Ohio’s Dyslexia Guidebook

Best practices and methods for universal screening, intervention, and remediation for children with dyslexia or children displaying dyslexic characteristics and tendencies using a multisensory structured literacy program.

Helping students see *dynamic* instead of *dyslexic*.
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The Ohio Dyslexia Guidebook was developed pursuant to [Ohio Revised Code Section 3323.25(C)](https://codes.ohio.gov/RC/3323.25(C)):

1. Not later than December 31, 2021, the Ohio dyslexia committee shall develop a guidebook regarding the best practices and methods for universal screening, intervention, and remediation for children with dyslexia or children displaying dyslexic characteristics and tendencies using a multi-sensory structured literacy program.
2. The committee shall provide an opportunity for public input when developing the guidebook, in the manner determined by the committee.
3. Prior to its distribution, the guidebook shall be subject to final approval by the state board of education.
4. The guidebook shall be developed and issued to districts and schools in an electronic format. After the initial development of the guidebook, the Ohio dyslexia committee shall update the guidebook as necessary.

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Introduction

Ohio’s vision is that each child is challenged to discover and learn, prepared to pursue a fulfilling post-high school path and empowered to become a resilient, lifelong learner who contributes to society (Each Child, Our Future, 2018). There may be no greater purpose for an education system than to provide all learners with effective evidence-based instruction to build language and literacy knowledge and skills so they can enjoy full lives of learning and success. Ohio maintains a portfolio of aligned policies and practices aimed at ensuring all learners acquire essential literacy skills. The Department promotes alignment of all school improvement efforts into one comprehensive plan. Clear alignment of local literacy plans to other improvement activities and local improvement efforts is critical. (Ohio Department of Education, 2020, p.8)

Far too many Ohio students are not reading on grade level. In many cases, differences in student outcomes can be linked to differences in access to high-quality educational experiences. Ohio is committed to meeting these equity challenges by improving literacy achievement for all students. Ohio’s Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement (see Section 4: Ohio’s Language and Literacy Vision) calls for district and school leaders to partner with families in the use of technically sound assessments and standards-aligned curricular materials to implement evidence-based reading instruction to meet the needs of all learners, including students with dyslexia. Equitable systems supporting all learners to thrive are grounded in access, opportunity, collaboration and efficiently matching resources to student needs. Access to those equitable systems has been especially challenging for students with dyslexia.

Ohio’s dyslexia support laws define dyslexia as “a specific learning disorder that is neurological in origin and that is characterized by unexpected difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities not consistent with the person’s intelligence, motivation, and sensory capabilities, which difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language.”

Students with dyslexia tend to have difficulty processing speech sounds, decoding words and reading fluently. Such difficulties often lead to slow and inaccurate reading, inadequate comprehension and difficulty with written and/or spoken language. The percentage of students experiencing characteristics of dyslexia has been reported to be as high as 15%–20% (International Dyslexia Association, 2012).

More information about dyslexia can be found on the International Dyslexia Association website and the National Center on Improving Literacy’s Understanding Dyslexia Toolkit.

Reading intervention research documents compelling evidence that the use of early and intensive phonemic awareness training, explicit and systematic instruction in phonics, and the opportunity to read connected text is effective in improving reading outcomes for students struggling to read in kindergarten through third grade (Al Otaiba, Rouse & Baker, 2018; Torgesen et al., 2001; Vellutino et al., 1996; Vellutino, Scanlon, & Lyon, 2000). The body of evidence known as the science of reading provides a solid foundation for reading instruction and intervention for all students, including those with dyslexia.

Myths and misunderstandings about dyslexia are prevalent and persistent. Despite the legal requirement, districts struggle to find, evaluate, and educate students with dyslexia. Teachers continue to struggle to identify and teach students with dyslexia despite their desire to have every student learn to read. And many parents struggle to be engaged as partners with educators when their child has difficulty with reading, despite being the people who know the student best.

The Ohio Dyslexia Committee believes the topic of dyslexia has the power to unite parents and schools around the common goal of raising reading achievement for all students. It is from this perspective that this Guidebook is written.
The purpose of this Guidebook is to provide the best practices and methods for universal screening, intervention, and remediation for children with dyslexia or children displaying dyslexic characteristics and tendencies using a multi-sensory structured literacy program.

The Guidebook provides support and direction for Ohio’s educators, in collaboration with families, and community members, to:

- Increase their knowledge of dyslexia
- Create a common vision for the definition and provision of effective instruction for students with dyslexia
- Build an instructional system that allows resources, even intensive resources, to be given to all students who need them, regardless of disability status
- Accurately identify reading difficulties early and provide support
- Use a systematic assessment process to identify the essential reading skills students have and don’t have, which, in turn, will direct next steps in the instructional sequence
- Formalize the identification of dyslexia, when appropriate, as a specific learning disability with special education supports

As districts implement the contents of the Guidebook, they are encouraged to provide feedback to the Ohio Dyslexia Committee. Over time, the Guidebook may be revised based on ongoing research and input from Ohio educators.
Section 1: Best Practices in Literacy Instruction

Students may struggle with reading or learning to read for a variety of reasons, including difficulty acquiring language skills, cognitive impairment, unaddressed hearing problems, gaps in attendance or ineffective reading instruction. Not all students who struggle with reading have a disability, and not all students with reading disabilities have dyslexia. That being said, a significant percentage of students struggling with reading do have dyslexia. The approaches outlined in this Guidebook, based in the science of reading, are focused on providing systems of support that will prevent reading failure for most students, and identify and support students who are challenged with reading, including those with dyslexia and other reading disabilities.

The Science of Reading: A Defining Guide provides information about the science of reading.

This Guidebook aims to support Ohio’s school districts to become better prepared to meet the needs of the full range of students with reading difficulties, including those with dyslexia. As educators increase their knowledge and skills, they will be more equipped to meet the needs of the students they serve. Professional development plays an important role in Ohio’s Dyslexia Support Laws and more information pertaining to these requirements is in the Department’s supporting resources.

Best Practices for Effective Reading Instruction

Because reading is not a natural or innate skill, becoming a reader must not be left to chance. Reading instruction is most effective when it is taught explicitly and systematically. Teaching methods focusing only on student development or maturation, creating a literacy-rich environment or fostering a love of reading are insufficient, likely leaving many students without the basic literacy competencies.

The articles Speaking is Natural; Reading and Writing Are Not and See Brain. See Brain Read: Reading Instruction Changes the Brain on the Reading Rockets website provide information about how the brain learns to read.

Explicit and Systematic Instruction

Explicit instruction is direct and unambiguous (Archer and Hughes, 2010). It can be thought of as “errorless learning” because students are supported with direct models and scaffolds to correctly perform the foundational skills that lead to reading comprehension.

Characteristics of explicit, teacher-directed instruction include:

- Breaking tasks into small steps
- Sequencing skills from simple to complex
- Providing explicit models (I do it)
- Teaching prerequisite skills prior to expecting advanced skills
- Using clear examples and non-examples
- Providing immediate affirmative and corrective feedback (We do it)
- Practicing to automaticity (You do it)
- Reviewing in a cumulative fashion

Characteristics of systematic instruction include:

- Planning instruction deliberately, before it is delivered
- Building on prior knowledge
- Sequencing from simple to complex
- Progressing toward measurable learning goals
The use of explicit and systematic teaching to improve student outcomes is documented in a vast body of scientific evidence (i.e., Adams & Engelmann, 1996; Brophy and Good, 1986; Christenson, Ysseldyke, & Thurlow, 1989; Gersten et al, 1998; Gersten et al., 2009; Gersten, Schiller, & Vaughn, 2000; Gersten et al, 2020; Hall and Burns, 2018; Mastropieri, Scruggs, Bakken, & Whedon, 1996; Rosenshine & Stevens, 1986; Rosenshine, 1997; Simmons, Fuchs, Fuchs, Mathes, & Hodge, 1995; Swanson & Hoskyn, 1998; Swanson, 1999; Vaughn, Gersten, and Chard, 2000).

Students who are acquiring new skills, and those who need intervention, benefit from explicit instruction that reduces cognitive load, transfers new knowledge to long-term memory, minimizes errors and maximizes content learned.

Instruction that is not explicit and systematic is often described as constructivist, problem-based, student-led or discovery learning approaches. These approaches involve minimal teacher structure and guidance as students construct their own knowledge. They are typically less effective when building the foundational reading skills to a level of automaticity that allows students to gain meaning from text (Kirschner, Sweller, & Clark, 2006; Sweller, Kirschner, & Clark, 2007). This may be especially true for young students who are just acquiring reading and for older struggling readers, such as those with dyslexia.

The following resources provide information on explicit instruction:

- Anita Archer’s video examples on the [Explicit Instruction website](#)
- The Meadows Center’s [10 Key Policies and Practices for Explicit Instruction](#)
- The National Center on Intensive Intervention’s webinar on [What Every Educator Needs to Know About Explicit Instruction](#)

The Essential Early Literacy Skills

Research has converged on the essential early literacy skills (Castles, Rastle, Nation, 2018; Foorman et al, 2016; National Reading Panel, 2000). These skills are recognized as non-negotiable, and form the foundation of classroom reading instruction, assessment, and intervention. The skills listed below represent the essential skills that are the broad areas of focus, each containing subskills that can be taught sequentially and integrated with other skills for maximum benefit.

- **Vocabulary:** Understanding the meaning of words we speak, hear, read, and write
- **Phonemic Awareness:** Noticing, thinking about and working with the smallest units of spoken language, which are called phonemes
- **Decoding:** Knowing relationships between sounds (phonemes) and letters (graphemes)
- **Reading Fluency:** Reading connected text accurately, fluently, and for meaning
- **Reading Comprehension:** Gaining meaning from text

Although all elementary grades contain standards addressing each essential early literacy skill, the emphasis of instruction shifts throughout the grade levels as students progress toward proficiency. Appendix F of Ohio’s Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement depicts the general subskills, highlighted in orange, in each of the five essential early literacy skills that are emphasized as learners move through the elementary grades—this is not about balance, or even amount of time spent on each component, but a changing emphasis on specific skill progressions. Educators must be aware that students who are not progressing in a typical manner will continue to need support targeting the earlier foundational skills. Mastering these foundational early literacy skills will lead to greater success in later years.

Ohio’s Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement and Appendices provide information about the essential early literacy skills.
Structured Literacy
Structured Literacy is an instructional approach that describes the type of explicit and systematic reading instruction supported by research. This instructional approach explicitly teaches the language structures supporting both the word recognition and language comprehension components of the Simple View of Reading (Gough & Tunmer, 1986).

The Simple View of Reading

Word Recognition
The ability to transform print into spoken language

×

Language Comprehension
The ability to understand spoken language

=

Reading Comprehension

The term “structured” refers to the structure teachers provide to the organization, sequencing, presentation and integration of the language structures that support skilled reading and writing, within a systemic structure of tiered supports for all learners.

Structured Literacy doesn’t refer to a single instructional method or program. Several effective instructional and intervention programs are available for implementing a Structured Literacy approach. These programs share the following characteristics:

- Explicit
- Systematic
- Diagnostic
- Cumulative
- Integrating listening, speaking, reading and writing
- Emphasizing the structures of language (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and orthography)

Common instructional practices defining Structured Literacy approaches include the characteristics of effective reading instruction mentioned above. While Structured Literacy approaches are especially effective with struggling readers and students with reading disabilities, students with language-based disabilities, students for whom English is not their first language and students without reading difficulties benefit from this approach (Snow & Juel, 2005). All students deserve access to teachers who are prepared to deliver reading instruction that is grounded in the science of reading and Structured Literacy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is taught</th>
<th>How it is taught</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phonology and phonemic awareness</td>
<td>Systematic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound-symbol association (basic phonics)</td>
<td>Cumulative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syllable instruction</td>
<td>Explicit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morphology</td>
<td>Diagnostic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syntax</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semantics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional Considerations for English Learners
Teachers of students who are English learners can enhance the Structured Literacy approach for students by addressing the similarities and differences of the language structures of students’ native or home languages and English. Instruction should systematically build on the knowledge students already have in phonemic awareness, syllable structure, morphology, syntax and semantics in their native or home languages and explicitly address overlaps, variations and differences in English. Additionally, as instruction for English learners must emphasize oral language development, educators can use features of a Structured Literacy approach to support this development. Explicit instruction in the similarities of words (cognates) can support the development of oral language and vocabulary for English learners whose native languages derive from languages in which English also comes from (Cardenas-Hagen, 2018).
The **International Dyslexia Association** and **Reading Rockets** provide information on Structured Literacy.

The **Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk** provides research and resources on reading development, including several resources for teaching students who are English learners.

### Comparing a Structured Literacy Approach to Other Approaches

District personnel who are responsible for reading curriculum and instruction should be cautious about the claims made by authors and publishers regarding alignment to Structured Literacy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Skill Area</th>
<th>Structured Literacy Approach (Speech to Print Approach)</th>
<th>Common Practices Not Using a Structured Literacy Approach (Print to Speech Approach)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phonemic Awareness</td>
<td>Emphasis on the sounds in spoken language distinct from and prior to phonics instruction; phoneme awareness used as the starting point for print.</td>
<td>Letters used as the starting point for print; reading treated as a visual skill; confusion of phonemic awareness and phonics; avoidance of segmenting spoken words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics &amp; Spelling</td>
<td>Intentional instruction in letter-sound combinations; sequenced from easier to harder for reading and spelling; application of word reading in print.</td>
<td>Taught whole to part (analytic) incidentally as students make mistakes in text or by analogy (word families); mini lessons responding to student errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary &amp; Oral Language</td>
<td>Oral language as the reference point for print; books used for reading aloud are more challenging than those students read independently; scripted teacher dialogue.</td>
<td>Modeling reading aloud from the leveled books students will read; non-directive questioning and discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text Reading Fluency</td>
<td>Young students read text that is controlled to include only those phonics patterns that have been explicitly taught; fluency building only after accuracy; high degree of teacher-student interaction with immediate corrective feedback.</td>
<td>Use of leveled or predictable texts that are not controlled for decoding difficulty; error response focuses on picture cues or the use of context to determine words; high degree of independent silent reading; miscue analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>Background knowledge, text structure, inference making are overtly modeled and practiced in a planned progression; students held accountable for close reading, retelling, and evidence-based responses.</td>
<td>Over-emphasis on teacher modeling (think aloud) without direct instruction; activities such as shared reading and guided reading; student book choice; over-emphasis on teaching reading comprehension strategies; disconnected topics without consideration for text complexity or background knowledge.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### District Decision Point: Has there been an analysis of the match between Structured Literacy and the literacy instruction provided in elementary grades?
Multi-Tiered System of Support

There is no single test for dyslexia. Dyslexia is not diagnosed through screening and cannot be diagnosed without measuring a student’s response to effective instruction. Because dyslexia is not identified by a score on a single test, students who are on either side of any selected cut point are very likely to have similar instructional needs. Therefore, rather than focusing on how to restrict reading intervention only to students who have dyslexia, it is preferable to provide effective reading instruction and intervention to all students who demonstrate difficulty on screening, and to vary the intensity, specificity and duration of the support based on student need (Al Otaiba, et. al., 2009; Fletcher, Lyon, Fuchs, & Barnes, 2018; Yudin, 2015). This approach is consistent with a Multi-Tiered System of Support model.

A Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) includes three tiers of instruction in which all students can access the type and amount of instructional support they need to be skilled readers, without having to fall behind before receiving support. The goal is to support all students with the least intensive resource necessary for all to meet grade-level expectations. Students with dyslexia will need prolonged, intensive, explicit and systematic instructional support delivered by a highly trained educator. Schools can use the MTSS model to ensure intensive support is available to any student who needs it, as soon as they need it and for as long as they need it.

Michigan’s MTSS Technical Assistance Center provides more information about establishing and evaluating a multi-tiered system of support.

Results of the Ohio Dyslexia Pilot Project (2012-2015) confirmed the impact of MTSS on learning and on the cost of service delivery. Districts that implemented a tiered system of early literacy supports increased the percentage of proficient readers and decreased the percentage of students requiring more intensive and expensive supports (Morrison, Hawkins, & Collins, 2020).

Three Tiers of Instruction and Intervention

The three-tiered model of prevention and intervention originated in public health and has been applied to changing reading outcomes in a variety of schools, districts and states (Al Otaiba et al 2011; Ervin et al, 2006; Harn et al, 2011; VanDerHeyden, Burns, Brown, & Shinn, 2017; Vellutino, Scanlon, Zhang, & Schatschneider, 2008). Conceptualizing the tiers as primary, secondary and tertiary prevention of reading failure is a hallmark of the MTSS model, and involves efficiently matching student needs to instruction, using the fewest resources possible to get the desired outcome for the largest number of students.

Structured Literacy instruction in tier 1 should be so well matched and differentiated to the needs of the students that it results in the vast majority (at least 80%) of the students reaching grade-level goals. However, some students will need additional targeted tier 2 support, in addition to tier 1 instruction, to reach those goals. And a small number of students will need the most-intensive Structured Literacy support to reach expectations. One goal of the three-tiered model of prevention and intervention is to have students meet grade-level expectations with the least intensive instructional support possible.
Guidance on the characteristics of each tier of support are described below. These are not meant to be rigid mandates, but rather intended as guidance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Tier 1 Instruction</th>
<th>Tier 1 Instruction Plus Tier 2 Intervention</th>
<th>Tier 1 Instruction Plus Tier 3 Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Primary prevention of reading failure</td>
<td>• Secondary prevention of reading failure</td>
<td>• Tertiary prevention of reading failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Core Structured Literacy curriculum and instruction</td>
<td>• Structured Literacy intervention targeting students’ specific reading concerns</td>
<td>• Individualized plan to intensify and coordinate Structured Literacy intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness Criteria</td>
<td>At least 80% of students reach grade-level expectations</td>
<td>An additional 15%-20% of students reach grade-level expectations</td>
<td>Remaining 0%-5% of students reach grade-level expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td>General education classroom</td>
<td>General education classroom with push-in or pull-out services</td>
<td>Location determined by the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who Delivers</td>
<td>Classroom teacher with support for differentiation</td>
<td>Classroom teacher with support of others determined by the school (such as reading support staff, special education staff, etc.)</td>
<td>Classroom teacher with support of others determined by the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who Receives</td>
<td>All students</td>
<td>Some students who are at risk or haven’t responded to effective tier 1 instruction that worked for the majority</td>
<td>A few students with significant reading difficulties or those who haven’t responded to effective tier 1 and tier 2 instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Size</td>
<td>Whole class, with small groups of 5-7</td>
<td>Small groups (3-5 recommended)</td>
<td>Small groups of students who need to work on the same skill (1-3 recommended)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Minimum of 90 minutes every day</td>
<td>30-45 minutes 3-5 times per week in addition to tier 1 instruction</td>
<td>45-60 minutes every day in addition to tier 1 instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>• Universal screening (tier 1 dyslexia screener &amp; Third Grade Reading Guarantee diagnostic assessment) three times per year</td>
<td>• Intervention-based diagnostic assessment (tier 2 dyslexia screener) as needed</td>
<td>• Intervention-based diagnostic assessment (tier 2 dyslexia screener) as needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Intervention-based diagnostic assessment (tier 2 dyslexia screener) as needed</td>
<td>• Progress monitoring at least every other week, determined by grade-level team</td>
<td>• Progress monitoring weekly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: In Ohio’s dyslexia support laws, universal screening (tier 1 dyslexia screening) refers to the practice of screening all students three times a year. Ohio’s Third Grade Reading Guarantee legislation uses the term “diagnostic assessment” to refer to this same process of universal screening. Schools are encouraged to leverage the overlapping requirements and guidelines for screening by using the fewest approved assessments necessary to find at-risk students and provide them with effective instruction as soon as possible. There is no need to adopt new tools if the screening measure used for diagnostic assessment under Ohio’s Third Grade Reading Guarantee also appears on Ohio’s list of approved universal screening assessments for tier 1 dyslexia screening.
Purposes of Assessment

Implementation of MTSS requires a comprehensive and coordinated system of assessments to address each of the four purposes described below. **The goal is to guide instruction and intervention, rather than the diagnosis of dyslexia or determination of eligibility for special education.**

Universal Screening (Tier 1 Dyslexia Screening)
- **Problem solving step:** Step 1 Problem Identification
- **Questions answered:**
  - Which students and systems need support?
  - Who is at risk?
  - How many students are at risk?
  - Which grade should be prioritized?
  - What is the problem?
- **Characteristics:**
  - Brief
  - Standardized
  - Predictive
  - Indicators of essential early literacy skills

Intervention-Based Diagnostic Assessment (Tier 2 Dyslexia Screening)
- **Problem solving step:** Step 2 Problem Analysis; Step 3 Plan Development and Implementation
- **Questions answered:**
  - Why is the problem happening?
  - What support is needed?
  - What is the next step for instruction?
- **Characteristics:**
  - Standardized or informal, rather than teacher-created
  - Specific and detailed
  - Closely linked to instruction

Progress Monitoring
- **Problem solving step:** Step 4 Plan Evaluation
- **Questions answered:**
  - Is the support working?
  - Should instruction change or stay the same?
- **Characteristics:**
  - Brief
  - Standardized
  - Sensitive to change
  - Alternate forms at same difficulty level
  - May be same as universal screening measures
  - Aligned to universal screening

Outcome Evaluation
- **Problem solving step:** Step 4 Plan Evaluation
- **Questions answered:** Did the support work?
- **Characteristics:**
  - Standardized
  - Change in percent at risk on universal screening over time

District Decision Point: Does the district have a comprehensive assessment system for each of the four purposes of assessment?
Multidisciplinary Teams
Multidisciplinary teams that form at the district, building, grade, and student levels are tasked with using a structured data-based decision-making framework to build the MTSS for prevention and intervention that will increase the reading performance of all students.

District Leadership Teams (DLT) review aggregate screening data and establish a vision for consistent literacy improvement efforts across the district. They create a district action plan for the policies, staffing, professional learning, service delivery, and instructional approaches necessary to improve reading outcomes for all students.

Building Leadership Teams (BLT) use student data to identify needs of students in the school and create an action plan that is aligned to the district plan but contextualized for the needs and resources of the school. Their task is to create the systems that support reading improvement.

Grade-Level Teams (also called Teacher-Based Teams) use student data to identify the needs of students in their grade and implement systems for classroom reading instruction and reading intervention to meet those needs.

Student-Level Teams (also called Teacher-Based Teams) are formed around the needs of individual students who need intensive reading support.

Under Ohio’s dyslexia support laws, districts are tasked with establishing a multidisciplinary team to administer screening and intervention measures and analyze the results of the measures. The team must include trained and certified personnel and a stakeholder with expertise in the identification, intervention, and remediation of dyslexia. The term “stakeholder” refers to any individual who has a stake in reading outcomes, and includes district employees, parents/guardians and community members. This stakeholder is knowledgeable and experienced in guiding conversations around analyzing literacy data and planning for instruction. This stakeholder should be an educator with a multisensory structured literacy certification, a school psychologist with this expertise, a speech-language pathologist with this expertise, or an individual from the community with specific expertise in dyslexia assessment. Districts may find it necessary or beneficial to reach out to partners outside of the district such as Educational Service Centers when fulfilling this role.

The following information provides guidance for how districts can align existing teams to the functions of MTSS and requirements of Ohio’s dyslexia support laws.

District Leadership Team (DLT)
- **Who:**
  - Stakeholders with expertise in the identification, intervention, and remediation of dyslexia
  - District and building administrators
  - Teacher and staff representatives from each building
  - Related service personnel
  - Parent and community representatives
- **Meeting Frequency:** Quarterly (more often until strategic plan is written)
- **Tasks:**
  - Set a vision, priorities, and expectations
  - Review district data to develop, implement, and evaluate a district action plan
  - Review and establish district policies, professional development, and funding for alignment to the action plan
  - Provide support for implementation (funding, PD, coaching) of building action plans
  - Guide building leadership teams
Building Leadership Team (BLT)

- **Who:**
  - Stakeholders with expertise in the identification, intervention, and remediation of dyslexia
  - Principal
  - Teacher representative from each grade, related service staff, union representative
  - Related service personnel
  - Representative from non-certificated staff
  - Parent, community representative
  - A person in the role of systems coaching
  - District office representative
- **Meeting Frequency:** Monthly
- **Tasks:**
  - Review building data to develop, implement, and evaluate a building action plan
  - Develop knowledge and skills of building staff for implementation
  - Plan and conduct professional learning and coaching
  - Set a vision, priorities, and expectations
  - Provide support for implementation (funding, PD, coaching) of the building action plan
  - Guide building leadership teams

Grade-Level Team/Teacher-Based Team (TBT)

- **Who:**
  - All teachers in the grade
  - Related service staff
  - Coach
- **Meeting Frequency:** Every other week
- **Tasks:**
  - Review grade-level data to develop, implement and evaluate building action plan
  - Guide student teams

Student-Level Teacher-Based Team (TBT)

- **Who:**
  - Teachers
  - Parents
  - Student when appropriate
- **Meeting Frequency:** As needed to support student learning
- **Tasks:** Review student data to develop, implement and evaluate student intervention plan

**District Decision Points:** Who will serve on the multidisciplinary teams at the district, school, and grade level? When will each team meet? What are the roles and functions of each team?
The Problem-Solving Model
The use of the below problem-solving model is a suggested framework to use while screening and designing instructional supports for children with dyslexia or children displaying dyslexic characteristics and tendencies. A structured data-based decision-making framework guides and supports the implementation of MTSS. All teams outlined above use the problem-solving model to guide implementation of MTSS to improve reading outcomes at the district, school, grade, and individual student level. The basic steps of problem solving used at all levels are the same and are outlined below.

The [Florida Problem Solving/Response to Intervention Project](#) provides information and resources to support the problem-solving model.

**Step 1: Problem Identification:** What is the problem? Which systems and students need support?
The problem should be defined as precisely as possible as the difference between what is expected and what is actually happening for the student and the system.

**Step 2: Problem Analysis:** Why is the problem happening?
Teams should consider student, instruction and environment variables, barriers, and resources to generate hypotheses about the factors contributing to the problem.

**Step 3: Plan Development and Implementation:** What is the plan?
Teams use information from step two to create a plan. This includes setting a goal, identifying necessary resources, and stating how progress will be monitored.

**Step 4: Plan Evaluation:** Is the plan working? Did the plan work?
Formative and summative, brief, reliable and valid, curriculum-based evaluation data are used to determine if the plan needs to be revised. Teams may return to step one or two if the problem is not resolved.

Teams use student data in the problem-solving model to build a tiered system of evidence-aligned instruction to meet the needs of all students. Learning to use the problem-solving model requires training and ongoing coaching. Over time, members of the multidisciplinary teams can support all members of the school community to use the problem-solving model. Examples of collaborative problem solving are included throughout the Guidebook.
Section 2: Methods for Universal Screening

Screening assessments are not designed to diagnose dyslexia but rather to identify risk. By providing robust Structured Literacy instruction and intervention at the first sign of risk, educators can positively impact all students at risk for reading concerns, and through a multi-tiered system of supports, identify and meet the needs of students with dyslexia. An immediate instructional response to the early signs of difficulty uncovered during universal screening can positively impact the future for students who are at risk of dyslexia.

All students should be screened with a universal screening measure (tier 1 Dyslexia Screening) three times a year in kindergarten-grade 3. Students in grades 4-6 must be screened at the request of their parent or guardian or by request of their teacher and with parent/guardian permission.

Grade-level and/or building-level teams review the results of universal screening (tier 1 dyslexia screening) to identify students who are at risk. The needs of individual students must be addressed within the context of the needs of all students. The percentage of students who are identified as being at risk of dyslexia on the universal screening (tier 1 dyslexia screening) serves as an indicator of the overall effectiveness of the tier 1 reading instructional system.

If a significant number of students are at risk on universal screening, it is a strong indicator reading instruction is not generally effective. Additionally, it is difficult to claim that any individual student who is learning in this instructional context has dyslexia and difficult to provide them with more intensive support. Therefore, universal screening (tier 1 dyslexia screening) provides an opportunity to check the effectiveness of tier 1 instruction for all students.

Because universal screening assessments are brief indicators, they often do not provide sufficient detail about a student's skills to facilitate instructional planning. Intervention-based diagnostic assessments (tier 2 dyslexia screening measures) must be instructionally relevant and selected to answer specific questions about teaching the student and to determine next steps for instruction.

The primary purpose of early screening is to prompt and guide instruction and early intervention.

Characteristics of universal screening and intervention-based diagnostic assessments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Universal Screening</th>
<th>Intervention-Based Diagnostic Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Tier 1 Dyslexia Screening)</td>
<td>(Tier 2 Dyslexia Screening)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Brief (10 minutes or less)</td>
<td>• Given to all students who demonstrate a need or are at risk of dyslexia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Standardized</td>
<td>• Linked to Structured Literacy instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Technically adequate (reliable, valid, demonstrate accuracy for predicting reading achievement)</td>
<td>• Standardized or informal, rather than teacher-created</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Direct indicators of essential literacy skills</td>
<td>• Norm-referenced, criterion-referenced, or curriculum-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Given by classroom teachers with the support of other educators</td>
<td>• Selected to clarify instructional need and inform instructional placement by answering specific problem-analysis questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Predictive of future reading outcomes through research-based skill levels and risk status</td>
<td>• Individually administered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Alternate forms for screening three times per year and for ongoing progress monitoring</td>
<td>• Connected to specific foundational skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Identifying Tier 1 Dyslexia Screening Measures

Universal screening, referred to as a Tier 1 dyslexia screening measure in the Ohio Dyslexia Support Laws, identifies the students whose current level of skills indicate they may be at risk of reading difficulties such as dyslexia. These measures are:

- Brief (10 minutes or less)
- Standardized
- Technically adequate (reliable, valid, demonstrate accuracy for predicting reading achievement)
- Direct indicators of essential literacy skills
- Given by classroom teachers with the support of other educators
- Predictive of future reading outcomes through research-based skill levels and risk status
- Available in alternate forms for screening three times per year and for ongoing progress monitoring

Districts must select universal screening measures (Tier 1 dyslexia screening measures) from the list of Department-approved assessments for this purpose.

Skills Measured by Universal Screening (Tier 1 Dyslexia Screening)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill to screen</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonemic Awareness</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter Naming</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter-Sound Correspondence</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real and non-word reading</td>
<td>X (end of year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Text Reading Accuracy and Rate</td>
<td>X (starting in mid-year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Beginning Of Year</th>
<th>Middle Of Year</th>
<th>End Of Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Phonemic Awareness Letter Naming</td>
<td>Phonemic Awareness Letter Naming Letter-Sound Correspondence Real and Non-word Reading</td>
<td>Phonemic Awareness Letter Naming Letter-Sound Correspondence Real and Non-word Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Phonemic Awareness Real and Non-word Reading</td>
<td>Letter-Sound Correspondence Real and Non-word reading Oral Text Reading Accuracy and Rate</td>
<td>Letter-Sound Correspondence Real and Non-word reading Oral Text Reading Accuracy and Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Letter-Sound Correspondence Real and Non-word reading Oral Text Reading Accuracy and Rate</td>
<td>Oral Text Reading Accuracy and Rate</td>
<td>Oral Text Reading Accuracy and Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-6</td>
<td>Oral Text Reading Accuracy and Rate Comprehension Measure</td>
<td>Oral Text Reading Accuracy and Rate Comprehension Measure</td>
<td>Oral Text Reading Accuracy and Rate Comprehension Measure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
District and building teams should be mindful of the following best practices for conducting universal tier 1 dyslexia screening:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Don’t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use assessments for the purposes for which they were designed (screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring, outcome evaluation).</td>
<td>Try to conduct screening with a test designed for diagnostic or achievement testing purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use screening assessments that predict important reading outcomes.</td>
<td>Use tests that use only a normative interpretation or tests for which the predictive value is unknown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access training from the test author or publisher, or their designee.</td>
<td>Test without training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include the classroom teacher in the assessment team.</td>
<td>Exclude classroom teachers from the assessment team or expect classroom teachers to screen all their students themselves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow the standardized procedures for giving and scoring the assessment.</td>
<td>Alter the directions, prompts, or scoring based on time constraints or personal preference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test in a quiet location.</td>
<td>Test in a noisy area with distractions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The National Center on Improving Literacy provides information and resources on universal screening.
Identifying Tier 2 Dyslexia Screening Measures

Intervention-based diagnostic assessments, referred to as Tier 2 dyslexia screening measures in Ohio’s dyslexia support laws, identify where each student is on an instructional continuum and specifies next steps for instruction. These assessments may be selected to answer problem analysis questions, or they may be placement tests within instructional programs. The purpose of intervention-based diagnostic assessment (tier 2 dyslexia screening) is to drive instruction and accelerate student progress by identifying the next step for instruction or in the appropriate lesson within a Structured Literacy program. These measures are:

- Given to all students who demonstrate a need or are at risk of dyslexia
- Linked to Structured Literacy instruction
- Standardized or informal, rather than teacher-created
- Norm-referenced, criterion-referenced, or curriculum-based
- Selected to clarify instructional need and inform instructional placement by answering specific problem-analysis questions
- Individually administered
- Connected to specific foundational skills

The Department will not be creating a list of approved intervention-based diagnostic assessments for tier 2 dyslexia screening. Teams working with students who are at risk of dyslexia will need to select intervention-based diagnostic assessments (tier 2 dyslexia screening measures) meeting the below criteria and designed to answer the questions they have about the students.

Student performance on universal screening (tier 1 dyslexia screening) and the shifting emphasis on the essential early literacy skills across grades provide guidance in the selection of intervention-based diagnostic assessments (tier 2 dyslexia screening) at step 2 of the problem-solving model.

The following table provides guidance on the skill areas in which an intervention-based diagnostic assessment (tier 2 dyslexia screener) might be selected.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Beginning Of Year</th>
<th>Middle Of Year</th>
<th>End Of Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary/Oral Language</td>
<td>Phonics/Spelling</td>
<td>Phonics/Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Listening Comprehension</td>
<td>Vocabulary/Oral Language</td>
<td>Vocabulary/Oral Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Listening Comprehension</td>
<td>Listening Comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phonics/Spelling</td>
<td>Phonics/Spelling</td>
<td>Phonics/Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary/Oral Language</td>
<td>Oral Reading Fluency</td>
<td>Oral Reading Fluency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Listening Comprehension</td>
<td>Vocabulary/Oral Language</td>
<td>Vocabulary/Oral Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Listening Comprehension</td>
<td>Listening Comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phonics/Spelling</td>
<td>Phonics/Spelling</td>
<td>Phonics/Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oral Reading Fluency</td>
<td>Oral Reading Fluency</td>
<td>Oral Reading Fluency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>Reading Comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary/Oral Language</td>
<td>Vocabulary/Oral Language</td>
<td>Vocabulary/Oral Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Listening Comprehension</td>
<td>Listening Comprehension</td>
<td>Listening Comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3+</td>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phonics/Spelling</td>
<td>Phonics/Spelling</td>
<td>Phonics/Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oral Reading Fluency</td>
<td>Oral Reading Fluency</td>
<td>Oral Reading Fluency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>Reading Comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary/Oral Language</td>
<td>Vocabulary/Oral Language</td>
<td>Vocabulary/Oral Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Listening Comprehension</td>
<td>Listening Comprehension</td>
<td>Listening Comprehension</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Building, grade, and student-level teams should be mindful of the following best practices for conducting intervention-based diagnostic assessment (tier 2 dyslexia screening):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Don’t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use assessments for the purposes for which they were designed (screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring, outcome evaluation).</td>
<td>Try to conduct diagnostic assessment with a test designed for screening, progress monitoring or achievement testing purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use intervention-based diagnostic assessments that briefly and comprehensively assess the full range of skills within an essential skill area.</td>
<td>Use tests that measure a narrow range of skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use intervention-based diagnostic assessments that explicitly provide information about next steps for instruction (e.g., placement tests for structured literacy instructional programs).</td>
<td>Use tests designed for clinical diagnosis without a direct application to classroom instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use intervention-based diagnostic assessments that minimize testing time by including discontinue rules.</td>
<td>Use tests that require administering items that are clearly too easy or too difficult.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use intervention-based diagnostic assessments that have an adequate number of items to measure the essential skill area.</td>
<td>Use tests with too few items to assess the essential skill area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access training from the test author or publisher, or their designee.</td>
<td>Test without training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test in a quiet location.</td>
<td>Test in a noisy area with distractions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional Considerations for English Learners**

When selecting tier 2 dyslexia screening measures to administer with English learners, schools should use assessment processes to guide instruction in both basic literacy skills, as well as English language development. Additionally, schools are encouraged to use a tier 2 dyslexia screening measure and culturally responsive process that provides information about the student’s language and literacy in a home or first language other than English. If there is not an assessment in a student’s native or home language, informal measures of language proficiency such as reading a list of words and listening comprehension in the native or home language may be considered. This information will assist schools in designing integrated language and literacy instruction that addresses the multilingual learner including whether the student is at risk of dyslexia.

**Assessments That Do Not Meet the Characteristics of Dyslexia Screening Measures**

Running records, assessments analyzing reading miscues or focused on “sources of information,” and other assessments designed to match students to text levels do not meet the criteria for use as universal screening (tier 1 dyslexia screening) or intervention-based diagnostic assessment (tier 2 dyslexia screening measures). Clinical assessments focusing on arriving at a clinical diagnosis and without a direct application to classroom instruction do not meet the characteristics of intervention-based diagnostic assessments for use as tier 2 dyslexia screening measures.

**Clarification on Dyslexia Screening and Ohio’s Third Grade Reading Guarantee**

**Universal Screening**

In Ohio’s dyslexia support laws, universal screening (tier 1 dyslexia screening) refers to the practice of screening all students three times a year. Ohio’s Third Grade Reading Guarantee legislation uses the term “diagnostic assessment” to refer to this same process of universal screening. Schools are encouraged to leverage the overlapping requirements and guidelines for screening by using the fewest approved assessments necessary to find at-risk students and provide them with effective instruction as soon as possible. If the universal screening assessment a district is using to meet the requirements of Ohio’s Third Grade Reading Guarantee also appears on the Department’s approved list of universal screening measures (tier 1 dyslexia screening), the district does not need to adopt a new tool, as the same tool appears on both lists.

**Intervention-Based Diagnostic Assessment**

In Ohio’s dyslexia support laws, intervention-based diagnostic assessment (tier 2 dyslexia screening) refers to the practice of identifying where a student is on an instructional continuum and specifies next steps for instruction. Ohio’s Third Grade Reading Guarantee requires schools to provide kindergarten-grade 3 students identified as not on track with a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan. The intervention-based assessments (tier 2 dyslexia screeners) can be used to support the identification of the student’s reading needs, inform the instructional services and support that will be provided to the student, provide scientifically based and reliable assessment and initial and ongoing analysis of the student’s reading progress as required by the Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan.
District Decision Point: Which universal screening assessment (Tier 1 dyslexia screening) will the district select from the approved list? What training is needed for those who administer and interpret the results? What intervention-based diagnostic assessments will be used to inform instruction and further clarify student need?

Interpreting Dyslexia Screening Measures

Interpreting Tier 1 Dyslexia Screening Measures
Districts use the universal screening (Tier 1 dyslexia screening) results to identify risk for dyslexia based on the test publisher-determined cut point. Once a student is identified by a screener as at risk, the school begins to design next steps in instruction, further assessment, and intervention. If the student will be provided intervention shortly after the Tier 1 screening measure, the district should not delay in administering an intervention-based diagnostic assessment (Tier 2 dyslexia screening measure) to inform the design of this intervention.

For children identified as at-risk of dyslexia, instruction is monitored through a progress monitoring tool. Progress monitoring is the repeated measurement of the area of instruction, for the purpose of making decisions about continuing or changing instruction. Progress monitoring is formative assessment, meaning data are collected before a skill is taught, while a skill is being taught and at the point of expecting mastery of a skill.

Ongoing progress monitoring allows educators to make decisions about student growth and the effectiveness of their instruction based on data rather than hunches or intuition. Decisions that are based on repeat measurement over time, rather than a single point in time, are more reliable and accurate.

Progress monitoring data are displayed on graphs showing the student’s performance at the point of initial concern, the goal, and the path to follow to close the gap. Frequent data collection allows instructors to make real-time adjustments to instruction rather than waiting months for the results of summative assessments. Research indicates that when teachers use progress monitoring data to inform instruction, student outcomes improve (Jimerson et al., 2016; Miciak & Fletcher, 2020).

Progress-monitoring measures are:
- Brief
- Standardized, not teacher-created
- Technically adequate
- Direct measures of essential literacy skills
- Matched to the skill that is the focus of instruction
- Sensitive to learning over small increments of time through an adequate number of alternate forms
- Aligned to universal screening (Tier 1 dyslexia screening)

Progress monitoring should be done with indicators of the essential early literacy skills, phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, reading fluency, and reading comprehension. Some universal screening measures (Tier 1 dyslexia screening) meet the criteria to be used for progress monitoring.
The following skills are the ones assessed during universal screening (tier 1 dyslexia screening), and therefore are the skills that may be identified as needing support. When students score below expectation on multiple skills, the one that is first in the instructional sequence should be the initial focus of instruction. The skill that is the focus of instruction should be monitored, with a progress monitoring tool that meets the criteria outlined in this Guidebook, at least at weeks two, four, and six following the start of small group Structured Literacy instruction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Beginning Of Year</th>
<th>Middle Of Year</th>
<th>End Of Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Letter-sound correspondence</td>
<td>Letter-sound correspondence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-word reading</td>
<td>Non-word reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Letter-sound correspondence</td>
<td>Letter-sound correspondence</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-word reading</td>
<td>Non-word reading</td>
<td>Non-word reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Letter-sound correspondence</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-word reading</td>
<td>Non-word reading</td>
<td>Non-word reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oral text reading accuracy and rate</td>
<td>Oral text reading accuracy and rate</td>
<td>Oral text reading accuracy and rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3+</td>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-word reading</td>
<td>Non-word reading</td>
<td>Non-word reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oral text reading accuracy and rate</td>
<td>Oral text reading accuracy and rate</td>
<td>Oral text reading accuracy and rate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interpreting Tier 2 Dyslexia Screening Measures
Districts use intervention-based diagnostic assessments (tier 2 dyslexia screening measures) primarily to identify next steps in instruction and intervention. This information, combined with progress in instruction and formative assessment, can inform the multidisciplinary team as to whether a student is displaying dyslexia tendencies and is at-risk of dyslexia. The following table provides examples of indicators that when present and not consistent with a student’s intelligence, motivation and sensory capabilities may support a multidisciplinary team in identifying a student as having dyslexia tendencies and at risk of dyslexia.

### Dyslexia Tendencies
- Weakness in phonological awareness tasks (e.g., rhyming, phoneme segmentation, blending, letter naming fluency)
- Difficulty learning letter names and letter sounds
- Difficulty learning sound-symbol association
- Weakness in phonological memory (e.g., non-word repetition)
- Weakness in word recognition fluency
- Weakness in spelling
- Weakness in oral vocabulary

*(Mather & Wendling, 2012)*

An appropriate response to risk for dyslexia involves the immediate provision of Structured Literacy instruction and intervention, promotion of protective factors, and ongoing monitoring of the student's response to increasingly intensive instructional supports.

Additional Considerations for English Learners
Districts use a variety of data sources to design instruction for students who are English learners. Schools should not isolate the dyslexia screening information from the other sources of data on students’ language and literacy development. Some of these data, such as information from the language usage survey and state English language proficiency screener, are required by federal and state laws. Below are examples of additional data sources for understanding the language and literacy needs of English learners:
- Language Usage Survey
- Ohio English Language Proficiency Screener
- Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment
- Instructional interventions provided for English language development
- Information regarding previous educational experiences (inside or outside of the United States)
- Progress in the district's selected educational approach for English learners
Communicating with Parents, Guardians, and Custodians

Parent Request for Screening
As their child’s first teacher, parents may recognize difficulties with early literacy skills, even before school entry, and can share their concerns with the school district. Parents of students in grades one through six may request universal screening (tier 1 dyslexia screening) at any time and give permission for screening when teachers request it.

Tier 1 Dyslexia Screening Results
Districts are required to use the universal screening (tier 1 dyslexia screening) results to identify risk for dyslexia, based on the test publisher-determined cut point, and notify the student’s parent, guardian, or custodian when the student has been identified as at risk. All parents should receive the results of their child’s screening within at least 30 days after it is given. If assessment used for universal screening (tier 1 dyslexia screening) is used for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee, one communication can meet the requirements of both laws.

Tier 2 Dyslexia Screening Results
The results of the intervention-based diagnostic assessment (tier 2 dyslexia screening measure) must be shared with parents within 30 days of the administration.

Helpful communication should include:

- The assessment used
- The skills measured
- The expected performance
- The student’s performance
- The next steps for instruction
- A request to share information about their child and their family history
- Whether or not the performance indicates risk of dyslexia
- Resources outlined in this Guidebook

Risk of dyslexia is indicated by:

- Inaccurate reading of text
- Dysfluent reading of text
- Difficulty with automatic word recognition
- Difficulty matching sounds to letters
- Difficulty blending and segmenting sounds in spoken words
- Difficulty naming letters
- Slow progress or resource intensive progress despite effective Structured Literacy instruction and intervention

If a student’s intervention-based diagnostic assessment (tier 2 dyslexia screening measure) does not indicate risk of dyslexia, they would still receive effective instruction/intervention and their parent would be informed of instructional needs as part of effective home-school communication. Even without risk of dyslexia, the student’s needs would be addressed, and parents informed.
If a student’s intervention-based diagnostic assessment results indicate risk of dyslexia, the student would receive effective Structured Literacy instruction and intervention and parents must be given information about:

- Reading development
- The risk factors for dyslexia
- Descriptions of evidence-based intervention
- The district’s multisensory Structured Literacy program

The following list outlines risk factors for dyslexia across the age/grade level (International Dyslexia Association, 2012; 2014; Mugnaini, et al, 2009; Svetaz, Ireland, & Blum, 2000)

Students who experience risk for dyslexia do not necessarily have dyslexia. The goal of early identification of risk is the provision of early intervention that can prevent or minimize the impact of reading difficulties such as dyslexia.

**Watch for difficulty with:**

**Birth-Kindergarten Entry**
- Learning to speak
- Learning nursery rhymes
- Identifying initial sounds in words
- Learning letter names, colors, numbers, days of the week
- Pronouncing familiar words
- Retrieving the correct word when speaking
- Telling a story in sequence
- Following multistep directions
- Not making progress despite generally effective instruction

**Early Elementary**
- Recognizing, producing, and working with individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words
- Confusion of visually similar letters or letters that represent sounds that are similar
- Learning the relationships between sounds and letters
- Learning to decode
- Reading out loud
- Retrieving words when speaking
- Pronouncing long, difficult, or complicated words
- Spelling
- Handwriting/letter formation
- Not making progress despite generally effective instruction

**Later Elementary**
- Organizing written and spoken language
- Reading multisyllabic words
- Reading common irregular words
- Reading text fluently enough to support comprehension
- Spending time reading
- Reading out loud
- Retrieving words when speaking
- Spelling and writing
- Handwriting
- Not making progress despite generally effective instruction
Middle and High School

- Organizing written and spoken language
- Reading text fluently enough to support comprehension
- Expressing ideas verbally
- Spending time reading
- Reading out loud
- Learning a foreign language
- Managing homework
- Taking notes in class
- Spelling and writing
- Not making progress despite generally effective instruction

Students with these difficulties do not necessarily have dyslexia and will not necessarily be identified in the future as having dyslexia. However, if the above characteristics are unexpected for a student’s age or education level, if they persist over time despite generally effective instruction, and if they interfere with learning, they may be associated with dyslexia.

Demonstrating Markers for Dyslexia

In addition to the above communications, districts must provide parents or guardians with a written explanation of the district’s multisensory Structured Literacy program when a multidisciplinary team determines that a student is demonstrating markers of dyslexia aligned to Ohio’s definition of dyslexia.

“Dyslexia” means a specific learning disorder that is neurological in origin and that is characterized by unexpected difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities not consistent with the person’s intelligence, motivation, and sensory capabilities, which difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language.
Section 3: Methods for Intervention and Remediation

This section provides information to districts on the methods for intervention and remediation for children with dyslexia, children identified with dyslexia tendencies and children demonstrating dyslexic characteristics using a multisensory structured literacy program.

The results of the intervention-based diagnostic assessments (tier 2 dyslexia screening measures) are used to design the next steps in multisensory structured literacy instruction for students across the three tiers of instruction. Careful consideration will need to be given to the alignment of instruction to accelerate progress for students. Misalignment between core instruction and intervention or tiers of intervention may work against the brain connections that support reading and inhibit adequate progress.

The following is a list of common instructional practices that are widely used but NOT consistent with a Structured Literacy approach and may impede the progress of children with dyslexia or at risk of dyslexia. Research and additional resources supporting this list are provided in Appendix A.

- Drawing shapes around words
- Vision therapy and using colored overlays
- “Brain-based” exercises such as “crossing the mid-line”
- Implementing “reading information systems” or other methods that direct student attention away from the letters or encourage equal emphasis on the use of visual information, language structures (natural language, grammatical structures, knowledge of English), and meaning (story sense, background knowledge and illustrations) when decoding
- Teaching through the “lens of strategic actions” or a “system of strategic actions”
- Posting words on an alphabetic word wall based on the first letter in a word regardless of the sound it represents (for example, one, off, and open listed under the letter O)
- Prompting students to decode with cues such as “does it look right?”, “does it sound right?”, “does it make sense”? “does the word look like another word you know”?
- Using pictures or the first letter to “predict” words
- Reading aloud from text that is leveled, lacks sufficient complexity, or isn’t representative of a range of genres appropriate for the grade level
- Grouping students based on leveled text systems
- Using an analytic approach to phonics instruction
- Instructing phonics and spelling separately
- Using materials such as poems or leveled text that doesn’t provide consistent practice of the phonics elements in the lesson
- Referencing “processing text,” “strategic actions,” “word solving,” or “solving words strategically” rather than reading text
- Emphasizing “choice” and “agency” rather than explicit, teacher-directed instruction
- Using a “mini lesson” format for whole-group instruction
- Insufficient instruction and practice opportunities the entire school year
- Treatment of high-frequency words as words to memorize without attention to the phoneme-grapheme correspondences and without a clear sequence for instruction
- Assessing with tools that rely on the three-cueing system (MSV) or “sources of information,” running records/reading records, or tools that don’t clearly identify the next step for instruction for all students
Tier 1 Structured Literacy Instruction
The goal of tier 1 reading instruction is primary prevention of reading failure. All students receive tier 1 instruction with supports as needed. Tier 1 instruction includes whole-group, small-group, and even individualized instruction, based on student needs as defined by the universal screening (tier 1 dyslexia screening).

Tier 1 instruction should be comprehensive in scope, aligned with the instruction articulated in this Guidebook, and supportive of meeting state standards. The skills taught within and across grades should be articulated in a clear scope and sequence that progresses logically from simple to complex and integrate the language structures that support skilled reading.

Research indicates that the best outcomes for students who may be at risk of reading difficulties, including dyslexia, occur when explicit and systematic instruction in the essential components of reading is provided even prior to the first signs of difficulty (Lovett et al, 2017; Wanzek & Vaughn, 2007). Multidisciplinary teams use assessment data in the problem-solving model to design multi-tiered instructional systems that support all students to become skilled readers.

The ability of a school system to meet the reading needs of all students depends on:
- Conceptualizing classroom reading instruction as risk reduction
- Matching student needs to instruction
- Using the fewest and least intensive resources to get the maximum benefit

Use of Problem Solving to Design Tier 1 Instruction
The problem-solving process is a suggested decision-making framework for implementing a multi-tiered system of support.

Step 1: Problem Definition
Developing an action plan to increase reading outcomes begins with an observable and measurable statement of the problem.

Examples of problem definition statements:
- The tier 1 instructional system should result in at least 80% of the students meeting grade-level reading expectations, however, the beginning-of-year screening shows only 54% of students met these expectations.
- At the middle-of-year screening, the tier 1 instructional system should result in at least 80% of students meeting grade-level expectations, however, only 42% of students met these expectations.
- The second-grade team set a goal for 80% of the students to meet grade-level expectations by the end of the year, however, only 65% met these expectations, which was a decrease of 22% from the middle of year.

District Decision Point: Does the percent of students meeting reading expectations at each grade indicate the need to analyze and improve tier 1 reading instruction?

Step 2: Problem Analysis
Next, grade-level teams consider the likely reasons for the stated problem.

The following components are alterable variables that teams should consider when analyzing the resources and barriers related to providing effective tier 1 instruction.

Time for Instruction
- Has sufficient time been allotted for tier 1 instruction?
- Is more time spent on prioritized learning targets?
- Are active participation and engagement strategies used to maximize instructional time?
Learning Targets

- Is instruction focused on the essential early literacy skills?
- Are the learning targets appropriately sequenced and integrated?
- Are all aspects of language taught in an integrated manner?
- To what extent are the learning targets written in terms that are observable and measurable?
- To what extent are the learning targets aligned with the grade below and above? What are the gaps? What are the redundancies?

Curriculum

- To what extent is the content of the curriculum aligned with the learning targets?
- Is there a comprehensive scope and sequence of skills to guide instruction?
- To what extent is the curriculum aligned with empirical research?

Instruction

- What percentage of scheduled time is spent in instruction?
- Has the need for class wide intervention been determined?
- To what extent are research-aligned instructional approaches implemented with fidelity?

Assessment and Decision Making

- To what extent does universal screening indicate the essential early literacy skills?
- Are universal screening data used to modify tier 1 instruction?
- How often do teachers meet to use assessment data to problem solve for individual students?

Format

- Are screening data used to inform which skills are taught in whole-group and which are taught in small-group formats?
- To what extent are screening data used to inform flexible, skill-based small groups?

Instructor Knowledge

- What do teachers know about the scientific research behind the English language arts standards and learning targets used in their grade?
- What do teachers know and not know about evidence-aligned instructional strategies and routines?
- What do teachers know about the selection and interpretation of assessments used in their grade?
- How frequently are teachers provided professional development, coaching, time for planning and collaborating with their grade level teams on tier 1 instruction?
- What training has been provided on published programs and approaches?

The following are free online tools multidisciplinary teams can use when evaluating instructional materials:
- Ohio Curriculum Support Guide
- Curriculum Evaluation Tool from The Reading League
- Consumer’s Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program K–3 from the University of Oregon
- EdReports reviews and reports on instructional materials for English language arts

Teams may identify several factors that contribute to the low reading outcomes. They should consider their available resources and prioritize one or two barriers to resolve first. The result of problem analysis should be a statement of the hypothesized reason for the low reading outcomes.
Example of a hypothesis statement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Systems-Level Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Problem Identification</td>
<td>At the middle-of-year screening, the tier 1 instructional system should result in at least 80% of students meeting grade-level expectations, however, only 42% of students met these expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Problem Analysis</td>
<td>Hypothesis: The low percentage of students who are meeting grade-level reading expectations is caused by curriculum and instruction that are not sufficiently focused on explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Plan Development and Implementation</td>
<td>Action Plan (see below)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 3: Plan Development and Implementation

Once the problem is clearly stated and a hypothesis is developed about why more students aren’t meeting grade-level expectations, the team should develop an action plan for using available resources to eliminate the hypothesized barrier to better reading outcomes.

Action plans for improving tier 1 instruction should include:

- Steps for eliminating the stated problem by changing the hypothesized reason for it occurring
- Details about the tasks at each step
- Who will conduct the tasks at each step
- Goal for improvement
- How the plan will be monitored
- When the plan will be reviewed
- Results and next steps

Plan Development and Implementation Example Action Map:

**Step 1:** Provide explicit and systematic instruction on phoneme segmentation.

- **Task 1:** Prepare a summary of the research on teaching phoneme segmentation
- **Task 2:** Develop an instructional routine for teaching phoneme segmentation
- **Task 3:** Integrate the routine into the existing phonics lesson framework
- **Who:** Grade-level team leader
- **Goal:** Ten minutes of instruction each day
- **Monitoring:** Coach observations of phonemic-awareness instruction; Student scores on progress monitoring
- **Date for Review:** January 15
- **Plan Evaluation:** At the middle-of-year universal screening (tier 1 dyslexia screening), 78% of students met the grade-level expectation for segmenting phonemes, which is an improvement of 23%.
**Step 4: Plan Evaluation**

System-level action plans allow for formative and summative evaluation. While instruction is happening, formative evaluation involves monitoring of implementation of the plan and ongoing progress monitoring of individual student growth to make decisions about revising the plan. Changes to the action plan can be made in real time. At the next universal screening time, the percentage of students who met the grade-level expectations is part of summative evaluation to determine future adjustments to the plan.

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<td>Action Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Plan Evaluation</td>
<td>At the middle-of-year universal screening (tier 1 dyslexia screening), 78% of students met the grade-level expectation for segmenting phonemes, which is an improvement of 23%.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The response to the results of universal screening (tier 1 dyslexia screening) should be the immediate improvement of classroom reading instruction for the benefit of all students. By improving the first reading instruction all students receive, the students who are at risk of dyslexia receive immediate support in the form of tier 1 instruction that is aligned to their reading needs. Students with dyslexia cannot be appropriately identified and served without the provision of effective instruction and intervention.

However, the process of analyzing and improving tier 1 reading instruction should not replace or delay the provision of more intensive support to students who need it. Students who score well below expectations on universal screening (tier 1 dyslexia screening) and students who are already receiving special education services should be considered for more intensive support.

At the same time that grade-level or building-level teams are using system-level problem solving to improve tier 1 instruction, student-level teams might be problem solving around the needs of individual students who need intensive support.
Use of Problem Solving to Support Individual Students

Universal screening is sometimes sufficient for differentiating tier 1 reading instruction and for planning tier 2 intervention. For example, at the beginning or middle of kindergarten, if more than 20 percent of the grade level is at risk on an essential skill, small group instruction on that skill should be provided in tier 1 and in tier 2 instruction.

In other cases, more information will need to be gathered through intervention-based diagnostic assessment (tier 2 dyslexia screening). Diagnostic assessment tools selected based on problem analysis questions for individual students, or placement tests for Structured Literacy intervention programs, can identify next steps for instruction. Either way, students are grouped for instruction based on their current level of skill on the path toward reading.

Below is an example of student-level problem solving.

Step 1: Problem Identification
At the middle-of-year screening, Johnny is expected to read third-grade text accurately, fluently and for meaning, however, he read with only 78% accuracy which impaired his comprehension.

Step 2: Problem Analysis
Hypothesis: Johnny lacks automatic word recognition and decoding skills. Intervention-based diagnostic assessment (tier 2 dyslexia screening) with the placement test for the school’s Structured Literacy intervention program indicates Johnny can read VC, CVC words, but not CVCe words, words with vowel teams, r-controlled vowels, or multisyllabic words.

Step 3: Plan Development and Implementation
Johnny will receive small group Structured Literacy instruction to work on decoding CVCe words through tier 1 and tier 2 instruction.
  - Who: Classroom teacher and reading specialist
  - Goal: Twenty minutes through tier 1 and 30 minutes through tier 2
  - Monitoring: Progress monitoring with first grade oral reading fluency passages; Check progress at weeks 2, 4, and 6; Goal: 95% accuracy
  - Date for Review: March 1

Step 4: Plan Evaluation
After six weeks, Johnny’s accuracy increased to 85%.
The Role of Multidisciplinary Teams in Tier 1 Instruction

Multidisciplinary teams at the district and/or building level have these responsibilities:

- Educating themselves about the purposes of assessment necessary for implementing a schoolwide reading improvement model (MTSS)
- Selecting a universal screening assessment (tier 1 dyslexia screening measure) from the Department’s list of approved assessments
- Selecting an intervention-based diagnostic assessment (tier 2 dyslexia screening measure) to identify next steps for instruction
- Selecting progress monitoring assessments to inform instruction and track student growth
- Providing training for staff and family members on the selected assessments
- Coordinating efficient data collection and reporting
- Facilitating data review, interpretation, and use within a structured problem-solving process
- Communicating results of literacy improvement efforts to all stakeholders

Multidisciplinary teams use student data in the problem-solving model to build three tiers of instruction that support all students to meet grade-level reading expectations.

Tier 2 Structured Literacy Targeted Intervention

Tier 2 intervention is strategic small-group Structured Literacy intervention provided in addition to tier 1 instruction. Tier 2 intervention is specifically tailored to the needs of students in the group and designed or selected based on alignment to the research about how best to intervene on the missing essential component(s) of reading. The classroom teacher and/or other instructors, inside or outside the general education classroom, can provide tier 2 intervention. Each grade should have a system of tier 2 instructional supports. Instruction provided through tier 2 intervention should be aligned to tier 1 instruction by using the same instructional routines, language, and sequence. The staff providing the intervention should have ongoing training on the program or approach. Tier 2 intervention is typically delivered in a 30- to 45-minute block, three to five days a week, with sufficient time built into the school schedule.

The goal of tier 2 intervention is to provide more instructional time and practice opportunities to students who are at risk so they will catch up to grade-level expectations and standards at an accelerated rate. The curriculum for tier 2 intervention must focus on the specific skills the students in the small group need to learn to achieve grade-level expectations. Tier 2 intervention elevates the use of a Structured Literacy approach. It is more explicit, includes more opportunities to respond and practice, is delivered at a brisk pace, includes more immediate affirmative and corrective feedback, and uses cumulative review over time.
**Differences Between Tier 1 Instruction and Tier 2 Intervention**

The tables below illustrate the ways tier 2 intervention is different from tier 1 reading instruction. Instruction in each of the essential skill areas is delineated for clarification, however, this should not be interpreted as a need for a different small group to work on each skill.

### Vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 1 Classroom Instruction</th>
<th>Tier 2 Intervention Instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Whole group and small group</td>
<td>• Small group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Word learning strategies through teaching orthography, word origin, and morphology</td>
<td>• More explicit instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Classroom discussion supporting the development of oral language including story structure, syntax and morphology</td>
<td>• Additional practice with words taught in classroom instruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| • Pre-teach before reading aloud and independent reading  
  ◦ Words that are essential to understanding the text  
  ◦ Words that will be encountered again and again  
  ◦ Difficult words such as those with multiple meanings and idioms | • Fill in possible “gaps” in vocabulary, morphology, syntax, and the knowledge essential for oral language development and school success |

### Phonemic Awareness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 1 Classroom Instruction</th>
<th>Tier 2 Intervention Instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Whole group and small group</td>
<td>• Homogenous small groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sequence from larger to smaller linguistic units</td>
<td>• Explicit modeling of new skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use of movement and/or manipulatives such as chips, blocks, or letter tiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Focus on two types of activities during a lesson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Multiple practice opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Immediate corrective feedback</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Phonics & Spelling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 1 Classroom Instruction</th>
<th>Tier 2 Intervention Instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Whole group and small group</td>
<td>• Small group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Follows a purposeful sequence</td>
<td>• Students all have same next steps for instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Word learning strategies through teaching orthography, word origin, and morphology</td>
<td>• Explicit modeling of new patterns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use of manipulatives such as letter tiles, syllable cards, prefix and suffix cards, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Immediate corrective feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Practice to automaticity in controlled decodable text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Fluency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 1 Classroom Instruction</th>
<th>Tier 2 Intervention Instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Choral reading  
  • Partner reading  
  • Audio-assisted reading  
  • Independent practice | • Small-group and partner practice |
|                                | • Repeated reading of words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs leading to repeated reading of text |
|                                | • Teacher modeling |
|                                | • Partner reading |
### Comprehension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 1 Classroom Instruction</th>
<th>Tier 2 Intervention Instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Begins as listening comprehension</td>
<td>• Small-group discussion of texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Follows a purposeful sequence of content knowledge</td>
<td>• Instruction in syntax, grammar, and word analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Explicit modeling of strategies (retell, main idea, inference making, summarization) that includes</td>
<td>• Comprehension at the sentence, paragraph, and text levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Purpose of strategy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ How, when, and where to use it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Which strategies work best in which instances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ How to apply to different types of text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Development of a mental schema</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Close reading of the text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Intentional questioning before, during and after reading aloud</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### District Decision Point: What is the tier 2 intervention needed at each grade level?

**Problem Solving to Design Tier 2 Intervention**

Below is an example of student-level problem solving for tier 2 intervention.

**Step 1: Problem Identification**
Second-grade students who are at risk need an extra dose of skill-based small group decoding instruction each day.

**Step 2: Problem Analysis**
- Resources: Intervention block in the schedule; Title 1 staff, special education staff, paraprofessionals, and classroom teachers are available to support intervention.
- Hypothesis: No evidence-based Structured Literacy program is available for use for tier 2 intervention.

**Step 3: Plan Development and Implementation**
Research and select a program that provides explicit and systematic decoding instruction on the skills the students are missing aligned to tier 1 instruction.

**Step 4: Plan Evaluation**
A program has been selected and staff training has been scheduled.
The Role of Multidisciplinary Teams in Tier 2 Intervention

Multidisciplinary building or grade-level teams use student data in the problem-solving model to design a system of tier 2 intervention that meets the needs of students at each grade level. The team must ensure that targeted intervention is available in addition to tier 1 reading instruction for those who need it by addressing system-level issues such as scheduling, program selection, flexible use of resources, and professional development.

Although student-level teams do not need to plan tier 2 intervention (a previous Intervention Assistance Team model), they may meet to review progress and revise intervention for individual students. Students who receive tier 2 intervention should have frequent progress monitoring to inform changes to the intervention.

The current instructional supports should be continued for students who are making progress (students 1 and 2 in the figure below). For students who are not making progress, the team should consider the causes of lack of progress by returning to the problem-analysis step. Students who are not making progress, despite the tier 2 intervention resulting in most students in their small group to make progress, may be considered for more intensive support through tier 3 intervention (student 3 in the figure below).

The Meadows Center’s 10 Key Policies and Practices for Reading Intervention provides information about effective reading intervention.

District Decision Points: What is the tier 2 intervention program for each essential component of reading in each grade? What data will be used to match students to intervention? What will be used to monitor the effectiveness of the tier 2 intervention system?
Tier 3 Structured Literacy Intensive Intervention

Tier 3 intensive intervention is individualized Structured Literacy instruction that is provided in addition to Tier 1 instruction, and in addition to or in place of Tier 2 intervention, depending on the needs of the student. This level of intervention should be provided by an educator with Multisensory Structured Literacy Instruction Certification or under consultation of an educator with Multisensory Structured Literacy Instruction Certification. The goal of intensive intervention is to catch students up to grade-level expectations by addressing severe and persistent learning difficulties. In an effective schoolwide reading system, only a few students need intensive intervention support since the needs of most students have been met through the provision of tier 1 and tier 2 support.

Intensifying intervention should be conceptualized in terms of the type and amount of instruction. Tier 3 intervention is not necessarily a different program than what was used for tier 2 intervention, but it should be more intensive and individualized in terms of the following characteristics of the instruction:

- More frequent instructional sessions
- Longer instructional sessions
- Smaller groups
- More homogenous groups
- More practice opportunities
- More immediate and individualized feedback and incentives

Interventions containing the elements and characteristics listed in the common practices not using a Structured Literacy approach do not meet the definition of intensive intervention and should not be used.

The reading curriculum for intensive intervention must amplify the elements of Structured Literacy by breaking tasks into smaller units, continuing to provide an explicit model of new skills, scaffolding the production of correct responses, and providing enough opportunities to practice. Intensive intervention is typically delivered in small groups or individually, more frequently and for longer blocks of time than tier 2 instruction. Universal screening (tier 1 dyslexia screening), intervention-based diagnostic assessment (tier 2 dyslexia screening), and progress-monitoring assessment results are used to articulate the needs of each student and provide individualized intervention. The most intensive instruction should be reserved for students with the most need.

Tier 3 is not synonymous with special education. It is not necessary for a student to have a diagnosis of a disability such as dyslexia before getting reading support, even intensive reading support. It is not necessary for a student to wait for a contrived period of intervention before receiving intensive reading support. In fact, careful monitoring of how students respond to intensive instruction is an accurate way to identify the students whose need for support will be ongoing and may require special education resources.

In some schools, intensive intervention supports are only available to students who are identified with a disability and are receiving special education services. This occurs despite the federal and state legislation that encourages or even requires early intervening services. It may be helpful to remember that flexible service delivery, such as serving students cross-categorically and providing intensive, even specialized instruction to students regardless of disability status, is permitted and even encouraged in federal and state law.

District Decision Point: What data and criteria will be used to decide instruction should be changed? What data and criteria will be used to decide when students need tier 3 intensive intervention?
Problem Solving Within Tier 3 Intensive Intervention: Intensifying Support

Tier 3 intensive intervention should be continued for students who are making progress.

When faced with students who are not progressing with intensive Tier 3 intervention, school teams need clear decision rules about intensification of support and suspecting a disability. In the absence of clear guidelines, teams may revert to the old refer-test-place model of service delivery. The old model relied on high-inference assessment practices. Too often, special education was seen as a generic cure all and implemented without targeted intensive instruction to specific student needs.

Not all students who need intensive support in reading are students with disabilities such as dyslexia. Not all students with dyslexia and other reading disabilities need intensive support in reading (Shaywitz, 2003).

For students who are not making progress, the team should consider potential causes of lack of progress and return to the problem-analysis step of the problem-solving model. Students who are not making progress, or who need more resources to make progress, may be considered for more intensive intervention within tier 3.

Factors to consider for intensifying support include:

- Effectiveness
- Match between instruction and student needs
- Explicitness
- Practice opportunities
- Dosage
- Frequency
- Group size
- Engagement and motivation
- Knowledge and experience of the instructor
- Individualization

Intensifying Literacy Instruction: Essential Practices provides information on intensifying intervention for students with severe and persistent reading and writing challenges.

Simone is in 2nd grade and a budding artist. She always looks forward to art class and is planning to enter this year’s city-wide art contest. While analyzing the beginning of year universal screening data, the grade level multidisciplinary team determined Simone was likely to need intensive support to make adequate progress. Because her Oral Reading Fluency score indicated she was highly inaccurate, the team recommended an intervention-based diagnostic assessment (tier 2 dyslexia screening measure) to determine why she is not accurate and what supports she needs to improve her accuracy.

Based on the results of the diagnostic, the team recommended intensive intervention using a multisensory approach with a beginning focus on reading single syllable words with short vowels. Each session included:

- Phonemic awareness on targeted sounds
- Review of prior skills
- New skill practice using gradual release of responsibility
- Opportunities to practice the skill through reading and spelling
- Connected reading using decodable texts

The intensive intervention would occur for 3 weeks, 5 days per week, for 30 minutes session. Simone’s interventionist would progress monitor her response to the intervention every other week. If Simone was not responding to the intervention at the end of 3 weeks, the team would reconvene to determine next steps.

After three weeks, the team adjusted Simone’s intervention by moving her to a smaller group. This reduced group size allowed her to receive more intensive support and opportunities to respond and practice skills with feedback from her interventionist. This adjustment improved her response. The intervention will continue, with progress monitoring conducted using a 1st-grade oral reading fluency passage.
The Role of Multidisciplinary Teams in Tier 3 Intervention
Multidisciplinary building or grade-level teams ensure that the systems are in place to support intensive and individualized tier 3 intervention at each grade level. The team must ensure that intensive intervention is available in addition to tier 1 and tier 2 reading instruction for those who need it by addressing system-level issues such as scheduling, program selection, flexible use of resources, and professional development.

Student-level teams use the problem-solving model to plan the instruction and intervention for individual students. Students who receive tier 3 intervention should have weekly progress monitoring to inform changes to their intervention. The problem-solving cycle continues until the student-level team finds the instruction that enables learning.

The current instructional supports should be continued for students who are making progress. For students who are not making progress, the team should consider the causes of lack of progress by returning to the problem-analysis step. Students who are not making progress may be considered for more intensive intervention within tier 3.

Some students will benefit from a short-term experience with intensive Structured Literacy support. Others have an ongoing need for intensive support. Student teams can use progress-monitoring data to test the possibility of fading support. Decisions about intensifying and fading support can be guided by districtwide decision rules grounded in data.

The National Center on Intensive Intervention provides information and resources for supporting students with intensive intervention.

When to Suspect a Disability
The student-level team can suspect a student may have a disability and request a comprehensive evaluation for special education eligibility when the instruction required for a student to make progress is individualized and intensive and cannot be maintained with general education resources.

Suspecting a disability prior to finding instruction that enables learning may perpetuate the unhelpful practice of viewing special education eligibility as the goal, rather than a potential necessary level of support to reach the goal of improved reading outcomes.

District Decision Point: What data and criteria will be used to suspect a disability?
Support for Adolescent Students

Efforts toward early identification and intervention are critical for supporting the reading development of all children, particularly those with dyslexia or dyslexic tendencies. However, it is important to acknowledge the need for intervention and remediation efforts for students in later grades. Even with effective universal screening and classroom instruction, there will be students in older grades who will need intense intervention and/or accommodations for academic and social-emotional success.

Intervention and Remediation

Intervention and remediation share the common goal of supporting children with reading difficulties. Intervention is a systematic approach to targeting specific skills identified as the potential cause of the reading difficulty. It is an ongoing process with clear goals and benchmarks. Remediation, or “re-teaching”, is appropriate for any student who has not demonstrated mastery of certain skills and requires intensive instruction to address errors in understanding and foundational knowledge.

There are several possible reasons that older students may have difficulties with word decoding and fluency and would benefit from intervention and/or remediation. Some students may not have been identified in earlier grades as at risk for reading difficulties or may have received inadequate intervention. Some students may have been able to compensate in early grades but experienced difficulties later as the text complexity and knowledge demands increased (Leach et al, 2003; Lipka et al, 2006). For these students, it is especially important to support both word decoding and reading comprehension within the context of intervention.

Evidence from studies of intervention for older students with word decoding difficulties suggests that they benefit from similarly structured interventions used for younger students with adjustments for age and experience (Wanzek et al, 2013). Explicit, systematic approaches that focus on vocabulary and reading comprehension, in addition to explicit instruction in the use of strategies to read words quickly and accurately, can be effective (Austin et al., 2021). It is also suggested that targeting phonemic awareness, oral reading fluency, vocabulary and reading comprehension using current curriculum content may be particularly effective for older students. In this way, students build foundational reading skills in tandem with their academic content and are provided multiple and reinforcing learning opportunities (Deshler, 2007).

The following table provides an overview of the instructional components used in intervention and remediation for adolescent students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Component</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Word Study</td>
<td>Instruction should include advanced word study that teaches phoneme-grapheme patterns, syllable patterns, and how to break words into parts. Teach students meaningful parts of words such as prefixes, suffixes, and roots. Older readers also need practice in applying decoding strategies through connected texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>Integrate fluency instruction when introducing new structures so words are read within texts. Provide controlled texts to allow students to apply skills and practice within context. Controlled decodable passages help to establish fluent reading and break habits of guessing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Instruction</td>
<td>Focus instruction on words that are useful to know and encountered across settings and content. Directly teach words using structured opportunities to practice using the words in a variety of contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension Instruction</td>
<td>Provide access to grade level curriculum and texts. While intervening with word-level deficits, older students need access to content and knowledge to support new information contained in texts. This can be facilitated by previewing headings and key concepts and engaging in before, during and after reading strategies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strategies for Accessing Core Instruction

Students in later grades may need additional scaffolds and supports to access core instruction across all content areas. Access to grade-level content, instruction, and text is critical alongside intervention and remediation for reading development. Support and guidance from the teacher can help students to gain meaning and make sense of the texts they encounter.

To aid reading comprehension, students may need to be supported through scaffolding strategies that allow them to access complex, grade-level text. The use of before, during, and after reading strategies may guide students who are not decoding fluently and automatically to interact with the complex language and vocabulary demands of text they encounter. For example, teachers may provide support in:

- Breaking down complex sentences found within a text
- Determining the meaning of multisyllabic words
- Writing and discussion about text using sentence frames
- Accessing academic language and background knowledge specific to the text under study

The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk provides information for supporting adolescent students in the following resources:

- Resources for Improving Low Literacy Levels in Adolescents
- What Dyslexia Looks Like in Middle School and What You Can Do to Help Your Child
- How Can I Help My Middle Schooler Read Multisyllabic Words?

Accommodations for Students with Dyslexia

Accommodations are strategies or tools that facilitate equal access to instruction and instructional content for students with disabilities and may be used for both screening and instruction/intervention. Accommodations provide the opportunity for children to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities without changing or diminishing the content, expectations, or requirements of the learning task. Further, accommodations adjust the way the student responds, the way the teacher presents instructional content, or the schedule of learning the student follows. For example, accommodations for testing a student with dyslexia may include providing extra time, allowing students to respond to questions verbally, or ensuring a quiet testing area.

Selecting appropriate accommodations requires consideration of how the student’s difficulties affect their academic progress. After barriers are identified, there are many possible accommodations that may be appropriate, based on the student’s age and individual needs.

Some examples of accommodations for students with dyslexia may include:

- Presentation accommodations that allow students to access content in alternative ways, such as text-to-speech software or read-aloud tools
- Response accommodations that allow students options for answering questions, such as speech-to-text software or verbal responses
- Setting accommodations that allow students to work on assignments in alternate locations
- Timing accommodations that allow students to have more time to complete assignments or follow an alternate schedule of completion.

The International Dyslexia Association provides information in their Accommodations for Students with Dyslexia Fact Sheet.
Identifying Dyslexia as a Specific Learning Disability

Once a referral has been made for an evaluation, the school district has 30 days to obtain parental consent for the evaluation or to provide the parents with written notice that the district does not suspect a disability.

Once the district has received permission for the evaluation, the district has 60 days to complete it. Progress monitoring data from interventions must be used to determine eligibility for special education services, however, districts may not use interventions to delay an evaluation unnecessarily. The evaluation must consist of procedures to determine if the student is a child with a disability and to determine their educational needs as outlined in Ohio’s Administrative Code related to special education.

A team of qualified professionals, as well as the child’s parent(s) or guardian, determine if the student is a child with a disability. The team will then meet to determine specific educational needs. The school must provide the parents with a written report summarizing the evaluation and determination of eligibility within 14 days of determining eligibility.

The Ohio Administrative Code includes dyslexia in the definition of a specific learning disability. School personnel have the authority to identify students as having dyslexia. It is not necessary for parents to receive a dyslexia diagnosis from a professional outside the school. Under federal and state law, school districts are required to find, identify, and serve students with disabilities, including dyslexia. The US Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services provided guidance on the use of the term dyslexia in their Dear Colleague letter in 2015, stating “There is nothing in the IDEA or our implementing regulations that prohibits the inclusion of the condition that is the basis for the child’s disability determination in the child’s IEP…There is nothing in the IDEA or our implementing regulations that would prohibit IEP teams from referencing or using dyslexia, dyscalculia, or dysgraphia in a child’s IEP.”

Ohio’s dyslexia support laws define dyslexia as “a specific learning disorder that is neurological in origin and that is characterized by unexpected difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities not consistent with the person’s intelligence, motivation, and sensory capabilities, which difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language.”

The use of a discrepancy between a student’s measured cognitive ability and their measured academic achievement to identify students with a specific learning disability has been discredited as unreliable, inaccurate, and has been removed from decisions about instruction. However, some schools continue to use a discrepancy model rather than the direct assessment and response to instruction approach outlined in this Guidebook. The result has been a false hurdle for students to clear, leaving many struggling readers without the reading intervention they need. Nothing in federal or state law requires the use of a discrepancy formula for the identification of a specific learning disability.

Once a student is identified as a student who has a specific learning disability such as dyslexia, and who needs specially designed instruction, that instruction is formalized and legally guaranteed through an Individualized Education Program (IEP). At least annually, and more often if needed, the student-level team uses the problem-solving model to review the student’s progress and revise the specially designed instruction as needed. A re-evaluation must be completed at least every three years or sooner if requested by the district or the parents.

Outside Clinical Diagnosis of Dyslexia

When a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) is implemented as described in this Guidebook, and the provisions of the dyslexia legislation are being followed, parents and school personnel will continue to work together on the student’s behalf from the first indication of reading difficulty. Parents can request a comprehensive multifactoried evaluation if they suspect a disability or have received a dyslexia diagnosis by an outside professional. The school district is obligated to consider the request. If parents seek an evaluation outside of the school district, they are encouraged to share the results with the district. A diagnosis of dyslexia by an outside professional does not mean the school district must automatically identify the student as a student with a disability. However, the district should consider the information from outside professionals as they endeavor to understand and meet the student’s learning needs.

The National Center or Learning Disabilities provides information for parents and educators in 5 Questions Parents and Educators Can Ask to Start Conversations About Using Terms Like Learning Disabilities, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, and Dysgraphia.
Supporting Learners with Co-Occurring Learning Needs

**English learner (EL)** – The term “English learner,” when used with respect to an individual, is an individual with the following characteristics:

1. Age 3 through 21;
2. Enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school;
3. Meets one of the following criteria:
   a. Was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English;
   b. Is a Native American or Alaska Native or a native resident of the outlying areas and comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual’s level of English language proficiency; or
   c. Is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and
4. Has difficulties in speaking, reading, writing or understanding the English language that may be sufficient to deny the individual:
   a. The ability to meet the challenging state academic standards;
   b. The ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or
   c. The opportunity to participate fully in society. [See ESSA 8101(20)]

**English Learners**

In Ohio, districts follow a two-step process for qualifying a student as an English learner. Schools complete this process and notify parents or guardians of the student's identification as an English learner within 30 days of enrollment at the beginning of the school year or within two weeks of enrollment during the school year. More information on these requirements is provided in the Department’s Guidelines for Identifying English Learners. This process should take place prior to administering a tier 1 dyslexia screening measure. The information gathered from the dyslexia screening measure(s) should be used alongside all other language and literacy development data collected by the district to inform the student’s instruction in the English language, as well as in literacy development.

**Language and Literacy Instruction**

Students who are English learners have varying language and literacy skills in English, as well as in their native or home language(s). Some students enter school with literacy skills in their native language(s). Other students may be learning literacy skills in their native language(s) at the same time they’re learning literacy skills in English. Whereas other students will have only oral language skills in their native language(s). When designing language and literacy instruction for English learners, the best practices and methods described in this Guidebook are applicable, however, simultaneous instruction is also needed for English learners in English language development. Providing effective English Learner Programs continues to be the basis for valid and equitable procedures to identify and serve English learners with dyslexia.

**Multi-Tiered System of Support and Data-Driven Decision Making**

English learners are included in the multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) described in this guidebook. However, the language and literacy data and information needed to design instruction and intervention for English learners varies from that of non-English learners. For example, if an English learner is identified as at risk of dyslexia on a tier 1 dyslexia screening measure, the school will also need to consider the impacts of language transfer from the student’s native language and the levels of exposure to English language phonemes, phonics and overall language. Schools should not isolate the dyslexia screening information from the other sources of data on the student’s language and literacy development. Some of these data, such as information from the language usage survey and state English language proficiency screener, are required by federal and state laws.

When selecting tier 2 dyslexia screening measures for English learners, schools should use assessment processes to guide instruction in both basic literacy skills, as well as English language development. Additionally, schools are encouraged to use a tier 2 dyslexia screening measure and culturally responsive process that provides information about the student’s language and literacy in a home or first language other than English. This information will assist schools in designing integrated language and literacy instruction that addresses the multilingual learner including whether the student is at risk of dyslexia. Educators providing language and literacy instruction to English learners identified with dyslexia tendencies will need to have expertise in both Structured Literacy and English language development. Collaboration and professional learning experiences that include teachers of English to speakers of other languages and bilingual educators is essential.
The Ohio Department of Education offers a resource to support schools in implementing MTSS with English learners.

Additional research, tools and resources on multi-tiered system of supports for English learners is available from the US Department of Education sponsored Multi-Tiered System of Supports for English Learners Model Demonstration Sites.

Language Differences Versus Language-Based Disability
Federal and state special education laws state that students cannot be identified as having a specific learning disability if the primary determinant for the decision is limited English proficiency. This does not mean that students who are learning English cannot have a disability. It is possible for a student who has limited English proficiency to also have a specific learning disability.

The Department’s Guidelines for Referral and Identification of English Learners for Disabilities provides a checklist that offers questions to assist team discussions around the identification of English learners with suspected disabilities.

The US Department of Education provides useful tools to assist school teams in considering effective interventions and decisions related to English learners and students with disabilities. See Chapter 6 of the English Learner Tool Kit.
Gifted and Dyslexic

Educators and parents should be aware that it is possible for students to both be gifted and have dyslexia. Students who have met the state criteria for being both students with disabilities and students who are gifted are sometimes called “twice exceptional.” Like all students with dyslexia, those who are gifted will benefit from early identification, careful consideration of their complex needs, Structured Literacy instruction, and ongoing monitoring.

The International Dyslexia Association provides information in their Gifted and Dyslexic Fact Sheet. This fact sheet is also available in Spanish.

Students With Complex Communication Needs

Dyslexia may co-occur with other disorders, including but not limited to, speech-language difficulties, deafness/hard-of hearing, and behavioral issues. Assessing children with complex communication needs, as well as those with visual impairments, may require adaptations to standardized procedures. Many assessments will offer instructions for how to adapt the assessment protocol to serve diverse learners, and in some cases, assistive technologies may be used to meet individual access needs.

OCALI and the Assistive Technology & Accessible Educational Materials Center provide information and resources for assessing and instructing students with complex communication needs.

The Teaching Diverse Learners Center at OCALI offers a free 10-part video series exploring strategies designed to provide access to the general education curriculum for all learners.

Co-Occurring Difficulties

Students with dyslexia are sometimes diagnosed with other difficulties such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, dysgraphia (difficulty with handwriting and spelling), dyscalculia (difficulty with math calculation), and mental health concerns such as anxiety and depression. These additional conditions should be considered as part of the problem-definition and problem-analysis steps when problem solving and planning for students with dyslexia.

The International Dyslexia Association provides information on co-occurring difficulties in their fact sheets:

- Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder and Dyslexia (Spanish version)
- Understanding Dysgraphia Fact Sheet (Spanish version)
- Dyslexia-Stress-Anxiety Connection Fact Sheet (Spanish version)

James is a new student in Mrs. Taylor’s third grade classroom. He arrives in October. James was identified as gifted in his previous school, with high cognitive and reading scores. Mrs. Taylor designs activities in her gifted cluster group for him. From a classroom writing diagnostic that she administers during his first three days; she notes his spelling errors in 75 words written. Concerned with the types of errors, Mrs. Taylor requests and obtains his parents’ permission to administer a dyslexia screening measure. This measure checks for phonemic proficiency and decoding. The results demonstrate that James has not secured his learning in decoding concepts that would help support his improvement in writing multi-syllabic words. She provides structured word study lessons with James and other students with similar needs. She consistently documents his progress to check that his rate of learning is sufficient and that he applies his understanding to writing on demand assignments.
Section 4: Certification in Multisensory Structured Literacy Instruction

Certification Process
Districts must establish a Multisensory Structured Literacy Certification process for teachers providing instruction in kindergarten through third grade. Districts determine locally which educators will become certified through this process. The certification process must align with this Guidebook and include processes to:

**Identify and Recruit Certified Educators**
Districts may want to consider:
- Surveying educators to determine certification status (certified, in progress, interested, not interested)
- Supporting hiring personnel (human resources and administrators) with understanding of the certification process and what to look for in qualified candidates
- Identifying employees of the district or school with certification to serve as instructional leaders
- Providing clear messaging to candidates on the district website and other forms of communications that the district or school is committed to the structured literacy approach
- Prioritizing candidates with certification for certain leadership positions (e.g., special education coordinators, elementary principals, literacy coaches)

**Identify Certification Candidates**
Districts may want to consider:
- Data and observations from the teacher training to help bridge the gap to certification
- Sharing about the certification process at staff meetings and trainings
- Making the opportunities available to all educators and not isolating by licensure
- Including other personnel in the identification pool: speech-language pathologist, school psychologist, teachers of English learners
- Targeting recruitment of K-2 teachers, lead teachers of every grade level and instructional coaches
- Including preschool educators
- Prioritizing each grade level having someone at the table with certification for teacher-based teams

**Train in House or Support External Training**
Districts may want to consider:
- Developing an in-house certification program
- Partnering with neighboring districts or Educational Service Centers to provide shared training opportunities
- Expanding in-house professional development to bridge from professional development to full certification for identified educators
- Partnering with philanthropic community organizations to support the costs of certification
- Scheduling training to take place during the day/on contract time
- Identifying local organizations to support the certification process (for example, the Children’s Dyslexia Centers)
**Retain Certified Educators**

Districts may want to consider:

- Providing positive incentives for maintaining certification and continuing employment with the district (for example, perk days or additional planning time)
- Providing relevant continuing professional development
- Limiting competing priorities (for example, waiving district-wide professional development not relevant to their position)
- Developing a tutor to classroom teacher model whereby the certified tutor has a pathway to move into a full-time teaching position and the district doesn’t lose highly qualified personnel
- Providing pathways for professionals who obtain certification into leadership roles (lead teachers, reading specialists, literacy coaches, literacy coordinators, principals, curriculum staff, etc.)
- Clearly articulating the support from leadership
- Ensuring certified personnel are available to meet the intensity of needs presented each year

**Certification Pathways**

The Ohio Dyslexia Committee recognizes the following options as appropriate certification. More information on these pathways to certification is available on the Department’s website.

1. Completion of an **independent training program** or **higher education program** accredited by the International Dyslexia Association at the Accreditation Plus level
2. Structured Literacy Dyslexia Interventionist Certification or Structured Literacy Dyslexia Interventionist Alternate Route Certification from the [Center for Effective Reading Instruction](#)
3. Structured Literacy Dyslexia Specialist Certification or Structured Literacy Dyslexia Specialist Alternate Route Certification from the [Center for Effective Reading Instruction](#)
4. Certified Academic Language Practitioner from the [Academic Language Therapy Association](#)
5. Certified Academic Language Therapist from the [Academic Language Therapy Association](#)
6. Completion of an **International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council** (IMSLEC) accredited program.

The Ohio Dyslexia Committee acknowledges that external accrediting organizations control the approval processes for programs to qualify for some of the certifications listed above. If a program is added by the accrediting organization, educators completing that program will then be considered certified so long as they completed the program according to what is approved by the accrediting organization. Independent training programs or higher education programs not listed above offering certification are not recognized as “appropriate certification” by the Committee. Educators completing these or other programs are encouraged to consider the alternate route certifications offered by the Center for Effective Reading Instruction.

The Committee recommends that after the district identifies the educator(s) who will have certification, the district will assume responsibility for tracking that individual(s) maintenance of their certified status. This might be done through the Local Professional Development Committee and the educator’s Individual Professional Development Plan. If the program that their initial certification was granted through is no longer on the approved list, the district will ensure that the individual completes CEUs that are aligned with Structured Literacy, with training that is equivalent to 10 contact hours per year.

**Note:** Programs can be accredited, and individuals can be certified. The Dyslexia Committee is using a broader definition of the term certification than what is used by accrediting organizations listed above.
Varying Roles of Certified Educators

Educators with Multisensory Structured Literacy Certification have completed intensive training including practicum to hone their expertise and skills. Because of this, districts are encouraged to consider the various ways certified educators can contribute to the academic outcomes of students.

**Instructional Support**

When assigning students who have been identified as dyslexic or having dyslexia tendencies to classroom teachers or interventionists, the district should consider whether that educator has obtained or is working toward a Multisensory Structured Literacy Certification. Additionally, if the results of the Tier 1 dyslexia screening measure indicate high numbers of students at risk of dyslexia, the district should consider assigning an educator who has obtained or is working toward a Multisensory Structured Literacy Certification to that class or grade level team.

**System Support**

Educators with Multisensory Structured Literacy Certification can provide expertise to assist multidisciplinary teams in administering screening and intervention measures and analyzing the results of the measures. These educators can also provide expertise at the district, building and grade levels to support other educators in identifying best practices in assessment, instructional materials, and intervention programs for children at risk of dyslexia.

**District Decision Points:**

- Which K–3 staff members currently hold certification in a multisensory Structured Literacy program?
- Do additional K-3 staff need multisensory Structured Literacy certification?
- Which staff members teach those with significant reading needs and desire additional training?
- Which certification pathway(s) will the district recommend?
References


Hoboken, N. J. John Wiley & Sons.


Hoboken, N. J. John Wiley & Sons.


Hoboken, N. J. John Wiley & Sons.


Hoboken, N. J. John Wiley & Sons.
Appendix A: Research Citations for Practices Not Aligned with Structured Literacy

The following provides research citations and resources supporting the list of common instructional practices that are widely used but not consistent with a Structured Literacy approach provided in Section Three.

Research Citations


Additional Supporting Resources

When Educational Promises Are Too Good to Be True by John Alexander (IDA Fact Sheet)

Online Dyslexia Simulation Is Compelling, Powerful, and Wrong by Carolyn D. Cowen (IDA Examiner, March 2016)

Thoughtful Responses to Controversial Dyslexia Study Offer Perspective by Examiner Editorial Board, (IDA Examiner, November 2017)

What is the Role of the Visual System in Reading and Dyslexia? by Jason D. Yeatman (IDA Examiner, February 2016)
Appendix B: Additional Resources for Educators, Families and Students

Resources for Educators

Books
Conquering Dyslexia (2020) by Hasbrouck
Explicit Instruction (2010) by Archer & Hughes
Language at the Speed of Sight: How we Read, Why so Many Can't, and What Can be Done About It (2017) by Seidenberg
Overcoming Dyslexia (2020) by Shaywitz
Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science Behind the Reading Brain (2007) by Wolf
Reader, Come Home (2018) by Wolf
Reading in the Brain (2009) by Dehaene
Speech to Print (2020) by Moats
The Reading Mind (2017) by Willingham
Uncovering the Logic of English (2011) by Eide
Multisensory Teaching of Basic Language skills, 4th ed (2018) by Birsch
Integrated Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (2016) by Goodman and McIntosh
Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for Young Children (2018) by Carta and Miller-Young
Leading Equity-Based MTSS for All Students (2019) by McCart and Miller
Dyslexia: Revisiting Etiology, Diagnosis, Treatment and Policy (2020) by Washington
Essentials of Assessing, Preventing, and Overcoming Reading Difficulties (2015) by Kilpatrick
Essentials of Dyslexia Assessment and Intervention (2011) by Mather and Wendling
Multisensory Teaching of Basic Language Skills (2011) by Birsh and Carreker
Equipped for Reading Success (2016) by Kilpatrick
Bringing Words to Life (2002) by Beck
Literacy Foundations for English Learners (2020) by Cárdenas-Hagan
Difference or Disorder? Understanding Speech and Language Patterns in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students (2014) by Kester

Articles
Dyslexia Basics by the International Dyslexia Association
What Is Dyslexia? by the Yale Center For Dyslexia & Creativity
Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading by the International Dyslexia Association
Structured Literacy and Typical Literacy Practices by Spear-Swerling
Dyslexia Handbook for Families: What Every Family Should Know by the International Dyslexia Association
IDA Fact Sheets

Podcasts
Teaching, Reading and Learning Podcast from The Reading League
Emily Hanford Podcasts from APM Reports
Research to Practice Podcast from Glean Education
Science of Reading: The Podcast from Amplify

Websites with Free Resources
The Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity
The Reading League
The International Dyslexia Association
Decoding Dyslexia
University of Florida Virtual Teaching Hub
Florida Center for Reading Research
The Center for Dyslexia at MTSU
Reading Rockets
National Center on Intensive Intervention
National Center on Improving Literacy
Gaab Lab Dyslexia Myths
Understood
PaTTAN Literacy Resource Hub
Resources for Families

Books
Parenting a Struggling Reader (2002) by Hall & Moats
The Human Side of Dyslexia (2002) by Kurnoff
Basic Facts About Dyslexia and Other Reading Problems (2008) by Moats & Dakin
The Many Faces of Dyslexia (1988) by Rawson
Overcoming Dyslexia (2020) by Shaywitz
The Complete IEP Guide: How to Advocate for Your Special Ed Child (1999) by Siegel
Understanding Dyslexia and Other Learning Disabilities (2013) by Siegel
One Word at a Time: A Road Map for Navigating Through Dyslexia and Other Learning Disabilities (2017) by Tessler
From ABC to ADHD (2007) by Tridas
From Emotions to Advocacy: The Special Education Survival Guide (2002) by Wright & Wright
Dyslexia Advocate (2016) by Sandman-Hurley
The Dyslexia Empowerment Plan (2013) by Foss
Conquering Dyslexia (2020) by Hasbrouck

Websites
Decoding Dyslexia Ohio
Dyslexia Advantage
Dyslexia Help
Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity
Understood
International Dyslexia Association
Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities
Wrights Law
National Council on Learning Disabilities
Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates

A Day in Our Shoes
Ohio Department of Education
Disability Rights Ohio
Learning Ally
Bookshare
Grammarly
IDA Central Ohio
IDA Northern Ohio
IDA Ohio Valley
Resources for Students

Books
It's Called Dyslexia by Moore-Mallinos & Roca
What Do You Mean I Have a Learning Disability? by Dwyer
If You’re So Smart, How Come You Can’t Spell Mississippi? by Esham, Gordon & Gordon
Thank You, Mr. Falker by Polacco
My Name Is Brain Brian by Betancourt
I Wish I Could Fly Like a Bird by Denison
The Don’t-Give-Up Kid and Learning Disabilities by Gehret & DePauw
All Kinds of Minds: A Young Student’s Book About Learning Disabilities and Disorders by Levine
The Boy Who Hated to Write by Richards & Richards
Adam Zigzag by Barrie
Me and Einstein: Breaking Through the Reading Barrier by Blue
The School Survival Guide for Kids with LD by Fisher & Cummngs
How Dyslexic Benny Became a Star by Griffith
Josh: A Boy With Dyslexia by Janover
It's All in Your Head: A Guide to Understanding Your Brain and Boosting Your Brain Power by Barrett
The Runaway Learning Machine: Growing Up Dyslexic by Bauer
Trouble With School: A Family Story About Disabilities by Dunn & Dunn
A Walk in the Rain With a Brain by Hallowell
The Worst Speller in Junior High by Janover
Hacking the Code: The The Ziggety Zaggety Road of a Dyslexic Kid by Meijering
Magnificent Meg: A Read-Aloud Book to Encourage Children With Dyslexia by Wells
Dyslexia is My Superpower (Most of the Time) by Rooke
The Alphabet War by Robb
Fish in a Tree by Mullaly
Hank Zipzer by Winkler
Looking for Heroes: One Boy, One Year, 100 Letters 2nd Edition by Colvin
Ben and Emma’s Big Hit by Newsom