

**Dyslexia Working Group**  
**Virtual Meeting Summary**  
Friday, November 15, 2024

**Attendees**

Dyslexia Working Group - Jenny Imel, Brian Rose, Laura Swanson, Cindy Kanuch, Sarah Huffman, Patrick McGinty, April Gerakos-Rooker, Janine Runfola, Michelle Qazi

Colorado Department of Education - Rachael Lovendahl, Tammy Yetter, Emily Ottinger, Mandy Harris, Rhonda Haniford, Joanna Bruno, Paul Foster, Ellen Hunter, Melissa Bloom and Shelbie Konkel

Public - Jo Martell, Elizabeth Lo

Facilitators - Kara Schmitt and Betsy Kummer

**Time and Location**

- 9:00am - 11:00am Virtual (Zoom)
- [Meeting Recording](#) (Passcode: 8jf0+17.)

**Helpful links:**

- [Dyslexia Working Group | CDE](#)
- [Colorado Department of Education Dyslexia Handbook \(Feb. 2020\)](#)
- [Dyslexia Pilot Program](#)

**Meeting Objectives**

- Legislative Updates
- Budget Updates
- Confirming priorities for 2024-2025

**Meeting Activities**

**1. Welcome/Introductions**

New DWG member, Janine Runfola, was welcomed to the group. She will be serving on the DWG as a parent of a child with dyslexia. Members of the public who were in attendance were reminded of the public participation norms and the public comment process.

**2. CDE Updates**

- a. ECEA rules open for public feedback - Dr. Paul Foster, Assistant Commissioner, Exceptional Student Services Unit, met with the State Board of Education to request a hearing in January to review suggested ECEA rules. Dr. Foster focused his presentation on the paraprofessionals section of the proposed rule change document. The DWG shared the following comments/questions:

- i. Can the board change its rules on preventing individuals with misdemeanors from being qualified as paraprofessionals?

- ii. Can we get guidance on what “supervision” for paras looks like to meet compliance?
- iii. Can you clarify whether paraprofessionals are permitted to deliver special education service minutes under current legislation, or must those minutes be delivered by a special education teacher?

DWG members are encouraged to make public comments before the January meeting (comments can be made up until the board meeting, but CDE would like input by the Monday before the meeting so info can be included in the board packet). **Here’s how to comment:** Anyone may provide written comment via this form, [Rulemaking Testimony Form for the State Board of Education](#). Members are also welcome to testify during the hearing. **Here are details on how to testify:** Anyone may attend the rulemaking hearing in person to provide oral testimony. If attending in person to testify, a sign-up sheet is provided in the lobby check-in area the day of the board meeting that the hearing is scheduled for. Oral testimonies are typically given a time limit of two minutes or less.

- b. [Strategic plan overview for feedback](#) - Dr. Joanna Bruno, Chief Academic Officer, Student Learning Division shared a draft of [CDE’s 2025-2028 Strategic Plan](#) and reviewed the priority areas of the plan. The DWG had the following questions/comments:
  - i. Identifying students with dyslexia so they can get proper interventions would help with accelerating student outcomes
  - ii. Can the plan include accommodations for CMAS (equivalent to what students receive in school)?
  - iii. We need to consider low vision children too. Is CMAS offered in braille? Only online? If it's online, can we get screen readers? That'd cover dyslexic and low vision/blind students

*Following up on the assessment questions CDE shared some information on guidance that is under consideration: [CMAS/CoAlt Procedures Manual](#), pages 65-73.*

**Please email the board with any feedback on this draft at:**  
[state.board@cde.state.co.us](mailto:state.board@cde.state.co.us).

- 3. **Legislative and Budget Updates** - Melissa Bloom, Senior Policy Associate & Shelbie Konkel, Senior Legislative Advisor gave [a presentation](#) on:
  - a. Major things to watch for - general updates (election results)
  - b. Overview of the governor’s budget submission (November 1st)
  - c. Update on CDE’s legislative agenda (following board meeting on 13-14)
  - d. Overview of dyslexia proposal being presented to the board (in addition to what is in the READ Act)- State Board has requested No Unfunded Mandates.
  - e. Opportunities for engagement - JBC meeting/ways to support- **see slide 15**

General comments made by the DWG:

- READ Plan qualifications based on composite scores create challenges for students struggling with certain issues. Assessments show students on grade level but sub scores do not reflect where students are in terms of other areas comprehension/ vocab. Would like to see a change on the READ plan not based on composite score.
  - *CDE is currently trying to address this in other ways outside of legislation through ELAT trainings.*
- Local assessments should be more aligned with grade level standards (different things being measured) ex. A student might be “at benchmark” on a local assessment but this does not mean that the student is at grade level. CDE is aware of misalignment and is trying to figure out ways to communicate and support this.
  - *Is it possible to create awareness about this and get information out to districts? Teachers need this information.*
- Janine shared data about students who were in 3rd grade COVID year - now 8th grade - impact on READ Plans -[CDE \(11\) 2024 Handout.pdf](#)
- READ plan doesn't need to change, we just need more professional development.
- MTSS Tier 1 issue - What do we do in the classroom in the moment when teachers are seeing initial gaps? Need to put more into the process of what happens with data/info
- Tools on approved dyslexia screening list - some assessments are squeaking by; they have components but not all in one. Teachers must know how to disaggregate data. How can we tighten this up? Not just pulling different pieces from different assessments but having a comprehensive standalone dyslexia screening.

***DWG members are encouraged to contact JBC members to provide feedback. DWG can also create a letter of support if desired.***

#### **4. Review Priorities Matrix**

The group participated in a large group discussion to walk through initial 2024-2025 priorities identified during the September in-person meeting. The ideas were put into some themes/categories and moved into small groups to discuss and begin refining the ideas.

#### **5. Public Comment/ Closing**

No public comment

#### ***Next Meeting:***

- **In Person Meeting 2 - January 31, 2025 at CSU Spur**
  - Address: 4777 National Western Dr, Denver, CO 80216