

Dyslexia Working Group

September 12, 2025 Meeting - Session Summary

Attendees

- Dyslexia Working Group - Jenny Imel, Brian Rose, Cindy Kanuch, Sarah Huffman, Marcie Eichmann, Jess Yost, Sissy Peters
- Colorado Department of Education - Rachael Lovendahl, Tammy Yetter, Emily Ottinger, Mandy Harris, Rhonda Haniford, Joanna Bruno, Ellen Hunter
- Public - Brenda Sand
- Facilitators - Kara Schmitt and Betsy Kummer

Time and Location

- 9am-3pm
- In person, Colorado Department of Education

Helpful links:

- [Dyslexia Working Group | CDE](#)
- [Colorado Department of Education Dyslexia Handbook \(Feb. 2020\)](#)

Meeting Activities

1. Welcome/Introductions

- Participants introduced themselves and new member, Sissy Peters (Literacy Expert from Aurora Public Schools) was welcomed.
- Resignations: Jamie Brackney, Dyann Powell

2. DWG Recap/Review

Facilitators provided a brief reminder/overview of the DWG purpose, roles, and responsibilities (see [Presentation Slides](#) #3-#4) and took a moment to celebrate successes from 2024-2025.

3. CDE Updates/Policy Presentation and Q&A

CDE provided updates on budget and policy status - see [Presentation Slides](#) (#5-#17)

4. Language Acquisition Presentation

- Hunter Smith, Multilingual Learners with Educational Disabilities Specialist
- Brie Johnson, Senior Literacy Consultant
- Heather Villalobos, Ed.D., English Learner Assessment Specialist

[English Learners and Dyslexia Document \(PDF\)](#)

[Multilingual Learners and Reading Assessment Presentation \(PDF\)](#)

5. 2025-2026 Opportunities

The group reviewed DWG recommendations from last year, and ideas generated during the 2024-2025 sessions to brainstorm ideas for priorities/opportunities in 2025-2026 for the DWG. Each idea was then placed on a matrix based on how easy/hard it would be to implement, and how big of an impact it could potentially have. This exercise was followed by discussion: “what would success look like?”

6. Public Comment

Brenda Sand shared her deep appreciation for the work that the DWG is doing.

7. Other Business and Closing

- The DWG will need to fill two positions. For one of the positions, the group will be looking to find a national expert with a clinical background.
- The next meeting will on Friday, November 14, 2025; 9am-11am (virtual)