RCW 28A.230.025 Comprehensive system of instruction and services in reading and early literacy—Curriculum components. (1) School districts are responsible for providing a comprehensive system of instruction and services in reading and early literacy to kindergarten through grade four students that is based on the degree of student need for additional support. Reading and early literacy systems provided by school districts must include:

(a) Annual use of screening assessments and other tools to identify at-risk readers in kindergarten through grade four, such as the Washington kindergarten inventory of developing skills, the Washington state early learning and development guidelines for birth through grade three, the second grade reading assessment under RCW 28A.300.310, and locally used assessments and other tools; and

(b) Research-based family involvement and engagement strategies, including strategies to help families and guardians assist in improving students' reading and early literacy skills at home.

(2)(a) Beginning September 1, 2027, when a school district updates or purchases a curriculum related to early literacy, reading literacy, or writing literacy for use with any students in kindergarten through grade four, the new or updated curriculum must include at least the following essential components: (i) Language comprehension, including semantics, syntax, and knowledge building; (ii) reading and writing fluency; (iii) orthographic knowledge, including phonics and spelling; (iv) phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness; (v) vocabulary; and (vi) oral language development and proficiency.

(b) The new or updated curriculum must also be:

(i) Diagnostic of and responsive to individual student needs, including by being multisensory, multimodal, high quality, and culturally relevant;

(ii) Evidence-aligned to established interdisciplinary literacy research and evidence-informed in its instructional design;

(iii) Aligned with the state learning standard in English language arts, as the standard is adopted and periodically revised under RCW 28A.655.070; and

(iv) Consistent with the teacher endorsement standards for literacy-related competencies adopted by the Washington professional educator standards board under RCW 28A.410.048.

(3) To the extent possible without incurring undue financial or operational burden, school districts must implement curriculum purchased or updated under subsection (2) of this section consistent with the curriculum developer's guidance and school district policies, with the expectation of achieving full fidelity and sustainability over time. [2026 c 190 s 2; 2013 2nd sp.s. c 18 s 102. Formerly RCW 28A.320.202.]

Findings—Intent—2026 c 190: "(1)(a) The legislature finds that learning to read and write is a core element of the state's statutory program of basic education and is the foundation for many other elements of the basic education program. The legislature recognizes that, during the 2023-24 school year, 37 percent of grade three students and 40 percent of grade four students were identified as reading below grade level.

(b) The legislature recognizes that, during the 2021-22 school year, the system established to screen students in grades kindergarten through grade two for risks associated with reading difficulties,

including dyslexia, identified over 20 percent of students as at risk and in need of additional supports.

(2)(a) The legislature finds that, in 2009, the United States department of education published a practice guide with evidence-based suggestions for implementing multitier interventions that are feasible and based on evidence from rigorous research. One of the recommendations is to use a curriculum that addresses the components of reading instruction (comprehension, fluency, phonemic awareness, phonics, and vocabulary) and relates to students' needs and developmental levels. The legislature acknowledges that these components are often referred to as "structured literacy."

(b) Therefore, the legislature intends that these components be incorporated into foundational curricula and expectations for teaching reading and writing in Washington public schools.

(3)(a) The legislature understands recent research indicates that African American and Hispanic children who show signs of dyslexia are less likely than white children to be identified as dyslexic through school screening programs, even after controlling for income level. The legislature recognizes that the scientific literature on reading and cognition indicates that instruction using the principles of structured literacy will benefit almost all students, not only those with indicators of dyslexia.

(b) Therefore, the legislature intends to address this serious equity problem by ensuring that the next time any school district, charter school, or state-tribal education compact school revises its curriculum, it selects a curriculum that is evidence-aligned to established interdisciplinary literacy research and evidence-informed in its instructional design. In this way all students receive evidence-informed reading and writing instruction." [2026 c 190 s 1.]

Application—Enforcement of laws protecting health and safety—2013 2nd sp.s. c 18: See note following RCW 28A.600.022.