

DESE RULES GOVERNING THE RIGHT TO READ ACT

Public Comments and Responses of the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education

Commenter Name: Joyce Sanders Haver, Van Buren School District (2/22/2022)

Comment (1):

I have been working with a district team of top literacy teachers (K-6) since last year. We have been building capacity and knowledge as well as gathering information from many sources to help us make an informed decision concerning the adoption of a new reading program.

Our team is concerned with the very small number of "approved" core programs on the state approved list.

We are also concerned that of the very small number of "approved" programs, there are very few with "approval" in all core reading components: phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency.

There have to be more programs that meet all the components of reading and should be approved. When will an updated list of programs be published?

With districts moving forward with adoptions and purchases, it seems unwise to choose one of the limited number of programs on the approved list, just because it is on the list.

I understand the need to provide support and sanctions to districts with struggling programs which result in very low test scores, but to do a blanket threat to sanction a district for the curriculum they choose to use to educate their students seems to be an extreme action.

Division Response: DESE has add Programs to the list of approved reading programs as they are reviewed and approved. Please check the DESE website for updates to the list. Districts have the autonomy to select core, supplemental, and intervention programs that meet the needs of their educational communities.

A public school district receiving Level 1: General Support or Level 2: Collaborative Support that chooses to purchase a curriculum program that is not from DESE's approved list of curriculum programs has the option to request program approval by submitting the following information to DESE:

- 1) the rationale for choosing the alternative curriculum program;
- 2) evidence-based research regarding the alternative curriculum program; and
- 3) a signed letter from the Superintendent and School Board President requesting approval of the alternative curriculum program.

Comments Considered. **No changes made.**

Commenter Name: Lucas Harder, Arkansas School Boards Association (2/22/2022)

Comment (1): 10.00: All of the section numbers below "10.00" are instead "9.0". For consistency, all of the numbers after "9.01" have an extra zero in the second section number, such as "9.01.01".

Division Response: Comments considered. **Non-substantive change made.**

Comment (2): 9.01.04 The “l” is missing in “public” between “open-enrollment” and “charter”.

Division Response: Comments considered. **Non-substantive change made.**

Comment (3): 9.01.06 The “l” is missing in “public” at “public school district”.

Division Response: Comments considered. **Non-substantive change made.**

Comment (4): 9.01.07.01: The citation to “9.01.07” here should be “10.01.7”.

Division Response: Comments considered. **Non-substantive change made.**
