

Ohio Dyslexia Committee

January 25, 2022

Ohio Department of Education

Committee Members Attending: LM Clinton, Steve Griffin, Dana Hamilton, Melissa Spangler, Chinnon Jaquay, Mike McGovern, Amy Murdoch, Rebecca Tolson, Trevor Thomas, Olivia Weisman

Ohio Department of Education Presenters: Sherine Tambyraja, Dyslexia Administrator – Office of Approaches to Teaching and Professional Learning

Department Staff Providing Information:

Recording Secretary: Kyaundra Ellis, Ohio Department of Education

Opening

Mike McGovern, Committee Chair, welcomed the committee members and called the meeting to order at 8:45 a.m. *Mike called roll.* A quorum was present to proceed with committee. Notes from the previous meeting were approved.

Dr. Melissa Weber-Mayrer introduced Chair Martha Manchester and Vice Chair Meryl Johnson from the Teaching, Leading and Learning Committee.

Parent and Student Spotlight

Dr. Sherine Tambyraja introduced parent speaker, Joy Palmer. Ms. Palmer's daughter has dyslexia, and the family is part of a documentary film, *Our Dyslexic Children*. Ms. Palmer explained the process of advocating at the school for appropriate interventions to help her daughter learning to read. Mrs. Palmer described experiencing a number of "best practices" that were not effective instruction for a learner with dyslexia, and eventually filed a due process complain to address the school system's failure to meet her daughter's needs. She believes if the guidebook had been in place six years ago, her daughter would have a significantly better experience.

Committee Discussion: Teaching, Leading and Learning Committee

Chair, Martha Manchester introduced herself and Vice Chair, Meryl Johnson to the committee. Chair Manchester addressed the committee with an overview of the Teaching, Leading and Learning Committee and how the Teaching, Leading and Learning Committee will review and approve the guidebook before the guidebook moves on to the full board for final approval.

Chair Manchester thanked the committee and staff for their work on the guidebook. Chair Manchester shared questions and concerns raised by other committee and board members. To be conscious of committee time, rather than bringing a list of questions up front, she requested permission to be part of today's discussion to share questions and concerns as the relevant topics are raised for discussion.

Overview of public input

Dr. Sherine Tambyraja provided to the committee an overview of the public input survey which opened on January 3rd and closed on January 19th. Overall, the survey yielded a total of 1083 open ended responses and had a nice representation of different groups such as: teachers, principals, special education directors, literacy coaches and literacy specialists.

- Similar to the previous public input, most of the representation was from rural and suburban districts.
- LM Clinton and Sherine Tambyraja held an urban and community school forum on January 21 to hear their feedback regarding the guidebook.

Summary of Section 1: Best Practices

- Over 60% of literacy coaches and parents and parents found this section to be very or extremely useful
- Over 50% of teachers rated this section as not at all or slightly useful

Section 2: Overview of Screening

- Over 70% of school psychologists and parents found this section to be very or extremely useful
- Approximately 25% of teachers rated this section as very or extremely useful.
- The most important feedback received in this section was providing more guidance on tier 2 diagnostic assessment with examples.

Section 3: Intervention and Remediation

- 60% of literacy coaches, intervention specialist, school psychologist and parents found this section to be very or extremely useful
- Main themes: The lists of strategies that are not consistent with a structured literacy approach and confusion around why tier 1 was in this specific section.

Section 4: Certification Process

- This section was rated the least favorable, and equally so across stakeholder groups, except for parents who rated this section to be very favorable.
- Common feedback was more clarification on who should be certified

Open Q&A/comments

Q: Does the list pertain to all students?

Answer: Pertains to students who are struggling or have dyslexia

Q: When you mention additional parent resources,

Answer: We are hoping for some type of companion that can be passed over to parents. Beth Hess mentioned Family Engagement specialists who are also literacy specialists –

Q: Will this list include additional legal steps you can take?

Answer: The list is going to focus on building the partnership.

Q: What about additional resources for parents?

Answer: We worked with Dr. Barbara Boone who drafted letters for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. We can reach out to Dr. Boone and her team to see if they may be able to create template letters to provide to parents for additional resources.

Q: How are people made aware that there was a survey?

Answer: The survey went out on our website and was also sent out to literacy specialists who then sent the survey out to their districts.

Comment: Vice Chair- Meryl Johnson suggested adding in a section for trauma within the suggested areas for expanded content – “When we look at the percentage of students who have been placed in special education classes, this is mostly due to trauma and are often misdiagnosed. You can’t teach someone something if trauma is affecting their brain”. This would be a great concept to add to the suggested areas for expanded content.

Legal Guidance on Professional Development- Jason Wagner

- The guidebook feedback received several comments around the professional development section. Dr. Amy Murdoch stated that the professional development piece needs to be a part of the guidebook as it relates to what is “best practice”.
- Elizabeth Hess stated, when it comes to the guidebook, we have to follow our legal guidance.
- Jason Wagner addressed the committee regarding professional development and the guidebook. The professional development requirements do not need to be referenced within the guidebook. Jason suggests making a reference within the guidebook such as “educators should be mindful of the professional development hours and when those hours need to be completed”

Q: Chair Manchester asked, under the law, it states each district and school must comply with the guidebook. If the guidebook is best practices, how is that interpreted?

Answer: We are trying to be clear as to what a best practice is. It is providing a resource of information.

Q: In the guidebook on page 6- Do we approve the guidebook one time, or do we have to approve the guidebook each time a change is made?

Answer: Whenever revisions are done, the verbs are still in effect.

Action Item: Review and vote on changes to Section 1

Document to refer to: Reorganized document problem solving to best practices

The following was discussed amongst the committee:

1. Introductory paragraph to define best practices
2. Movement of the problem-solving model all to Best Practices section
3. Explain why the focus is on structured literacy (So this aligns with the instructional approach used for tier 2 and 3)?

- Chair, Mike McGovern suggested going further into what “best practices” is as we want to find and identify the child.
- Steve Griffin stated to be specific as children who are below grade level are most likely having word recognition difficulties. Do we know what type of activities trigger the word recognition? There should be a direct link or graph, we need to clarify why this is considered “best practice”.
- Amy Murdoch stated that teachers do not know structured literacy. We must section this piece out within professional development. It may be best to move the structured literacy piece back to where it was originally and shorten the list.
- Vice Chair Johnson stated that we need to remain open minded when it comes to what the guidebook is stating on what is best practice for teachers and educators. You have to find other ways to convince teachers and educators as to what may work.
- Sherine Tambyraja posed the following question to the committee: Should we move this section to the very beginning of the guidebook?
- Rebecca Tolson stated that narrowing the list down to 4 and then clarifying the “why” at the bottom of page 10 before MTSS would be beneficial.
- Chair Manchester stated that “less is more”. This guidebook should be more concise as teachers will learn more about this through professional development.
- Olivia Weisman stated as educators we want the tools that will work for our kids and what this looks like. What does this shift look like? Graph on page 10 – The graph on page 10, can we add additional pieces of key shifts to make in instruction that will make a high-quality impact to our students?

Action Item: Review and vote on changes to Section 2 Universal Screening

The committee had a robust discussion on reviewing and making changes to section 2 of the guidebook.

Suggested edits: Clarity between best practice and legal requirement

Options:

1. Remove anything that is best practice and move to section 1
 2. Start the section with a clear outline of the legal requirements
 3. Add callout boxes throughout the guidebook
- Chinnon Jaquay suggested adding a “because” box to explain why universal screening is done 3 times a year.
 - Trevor Thomas stated that based on the amount of feedback the guidebook has received, universal screening should stay in one place.
 - Amy Murdoch suggested changing the title of section 2 to “Assessments” as the current title- universal screening is unclear. Dr. Murdoch also suggested talking about progress monitoring in this section.
 - Trevor Thomas suggested “Screening” as the main title and taking out universal – This covers both tier 1 and tier 2 screeners with the addition of progress monitoring

Tier 2 additions

The following was discussed amongst the committee:

1. Scope of what to include – Who should do this assessment and describe an example student and the process based on feedback received
 - Trevor Thomas stated it's truly hard to state what exactly to include as there are many options for tier 2 screening.
 - Chinnon Jaquay stated that there may be confusion between standardized and informal scopes of assessment.
 - Elizabeth Hess suggested to the committee of moving the vignette piece forward, if need be, however, this then moves into intervention which is why it is in the current section
 - Olivia Weisman stated that our schools have so much data, however, do not know how to use it for best practice (Dana Hamilton stated the professional development piece will help with analyzing the data)
 - Elizabeth Hess mentioned to the committee that the issue we are seeing with the comments from the districts is that they are unable to connect. What may need to happen is some imagery of what may happen in these assessments or what teachers may see.

Q: Could we show an example of what an educator may see in an assessment through an image, however remove the vendor?

Answer: Yes, we would need to consult with the vendor first, however we cannot promise that vendors will give us such permission.

- The table of page 21 "The Do's and Don't" should be moved to the conclusion of the assessment section right before consideration
- Amy Murdoch suggested removing the table on page 23 as we have a similar table on page 20 and the information is somewhat redundant.
- All committee members motioned to remove the table on page 20.
- Amy Murdoch asked the committee if the "watch for difficulty" piece on pages 25 and 26 can go within the appendix?
- All committee members motioned to move the "Watch for difficulty" information to the appendix section of the guidebook.
- Elizabeth Hess pointed out that the "watch for difficulty" piece could also be inserted into the "toolkit" that the department is working on.
- Vice Chair Johnson stated that the list would be great within the appendix section with a digital link to the parent "toolkit"
- Martha Manchester provided the committee with a statement of overreach by Jason Wagner of why all children need to be screened which she suggested being placed into the screening section of the guidebook.
 - "In order to effectively identify students "with dyslexia or children displaying dyslexic characteristics and tendencies," one must first start by assessing all students. An effective screening process takes the full student population, and through a process of deduction, identifies students demonstrating such characteristics. A multi-tiered process then takes those students who have been identified through an initial screener and assesses them further to determine the

students' need for intervention and support. Casting a "wide net" at the beginning of the process ensures that students who may have dyslexia do not somehow "slip through the cracks" and miss the opportunity for interventions and supports that could help them during those critical early years of literacy development."

- Beth Hess reminded the committee that within the legislation, we are to screen all students once and there is no option to opt out. At any point after that initial screening, parents and teachers can request an additional screening, however, there needs to be consent from the parents.
- The committee considered the extent to which dyslexia screening and third grade reading guarantee screening can be merged to limit assessment time.

Action Item: Review and vote on changes to Section 3 Intervention and Remediation

1. Reorganized document of problem solving to Best Practices
 2. On page 27- should we remove the list or revise the list to focus on what is aligned with structured literacy?
 3. Continue to clarify what is law versus best practice in this section
- Amy Murdoch stated that there is a concern around tier 1, so we would want to articulate clearly tier 1 best practice methods. With Section 3, we could rename this section to screening and intervention as it is sending a confusing message.
 - Steve Griffin stated: The more alignment there is between the tiers, the better off dyslexic children are. The other key piece which could be clearer throughout the guidebook is the students who have reading problems due to quality instruction
 - Dr. Melissa Weber-Mayrer stated that "best practice is to look at your remediation"
 - We can provide resources that are helpful to examine tier 1 and provide a simplified list that ties into the Data or explains why the data is important
 - Rebecca Tolson stated that the district decision points on page 28 are helpful. She asked the committee if we should add the point of what the data means here.
 - Committee member, Amy Murdoch noted that on page 35 below the student level learning section is confusing.
 - Dr. Sherine Tambyraja stated that there could be clarification at the beginning of section 3 as the language around tier 1 is best practice and aligns with structured literacy. Should we remove problem solving?

Action Item: Review and vote on changes to Section 4 Certification

Sherine Tambyraja provided an overview of the Certification process to the committee. The following was discussed:

1. Adding a clear list of what meets requirements similar to the Texas handbook.
 2. Consider supporting materials such as examples of the process and clarifying what is legally required
- Rebecca Tolson recommended allowing the certification bodies to answer questions around certification themselves and possibly adding a link on ODE's website to direct all questions.

Open Q&A/comments

Q: Vice Chair Meryl Johnson stated that on page 47, there is no Asterix as to what the information at the bottom of page 47 relates to. Could this be a part of the glossary?

Answer: Yes, this will help people see the difference.

- Elizabeth Hess stated to the committee that districts must complete a certification process that aligns to the guidebook – These are the four recommended components of the process for their certification process
- In the executive summary, compliance would be a good idea at the top of page 46

Glossary

Dr. Sherine Tambyraja provided an overview of the glossary section within the guidebook. The committee discussed adding additional terms to this section if need be.

- Chair McGovern proposed that we continue to work on the language around best practices
- Vice Chair Johnson stated adding “Child find” in the glossary or to the disabilities section
- Beth Hess stated that child find could potentially be added to the disability section as the definition states, “the process of identifying and evaluating children with disabilities who may be in need of special education and related services. Both state and local education agencies are given the responsibility by federal and state laws, to conduct child find activities so that children who need special services have the opportunity to receive those services. Qualifying children who are age 3 through 22, are eligible for special education services”.
- Rebecca Tolson recommended adding structured literacy to the glossary

Q: Do we want to include the definition of the science of reading?

Answer: Not necessarily. On page 7 there is an introduction on the science of reading. We could update the link to the new book that has been released and add the definition to the glossary.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students

Sherine Tambyraja provided an overview of deaf and hard of hearing students to the committee.

- Elizabeth Hess was able to reach out to Anthony Gonzalez, Teacher of the Year at the Ohio School for the Deaf.
- Dr. Sherine Tambyraja asked the committee where they feel this section should within the guidebook. Should this go in best practices, section 3 as its own space, or, should it be broken up?
- The committee stated having the deaf and hard of hearing students’ section on page 45 under the “Students with Complex Communication Needs”

Voting items:

Review and vote on changes to Section 1

Dr. Sherine Tambyraja gave an overview of the two options for section 1 of best practices.

Options:

1: Movement of the problem-solving model all to Best Practices section

2: Explain why the focus is on structured literacy so that it aligns with the instructional approach used for tier 2 and 3.

Mike McGovern motioned to move the problem-solving model to the Best Practices Section

Chinnon Jaquay voted to move the problem-solving model to section 1. Rebecca Tolson seconded the motion.

Affirmative Votes: LM Clinton, Amy Murdoch, Dana Hamilton, Melissa Spangler, Olivia Wiseman, Trevor Thomas, and Steve Griffin

Review and vote on changes to Section 2 Universal Screening

Options:

1. Remove anything that is best practice and move it to section 1
2. Start the section with a clear outline of the legal requirements
3. Add call out boxes throughout the guidebook

Mike McGovern motioned to allow Elizabeth Hess and the Ohio Department of Education team to make changes to the Universal Screening Language. A small group from the committee will review and get back to Elizabeth Hess and team.

LM Clinton motioned to allow changes to the universal screening language. Trevor Seconded the motion.

Affirmative Votes: Amy Murdoch, Melissa Spangler, Rebecca Tolson, Mike McGovern, LM Clinton, Chinnon Jaquay, Dana Hamilton, Olivia Wiseman, Trevor Thomas, and Steve Griffin

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students

Steve Griffin made a motion to add the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students to the guidebook on page 45 as its own section. Chinnon Jaquay seconded the motion.

Affirmative Votes: Amy Murdoch, Melissa Spangler, Rebecca Tolson, Mike McGovern, LM Clinton, Chinnon Jaquay, Dana Hamilton, Olivia Wiseman, Trevor Thomas, and Stee Griffin

The following was adopted by the Ohio Dyslexia Committee

2. Make changes to the universal screening language
3. Move the problem – solving model to the best practices section of the guidebook
4. Add a section for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students
5. Make changes to the certification language
6. Add additional information to the glossary

Public comments

Dr. Tambyraja shared with the live stream that public comment will not be allowed in person today, but comments may be submitted to the Dyslexia inbox. The committee reviewed public comment via email and provided responses.

Next Steps

Our next meeting is February 22, 2022

Adjournment

Mike McGovern adjourned the meeting at 3:35p.m.