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August 4, 2026

MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents, District and Charter Leaders, Literacy Contacts

FROM: Mariana D. Padilla, Secretary of Public Education 

RE: Structured Literacy Updates, School Year 2026–2027

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update and a summary of statutory requirements for structured literacy and early screening and intervention for students displaying characteristics of dyslexia. The Public Education Department (PED) has developed a comprehensive support structure and guidance for school districts and charter schools as they move forward with implementation of the requirements specified in §22-13-32 NMSA 1978 and Senate Bill 37.

State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) Allocation

The 2026 legislative session provided funding to support professional development for teachers of reading in structured literacy. All local education agencies (LEAs) will receive a structured literacy SEG allocation for the 2026–2027 school year (SY). These funds should be designated to support teachers (i.e., substitute coverage, stipends, etc.) as they complete professional learning aligned with a structured literacy approach. [The estimated SEG allocation for structured literacy is available here.](#)

Screening of First-Grade Students

As stated in New Mexico Statute 22-13-32 NMSA 1978, all first-grade students must be screened for characteristics of dyslexia by the 40th day of school or within two weeks of initial enrollment for students new to New Mexico. All LEAs and educators need to reinforce the purpose of screening for characteristics of dyslexia in first grade. The results support instructional planning by providing teachers with data to help determine instructional areas of focus where they can intervene in daily literacy instruction. The screener is *not* diagnostic but flags possible characteristics of dyslexia. It does *not* diagnose students with dyslexia. A student who demonstrates characteristics of dyslexia and has difficulty reading, writing,

spelling, understanding spoken language, or difficulty with expression, shall receive appropriate classroom interventions or be referred to a student assistance team. Schools shall provide timely, appropriate, systematic, explicit, and evidence-based interventions prescribed by the student assistance team with appropriate progress monitoring to determine the effectiveness of the intervention.

Screener data will be reported in the state data collection portal. The following screeners are provided to LEAs at no cost.

Approved English screeners:

- Amira ISIP (online, same as Amira ISIP for first grade); At-Risk indicators are Red (stronger signals) and Yellow (weaker signals); [New Mexico - Amira 26-27 Professional Development](#)
- [Teach Me to Read Dyslexia Screener](#) (paper/pencil, printable PDF, and training in Canvas)
- [Lexercise](#) (online, the first subtest has a printable PDF and can be administered whole group with paper/pencil; when the teacher is ready to administer the remaining subtests, one child at a time, they will enter the student responses from the whole group subtest)

Approved Spanish screeners (used when Spanish is the language of instruction for students):

- Amira Evaluar (Spanish screener; same as ISIP for first grade online) [New Mexico - Amira 26-27 Professional Development](#)
- Indicadores Dinámicos del Éxito en la Lectura (IDEL) (Spanish screener, paper/pencil)

These assessments will guide teachers in data-informed instruction, as well as early identification of characteristics and risk factors for reading difficulty. It is important that screening does not take place until teachers have received training in the administration of the tool and have completed the [Structured Literacy and Dyslexia for Diverse Learners 2.0](#) course available in Canvas. Please note that the dyslexia screener training modules have not changed, and teachers do not need to retake the courses unless they need a refresher. A refresher of the course is recommended every three years.

Screeners should only be used at the beginning of year (BOY) window and should not be used as a progress monitoring tool. The use of Amira and/or an interim assessment is highly encouraged to be used monthly as a progress monitoring tool to support teachers with individualized instruction based on need.

Early Years Literacy Assessment Reminders: Benchmark, Screening, Tutoring, and Progress Monitoring

Consistent with PED's [School Year 2026–27 Assessment Program Requirements Memorandum](#) and PED's Curriculum and Instruction instructional guidance, all public-school districts and charter schools serving early literacy grades are required to:

- Administer the Amira Reading Assessment, **except in cases where the PED has approved the use of an alternative assessment**, to all kindergarten through grade two students during the Beginning-of-Year (BOY), Middle-of-Year (MOY), and End-of-Year (EOY) benchmark windows.
- Conduct monthly progress monitoring for students identified as needing additional literacy support—Students performing in levels 1, 2, and 3 (students who are not proficient as determined by approved alternative assessment).

- Provide a minimum of 30 minutes of high-impact tutoring each week for every student. High-impact tutoring should be delivered through small-group or one-to-one instruction and be responsive to individual student needs. Tutoring should accelerate learning for students requiring additional support while also providing enrichment and extension opportunities for students who are meeting or exceeding grade-level expectations. **Please complete the following form stating how high-impact tutoring will be provided to meet this requirement. [LEA High-Dosage Tutoring Plan](#)**
- Utilize assessment results to inform instruction, intervention, or acceleration within a Multi-Layered System of Supports (MLSS).

If an LEA is using Amira, **all** first-year teachers in grades K–2 teaching literacy and math are **required** to attend local or regional Amira training sessions. Given the enhancements to Amira, all educators are encouraged to attend training. The training schedules and registrations will be communicated to coincide with [the Amira ISIP professional development plan outlined here](#). Both onsite and virtual webinars (to be recorded and available in [Canvas](#)) will be available throughout the 2026–2027 SY. If a district is using an approved alternative assessment, appropriate training must be provided to **all** first-year teachers.

Literacy Champions

As mentioned in the Assessment 2026–2027 SY memo, the Literacy Champion initiative will start in the 2026–2027 SY. Each elementary school site will designate one Literacy Champion to serve as the site-based lead for supporting effective literacy data analysis. The Champion may be a school-site administrator, instructional coach, reading interventionist, or teacher.

The Literacy Champion will support teachers in analyzing literacy assessment and tutoring data to inform instruction, monitor student progress, and strengthen literacy outcomes. This individual will collaborate with school leadership teams to review implementation and usage data, support progress-monitoring efforts, and help ensure students have equitable access to the required assessment and tutoring components.

The Literacy Champion will also support Read-At-Home Plan implementation by participating in the PED’s Read-At-Home Plan training aligned to SB37 and uploading required student data by the established Read-At-Home Plan deadlines.

The Literacy Champion will participate in state-supported professional learning opportunities and serve as a liaison between the school and the Literacy and Humanities Bureau to support successful implementation and continuous improvement.

Each elementary school will identify its Literacy Champion by completing the [Literacy Champion Designation Form](#). The designated Literacy Champion will dedicate approximately 25–30 hours throughout the school year to fulfill the responsibilities and assurances associated with this role and will receive a stipend of **\$1,500.00** as compensation for their efforts. Additional guidance regarding roles, responsibilities, participation requirements, Read-At-Home Plan expectations, and stipend eligibility will be provided by the Literacy and Humanities Bureau. **The deadline to submit form is Wednesday, August 19, 2026.**

Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) Training for Teachers

Before beginning LETRS training, teachers should complete the [Structured Literacy and Dyslexia for Diverse Learners 2.0](#) course available in Canvas. LETRS training is a two-year course consisting of eight units of study with the following components: asynchronous online coursework, sixteen three-hour live virtual or in-person facilitated sessions, and reading of the LETRS Manuals, Volumes 1 and 2. The following groups of teachers must be enrolled in LETRS training unless they are currently enrolled or have completed the training:

- New K–5 general and special education teachers, including teachers of gifted students
- English language development (ELD) teachers and teachers of other languages
- K–5 interventionists
- Elementary instructional coaches
- Library teachers who provide instruction

Only the following groups of teachers are exempt from taking LETRS training: physical education, music, art, and library teachers who do not provide instruction, as well as teachers with a Certified Academic Language Practitioner (CALP) or Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT) certification.

Along with attending all live virtual or in-person, facilitated sessions, educators are required to complete the online coursework and receive a score of at least 70% on Volume 1 and Volume 2 Posttests to complete the professional learning requirement. The PED will pay for a retake of one posttest (Volume 1 or Volume 2) for educators who score below 70%. To request a posttest retake, please complete the [LETRS Posttest Retake Request Form](#).

LETRS Training for Administrators

All K–5 elementary school administrators are required to take LETRS for Administrators training. This two-year course consists of five units of asynchronous online coursework, eight three-hour live virtual facilitated sessions, and reading of the LETRS for Administrators manuals. Any new or current administrators who have not begun LETRS training need to be enrolled in Phase 15, which begins in the fall of 2026. Please let your LETRS Course Manager know if you need to be enrolled. If you do not know who your LETRS Course Manager is, you can check the [LETRS Course Manager Directory](#).

District and Charter LETRS Course Managers

Each LEA with LETRS participants must have a LETRS Course Manager (CM). LETRS CMs may not be classroom teachers. LETRS district and charter CMs are responsible for enrolling participants, monitoring participant course progress, providing participants with support and intervention as needed, and using the PED’s procedures and tools for enrollment and maintenance of accurate records.

The PED’s Structured Literacy (SL) Team provides training for this important role through the **LETRS Course Manager Orientation Canvas course**. All CMs are required to successfully complete this course **annually** and will not be able to enroll participants until they do so. The SL Team will post course registration information on the [NM PED LETRS Help Center](#) website and email CMs with the information over the summer. **The deadline for course completion is Tuesday, September 1, 2026**, unless the CM begins after that date. If an assigned LETRS CM is unable or unwilling to fulfill the CM responsibilities in the 2026–2027 SY, please use the link below to remove the CM and assign a new one. [LETRS Course Manager Update Form](#).

Planning for LETRS Training

For the 2026–2027 SY, the PED will cover the costs of the live synchronous, facilitated sessions and the online licenses for asynchronous coursework associated with LETRS training for teachers and administrators. In addition, the PED will cover the cost of manuals for administrators. However, **LEAs are responsible for covering the cost of the LETRS manuals for teachers.** In the 2027–2028 SY, **all** costs associated with LETRS training need to be covered by LEAs (live, facilitated sessions, online licenses for asynchronous coursework, and LETRS manuals). Please note that all fees are subject to change at the discretion and policy of Lexia Learning Systems LLC.

Reading Endorsement

The reading endorsement pathway for educators who have completed LETRS 3rd Edition training was finalized into rule in 2022. Upon successful completion of the LETRS 3rd Edition training, educators will be eligible to apply for a reading endorsement.

Requirements include:

- At least an 80% on all summative assessments (Unit Tests and Volume Posttests)
- Attendance for at least 40 hours of live facilitated sessions
- Completion of at least 40 hours of asynchronous coursework in the LETRS platform.

After each LETRS phase has expired, Literacy and Humanities Bureau staff will review each participant's eligibility for the reading endorsement. A phase expires when the online course licenses expire. Within two months of each phase ending, educators who are eligible for the reading endorsement will receive a Memorandum of Eligibility from the Literacy and Humanities Bureau and can apply for their reading endorsement with the Licensure Bureau. The Reading Endorsement Memorandum of Eligibility does not exempt a person from completing all LETRS requirements.

Literacy Plans

As outlined in §22-13-32 NMSA 1978, all LEAs are required to submit a literacy plan. Updated literacy plans are required every two years. LEAs that submitted a literacy plan that was approved in the 2025–2026 SY do not need to submit a plan for the 2026–2027 SY. The deadline for submission for the 2026–2027 SY is October 30, 2026. LEAs are required to use one of the following templates to create the literacy plan, depending on the grade levels the LEA serves: [K–5 Literacy Plan](#), [K–8 Literacy Plan](#), or [K–12 Literacy Plan](#). LEAs can submit their 2026–2027 SY literacy plan to this link, [26–27 SY Literacy Plan Submission Form](#). All literacy plan templates, the submission link, and more information can also be found on the PED's [Structured Literacy New Mexico](#) page in the K–5 Literacy Plan Submission section.

Professional Learning Canvas Courses

There are several structured literacy [Canvas](#) courses available for educators, including the latest course, **Structured Literacy in Action**, which features videos of New Mexico educators implementing evidence-based structured literacy practices in the classroom.

Multilingual Mondays: 2026–2027 Webinar Series

Join Dr. Linda Cavazos and Severo Martinez for **Multilingual Mondays**, a monthly professional development series for educators across New Mexico committed to equitable, high-impact instruction for every student, with a focus on English learners (ELs).

Throughout the 2026–2027 school year, these interactive webinars will bridge theory and classroom practice, equipping you to apply structured literacy across all instructional settings.

Webinars will include:

- **Structured Literacy:** Actionable strategies to implement structured literacy tailored to your classroom setting.
- **Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Instruction:** Targeted tools to support ELs and diverse learners by honoring their unique linguistic backgrounds.
- **Evidence-Based EL Strategies:** Proven approaches to center oral language development directly within reading instruction.

When: Monthly on Mondays throughout the 2026–2027 school year (*specific dates TBD*)

Where: Zoom

Who Should Attend: K–12 teachers, dual language teachers, literacy coaches, ESL/EL specialists, and school administrators

Sign up today to receive schedule updates and request specific topics you would like covered during the series!

Register here: [Multilingual Mondays Updates Registration Form](#)

Structured Literacy Administrator Walkthrough Tool

As a reminder, all K–5 principals are required to observe literacy instruction during their first walkthrough. The deadline for completing **Walkthrough #1 - Structured Literacy in Elevate NM** is **Friday, September 25, 2026**. Principals who did not attend the virtual training in the 2025–2026 SY or did not view the recording may [view the recording here](#).

New training for the Structured Literacy Administrator Walkthrough Tool for the 2026–2027 SY will be provided to principals on the elements of explicit instruction with a focus on opportunities to respond. See the [flyer](#) for more information. Additional sessions will include more in-depth training on the additional components of the walkthrough tool: Print Concepts, Phonological Awareness, & Phonics; Vocabulary & Oral Language; Comprehension; and Writing.

New Mexico Read-At-Home Plan: Strengthening Literacy Through School-Family Partnerships

SB37, signed March 9, 2026, by Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham, also known as the “High-Quality Literacy Act,” establishes new requirements for parent communication and at-home literacy support through the PED Read-At-Home Plans. It includes parent notifications and at-home instruction through Read-At-Home plans. Student data will inform the creation of an individualized PED Family Literacy Plan for every K–2 student statewide. For third-grade students, teachers will submit individual proficiency level (low, medium, high) data. All assessment data and proficiency levels will be submitted to Just Right Reader partners with the support of the on-site Literacy Champion, in accordance with PED deadlines.

Schools will receive personalized, science of reading-aligned materials to distribute to students for at-home use. On four scheduled PED dates, students will take home:

- An Individual Family Literacy Plan
- Structured literacy activities
- Assessment results
- Progress monitoring documentation

- Just Right Readers Take-Everywhere Literacy Packs

The Just Right Readers Take-Everywhere Literacy Packs include high-quality, structured literacy-aligned materials, including decodable books available in English, Spanish, and Diné, video phonics lessons in over 12 languages, at-home literacy activities, and quarterly family training sessions. Teachers will be supported with training sessions held four times throughout the school year, monthly office hours, established timelines, and on-site support from the Amira Champion.

Additional implementation resources include the PED Read-At-Home Guidance document (coming soon) and [flyer](#) for school personnel to support school leaders, educators, and families. Your commitment to partnering with families will have a large impact on every child's learning journey.

For questions regarding any structured literacy requirements or initiatives, please visit the [Structured Literacy New Mexico](#) website or contact Christine Quesada at christine.quesada@ped.nm.gov.

AD/jc/sm/cq

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