

# Dyslexia Audit

Takeaways and Solutions

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# Confusion about Screening

- All schools could articulate the process, but there was confusion about
- how to interpret data
- when to conduct a Level 1
- how to decide which students are exhibiting characteristics of Dyslexia and need dyslexia intervention services.

# How to interpret data and when to conduct a Level 1?

For K-2 students, we have to use Dibels, a spelling assessment (Monster), and the AR Rapid Naming Assessment to screen all students. **The Initial screener determines risk, not the cause.**

Initial screeners are similar to getting your vitals taken at the ER. This helps us determine who needs immediate help, but not what the problem is.

- If a student is AT RISK or SOME RISK on **any** area, he or she **must** be given a Level 1 Screener. The Level 1 screener provides diagnostic information so we can determine the cause of reading problems.
- Level 1 screeners are similar to seeing the doctor and giving your symptoms, running additional tests, and looking at your history. This determines why a student is struggling with reading.

# Initial and Level 1 screeners must include all of the following components:

- Phonological and phonemic awareness Sound-symbol recognition
- Alphabet knowledge
- Decoding skills
- Rapid naming skills
- Encoding skills
- All components must be given, even if the DIBELS assessment for that grade level doesn't include them. All K-2 students need to do Letter Naming, Nonsense Word Fluency, and Phoneme Segmentation Fluency.
- We also need to contact the parent if the student showed at risk or some risk on any area of our initial screener, and conduct a parent interview.

# How does the team decide if the student shows characteristics of Dyslexia?

**SBIT should use the questions on page 20 of the Arkansas Dyslexia Resource Guide: If the level I dyslexia screening conducted by the school district indicates a student exhibits characteristics of dyslexia (first three questions answered with a “yes”), the student shall be considered to be exhibiting the characteristics of dyslexia and should be provided intervention services using a dyslexia program delivered with fidelity.**

- 1. Does the student demonstrate one or more of the primary reading characteristics of dyslexia in addition to a spelling deficit?
- 2. Are the reading and spelling difficulties the result of a phonological processing deficit?
- 3. Are the reading, spelling, and phonological processing deficits unexpected? Does the student demonstrate cognitive ability to support age level academic learning?

# Kindergarten and Dismissal

- Kindergarten students are not screened until January and only receive intervention if there is room.
- It is commonplace to dismiss some first grade students that were identified as needing dyslexia intervention the first semester based on DRA levels when new students are identified.

# Appropriate intervention

- Students who exhibit characteristics of dyslexia **MUST** receive dyslexia intervention with fidelity. Dyslexia intervention is multi-sensory and includes instruction in phonemic awareness, graphophonemic knowledge, structures of the English language, linguistics, language patterns, and strategies for decoding, encoding, word recognition, fluency and comprehension.
- **Guided Reading is not dyslexia intervention**, and can be detrimental for a student with characteristics of dyslexia.
- Dyslexia interventionists need to be providing intervention with fidelity in the district's chosen programs. With our current numbers, and the amount of students in LRSD who are not on grade level, you need at least one full time dyslexia interventionist.

# Solutions

- Kindergarten is critical: We can remediate a kindergarten student in 30 minutes a day. It takes 2 hours a day to remediate a 4<sup>th</sup> grader.
- Dyslexia interventionists must be providing dyslexia intervention with fidelity. We have enough students exhibiting characteristics that your interventionist should have a full schedule for dyslexia intervention only.
- We cannot dismiss a student without criteria. I have created a preliminary, but our current program does not have an end and there are not current state-approved criteria for dismissal. Regardless of the reason, a parent must agree with the team if a student is recommended for dismissal



# Parent notification and participation

- The district has a parent letter in the LRSD Dyslexia Handbook to be used to notify parents when a student is identified as needing dyslexia interventions.
- It does not include screening results or resources including characteristics of dyslexia, appropriate interventions, accommodations, and the right to have the student receive an independent comprehensive dyslexia evaluation, all of which are required by law (This has been corrected and a parent packet has been created that includes all of this information)

# Solutions

- A parent packet has been completed
- It is currently posted on the website
- We have to involve the parents every time a student shows any risk on any screener.
- We have a new parent interview where a teacher can notify the parent of the results of an initial screener, complete the interview with the parent, and get verbal consent for a Level 1 screener. It is posted on the website as well

# Concerns

- Elementary schools are in triage mode and serve only the most needy.
- Students might start experiencing success and then are dismissed due to other students being identified.

**Solution:** Follow screening protocol to determine all students who are exhibiting characteristics and then develop a process for asking for staffing support

- Elementary schools do not seem to understand RTI and how to use screening data to determine risk.
  - This delays the Level I Dyslexia Screening and dyslexia intervention.

**Solution:** Provide Training in Dyslexia Awareness, Screening, and RTI

## Concerns continued...

- Elementary schools are collecting screening data, but put more emphasis on Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) and summative data.
- ○ The DRA is not an adequate measure for determining exit status. It does not measure the key weaknesses associated with dyslexia (phonological awareness, letter-sound correspondences, decoding, and encoding)
- Schools should utilize state assessment data with clear explanations of scores to notify parents of reading levels.

# Recommendations: Referral

- Develop written procedures for the Dyslexia referral process for all buildings.

Flow charts and forms have been developed to provide guidance on the referral process

# Screening

- Provide professional development dyslexia awareness focusing on indicators of dyslexia for middle school and high school staff members.
- Provide professional development in RTI, purpose of Initial Screening (prediction of risk), Level I Screening (diagnostic), scoring and interpretation of screening tools, and instructional implications.
- Provide professional development in School-Based Identification of Dyslexia (Level II Screening) for the staff members of the decision making teams and screening personnel in each building.

Professional Development is already occurring at various school PLCs and staff meetings. Vicki King is going to provide school based teams training for LRSD assessment and literacy staff between March 11<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>

Screen students experiencing difficulty at each grade level in accordance with the law.

## Parent notification

- Include screening results and required resources when contacting parents.

I have edited our current form to include attachment of screening results and all required resources.

# Instructional approaches and Interventionists

- Adopt a comprehensive dyslexia program that is systematic and explicit.
- Provide dyslexia interventionists coaching support for implementing the program.
  - We have held 2 full days of program review and two after school sessions to score the intervention programs. We have one more meeting scheduled for the 25<sup>th</sup>.
- Dyslexia interventionists need designated time in the daily master schedule to see dyslexia intervention groups.
  - I have held and scheduled meetings with multiple schools to support the current students who are currently identified and support master schedule planning for next year.



# Required reporting

- Make website reporting more easily identifiable by adding dyslexia to the file link name.
- List all programs used for dyslexia interventions.
- Include students identified, but not receiving intervention in the third item: Total Number of Students Identified as Exhibiting the Characteristics of Dyslexia.
- This information has been updated, with the exception of students last year who were identified, but did not receive intervention. It will be updated for this year.

# Communication

- Create a district system for tracking students receiving dyslexia intervention from building to building
  - The system should house assessment information, including screening results and progress monitoring data so that precious instructional time isn't wasted on duplicating assessments.
  - The system should house dyslexia program instructional information to indicate the level and lesson the student has mastered.

I am developing a folder system to house information in schools that will transfer if a child moves. I have also created a change form to allow me to tag students and transfer information between schools for transient students. I need support in this area, as I do not think I can keep up with the data entry on such a large scale. I am researching the capabilities of sped track to house