>
13	Address reading proficiency as part of the district's Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) using data from universal screening and progress monitoring assessments at the classroom and school levels and analyzed by other student characteristics.	The Iowa Department of Education will provide guidance on the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan by Summer 2015.
14	Review chronic early elementary absenteeism for its impact on literacy development as part of the CSIP.	The Iowa Department of Education will provide guidance on the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan by Summer 2015.
15	If more than 15% of an attendance center's students are not proficient by the end of 3 rd grade, the CSIP is required to include strategies to increase the percent proficient in reading, including school and community strategies.	The Iowa Department of Education will provide guidance on the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan by Summer 2015.
16	Notify the parent/guardian of a student whose reading deficiency has not been remedied by the end of 3 rd grade that they may enroll their student in an intensive summer reading program.	<p>It is strongly recommended that districts schedule Early Literacy Progression meetings with parents/guardians to discuss summer school options, and possible retention of their child(ren) in the 3rd grade.</p> <p>An example parent letter and contract will be provided to districts by Fall 2014.</p>

Item	Action required of district	Guidance [Updated August 26, 2014]
17	Offer and provide an intensive summer reading program for any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading. The summer reading program must meet the standards and implementation guidelines established by the Iowa Reading Research Center (IRRC).	It is required to provide summer reading program options for students who have been identified as substantially deficient by the end of 3rd grade. Although this is not required until the 3 rd grade, it is recommended that districts have summer reading program options available for all students who exhibit substantial deficiency in reading until the deficiency is remediated beginning Summer 2015. Standards and implementation guidelines for summer reading programs will be provided by the Iowa Reading Research Center to districts Spring 2015.
18	<p>Retain in the 3rd grade any student who is not proficient in reading by the end of 3rd grade on the universal screening assessment unless the student meets any of the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the student completed the intensive summer reading program 2. the student is a Limited English proficient student with less than two years of instruction in an ESL program 3. the student has an IEP and the students IEP indicates that participation in the assessments required by 279.68 is not appropriate 4. the student has demonstrated an acceptable level of performance on an alternative assessment based on scientifically- based research 5. the student has demonstrated mastery through a portfolio review that meets Department- required criteria 6. the student was previously retained and has received intensive remediation in reading for at least two years 	As retention, and therefore good cause exemptions, will not be required until May 1, 2017, guidance will be provided to districts by Summer 2016.
19	Document requests for good cause exemption from retention with evidence presented by the student's teacher to the school principal that the student's promotion is appropriate and is based on the student's academic record. Evidence may include the student's IEP, report card, or portfolio.	As retention, and therefore good cause exemptions, will not be required until May 1, 2017, guidance will be provided to districts by Summer 2016.

Item	Action required of district [Items 21-23 are permitted actions]	Guidance [Updated August 26, 2014]
20	Continue to provide intensive reading instruction to a student who is promoted to grade four but is not yet proficient in reading until the student's reading deficiency is remediated.	Districts must continue to provide intensive reading instruction to any student who exhibits substantial deficiency until the student no longer performs below the benchmark on the universal screening measure and/or meets proficiency on the statewide accountability assessment. This includes all students, from kindergarten through twelfth grade in Iowa's public schools.
21	In addition to universal screening and progress monitoring using approved assessments, the district may use an alternative assessment to determine an individual student's proficiency in reading. The alternative assessment must be based on scientifically-based research and reasonably calculated to provide information about the child's reading.	As retention, and therefore alternative assessments, will not be required until May 1, 2017, guidance will be provided to districts by Summer 2016.
22	In addition to universal screening and progress monitoring using approved assessments, the district may use a portfolio review of student work to determine reading mastery. The portfolio review must use standard criteria based on scientifically-based research. The Department will maintain a list of portfolio review criteria.	As retention, and therefore portfolio reviews, will not be required until May 1, 2017, guidance will be provided to districts by Summer 2016.
23	In addition to conducting universal screening and progress monitoring using approved assessments, the district may use teacher observation to determine that a student should be initially identified as having a substantial deficiency in reading proficiency. Teacher observation may not be used to determine that a student continues to have a substantial deficiency. Teacher observation must be based on Department-approved observation criteria.	<p>Identification of students as having a substantial deficiency occurs when a student scores below benchmark on two consecutive universal screening administrations within or across school years. Teacher observation may be used to initially identify that a student has a substantial deficiency in reading. In the 2014-2015 school year, teacher observation may be used after the Winter universal screening period. Teacher observation may not be used to determine a student does not have a substantial deficiency in reading.</p> <p>Example teacher observation criteria will be provided to districts Fall 2014.</p>

Frequently Asked Questions

The Frequently Asked Questions are organized in table format by major category as indicated below:

- Assessment: Universal Screening and Progress Monitoring
- Continuous Improvement
- Early Childhood
- Finance
- Intensive Intervention and Core Instruction
- Non Public Schools
- Parental Notification
- Retention
- Students receiving Special Education Services
- Substantial Deficiency
- Summer School
- Waiver

Table 5: Question and Answer by Category

ASSESSMENT: UNIVERSAL SCREENING AND PROGRESS MONITORING		
No	QUESTION	ANSWER
A1	Are districts required to use the state-purchased universal screening assessments and progress monitoring assessments?	No. Districts are required to use assessments that meet Department-adopted minimum standards. A list of assessments that meet Department-adopted standards are published annually on the Department's web site along with the criteria used to establish the standards. The state-purchased universal screening and progress monitoring assessments meet these criteria and are available to districts at no cost.
A2	What are the benchmarks for basic levels of reading proficiency for each grade?	Districts must follow the benchmarks established by the test developers that are appropriate for that assessment. For schools using the Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST) and Individual Growth and Development Indicators (IGDIs) the benchmarks are programmed into the Iowa TIER data system.
A3	What are the acceptable administration windows for universal screening assessments?	Rule 62.2 allows the Department to require universal screening assessments to be administered three times a year. The fall administration window is between the third and sixth week of the start of the school year. The winter administration window is during the first six weeks students are back after winter break. The spring administration window is generally the last four weeks of the school year.
A4	How often do districts need to monitor the progress of students with, or who are at-risk of having, a substantial deficiency in reading?	It is recommended that students should be monitored weekly if the universal screening assessment results indicate he/she has a substantial deficiency in reading. The rules allow the Department to set the standard of weekly progress monitoring for students with a reading deficiency.
A5	Can districts continue to use the assessments they already have in place in order to implement these rules?	Maybe. For the purposes of universal screening and progress monitoring, districts must use assessments that meet Department-adopted minimum standards. A list of acceptable assessments are published annually on the Department's website. This does not necessarily prevent districts from continuing to use assessments they already have in place. If the district's current assessment meets the minimum standards, it may be used for the purposes of universal screening and/or progress monitoring. If it does not, the district may still wish to use the assessment if the results answer other instructionally relevant questions.
A6	Can districts continue to use assessments they already have in place that do not meet universal screening and progress monitoring standards?	Yes, but not for the purposes of universal screening or progress monitoring.

ASSESSMENT: UNIVERSAL SCREENING AND PROGRESS MONITORING

No	QUESTION	ANSWER
A7	What if a district uses an assessment for universal screening and progress monitoring that is not on the published list? Can the district continue to use the assessment if it meets the minimum standards outlined by the Department?	The district needs to establish that the assessment meets the minimum standards outlined by the Department. Assessments may be submitted to the Department for review within a review cycle to determine whether or not this is the case. Documentation of selected assessments meeting minimum standards must be maintained and made available to the Department upon request.
A8	What alternative assessment would be appropriate to determine proficiency in reading?	As the alternative assessment to determine proficiency is a requirement related to the retention portion of the legislation which is required May 1, 2017, guidance will be provided to districts by Summer 2016.
A9	Can districts use portfolio reviews to determine reading proficiency instead of using universal screening assessments to determine whether a student has a substantial deficiency in reading?	No. Portfolio reviews may be used along with universal screening assessments but not instead of or in place of universal screening assessments to determine whether a student has a substantial deficiency in reading. Portfolio assessments may also be used in determining whether a student should or should not be retained at the end of third grade as part of a good cause exemption.
A10	Can districts use teacher observations to determine reading proficiency instead of using universal screening assessments?	No. Teacher observation may be used for a one-time initial identification of an individual student with substantial deficiency in reading, but may not be used to determine if a student continues to have a substantial deficiency in reading.
A11	Can we implement Department approved universal screening and progress monitoring assessments to students beyond grade 3?	Yes. It is recommended that districts use appropriate assessment practices above the 3 rd grade.
A12	Can districts use other means besides universal screening assessments to determine a student has a substantial deficiency in reading?	No, with the exception of teacher observation. Universal screening assessment should be used to determine a substantial deficiency in reading; however teacher observation may be used for a one-time initial identification.
A13	Is the sole act of progress monitoring considered an intervention for at-risk students?	No. The purpose of progress monitoring is to evaluate the improvement students are making toward end of year goals given the instruction and/or intervention they are receiving. Progress monitoring is not an intervention as it is not designed to teach skills. It only measures the impact of instruction and the extent to which a student's skills are increasing.
A14	How does a parent refuse to have their child tested?	The procedures followed regarding parent refusal for district-wide assessments are local decisions.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

No	QUESTION	ANSWER
CI1	How shall we review “chronic early elementary absenteeism for its impact on literacy development”?	The district should review attendance data for all students in grades K-3 to determine if a pattern of frequent absences is associated with students being determined to have a substantial deficiency in reading at the individual student level.
CI2	Do we have to provide professional development to enhance the skills of elementary teachers in responding to children’s unique reading issues and needs and to increase the use of evidence-based strategies?	No. This is not required by code or rule since there have not been funds appropriated specifically for this section of the law. However, the district <u>may</u> use part or all of their portion of the \$8 million allocation for 2014-2015 to provide professional learning opportunities for teachers if they choose.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

EC1	How does IAC 279.68 apply to prekindergarten or transitional kindergarten programs?	Iowa Code 279.68 does not apply to prekindergarten programs. However if a kindergarten age eligible child is participating in Statewide Voluntary Preschool Programs [SWVPP], the child would need to be assessed using an approved kindergarten age assessment if the district receives kindergarten funding for the child. Transitional kindergarten and kindergarten are considered kindergarten programs and must comply with expectations of IAC 279.68. If a kindergarten age eligible child is participating in SWVPP and a transitional kindergarten program, the child would be assessed using a DE approved kindergarten age assessment. Children participating in transitional kindergarten who will attend kindergarten the following year would take a DE approved kindergarten age assessment both years. It would not be appropriate to assess a child participating in a preschool program with both IGDIs and a DE approved kindergarten age assessment. Transitional kindergartens align curriculum, instruction and assessment with the kindergarten standards in the Iowa Core. Therefore, transitional kindergarten teachers would administer a DE approved assessment for kindergarten age children.
EC2	Should IGDIs be used to assess three year old children?	No, the DE did not find IGDIs to be technically adequate for use with three year old children as a universal screening measure. IGDIs assessments are identified for use with four year olds only. The DE has not identified an early literacy screening tool for use with three year old children.
EC3	How does IGDIs relate to Teaching Strategies GOLD?	GOLD and IGDIs are both components of a balanced comprehensive assessment system. One assessment does not replace the other. GOLD is required under IAC 279.60 to be administered to all preschool children enrolled in a district program. While IGDIs is a DE approved assessment, it is not mandated by state law.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

No	QUESTION	ANSWER
EC4	We have a few transitional kindergarten classrooms in our district. If the students that attended transitional kindergarten, by 3 rd grade, are determined to be significantly behind in reading, would they be exempt from the retention rule because they had spent two years in kindergarten?	One of the good cause exemptions indicates that if a student was previously retained and has received intensive remediation in reading for at least two years, then the student is exempt from retention. If a district's defined transitional kindergarten mirrors the same structure, content and delivery of the district's defined kindergarten ² a student who has attended kindergarten for two years would meet one part of this exemption. The other requirement is that the student would need to have received two years of intensive remediation. If these two requirements are met, then the student would be exempt from retention. It is important to note (1) if a district's defined transitional kindergarten is anything less or otherwise different than their defined kindergarten, then this would not meet the good cause exemption requirement of being retained for at least two years, and (2) 279.68 requires the district to continue to provide intensive instruction until the substantial deficiency is remediated, which includes grades 4 through 12.

FINANCE

F1	In what ways can we spend the funds provided under these rules?	<p>The funds received pursuant to this section of code can be used to implement any part of Iowa Code 279.68. Examples include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) obtaining assessments for universal screening and/or progress monitoring b) professional development around assessments, reading instruction, summer school etc. <p>To access funds, districts must submit a brief application at www.iowagrants.gov. For guidance on how you might use your funds, please see the additional information provided in the Iowa Department of Education's guidance <i>Early Literacy Implementation: Budget Guidance</i>.</p>
F2	When are the state funds available for the 2014-2015 academic year?	Funds will be available as applications are received.
F3	Will the monies be there for summer school for the 2014-15 school year?	As long as Budget Guidance is followed, monies can be used per local decision. See Budget Guidance.

INTENSIVE INTERVENTION & CORE INSTRUCTION

I1	Is the required minimum of 90 minutes daily of scientific research-based reading instruction in addition to my current literacy block for core instruction?	No. If your core literacy block for all students is at least 90 minutes and composed of scientific, research-based reading instruction, it satisfies the requirement to provide this service for all students who have a substantial reading deficiency. If your core instruction is not at least 90 minutes and composed of scientific, research-based reading instruction, then you will need to implement such a program for students with a substantial deficiency in reading. You must still provide additional instruction or support to these students beyond the 90-minute requirement, which may include but is not limited to small group instruction; reduced teacher-student ratios; more frequent progress monitoring; tutoring or mentoring; extended school-day, week, or year; and summer reading programs.
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² Kindergarten includes programming for children who are kindergarten age eligible and enrolled in any program design including those commonly referred to as "transitional kindergarten" or "junior kindergarten." These children receive K-12 student aid.

INTENSIVE INTERVENTION & CORE INSTRUCTION

No	QUESTION	ANSWER
12	Where can I find a list of scientific, evidence-based reading curricula and instructional materials?	The Iowa Reading Research Center, in collaboration with the Department, will be adopting standards for reading curricula and materials based on the work of the national technical assistance centers and providing a list of acceptable materials that will be published annually on the Department's web site along with the criteria used to evaluate curriculum and instructional materials.
13	Are schools required to provide 90 minutes of research-based core reading instruction to all students?	The number of minutes specific to core reading instruction is a district decision. However it is strongly recommended that districts devote at least 90 minutes to core reading instruction for all students.
14	How much more time beyond the 90 minutes do I need to provide to a student?	It depends on the intervention being used and what the guidelines for implementation regarding the specific intervention entail. It is important to implement the evidence-based intervention with fidelity, or in the manner the designer intended. The intensity and duration of intervention should be adjusted as needed to ensure participating students are gaining the desired improvement.
15	Who can I count as certified instructional staff with appropriate training and professional development?	All licensed staff that have received training and professional development on the specific reading curriculum qualify.
16	How would I determine if the reading curriculum was implemented with fidelity?	Fidelity is determined by the curriculum selected, therefore, it depends on the curriculum being used and what the guidelines for implementation entail.
17	What subjects are covered under "core academic subjects"?	At a minimum, this includes subjects required to meet the offer and teach requirements for an elementary school [see IAC 281—12.5(3)]. The focus is providing assistance in the area of reading so that students can access all other subjects that require reading.
18	What is the mechanism for reporting which intensive reading interventions and supports we are using?	The Department will gather information through Iowa TIER for all districts choosing to use that system. This information may also be reported in the districts Consolidated School Improvement Plan (CSIP).
19	What is meant by an altered instructional day?	"Altered instructional day" means that the student will be provided with a minimum of 90 minutes of reading instruction in the core literacy block each day. In addition, more intensive reading intervention will be provided using time beyond the 90-minute core literacy block to successfully address the student's specific reading needs.
110	What is meant by specialized diagnostic information?	"Specialized diagnostic information" does not imply a diagnostic test but rather the collection of additional information (e.g., through teacher observation, diagnostic teaching, classroom formative assessment, examination of student error patterns in work samples, etc.) in order to determine what specific skill(s) the student may need assistance with in order to be proficient in reading.
111	How will I identify "reading strategies that research has shown to be successful"?	The Department will be adopting criteria by which it may be determined which are research based. The criteria have been established and will be published Fall 2014.
112	Why aren't interventions required immediately when a child is below vendor benchmarks on an approved assessment?	It is recommended that interventions are provided immediately for students who are at-risk of having a substantial deficiency in reading. Additionally, progress monitoring data will inform schools when a child who is at-risk is not making adequate progress with current instruction to meet end of year goals.

INTENSIVE INTERVENTION & CORE INSTRUCTION

No	QUESTION	ANSWER
I13	When should we intervene with a student who is performing within the at-risk range?	Although not required, it is recommended that supplemental interventions, be provided to students who are determined to be at-risk of having a substantial deficiency. However, it is required that these students' progress is monitored using state approved tools. This will allow the school to monitor each student's progress toward end of year goals.
I14	Can I discontinue an intervention for a student identified as substantially deficient in between benchmark periods?	No. Intervention may be discontinued when a student is no longer substantially deficient. The best measure of this status is performance during the screening periods. In most instances, the amount of time until this decision is a matter of a few weeks and it is likely most efficient to make the decision at this time.
I15	What about students who are a little bit above or a little bit below the benchmark target?	Decision making will always be least reliable at the margins (i.e., slightly above or slightly below a target). Additional caution, thought, and monitoring of student performance will be critical at these scores. These students are still identified as at-risk or substantially deficient if they score below the benchmark target.
I16	If you're doing classwide intervention as part of MTSS implementation, do you have to provide additional intervention to each student?	Yes, if that student is substantially deficient. This is true even if the classwide intervention is above and beyond core instruction.
I17	Does a classwide intervention count as an intensive intervention for students with a substantial deficiency in reading?	No. Students with a substantial deficiency in reading may participate in a classwide intervention but are required to receive additional intervention in smaller student-teacher ratio to remediate the deficiency. While a classwide intervention will be useful for buildings with many students at-risk of having a substantial deficiency in reading, these interventions are not intensive enough for students with a substantial deficiency in reading.
I18	If a school has 60 minutes of research-based reading instruction for all students and provides students with a substantial reading deficiency 30 minutes of research-based intervention that meets code requirements, have the requirement of 90 minutes of approved reading instruction been met?	It depends. Students should be provided with interventions that meet the requirements of the rule and are designed to remediate the student's reading deficiency. Research-based intervention programs provide guidance regarding implementation requirements and those should be followed. Refer to the definition of Intensive Instructional Services for more information.
I19	Can interventions for students with a substantial deficiency in reading be provided within an already-existing 90 minute literacy block?	Students with substantial deficiencies in reading should be provided with intervention in addition to the core reading instruction. When differentiation is included as part of a core program, this differentiation cannot be considered intervention for students with substantial deficiency.
I20	Can the 90 minutes include 60 minutes of classroom core and 30 minutes of intervention?	For students with a substantial deficiency in reading, at least 90 minutes of scientific, research-based reading instruction is required. These students should have access to core instruction and be provided with intensive instruction in addition to the core instruction. The specific breakdown of these minutes is a local decision. Refer to the definition of Intensive Instructional Services for more information.

NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS

No	QUESTION	ANSWER
N1	May a nonpublic school that chooses to collect information and provide the services in Iowa Code §279.68 and IAC 281—62, though not required, send students to the public school's summer reading program?	Yes.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

PN1	How often do schools need to apprise the parent or guardian of the student's academic progress?	Information showing the student's progress on a valid and reliable progress monitoring assessment should be provided to parents at least quarterly.
PN2	Will the Department provide an example of what needs to be in the "parental contract"?	Yes. An example parental contract will be provided to districts Fall 2014.
PN3	What is meant by "participation in regular parent-guided home reading"?	Guidance for parents to assist their children at home will be provided by the Iowa Reading Research Center along with activities parents can implement with their children to assist them in reading.
PN4	At what point in the year are parents notified of a substantial deficiency?	Parent notification is required within a reasonable period (e.g. within two weeks) of the universal screening in which the substantial deficiency is initially determined. Additionally, schools are encouraged to notify parents of students who are determined to be at-risk.
PN5	How are universal screening and progress monitoring data, as well as parent notices and related information, documented? Does this information go into the student's cumulative file?	Universal screening and progress monitoring data, as well as parent notices and related information, are required to be kept by districts. How districts store these data is a local decision, as long as they are maintained in a reasonable manner.
PN6	When will sample parent forms be available?	Parent forms will be available Fall 2014. It is important to note that districts will not be required to contact parents regarding substantial deficiency until after the Winter universal screening window. Please see guidance regarding substantial deficiency.
PN7	The law indicates we are to report progress to parents quarterly, however our school is on a trimester schedule. Do we report progress quarterly or on a trimester schedule?	Districts on a trimester schedule may report progress to parents on a trimester schedule.

RETENTION

No	QUESTION	ANSWER
R1	How would I use additional factors like “student’s progress in other subject areas, as well as, the student’s overall intellectual, physical, emotional, and social development?”	These additional factors might be used to aid district staff in making a decision to retain or promote a student where they are relevant to the individual student’s situation.
R2	IDOE Early Literacy Guidance document (p.5) indicates that universal screener would be used for determining retention (see also Line 11). So is this the guidance to go by or will it be based on the state test?	Districts may use either the State assessment or the universal screening assessment to demonstrate proficiency at the end of third grade. One consideration is that the data must be available at the end of third grade before the school year is out In order to determine if a student has or has not met proficiency.
R3	If a student is still deficient in 4th grade or up, are they subject to the retention policy set by the state, or is that only for 3rd grade?	No. Note that the district is required to continue reading intervention until the deficiency is remediated.
R4	What will be the response by LEAs/state if parents refuse to agree to retention or summer school?	The procedures followed regarding parent refusal are local decisions.
R5	Does the exemption related to students with IEPs apply to all students with IEPs or only those who currently take the Alternate Assessment?	This exemption applies only to students whose IEP indicates they are participating in the Alternate Assessment.
R6	Will there be an example exemption letter from the Department?	Yes. An example exemption letter will be provided by Summer 2016.
R7	How will districts file Good Cause Exemptions with the Department?	Additional guidance related to the retention portion of the legislation will be coming in the future.
R8	If a student is substantially deficient and retention is recommended, does the student repeat '3rd grade' reading AND 3rd grade math, science, and so on?	Districts are required to retain in the 3 rd grade any student who is not proficient in reading by the end of 3 rd grade unless the student meets good cause exemption criteria. This includes all areas within the 3 rd grade curriculum.

RETENTION

No	QUESTION	ANSWER
R9	What happens if a student moves to Iowa only in 3 rd grade and is not meeting benchmark in fall and winter - Could they be retained?	Yes.
R10	What happens if a student is in Iowa in kindergarten but then moves out for a while and comes back in 3 rd grade – can they be retained?	Yes.

STUDENTS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

SE1	Are students with IEPs exempt from universal screening and progress monitoring?	<p>No. Students with IEPs must also be given universal screening and progress monitoring assessments. This includes the requirement of weekly progress monitoring, if the student is identified by screening as at-risk or substantially deficient</p> <p>A student with an IEP that designates that he or she is to take an alternate assessment instead of the universal screening and progress monitoring of reading required by these rules is to take the alternate assessment required by the IEP. That alternate assessment may be IEP progress monitoring of instruction in literacy or pre-literacy skills. It is not enough that a child's IEP requires an alternate assessment. The IEP must (1) specifically mention the universal screening and progress monitoring of reading required by these rules, (2) state why they are inappropriate for the particular child, and (3) describe the alternate methods of assessing progress.</p>
SE2	Are students with IEPs exempt from the retention requirements?	<p>Not necessarily. A student who has an IEP that specifies participation in the assessments required by these rules is not appropriate (i.e. that student should take an alternate assessment) is exempt from the retention requirement. Any other student with an IEP is not exempt unless they meet one of the other good cause exemption criteria. Note that even if the student's IEP specifies that participation in the assessments required under this section of code is not appropriate, that student must still be assessed using an alternate assessment. Students with IEPs are not exempt from being assessed.</p>
SE3	What does this mean for students who currently receive IEP services in the area of reading? Do these rules apply to them?	<p>Yes. When a student receives special education services in the area of reading they are already receiving both intervention and progress monitoring services. Additionally, all students are general education students. Some also receive services through special education because of a disability and related needs. Students with reading IEP services already receive both intervention and progress monitoring services. These students should be able to take advantage of all appropriate services available to readers in the building, including those implemented as a result of the Early Literacy Progression law. Additionally, weekly progress monitoring is required of all students who are identified as at-risk or substantially deficient on the universal screening assessments, regardless of special education eligibility. Therefore, a student with an IEP may need to be more frequently monitored on his reading IEP goal than is required per the IEP in order to meet the requirements of the Early Literacy Progression rule.</p>

STUDENTS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

No	QUESTION	ANSWER
SE4	Should we suspect a disability for a child who is at-risk for having a substantial deficiency in reading?	A disability can be suspected at any time. A public agency may suspect a child might have a disability when the child's performance is below the universal screening benchmark and the child is unique in the setting in their performance level. Universal screening data of all students are needed to make this judgment.
SE5	After providing intervention and progress monitoring, at what point do we decide that we suspect a student may have a disability?	A disability can be suspected at any time. Commonly, a disability may be suspected if, a student has been provided with general instruction plus research-based supplemental instruction with sufficient frequency and duration and progress monitoring data indicate that progress is not sufficient to meet end of the year goals.
SE6	Can the specially designed instruction of an IEP be considered the intensive intervention and count towards the 90 minutes?	For students with IEPs and reading goals, IEP teams determine the specially designed instruction needs related to reading, including intervention needed in addition to core reading instruction. This includes both supports needed to access core instruction within the 90 minutes, as well as interventions needed to remediate skill deficiencies.
SE7	How does a student's progress monitoring data help determine if the student has a substantial deficiency?	Only scores on the universal screening assessment is used to determine status as at-risk or as having a substantial deficiency in reading. Progress monitoring data inform the need for intervention for students who are at-risk and may inform decisions regarding intervention effectiveness for students receiving interventions.
SE8	Can accommodations be made when testing IEP students?	Accommodations related to a student's disability are decided by the IEP team. Accommodations are provided that allow students to access the assessment while holding the purpose of the assessment constant. For example, on the Iowa Assessments, it is inappropriate to read the reading portion of the test to students as an accommodation because it changes the test from an assessment of reading skills to a listening comprehension assessment. Similarly, with a reading fluency assessment, it is inappropriate to either read the assessment to the student or change the nature of the timing of the assessment, as those modifications alter the ability to assess the student's reading fluency.

SUBSTANTIAL DEFICIENCY

No	QUESTION	ANSWER
SD1	Does a district have to provide intensive reading instruction to students who are at-risk of having a substantial deficiency in reading?	Intervention for students who are at-risk is highly recommended. If multiple data points suggest a student is not on track to meet end of year goals (i.e., spring benchmarks), interventions should be implemented for the at-risk student.
SD2	The law says that a district must provide a student with intensive reading instruction until the reading deficiency is remedied: what does 'remedied' mean?	Remedied means the student no longer performs below the benchmark on the universal screening measure for two consecutive periods and/or meets proficiency on the statewide accountability assessment.

SUBSTANTIAL DEFICIENCY

No	QUESTION	ANSWER
SD3	How should we use progress monitoring information? It seems like decisions are all based only on the universal screening data.	For the purposes of identification of a student for substantial deficiency in the early literacy application, universal screening data is the primary indicator. For students identified as at-risk, progress monitoring data can be used to help identify the student as needing intervention if they are not already receiving intervention. Additionally, for all students receiving intervention, progress monitoring should be used to monitor the student's improvement toward end of year goals (i.e., spring benchmark) given the intervention they receive.
SD4	Do we only consider the universal screening periods within the current school year to determine at-risk or substantial deficiency?	No. Decisions related to substantial deficiency or being at-risk are made by examining scores at adjacent universal screening periods. This applies both within and across school years. For example, a student who was identified as being at-risk of having a substantial deficiency in the spring may be identified as having a substantial deficiency once fall universal screening occurs if the student scores below benchmark in the fall.
SD5	Can the labels of at-risk and substantially deficient be applied to grades above third grade?	Schools are encouraged to use the same, good instructional practices above 3rd grade. The legislation applies to only grades K-3. However, students who are substantially deficient at the end of grade three are required to continue receiving intervention and progress monitoring until they are proficient readers.
SD6	If we use 2 of the approved universal screening assessment and a student scores above benchmark target on one and below on the other, which should we use?	If a student meets the target on an approved assessment, you can consider the student as one who met the target. In these situations, it is recommended that you use other information available to estimate the student's risk for reading success. It may be advantageous to monitor the student's progress for a brief period of time to determine if the student is on-track with reading skills or may need additional intervention.
SD7	If I can retest a student during the universal screening period, can I retest all students whose scores are below the benchmark?	No. Retesting students is only appropriate in rare and unusual circumstances where the validity of the results are suspect. Unless these types of circumstances exist, students should only be assessed once during a screening period.

SUMMER SCHOOL

SS1	Do students who are identified as at-risk in the spring need summer school?	Although not required, summer school would be an excellent intervention opportunity for students who are identified of being at-risk of having a substantial deficiency.
SS2	During summer school sessions, which grade level of progress monitoring materials should be used?	Use the grade level material for the grade just completed.
SS3	Do retention requirements apply to students who attend summer school at the end of third grade?	Yes.
SS4	Can parents indicate they do not want their child to participate in the summer program?	The procedures followed regarding parent refusal are local decisions.

SUMMER SCHOOL

No	QUESTION	ANSWER
SS5	If there is a summer school program for special education students, can the non-proficient students be blended into this program? Can funds be blended?	Extended School Year services are designed to meet specially designed instruction needs of a student based on his or her disability. These interventions may or may not include interventions that meet the requirements of summer school for students with a substantial deficiency in reading. Funds for both special education and the early literacy progression rule are required to be used for their purposes.
SS6	Is the Intensive Summer Reading requirement only for 3rd grade students that are deficient or all students that are deficient?	The requirement for summer school is only related to third grade students. Other summer school offerings are a local decision.
SS7	What are the requirements for transportation of students to the summer reading program (for public and nonpublic students)?	The legislation does not address transportation for summer reading programs. This is a local decision.
SS8	Previous guidance indicates that a non-public school that is doing the progress monitoring and following the ELI law can attend summer school in a public school. Who pays for that?	Yes, non-public school students may attend the intensive summer reading program(s) offered by public schools. The public school district is responsible for funding non-public and public school students in district who attend the intensive summer reading program(s) required by 279.68.
SS9	How do I qualify for a waiver of the summer reading program requirement in 2017?	Waiver applications will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and must demonstrate a good faith effort in implementing a summer reading program along with plans for future implementation of a program within a year.
SS10	Can I get a waiver for more than one year?	No.
SS11	If I didn't apply for a waiver in 2017, may I apply for a waiver in a future year?	No.

Definitions

Alternate assessment – An assessment provided to a student with a significant cognitive disability pursuant to his or her IEP in addition to universal screening and progress monitoring assessments. In most states, less than one percent of the student body take such assessments. The alternate assessment in this case is aligned to alternate academic achievement standards in reading.

Alternative assessment – An assessment provided to a student based on the unique facts of the student’s case to help determine his or her proficiency in reading. The alternative assessment is given in addition to universal screening and progress monitoring assessments, must be based on scientifically-based research, and must be reasonably calculated to provide information about the student’s reading skills.

Approved assessment – An assessment that appears on the Iowa Department of Education’s annually updated list of assessments determined to meet the standards appropriate for the purposes of universal screening and progress monitoring; OR an assessment that meets Department-adopted minimum standards for validity and reliability at the appropriate grade level and for the appropriate skills assessed. In addition, universal screening measures must meet minimum standards for area under the curve, sensitivity, and specificity; progress monitoring measures must meet minimum standards for number of available forms of demonstrated equivalence and reliability of slope.

Area under the curve – A statistical measure used to gauge how accurately an assessment identifies students in need of assistance. It is derived from Receiver Operating Characteristic curves (ROC) and is presented as a number to 2 decimal places.

Assessment – A process to determine how a child functions by having him or her perform a selected sample of actions that are representative of the desired content.

At-risk Reader - Students are considered at-risk of having a substantial deficiency in reading when they meet either of the following criteria:

- A. Score below the vendor benchmark during a universal screening period for the first time.
- B. Have been previously identified as substantially deficient and then meet the vendor benchmark during the next universal screening period.

Benchmark – Performance on an assessment that is compared to a criterion of acceptable performance.

Chronic early absenteeism – The extent to which a student in Kindergarten through third grade is frequently absent from school.

Classwide intervention - An intervention/program that includes one or more foundational literacy skills (print concepts, phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, phonics/decoding, irregular/sight words, fluency, oral language, vocabulary, comprehension, spelling and writing) implemented to an entire class of students. This would be implemented in addition to core literacy instruction.

Comprehension – Constructing meaning from text by accessing prior knowledge, understanding vocabulary and concepts, making inferences, and forming connections between critical ideas.

Core Curriculum [or Universal Curriculum] - The body of knowledge and skills that all students are expected to learn, as well as the materials used to engage students in learning. Curriculum can be specific knowledge and learning processes. In Iowa, curriculum must be aligned with the Iowa Core.

Core Instruction [or Universal Instruction] - The course of study, instruction and assessment deemed critical for student success. Universal instruction in Iowa must align with the Iowa Core, the state adopted standards that outline what educators are expected to teach and students are expected to learn.

Evidence-based practice – A practice that has been established as being effective through scientific research that conforms to a set of explicit criteria as defined by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

Fluency – Reading text at an appropriate rate, with appropriate accuracy and expression.

Forms of demonstrated equivalence – Alternate forms need to be of equivalent difficulty to be useful as a progress monitoring tool. Having many forms of equivalent difficulty allows a teacher to determine how the student is responding to instruction because the change in score can be attributed to student skill versus a change in the measure. Approaches typically used to determine this are:

- Readability formulae (e.g., Fleish-Kincaid, Spache, Lexile, FORCAST)
- Equipercentiles
- Euclidian Distance
- Item Response Theory
- Stratified Item Sampling

Intensive instructional services – Intensive instructional services typically include some combination of increased time, more explicit instruction, enhanced instructional routines, more opportunities for students to respond and practice, enhanced feedback techniques, focus on a smaller number of teaching objectives at a time and smaller student to teacher ratios. Intensive instruction is aligned with each individual student's educational needs. Students with similar needs can receive group instruction, but each student receives what he or she needs. Instruction is provided in addition to the universal instruction that all students receive.

Multi-tiered System of Supports – MTSS is a process by which schools use data to identify academic and behavioral needs of students, match student needs with evidence-based instruction and interventions, and monitor student progress to improve educational outcomes. *Parent-guided home-reading* – Parents working directly with their child at home, on specific reading skills that have a high likelihood of leading to improved outcomes.

Phonemic awareness – The ability to identify, produce, and manipulate individual sounds in words.

Phonics – The ability to apply knowledge of letter-sounds correspondences and spelling patterns to read words.

Portfolio review – Assessment of performance conducted by reviewing a sample of a student's work.

Reading Proficiency – Minimum level of acceptable student performance on an assessment.

Progress monitoring – Routine checks of the learning growth (i.e., rate of progress) a student demonstrates. In order to assess students' learning frequently, progress monitoring is typically conducted once a week.

Reading or reading readiness – Having the necessary reading skills as measured by proficiency on the statewide test and/or meeting benchmark on the universal screening assessments.

Reliability – The stability of a score across different forms, items, time or observers.

Reliability of slope – A statistical measure that tells us how accurately the slope represents a student's rate of improvement. Two criteria are used:

- Number of observations, or student data points, needed to calculate slope.
- Coefficients for reliability for slope. This should be reported via HLM (also called LMM or MLM) results. If calculated via OLS, the coefficients are likely to be lower³

Research-based practices – Strategies or programs which rely on evidence-based studies that have yet to compile specific evidence for that particular practice, as defined by the ESEA.

³ HLM=Hierarchical Linear Modeling; LMM=Linear Mixed Modeling; MLM=Multilevel Modeling; OLS=Ordinary Least Squares

Scientific, research-based reading instruction – Instruction carried out with fidelity that is based on scientifically- based reading research as defined in the ESEA as reauthorized in 2002. Per that definition, 'scientifically-based reading research' means research that:

- applies rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain valid knowledge relevant to reading development, reading instruction, and reading difficulties; and
- includes research that-
 - employs systematic, empirical methods that draw on observation or experiment;
 - involves rigorous data analyses that are adequate to test the stated hypotheses and justify the general conclusions drawn;
 - relies on measurements or observational methods that provide valid data across evaluators and observers and across multiple measurements and observations; and
 - has been accepted by a peer-reviewed journal or approved by a panel of independent experts through a comparably rigorous, objective, and scientific review.

Sensitivity/Specificity – A statistical measure that gauges how accurately a tool identifies students in need of assistance.

Substantial deficiency in reading –A student with a substantial deficiency in reading is a student whose reading performance is below a standard set on an approved assessment **and** whose progress on an approved assessment is minimal. Students are considered to have a substantial deficiency in reading when they meet either of the following criteria:

1. Score below the vendor benchmark during a universal screening period directly after a screening period in which they were considered at-risk of being substantially deficient.
2. Score below the vendor benchmark for two consecutive universal screening periods.

Teacher observation – An assessment procedure in which information is collected by watching and recording characteristics of individuals or environments.

Universal screening – A brief assessment that is done with all students in a grade or school to determine which students are on track for proficiency and which need additional, perhaps more intensive, instruction.

Validity – The extent to which a test measures what it purports to measure.

Vocabulary – Oral vocabulary includes words that are understood through listening and speaking, while reading vocabulary includes words that are understood when reading text.

Contacts

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