



The State University  
of New York

**Office of the Chancellor**

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**MEMORANDUM**

**January 27, 2026**

**TO: Members of the Board of Trustees**

**FROM: Dr. John B. King Jr., Chancellor**

**SUBJECT: State University of New York Science of Reading Framework**

**Action Requested**

The proposed resolution establishes the State University of New York's approach to implementing changes related to the Science of Reading.

**Resolution**

I recommend that the Board of Trustees adopt the following resolution:

**Whereas** the State University of New York is the leading preparer of educators for P-12 schools throughout New York State and is committed to preparing teachers and leaders with the knowledge and skills needed to educate students in all grades in comprehensive literacy practices, including practices derived from the body of research referred to as the science of reading; and

**Whereas** only 31% of 4th graders in New York State are proficient in reading, according to the 2024 National Assessment of Educational Progress (known as "the nation's report card"), including just 21% of New York State students from low-income backgrounds, 17% of Black students, and 22% of Hispanic students; and

**Whereas** the development of strong reading skills in early grades is foundational for learning that occurs as students proceed

through school and has lasting impacts, including as students prepare for continued study in higher education; and

**Whereas** the Fiscal Year 2025 Enacted New York State Budget included Governor Hochul’s Back to Basics reading plan, which ensures that instructional best practices—grounded in the science of reading—are implemented statewide to ensure that students in every school district are taught the foundational skills they need to become proficient readers; and

**Whereas** school districts throughout New York State need to certify with the State Education Department that their curriculum, instructional strategies, and teacher professional development align with all elements of evidence-based reading instruction; and

**Whereas** the New York State Education Department has developed a Framework for Integrating the Science of Reading in Educator Preparation Programs; and

**Whereas** throughout the 2023-2024 academic year, SUNY convened a Technical Advisory Group (TAG)<sup>1</sup> charged with: (1) providing an analysis of the current reading science literature; (2) identifying what teacher candidates should know and be able to do as it relates to the teaching of reading to all students and aligned with the science of reading; (3) conducting a landscape analysis to determine how current pedagogical practices across SUNY educator preparation programs relate to reading science principles; and (4) identifying translational research gaps, especially as related to teaching reading to diverse groups of students, for potential focus of study by faculty at SUNY campuses; and

**Whereas** grounded in the work of the TAG, which is based on research, standards, and best practices, during the summer and fall of 2025 the TAG co-chairs, in consultation with the other TAG members, developed recommendations to the SUNY Provost that informed a discussion draft distributed in October 2025 for system-wide comment, and feedback was received and then analyzed in consultation with the TAG co-chairs; and

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<sup>1</sup> Technical Advisory Group: co-chair John Strong, University at Buffalo; co-chair Virginia Goatley, University at Albany; Erica Barnes, University at Albany; Nicole Fenty, Binghamton University; Keli Garas-York, Buffalo State University; Kathleen Lord, SUNY New Paltz; Doreen Mazzye, SUNY Oswego; Mary McVee, University at Buffalo; Elizabeth Yanoff, Hudson Valley Community College; Bogum Yoon, Binghamton University; and Thea Yurkewecz-Stellato, SUNY Geneseo

**Whereas** as an additional means to obtain feedback, in the summer and fall of 2025 draft expectations were introduced directly to deans and directors of education, chief academic officers, and the presidents of the Faculty Council of Community Colleges and University Faculty Senate; and

**Whereas** the discussion draft was shared with the SUNY Trustees in December 2025 for discussion and input; now therefore be it

**Resolved** that all educator preparation programs<sup>2</sup> shall incorporate the science of reading into their required curriculum, as applicable to the certificate title and type, which includes knowledge and skills in the following ten areas: Phonemic Awareness; Phonics; Fluency; Vocabulary and Background Knowledge; Oral Language; Reading Comprehension; Motivation and Engagement; Writing; Response to Intervention (RTI) and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) for Reading; Multilingual Learners and Reading; and, be it further

**Resolved** within their educator preparation program, all candidates shall have an opportunity to practice science of reading knowledge and skills as part of their clinical experiences in partnership with P-12 schools, as applicable to the certificate title and type; and, be it further

**Resolved** beginning in spring 2026, faculty shall review each existing educator preparation program to determine if the program meets the expectations for science of reading curriculum and clinical experiences; and, be it further

**Resolved** each campus with educator preparation programs shall revise programs as needed to meet the new requirements for science of reading and submit an attestation and science of reading coursework alignment table to the SUNY Provost by December 31, 2026; and, be it further

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<sup>2</sup> This resolution is applicable to teacher preparation programs that lead to a recommendation for the issuance of an initial and/or professional teacher certificate and to educational leadership programs that lead to a recommendation for an administrator certificate and/or the superintendent extension. Additionally, this resolution is applicable to courses in associate degree programs that are intended to transfer to baccalaureate degree programs for the purpose of meeting pedagogical core requirements for language acquisition and literacy development.

**Resolved** for each new educator preparation program proposed as of January 27, 2026, the curricular content and expectations for clinical experiences shall meet the new requirements for science of reading, to be demonstrated via a science of reading coursework alignment table included within the proposal; and, be it further

**Resolved** that the Provost or designee be, and hereby is, directed to implement the requirements of this resolution related to the science of reading and to provide related guidance.

### **Background**

According to the Reading League (2022), which is based in New York State:

The science of reading is a vast, interdisciplinary body of *scientifically-based* research about reading and issues related to reading and writing. This research has been conducted over the last five decades across the world, and it is derived from thousands of studies conducted in multiple languages. The science of reading has culminated in a preponderance of evidence to inform how proficient reading and writing develop; why some have difficulty; and how we can most effectively assess and teach and, therefore, improve student outcomes through prevention of and intervention for reading difficulties (p. 6).

The New York State Literacy Initiative, led by the New York State Education Department<sup>3</sup> (2024), published a series of seven Literacy Briefs to support educators in the implementation of science of reading. In Brief 1, the authors note,

The Science of Reading refers to a body of research—50+ years of interdisciplinary research that documents and describes how children develop reading and writing skills and competencies. This research also features the principles and practices for research-based instructional design and opportunities to learn. The Science of Reading is not a single approach or entity—the term refers to a large, diverse body of evidence that should be used to inform curriculum and pedagogy (Lesaux & Carr, 2024, p. 1).

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<sup>3</sup> New York State Education Department in collaboration with Nonie K. Lesaux and Katie C. Carr

Common among these definitions is that a scientific body of research exists upon which the teaching of reading should be based. For more information on theories, models, and research underlying the science of reading, see the SUNY Technical Advisory Group (TAG) report available [here](#).

Within New York State, Governor Hochul's Back to Basics reading plan ensures that instructional best practices—grounded in the science of reading—are implemented statewide to ensure that students in every school district are taught the foundational skills they need to become proficient readers. In support of this, the New York State Education Department has been engaged in work with educators through the Literacy Initiative, Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework, and Path Forward Initiative, to improve student literacy through evidence-based practices in both schools and programs preparing candidates to become educators in schools.

Teacher and leadership preparation programs also draw on a range of state and national standards to provide a basis for curriculum and instruction. The standards summarized in Appendix A provide a core foundation for integrating SUNY's science of reading framework into educator preparation programs.

## Appendix A

### Science of Reading Contextual Background: State Standards and National Best Practices

Teacher and leadership preparation programs draw on a range of state standards and national best practices to provide a basis for curriculum and instruction. The following examples provide a core foundation for integrating SUNY's Science of Reading framework into preparation programs.

These key standards in this section are associated with competencies in the following areas of pedagogical practices (based on [New York State Standards for Teaching](#)):

- Knowledge of Students and Student Learning
- Knowledge of Content and Instructional Planning
- Instructional Practice
- Learning Environment
- Assessment for Student Learning
- Professional Responsibilities and Collaboration
- Professional Growth

The framework draws on related best practices from national professional organizations including:

- International Literacy Association
  - [Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals](#)
    - Foundational knowledge
    - Curriculum and instruction
    - Assessment and evaluation
    - Diversity and equity
    - Learners and the literacy environment
    - Professional learning and leadership
    - Practicum/clinical experiences
- International Dyslexia Association
  - [Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading](#)
    - Foundations of literacy acquisition
    - Knowledge of diverse reading profiles, including dyslexia
    - Assessment
    - Structured literacy instruction
      - Essential principles and practices of structured literacy instruction
      - Phonological and phonemic awareness

- Phonics and word recognition
- Automatic, fluent reading of text
- Vocabulary
- Listening and reading comprehension
- Written expression
- Professional dispositions and practices
- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
  - [Five Core Propositions](#)
    - Teachers are committed to students and their learning
    - Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students
    - Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning
    - Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience
    - Teachers are members of learning communities

Further, an analysis of the research on teacher preparation for literacy instruction conducted by the [International Literacy Association and National Council of Teachers of English \(2017\)](#) identified four critical quality indicators for pre-service teachers' learning and performance:

- Knowledge development
  - Depth and breadth of knowledge
  - Coherence across course work
  - Literacies of culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- Application of knowledge within authentic contexts
  - Prolonged engagement and explicit guidance and mentoring
  - Focused field experiences
  - Engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse students and families
- Ongoing teacher development
  - Guided self-critique
  - Analysis of social justice issues
  - Engagement in professional learning communities
- Ongoing assessments
  - Program admission
  - Progress monitoring
  - Benchmarking accomplishments
  - Tracking success