

CREATING  
OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR STUDENTS TO  
KEEP WYOMING  
STRONG

## MEMORANDUM NO. 2020-146



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**TO:** School District Superintendents  
Special Education Directors  
Principals  
Special Education Teachers

**FROM:** Shelley Hamel, Chief Academic Officer

**DATE:** September 14, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Conventional Literacy for Students with Significant Intellectual Disabilities

## CONVENTIONAL LITERACY FOR STUDENTS WITH SIGNIFICANT INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

Last year, the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE), through its Deaf-Blind Project, provided training and coaching focused on addressing the needs of students with significant intellectual disabilities who have emergent literacy skills. During the 2020-21 school year, the focus will be on students with significant intellectual disabilities who already know most of the alphabet; have ways to flexibly communicate with speech, symbols or signs; actively participate in shared reading activities and understand that writing is made up of letters and words.

A monthly 90-minute webinar will be provided by Dr. Claire Greer, a Research Assistant Professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Center for Literacy and Disability Studies. Each month the WDE will focus on a key component of comprehensive literacy for conventional learners. After each session, participants will be asked to implement the targeted instructional practice. WDE staff will be available, if requested, to support participants in this process by answering questions, observing

recorded lessons and providing coaching. Each session will begin with a discussion of implementation progress from the previous session. A Microsoft TEAMS meeting space will be used for these sessions and for ongoing communication.

All sessions will take place from 3:30 – 5 p.m. Session dates include:

September 22 – Comprehensive Literacy

October 20 – Reading Comprehension

November 17 – Vocabulary Instruction

January 26 – Reading Fluency

February 23 – Writing

March 23 – Phonics and Spelling

April 27 – Effective Instruction

Register to participate by September 18 [here](#). PTSB credits will be available based on the hours attended by each participant.

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*For more information, contact Leslie Bechtel Van Orman, Vision Outreach Services Program Manager at 307-857-9267 or [leslie.vanorman@wyo.gov](mailto:leslie.vanorman@wyo.gov).*