

California Department of Education

Executive Office

SBE-003 (REV. 11/2017)

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# California State Board of EducationJanuary 2024 AgendaItem #16

## Subject

Reading Difficulties Risk Screener Selection Panel: Recommendation of Independent Experts to Serve as Panel Members.

## Type of Action

Action, Information

## Summary of the Issue(s)

Education Code Section 53008 requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to appoint a panel of independent experts to establish a list of instruments to screen students in kindergarten through grade two for risk of reading difficulties, including possible neurological disorders, such as dyslexia, by January 31, 2024. The SBE Screening Committee reviewed the applications for appointment to the Reading Difficulties Risk Screener Selection Panel (RDRSPP) and interviewed selected applicants. The list of the recommended panelists is provided as an attachment.

## Recommendation

The SBE Screening committee recommends that the SBE approve the recommended RDRSPP members as identified in Attachment 1.

## Brief History of Key Issues

Section 83 of the 2023 Education Omnibus Budget Trailer Bill (Chapter 48, Statutes of 2023) requires the SBE-appointed panel of independent experts, the RDRSSP, to create a list of evidence-based, culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate screening instruments to assess pupils in kindergarten through grade two for risk of reading difficulties, including possible neurological disorders such as dyslexia.

The law requires the SBE to adopt a review process for the RDRSSP to use to evaluate screening instruments, so that the RDRSSP can approve a list of screening instruments by December 31, 2024, based on the following criteria:

* Use of direct measurement, supplemented by other pupil data, to determine if a pupil is at risk of a reading difficulty, including dyslexia.
* Measurement of domains that may predict dyslexia and other reading disorders, including, but not limited to, measures of oral language, phonological and phonemic awareness, decoding skills, letter-sound knowledge, knowledge of letter names, rapid automatized naming, visual attention, reading fluency, vocabulary, and language comprehension.
* Evidence that the tool is normed and validated using a contemporary multicultural and multilanguage sample of pupils, with outcome data for pupils whose home language is a language other than English as well as those who are native English speakers.
* Integration of relevant pupil demographic information, such as home language, English language fluency, and access to prekindergarten education, to more fully understand a pupil’s performance.
* Guidance and resources for educators regarding how to administer screening instruments, interpret results, explain results to families, including in pupils’ primary languages, and determine further educational strategies, assessments, diagnostics, and interventions that should be considered and that are specific to each type of pupil result. Guidance and resources provided shall be informed by the English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework for California Public Schools developed pursuant to Education Code Section 60207 and the California Dyslexia Guidelines developed pursuant to Education Code Section 56335, as well as knowledge of effective interventions for the specific needs of individual pupils and shall reflect a tiered interventions model aligned with the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support.

Pursuant to the requirements of Education Code Section 53008, beginning with the 2025–26 school year, local educational agencies (LEAs), are required to assess each of their students in kindergarten through grade two for risk of reading difficulties using an RDRSSP-approved screening instrument or instruments. The law requires that the results of the screenings be used by LEAs as part of a broader process that further evaluates pupil needs and progress, identifies supports for classroom instruction, enables targeted individual intervention as needed, and allows for further diagnosis. Statute specifies that screening instruments identified by the RDRSSP are: (1) not considered an evaluation or diagnostic tool to establish eligibility for special education and related services, and (2) must be appropriate for students in multiple languages. Alternative protocols are established for students for whom a screening instrument does not exist in a language in which the student is fluent.

On September 29, 2023, applications were invited for appointment to the panel. Applicants were asked to provide evidence of demonstrated experience in at least one of the following areas:

* Creating, evaluating, administering, interpreting, and/or otherwise working with screening instruments for kindergarten through grade twelve and/or early education. This could include screening instruments in English and/or in languages other than English.
* Providing instruction for, evaluating, providing supportive services to, or in any other way working with any of the following groups:
	+ Students with disabilities, especially disabilities that impede literacy
	+ Students who are multilingual and/or identified English learners
	+ Students in early elementary grades
* Instructional and/or administrative experience in either kindergarten through grade twelve or early education using student data to design individualized or systemic instructional plans and/or interventions. This could include communicating individual student information, especially screening and/or assessment information, with parents or guardians, including in languages other than English.

Applicants were also asked to describe their experience related to the statutory criteria for the screening instruments (as enumerated on Page 2), and to provide statements and information attesting to any financial or other conflicts of interest they may have with screening instruments that may be submitted to the RDRSSP for consideration.

The work of the RDRSSP will be subject to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act (Article 9 (commencing with Section 11120) of Chapter 1 of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code). Panel members will serve for a term of up to two years. However, the term for the panel members may be extended as necessary, including for the purposes of updating the review process and/or amending the list of approved screening instruments. Finally, state law prohibits the appointment of any person to the RDRSSP with a financial interest in the screening instruments under consideration.

## Summary of Previous State Board of Education Discussion and Action

None. This is a new statute.

## Fiscal Analysis (as appropriate)

Section 121 of the 2023 Education Omnibus Budget Trailer Bill (Chapter 48, Statutes of 2023) allocated the sum of $1,000,000 for the establishment and operation of the RDRSSP.

## Attachment(s)

Attachment 1: State Board of Education Screening Committee Recommendations for Appointments to the Reading Difficulties Risk Screener Selection Panel. (1 page)

# Attachment 1

**State Board of Education (SBE) Screening Committee Recommendations for Appointment to the Reading Difficulties Risk Screener Selection Panel (RDRSSP).**

The SBE Screening Committee recommends that the following individuals be appointed to the RDRSSP for a two-year term.

| **Name** | **Position** | **Employer** | **Term** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Dominic Grasso** | Assistant Professor, Elementary Literacy Education | California State University, Northridge | January 18, 2024 – December 31, 2025 |
| **Carlin Graveline** | Speech-Language Pathologist/Literacy Specialist | Mind By Design | January 18, 2024 – December 31, 2025 |
| **Yesenia Guerrero** | Special Education Teacher | Lennox School District | January 18, 2024 – December 31, 2025 |
| **Young-Suk Kim** | Professor & Senior Associate Dean | University of California, Irvine | January 18, 2024 – December 31, 2025 |
| **Martha Martinez** | Senior Director of Research & Evaluation | SEAL | January 18, 2024 – December 31, 2025 |
| **Jessica Niessen** | READ Coordinator | Los Angeles Unified School District | January 18, 2024 – December 31, 2025 |
| **Gisela O’Brien** | Assistant Director, Biliteracy and English Learner Programs | Center for Equity for English Learners, Loyola Marymount University | January 18, 2024 – December 31, 2025 |
| **Timothy Odegard** | Professor of Psychology, Chair of Excellence, Dyslexic Studies | Middle Tennessee State University | January 18, 2024 – December 31, 2025 |
| **Tamara Wilson** | Director, Development and Training | Sacramento County Office of Education | January 18, 2024 – December 31, 2025 |