

Iowa Dyslexia Board - Meeting Minutes

April 24, 2025 - 10:00 am-2:30 pm

Meeting minutes taken by Megan Hunemuller

Present: Tammy Wilgenbusch, Lindsay Harrison, Kay Stork, Shawn Datchuk, Michelle Geistkemper, Nina Lorimor-Easley, Bambi Boggs, Megan Hunemuller, Katie Greving, Shane Williams, Wanda Steuri, Katy Severe, Kimberly Buryanek, James Northwick, Director McKenzie Snow

Virtually:

Absent: Jill White, Kristen Craig, Tom Wood

Guests:

Welcome

1. Meeting called to order
 - a. 10:00 by Shane Williams
2. Public Comment
 - a. None

Approve Meeting Minutes and Agenda

1. Approve agenda
 - a. Tammy moved to approve the agenda. There was a second by Bambi. The agenda was unanimously approved.
2. Approve February Minutes
 - a. Michelle moved to approve the December meeting minutes. There was a second by Shawn. The February minutes were unanimously approved.
3. Board member announcements and updates:
 - a. Tammy brought extra IDA Perspective magazines for anyone to take if interested. It has many articles about structured literacy.
 - b. Tammy also announced that IDA Iowa will have a virtual workshop on Monday, June 23rd from 9-10:30. The workshop intends to discuss what dyslexia is and to give practical ideas on how to support students with dyslexia or characteristics of dyslexia..
 - c. Katie provided an update on the dyslexia specialist endorsement scholarship. The bill is sitting in the appropriations committee. She encouraged everyone to send emails if possible to the chairs of the appropriations committee. There is still a long process once it passes through this committee. If passed, the process is to be signed by the governor and then to Iowa College Aid to write the rules.

- d. Katy gave an update on the Grandview Dyslexia Specialist Program. In May, a new cohort will start. Nine students are enrolled so far.
- e. Shane shared that Mindy from DDIA along with a few other DDIA board members presented a dyslexia simulation in Davenport. He supported this event as well.

Department of Education Updates

1. Wanda presented at the IACTE conference. Director Snow and Lindsay were also involved. They both mentioned they had a great conversation with the higher education instructors.
2. Director Snow shared information about Amira tutoring. 243 school districts are using it at this time. Some summer school programs are also planning to use this program.
3. Director Snow mentioned that the Department is offering uPAR to Iowa Schools through the expanded Access for All initiative. Katie asked if it was only available for special education students. The Director replied that it is available for all but that it has an emphasis on supporting students with special needs. Shane encouraged us all to spread the word on this option.
4. Director Snow gave an update on the CLSD grant. They have been working on this. A formal announcement is pending in the upcoming weeks.
5. Director Snow mentioned they have published the ELA HQIM statewide contracts. This is meant to be a purchasing list, not a recommended curriculum list.
6. Wanda spoke on her Iowa Dyslexia Handbook presentations. This presentation includes a combination of the handbook as well as structured literacy. She made it at a time where educators and families alike could hopefully attend without missing much, if any work.
7. Director Snow shared an update on LETRS. 356+ educators have signed up so far for Round 6. It's important to understand that LETRS is being used outside of the Department as well so this number is not all-encompassing. Registrations for Round #6 will end August 22, 2025 with coursework to begin in September.
8. Director Snow mentioned that the literacy team is actively working on the Teaching for Impact conference in June. Wanda will present at this conference.
9. Wanda explained that the DE Literacy team does attend school site visits to view literacy practices. Afterwards, they provide helpful feedback and think more globally about professional learning that will be helpful for educators.
10. Director Snow announced that there is a new team member with the literacy team. Dr. Darcy Kress is the Administrative Consultant for Literacy. Darcie will attend a future meeting to be introduced.

Iowa Reading Research Center Updates

1. Shawn introduced the new product entitled MOTR-Cycle. The IRRC is hoping to release it in mid-June. It is a free online tool that instructional coaches and administrators can use during classroom observations to keep track of the number of "opportunities to respond," or OTRs, and the modality of each OTR.

2. Measure First coming out in August. Measure First supports data-based decision-making by providing school administrators and instructional coaches a way to measure fidelity of intervention.
3. CLIFTER will be released June 2. This is a cursive handwriting tool to provide instruction and practice for forming individual letters and for spelling words.
4. Shawn touched on their future planning, specifically hoping to have more applications/tools available online for anyone across Iowa to utilize as well as some in person training opportunities.

School District Dyslexia Specialist Panel

1. Dyslexia specialists from districts across Iowa were present (via Zoom) to talk with the group on what they are seeing in their school districts and how they are having impacts on dyslexic students. Those on the panel included: Rebecca Bruno, Lisa Williams, Sarah Rife Patten, Amy Numedahl, Mandi Middleton, Jawnica Kettler, and Mindy VanZuiden. Many clarifying questions were answered by the specialists. They provided great insight. The Board looks forward to continuing to offer support in the future to keep the Dyslexia Specialist program going strong.

Iowa Dyslexia Professional Learning Plan

1. We reviewed the Iowa Dyslexia Professional Learning Plan over lunch. Wanda advised us that we can continue to work on it after the meeting. The dyslexia specialists creating this document would really appreciate our feedback. This document is new and will undergo many revisions before release.

Iowa DOE Foundations of Reading Assessment and Higher Education Updates

1. Lindsay discussed support offered to institutes of higher education for their teacher preparation programs. These include a Literacy Workbook, the Foundations of Reading Test, and the Annual Report Data for the Science of Reading implementation. She then led a panel of instructors of future teacher educators to offer clarity on how these items are enhancing teacher educator programs and the current education provided to preservice teachers. This panel included: Gwen Marra, Jen Stover, Staci Kinzebach, and Stacey Brown.

Personalized Reading Plan

1. Wanda touched on how the Department is updating their Early Literacy Implementation website to match current legislation. She acknowledged that some things have been removed, and while they are working to replace/update certain things, others have been replaced. She guided us through some of the items currently on the website.

Closing Remarks

1. Wanda covered the process for Board membership and went over the proposed meeting dates for next year.

2. Shane commended what a year this has been for our Board with completing the Dyslexia Handbook as well as just expanding partnerships and providing guidance across Iowa. It's been a successful year.
3. Katie asked if we could possibly have a section in one of our meetings next year talking through the Amira (EPS Reading Assistant) tutoring program.

Meeting adjourned

1. Kimberly moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:05. Seconded by James. The adjournment was unanimously approved.