



Every Wyoming Families Guide to Wyoming's K-12 Language and Literacy Act

Wyoming has entered a new chapter in literacy education. The 2026 Wyoming Language and Literacy Act expands into a comprehensive K-12 framework that emphasizes evidence-based instruction, early identification, diagnostic assessment, individualized reading plans, progress monitoring, parent communication, professional development, and accountability. This guide was created to help parents become informed partners in supporting every child's path to reading success.

Reading Skills Every Student Should Learn

- Phonemic Awareness – Hearing and manipulating the sounds in spoken words.
- Phonics – Connecting letters and letter patterns to sounds.
- Decoding – Reading unfamiliar words.
- Encoding – Spelling words by matching sounds to letters.
- Vocabulary – Understanding the meaning of words.
- Fluency – Reading accurately, smoothly, and with expression.
- Reading Comprehension – Understanding and thinking about what is read.
- Writing – Communicating ideas using words, sentences, and paragraphs.

YOUR STUDENT'S LITERACY JOURNEY

Step 1: Universal screener

- K-3 students will be screened three times per year (fall, winter and spring).
- Students in grades 4-12 who have not demonstrated grade-level reading proficiency, transfer into a Wyoming public school, or are identified by the district as at risk for reading difficulties based on recent assessment data will be screened once per year.

If no reading difficulties are identified, the parent will receive the screening results. No further action is required unless future data indicate additional support is needed.

Step 2: Diagnostic Assessment

- A *Diagnostic Assessment* is a more detailed assessment used after a universal screener identifies a possible reading concern. It identifies the student's specific literacy strengths and weaknesses to guide instruction.

Step 3: Parent Notification: If difficulties are identified via the Universal Screener or Diagnostic Assessment the parent's must be notified within **15 school days**. The notification should include a copy of the assessment results; an explanation of the results, information about the student's identified literacy needs, and information about the next steps in the intervention process.

Publication Note: This guide is based on the Wyoming Language and Literacy Act (W.S. 21-3-401 through 21-3-405), current Wyoming Department of Education guidance, and the proposed Chapter 57 Rules. Laws, rules, and guidance may change. Always consult the most current Wyoming statutes and WDE publications.

Step 4: Development of Individualized Reading Plan ("IRP")

- The IRP **must** be developed **"in collaboration** with the **student's parent or guardian**.
- The IRP must be **implemented within 30 days** of identifying the reading difficulties.
- The IRP should identify the *Evidence-Based Language and Literacy Instruction* program that will be used to address your child's identified reading difficulties. As the Wyoming Department of Education develops its Advisory List, districts should use instructional materials that have been independently reviewed by EdReports and/or The Reading League Curriculum Navigation Reports.

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN COLLABORATING TO DEVELOP THE IRP

- What reading program will be used? Has it been reviewed by EdReports or The Reading League? How many minutes per day and days per week will my child receive instruction?
- What *Scope and Sequence* is my student's program? Where is my child within the scope and sequence? Does my student have access to decodable books that align with their scope and sequence?
- Who will be providing instruction? Have they been trained in the specific program? Have they completed Wyoming's recommended literacy professional development, including Cox Campus? (WDE partnered with Cox Campus to provide free, statewide Structured Literacy professional development. The program is designed to build educators' knowledge of Structured Literacy and is accredited by the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) for meeting the Knowledge and Practice Standards.)

STUDENT'S LITERACY JOURNEY CONT.

A FEW MORE NOTES . . .

DEFINITIONS

Step 5: Implementation of the IRP

The school begins providing the literacy instruction and supports outlined in the IRP.

- Instruction of the program shall be *Delivered with Fidelity*
- Instruction follow the program's scope and full sequence and methods as designed.
- Progress Monitoring - Student progress should be measured regularly using reliable assessments to determine whether the intervention is effective and whether instructional changes are needed. Wyoming law requires school districts to **provide parents with quarterly progress updates** while a student is receiving services under an Individual Reading Plan (IRP). Parents may also request copies of progress-monitoring data throughout the school year.

Audiobooks support vocabulary, language comprehension, and background knowledge while allowing students to access grade-level content while supporting language comprehension.

- Libby – Borrow free audiobooks and eBooks with your local library card.
- Learning Ally –Human-narrated audiobooks for qualifying students.

KNOW THE DIFFERENCE - IRP VS IEP

Having an Individualized Education Program (IEP) does not exempt a student from the Wyoming Language and Literacy Act. Students with IEPs are still entitled to evidence-based language and literacy instruction consistent with the Act. The IEP serves as the student's IRP for purposes of the law. Reading instruction should be **developed with parent participation** and **provide evidence-based language and literacy instruction** aligned with Wyoming law. Districts should select instructional materials consistent with WDE guidance and the state's advisory process for high-quality instructional materials.

An IRP does not replace Child Find. School districts must continue to identify and evaluate students who may have a disability. Parents may request a special education evaluation at any time. A district may not use an IRP, MTSS, RTI, or reading intervention to delay or deny an evaluation when a disability is suspected. If the district refuses, parents should request Prior Written Notice (PWN) explaining the decision.

Universal Screener: A valid and reliable brief assessment used to identify students with reading difficulties or at risk for poor reading outcomes that is aligned with evidence-based language and literacy instruction.

Diagnostic Assessment: A valid and reliable assessment used to identify a student's specific strengths and weaknesses in language and literacy and to guide evidence-based instruction and intervention.

Evidence Based Language and Literacy Instruction: Explicit, systematic, cumulative and diagnostic instruction grounded in the science of reading that develops accurate and fluent word recognition and language comprehension.

Scope and Sequence: A planned progression of instruction that identifies the skills to be taught, the order in which they are taught, and the criteria for mastery. High-quality literacy instruction follows a systematic progression from simple to complex, with explicit instruction and cumulative review to ensure students build on previously mastered skills.

Delivered with Fidelity means a reading curriculum, instructional program, and assessment is implemented as intended by a properly trained teacher. Instruction is delivered according to the prescribed content, instructional routines, lesson sequence, and assessment procedures. Instruction is delivered at the frequency, duration, and intensity established by the program.

If Progress is limited and your student is **not making adequate progress**, the school should review the IRP, **adjust instruction based on student data**, revise the plan as needed, and continue working with the parent to ensure the student receives **appropriate support**.

When progress-monitoring data shows the student no longer requires additional literacy intervention based on progress-monitoring data the **IRP may be discontinued**. Exit decisions should be based on **student data** and **made in collaboration with the parent or guardian**.

Need More Help? Visit WYORighttoRead.org for free parent guides, template letters, advocacy tools, legal resources, checklists, and information on Wyoming's Language and Literacy Act, dyslexia, IEPs, IRPs, and evidence-based reading instruction.