

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS  
SCHOOL BOARD OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 22  
BECKER AND OTTERTAIL COUNTIES, DETROIT LAKES MINNESOTA 56501**

Work Session Board Meeting  
**Monday, May 15, 2023 5:45 PM**  
**Laker Transitions Building, 1104 West River Road, Detroit Lakes, MN 56501**

Respectfully submitted,

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April Thomas, Clerk

I pledge allegiance to the flag  
of the United States of America,  
and to the Republic  
for which it stands,  
one Nation under God,  
indivisible,  
with Liberty and Justice  
for all.



# What is Science of Reading (SOR)

DLPS 2023

# What is the Science of Reading

- The Science of Reading is an evidence-based approach to teaching reading.
- It's focus is on the key components of reading instruction.
  - **Phonemic Awareness:** Understanding and manipulating individual sounds in words.
  - **Phonics:** Connecting sounds to written letters and letter combinations.
  - **Vocabulary:** Developing knowledge of words and their meanings.
  - **Fluency:** Reading accurately, with appropriate speed and expression.
  - **Comprehension:** Understanding and making meaning from text.

# What is the Need?

- **Critical need for reading proficiency in academic success.**
  - Downward trend in statistics regarding reading proficiency.
- **By focusing on the explicit instruction of the 5 components**
  - Improved reading proficiency and comprehension skills.
  - Enhanced vocabulary development and language acquisition.
  - Increased confidence and motivation in reading.
  - Reduced reading difficulties and learning gaps.
  - Higher academic achievement across all subjects.

# Strategies for Promoting Strong Reading Instruction

- Provide teachers with professional development on evidence-based reading instruction methods.
- Align curriculum materials with the Science of Reading principles.
- Regularly assess students' reading skills and provide targeted interventions as needed.
- Engage parents and the community in supporting students' reading development.
  - Parent communication
  - Imagination Library
  - Access to books
  - Less screen time for PreK and primary
- Establish ongoing support and resources for teachers.

# Background Information

- Dyslexia Institute in MN is behind this movement.
- Possibly state required materials that are what they call “teacher proof” and scripted instruction. Reportedly 5 companies will be named as the required materials.
- LETRS training is very time intensive and is described to be like a graduate course in how to teach reading.  
\*Based of the work of Louisa Moates, Ed.D
- MN students are scoring above national average.
  - Failing scores – based on what measures

## What do the critics say?

- 1. Overemphasis on Phonics:** Places an excessive focus on phonics instruction, potentially neglecting other important aspects of reading such as comprehension, critical thinking, and literature appreciation.
- 2. Limited Flexibility:** Can be rigid and prescriptive, leaving little room for individualized instruction or adaptation to diverse student needs and learning styles.
- 3. Inadequate Attention to Contextual Factors:** Does not sufficiently consider the cultural, social, and linguistic backgrounds of students, potentially overlooking the importance of context in reading instruction.
- 4. Misalignment with Whole Language Approach:** Critics argue that the Science of Reading dismisses the value of whole language approaches, which emphasize the use of authentic texts and meaningful reading experiences.
- 5. Potential for Narrow Curriculum Focus:** May lead to a narrowed curriculum, sacrificing other important subjects and areas of learning.

## Cautions as we move forward

- **Continue to listen to teachers and examine best practices in our classrooms.**
  - We can build on the current expertise and materials we have. We are not doing things incorrectly but may have some gaps
- **Cautiously examine new curriculum that state recommends if there is funding provided.**
  - State or local decision on materials?
  - Some claim this is a privatization initiative and that certain companies will financially benefit.

## Next Steps in DLPS

- Review our Literacy Data – Read Well By Third Grade, STAR and MCA
- Provide explicit instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics – Shifting the Balance book implementation
- Limit "station" work and examine the literacy block for direct instruction time.
- Interventionists -- skill based curriculum and professional development for those teachers
- New teachers –provide specific support in area of teaching reading
- Continue to stay abreast of current research and legislation



Questions