

Strong Readers 2026:

What's New and What it
Means for Your District



OKLAHOMA
Education

Deann Jones

Project Director, Strong Readers



literacy@sde.ok.gov



405-522-4098



Session Goals

- Understand the requirements for kindergarten through third grade students under the Strong Readers Act
- Understand the required documentation and reporting
- Understand new requirements for this school year
- Review recent changes

Purpose

Purpose of the Strong Reader's Act

The Strong Readers Act ensures that **reading proficiency** is a key factor in **grade promotion**, while providing **high-quality instruction**, **interventions** based on student needs, and clear **communication** with families. It emphasizes a multi-tiered system of supports (**MTSS**) with the goal of all students reading at or above grade level by the end of third grade.

Paraphrased from 70 O.S. § 1210.508B(B-D)

Definitions of Terms

Definition of Terms

Grade-level target – the grade-specific benchmark scores established for a state approved screening assessment

Highly qualified teacher – a teacher with appropriate training and demonstrated competency in evidence-based intervention

Literacy Coach – educator with expertise in evidence-based instruction who provides job-embedded support such as modeling, observation, and feedback to improve teaching within a multi-tiered system of supports. The non-evaluative role focuses on strengthening practices and systems.

70 O.S. § 1210.508B-1

Definition of Terms

Multi-tiered system of supports – a framework that provides strong core instruction to all students and increasingly intense levels of support based on student need

Reading deficiency – performance below grade-level target on screener or diagnostic assessment indicating that a student is not meeting grade-level expectations

Reading Specialist – an educator who has completed a graduate-level degree in reading and passed the certification exam. They are responsible for designing, delivering or monitoring reading interventions and supporting teachers.

70 O.S. § 1210.508B-1

Definition of Terms

Reading Interventionist – an educator trained in evidence-based reading instruction who provides interventions to students

Science of Reading—a body of research that explains how individuals learn to read and write and informs explicit, systematic, and cumulative instruction in phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, writing, and oral language.

Significant reading deficiency – a reading deficiency that persists despite supplemental interventions and indicates a need for intensive intervention

70 O.S. § 1210.508B-1

Assessments: Using Data to Guide Instruction

Exemptions to Strong Readers

- The student participates in the Oklahoma Alternate Assessment Program (**OAAP**) and is taught using alternate methods.
- The student's primary expressive or receptive communication is **sign language**.
- The student's primary form of written or read text is **Braille**.
- The student's primary expressive or receptive language is not English, the student is identified as an **English learner** using a state-approved identification assessment, and the student has had **less than one (1) school year** of instruction in an **English-learner program**.

70 O.S. § 1210.508C(C.1)

Universal Screening

- Students in kindergarten through 3rd grade at BOY, MOY, & EOY
- **Purpose: Identify** students who are **at-risk** for reading difficulties.
- Student Literacy Intervention Plan must be in place within **30 days** of the close of the assessment window.

Dyslexia Screener

- Students who are found to have a reading deficit by the universal screener will then be screened for risk for characteristics of dyslexia using an OSDE-approved screening assessment within **30 days**.
- Parents will be notified of the results from the risk assessment within **15 days**.

Amira: State-Provided Screener

- Amira is a universal screener.
- Amira also screens for risk for characteristics of dyslexia.
- Screener available to all K-8 students at no cost to districts.
- Amira Tutor available to all K-5 students at no cost to districts.

Universal Screening Assessments

Assessments approved for both Universal Screening and screening for the characteristics of dyslexia.

Amira

Dibels 8th Edition

I-Ready Diagnostic

Exact Path

EPS Reading Assistant

MAP Growth Early Learning

aimswebPlus

Star Early Learning Suite

Statewide Screening Assessment

Starting with the 2027-2028 School Year

Process for Selection

- OEQA will conduct an RFP and narrow it to 3 screeners
- OSDE will choose from those 3
- Projected timeline for identification: Early 2027

REMOVED FROM STATUTE

Proficiency Notice

- 70 O.S. § 1210.508C(F)
- Purpose: to notify parents that the student has satisfied the requirements of the Strong Readers Act and are unlikely to need additional supports this school year.

Diagnostic Assessment –

- Required for students who are determined to be at-risk for reading difficulties.
- Purpose: Identify specific strengths and needs of students at-risk for reading difficulties.
- Districts can choose any diagnostic assessment that fits the needs of their students and teachers. OSDE does not have an approved list.

Progress Monitoring

- Purpose: Monitor progress of students receiving intervention.
- It is important to monitor with the skill on which a student is receiving intervention.
- Recommended frequency for **Tier 2: monthly**
- Recommended frequency for **Tier 3: weekly**
- Parents of students on a SLIP must receive written notification of student progress every 30 days. - **NEW REQUIREMENT**

70 O.S. § 1210.508C(H.4)

Student Literacy Intervention Plan (SLIP)

Student Literacy Intervention Plan (SLIP)

Purpose: to ensure that students who are identified as having reading difficulties receive targeted, data-driven support to improve their literacy skills and that this is clearly communicated with their families

A SLIP is intended to:

- **Identify** a student's specific literacy needs based on assessment data
- **Document** the interventions and supports the student will receive
- **Monitor** student progress regularly to determine whether the interventions are effective
- Support **communication** and collaboration among teachers, interventionists, and families

Student Literacy Intervention Plan (SLIP)

- **Required signatures:** Reading Specialist, Interventionist, or Teacher with Micro-credential, and an administrator - **NEW**
- **Signed** and in place within **30 days** of completion of the screening window
- Parents of students on a SLIP must receive written notification of student **progress** every **30 days**. - **NEW**

70 O.S. § 1210.508C(H.4)

Early Reading Instruction

DATA- DRIVEN DECISIONS	SUSTAINABLE TEAMING	EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES
Measurement for Team-based Decisions	Leadership Support	Tier 1- Universal School-wide Supports
Effective screening tools and processes	Administrator involvement	<i>Academics</i> Core curriculum with standards for rigor
Structure to analyze graphic results	Allocation of resources	<i>Behavior/Mental Health</i> Prevent, Teach, Reinforce, Respond practices to support school climate and culture
Identifying Needs and Selecting Interventions and Practices	Multidisciplinary Teams	Tier 1- Universal Class-wide Supports
Multiple sources of data for decision making at Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3	Engagement of students, families, and community stakeholders	<i>Academics</i> High-quality, differentiated instruction for core academics
Decision rules to identify areas of needed supports and interventions (Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3)	Selection/identification of appropriate school personnel	<i>Behavioral/Mental Health</i> Prevent, Teach, Reinforce, Respond practices to support classroom climate and culture
Student grouping for intervention that prioritizes skill needs	Multi-directional communication	Tier 2 Interventions
Evaluate Effectiveness of Interventions and Practices	Effective Meetings	Standard protocol, evidence-based interventions to address specific skill deficits
Data informs instructional changes and alterations	Agenda and Action plan	Tier 3 Interventions
Progress monitoring individual student interventions	Team member roles and responsibilities	Intensified evidence-based interventions matched to individual's needs
Progress monitoring class, school, and district-level interventions and practices	MTSS Coaching Support	Data-based Individualization protocol
Evaluate Fidelity of Implementation	Internal coaching capacity through district-level support	
Fidelity checks for teaming structure	Access to external MTSS coaching expertise	
Fidelity inventories for practices	Professional learning	
Implement on the Foundation of the 4 R's of a Trauma-Informed Approach	• Realize how trauma can affect people and groups • Recognize the signs of trauma • Respond to trauma • Resists (re-)traumatization in the organizational environment	

Strong Readers follows the MTSS model for providing support to all readers.
70 O.S. § 1210.508B(C)

Multi-Level Prevention System

- **Tier 1**, or core instruction, is **research-based reading instruction** for all students based on the science of how students learn to read and is aligned with the Oklahoma Academic Standards. Tier I instruction provides all students with a minimum of **ninety (90) minutes** of reading instruction **daily**.
- **Tier 2** is **targeted instruction** that is based on the cognitive science of how students learn to read. It is designed to supplement core instruction and address students' reading skill deficits.
- **Tier 3** is **intensive intervention** designed to address students' individual reading skill deficits by targeting the area(s) of greatest need.

Tier 1 Core Instruction

- Initial Screener Score: At or above the **40th Percentile**
- All students receive this instruction. Other intensity levels are **in addition to** Tier I.
- Student Literacy Intervention Plan (SLIP) **NOT NEEDED**
- Whole Class: Daily, 90 minutes minimum (required)
- General Education Teacher

Tier 1 (with Enhanced Support)

- Initial Screener Score: **26th-39th Percentile**
- Other Considerations: If one or more sub-test scores are **significantly lower** than the target, consider increasing intensity
- Student Literacy Intervention Plan (SLIP) **REQUIRED**
- Recommended group size of **6-8** students that meet **2-4 days/week**
- **May occur within Tier 1** (small group instruction)
- General Education Teacher

Tier 2 Targeted Instruction

- Initial Screener Score: **11th-25th Percentile**
- Other Considerations: Received Enhanced Support in Tier 1 for more than **12 weeks or 3 data** points from progress monitoring without making significant progress
- Student Literacy Intervention Plan (SLIP) **REQUIRED**
- Recommended group size of **6-8** students that meet **3-5 days/week**
- At least 20 minutes **in addition to Tier I**
- General Education Teacher or Interventionist (Pull out or Push In)

Tier 3 Intensive Intervention

- Initial Screener Score: **1st-10th Percentile**
- Other Considerations: Received Tier 2 instruction for more than **20 weeks or 5 data points** from progress monitoring without making significant progress
- Student Literacy Intervention Plan (SLIP) **REQUIRED**
- Recommended group size of **1-3** students that meet **daily**
- At least 30 minutes **in addition to Tier I**
- Interventionist (Pull out)

Intervention Rules - NEW

- Interventions **cannot** occur **during math** instruction time
- Interventions **cannot** be provided **solely** by **digital** technology.
- Interventions should consist primarily of **direct instruction** from a reading specialist or a teacher trained in the science of reading.
- Rules will be developed for the 27-28 School Year.

Ban on “three-cueing”

- “It is the intent of the Legislature that beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, school districts and charter schools in this state shall be prohibited from using the three-cueing system model of teaching students to read. For the purposes of this section, the “three-cueing system” means any model of teaching students to read based on meaning, structure, syntax, and visual cues, which may also be known as meaning, structure, and visual (MSV), balanced literacy, or whole language.”
70 O.S. § 1210.508B(F)

Evidence-Based Intervention Materials

- The Oklahoma State Department of Education has reviewed intervention programs submitted for consideration. The table, located on the OSDE Strong Readers for Schools webpage, provides information based on this review.
- Please note this is NOT an approved list. It is provided for guidance to support districts in finding the best products to suit their needs.

Reporting Requirements

Reading Plan

- Every school district shall adopt and implement a district **strong readers plan** which has had input from school administrators, teachers, and parents and legal guardians and a reading specialist, interventionist or certified personnel with an early childhood literacy micro-credential, and which shall be submitted electronically to and approved by the State Board of Education. The plan shall be updated **annually**.

70 O.S. § 1210.508C(E.1)

Annual District Reading Plan

- Opens August 1st
- Due August 30th
- **New** this year:
 - Updated Application

Strong Readers Survey

- Updated Application in Single Sign On
- BOY Report – **New ?s**
 - Opens August 15th
 - Due October 1st
- EOY Report
 - Opens April 15th
 - Due May 30th
- Summer School Report – **Removed from Survey**
 - Opens June 1st
 - Due July 30th

Website Requirement

- Must be posted on school website by **September 1st**
- Schools must use the OSDE provided format.
- Guidance for completion can be found on the Strong Readers for Schools webpage.
- Data is to be collected at the site level, except district expenditure information.
- **No changes** to this requirement for current year
- **Additional requirements** will be added for **next year**

Strong Readers Required Website Information



Strong Readers Student Data	Kindergarten	% of Kindergarten Students
Total number of students in grade-level		Not Applicable
Total number of students on an IEP		Not Applicable
Number of students who have been enrolled in the district for less than 2 years		Auto-calculated
Number of students who did not meet grade-level target on the screener		Auto-calculated
Number of students who demonstrated proficiency on the screener		Auto-calculated
Number of students who are on an IEP and demonstrated proficiency on the screener		Auto-calculated

Strong Readers Student Data	First Grade	% of First Grade Students
Total number of students in grade-level		Not Applicable
Total number of students on an IEP		Not Applicable
Number of students who have been enrolled in the district for less than 2 years		Auto-calculated
Number of students who did not meet grade-level target on the screener		Auto-calculated
Number of students who demonstrated proficiency on the screener		Auto-calculated
Number of students who are on an IEP and demonstrated proficiency on the screener		Auto-calculated

Strong Readers Student Data	Second Grade	% of Second Grade Students
Total number of students in grade-level		Not Applicable
Total number of students on an IEP		Not Applicable
Number of students who have been enrolled in the district for less than 2 years		Auto-calculated
Number of students who did not meet grade-level target on the screener		Auto-calculated
Number of students who demonstrated proficiency on the screener		Auto-calculated
Number of students who are on an IEP and demonstrated proficiency on the screener		Auto-calculated

Strong Readers Student Data	Third Grade	% of Third Grade Students
Total number of students in grade-level		Not Applicable
Total number of students on an IEP		Not Applicable
Number of students who have been enrolled in the district for less than 2 years		Auto-calculated
Number of students who did not meet grade-level target on the screener		Auto-calculated
Number of students who demonstrated proficiency on the screener		Auto-calculated
Number of students who are on an IEP and demonstrated proficiency on the screener		Auto-calculated

Strong Readers School Data	Description
Number of staff implementing the provisions of the Strong Readers Act	
Average daily classroom time devoted to implementing the provisions of the Strong Readers Act	
School District Board of Education Policy to implement the provisions of the Strong Readers Act	

District Expenditures	Included Expenses	Amount
Instruction	Books, technology, and salaries	\$0.00
Instructional Staff Training	Registration, travel, or stipends related to literacy trainings	\$0.00
Academic Student Assessment	Diagnostic and progress monitoring assessments	\$0.00
Vehicle Operation Services	Salaries for summer school bus drivers	\$0.00
Total		\$0.00

Website Requirement

New questions for SY 27-28

- # of students retained
- # of students promoted by the alternative assessment
- # of students promoted by good cause exemptions

New questions for SY 28-29

- Performance of 4th graders promoted on good cause exemptions

Funding

Funding

- Increased from \$17.5 Million to **\$43.7 Million**
- **New** Allocation Calculation **Formula**
- 3 tiers of allocations
 - **Base Allocation**: 40% allocated to districts based on K-3rd student enrollment
 - **Supplemental Weighted Funding**: 30% allocated for students in tier 2 & tier 3
 - **Incentive Funding**: 30% allocated to districts that showed improvement (rules currently under development)

Eligible Expenses

- Literacy instructional **materials** and **intervention programs**
- **Assessments** (screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring)
- Family literacy **resources**
- Professional development
- **Salaries** for intervention staff and instructional coaches
- **Summer School** (must include 70 hours of instruction)
- Funding Checklist - located on the Strong Readers for Schools webpage

Science of Reading Professional Development 10% Spending Requirement

- Districts will **no longer** be required to meet this spending requirement.
- The list of literacy courses will be maintained as **guidance only**.

Additional Changes

Retention

- Starting School year **27-28**
- Includes **optional** retention in 1st and 2nd grade
- 3rd grade will have requirements for promotion to 4th
- Students qualifying for good cause exemptions will be exempted from retention.

Transitional Grades

- Screen as the previous grade
- Remain on SLIP all year regardless of screener scores.
- Count as a year of retention.

HEROES

Literacy Instructional Team

Helping to Elevate Reading Outcomes
for Every Student



- The Literacy Coaches team is no longer a pilot.
- Priority is given to lowest performing districts.
- If an identified district declines assistance, they will not receive Strong Readers funding.

Early Literacy Micro-credential

- Districts that **do not** have a reading specialist or interventionist will send a certified staff member to a teacher training academy.
- OEQA and Oklahoma universities will work together to offer these trainings.
- Funding is available for the registration and **stipends** for teachers completing the training.

Stay updated with Strong Readers

- Join my monthly zoom meetings on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 1pm. [Strong Readers Monthly Meeting](#)
- Zoom links and recordings from previous meetings can be found on the Strong Readers for Schools webpage.