

Pennsylvania Department of Education Reading Leadership Council Meeting #3

Meeting Notes

August 7, 2025

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Reading Leadership Council Meeting #3

Meeting Date and Time

The Reading Leadership Council met on August 7, 2025, from 12:00–2:30 p.m.

Attendees

- Kate Bacher, Structured Literacy Advisor, Pennsylvania Department of Education
- Jennifer Wicht, English Language Arts Education Advisor, Pennsylvania Department of Education
- Brian Campbell, Bureau of Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction Director, Pennsylvania Department of Education
- Council members, liaisons, and invited guests
- WestEd staff
 - Amaal Awadalla—Program Manager, Literacy
 - Julie Colton—Operations Coordinator
 - Katie Grogan—Senior Research Manager, Literacy
 - Liz Jameyson—Program Manager, Literacy
 - Amanda Nabors—Research Associate, Literacy
 - Robin Sayers—Research Associate, Literacy
 - Elizabeth Zagata—Program Manager, Special Education

Welcome, Purpose Setting, and the Sunshine Act

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and WestEd facilitated a meeting of the Reading Leadership Council to discuss implementation of **Act 135: Structured Literacy – Literacy Achievement for All Pennsylvanians**. The Act aims to expand access to Structured Literacy and improve literacy outcomes statewide. WestEd provided an overview of the Act, which requires PDE to publish lists of professional development training programs, reading universal screeners, reading instruction curriculum materials, and literacy intervention materials and approaches with the advisement of a Reading Leadership Council.

Liaisons, guests, and members of the public were also welcomed. Liaisons represent the following groups:

- Pennsylvania Department of Education
- Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN)
- Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL)
- Evidence Resource Center (ERC)
- National Center on Improving Literacy (NCIL)

The meeting addressed Pennsylvania's Sunshine Act, highlighting that public attendees are observers and that public comment periods are not intended for discussion with the Council or PDE representatives.

Review of the Process for Creating Lists and Guidance Documents

PDE Director of the Bureau of Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction, OESE, Brian Campbell, provided remarks that offered thanks to Council members for volunteering their time and highlighted the importance of the work occurring and its alignment with the state's priorities on early literacy and the science of reading.

A WestEd facilitator then reviewed the process used to develop the lists and guidance documents. To meet the goals of Act 135, the Council followed a structured approach by leveraging existing educational clearinghouses. Lists were compiled from multiple clearinghouses to provide LEAs with comprehensive information for decision-making. Key steps in the process included: checking alignment of Act 135 requirements against the review criteria used by well-known and respected educational clearinghouses; building lists for each resource type; and creating guidance to support local education associations' (LEAs') use of the lists, both to inform purchasing decisions and to evaluate previously purchased resources.

The WestEd facilitator then reviewed the process by which the council gave input on the lists and guidance documents. Council input was summarized and shared at the May 14, 2025, Council meeting, where additional input was elicited, which informed the lists and guidance

documents. Over the summer, the reading curriculum materials list was reorganized for increased usability. Today, the Council is providing input on this reorganization for the reading curriculum materials list.

Council Input: List Reorganization and FAQs

Council members were first invited to review the reorganized reading curriculum materials list and provide input through the lens of an LEA using it. Council members responded to the following questions:

- What are your first impressions of the document's clarity and organization?
- What are the benefits of organizing the list in this way?
- What are the tradeoffs of organizing the list in this way?
- Does this organizational structure place programs in areas that seem appropriate or logical to you?
- Any additional thoughts on usability, clarity?

Council members were then prompted to provide input on questions LEAs might have when opening a list or guidance document for the first time. Council members responded to the following questions:

- What questions might a teacher have (general, special education, and specialist teachers)?
- What questions might a site administrator have?
- What questions might a district administrator have?

Public Comment

One member of the public provided comment.

Next Steps and Closure

WestEd and PDE expressed gratitude to council members for their contributions throughout the process and shared that upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

- **October 16, 2025**, 12:00–2:30 p.m. (The date was changed from October 7, 2025, to avoid a conflict with a well-attended conference.)
- **December 11, 2025**, 12:00–2:30 p.m.