



Structured Literacy Certification Process

PLANNING TOOL FOR DISTRICT LEADERS

Purpose

Through establishing a certification process, we are committing to learning, coaching and implementing high quality language and literacy intervention and support by identifying both instructional and systems level leaders. An individual who is certified in structured literacy instruction is a highly knowledgeable and skilled reading teacher. The certification process builds on initial professional learning and gives multi-disciplinary teams information for providing high-quality evidence-based instruction and intensive interventions for students with and at risk for dyslexia.

Instructions

Step 1: Identify Certification Needs

This tool can be used to support discussions and decisions related to the need for certified educators within the district and the role they might play in supporting student outcomes, both at the instructional level and the systems level. Intensive reading intervention should be provided by educator(s) with structured literacy certification. Additionally, individuals with certification can serve on the district/school multidisciplinary team to provide expertise in the identification, intervention and remediation of dyslexia.

Step 2: Consider Certification Pathways

Individuals with certification are specifically prepared to work with those students who are diagnosed with or identified as at risk for dyslexia as well as students with other related reading difficulties. This tool can be used to support discussions and decisions related to the certification options recognized by the Ohio Dyslexia Committee. Before using this planning and discussion tool, review the [certification pathways](#) listed on the Department's website.

Step 3: Establish Certification Process

Districts may be advantaged to use this planning checklist with their existing *multidisciplinary team* ([Ohio's Dyslexia Guidebook, pp. 18-19, 50](#)). For each stage of the structured literacy certification process outlined in Ohio's Dyslexia Guidebook, districts can plan and discuss the following related to each key consideration:

- Identify components **currently in place**
- Determine what **next steps** should be considered
- Identify **person(s) responsible** for next steps
- Assign **current status** (*not started, in process, complete*)



Planning Tool Template

Step 1: Identifying Certification Needs

Consideration	Currently in Place	Next Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Current Status
Determining Needs – Instructional Support				
a. Who currently provides intensive reading support to students?				
b. How many students in K-3, 4-6, 7-12 require intensive reading supports?				
Determining Needs – Systems Support				
a. How is literacy data collected and analyzed at the building/district levels?				
b. How are educators at the building and district levels supported in identifying assessment, instructional materials and interventions for children at risk of dyslexia?				



Step 2: Consider Certification Pathways

Consideration	Currently in Place	Next Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Status
a. How many certified staff are needed to support instructional and system needs?				
b. Which certification option(s) fits the needs and resources of the district?				
c. What resources are necessary for candidates to complete certification?				



Step 3: Establish Structured Literacy Certification Process

Consideration	Currently in Place	Next Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Status
Identify and Recruit Certified Educators				
a. How do we survey educators to determine certification status (<i>certified, in progress, interested, not interested</i>)				
b. How will the district support hiring personnel (human resources and administrators) with understanding of the certification process and what to look for in qualified candidates?				
c. How will we identify employees of the district or school with certification to serve as instructional leaders?				
d. How will we provide clear messaging that the district or school is committed to the structured literacy approach?				
e. How will we prioritize candidates with certification for certain leadership positions (for example, special education coordinators, elementary principals, literacy coaches)				



Consideration	Currently in Place	Next Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Status
Identify Certification Candidates				
a. How will we use data and observations from teacher training to support the certification process?				
b. How will we communicate the certification process at staff meetings and trainings?				
c. How will we make certification opportunities available to all educators, including preschool, SLP, school psychologists, teachers of English learners?				
d. How will we target recruitment of K-2 teachers, lead teachers of every grade level and instructional coaches?				
e. How will we prioritize representation at each grade level for teacher-based teams?				



Consideration	Currently in Place	Needs	Person(s) Responsible	Status
Train the Trainer or Support External Training				
a. Is developing an in-house certification program an option?				
b. How can we partner with neighboring districts or educational service centers to provide shared training opportunities?				
c. How can we expand in-house professional development to bridge from professional development to full certification for identified educators?				
d. What options are available to partner with philanthropic community organizations to support the costs of certification?				
e. Which state or federal funding sources are available to support the costs of certification? (Review the Dyslexia Federal Funding Guidance document and the state Disadvantaged Pupil Impact Aid Fund Guidance Document).				
f. When will we schedule training to take place? Will it be during the day/on contract time?				
g. Which local organizations can support the certification process?				



Consideration	Currently in Place	Needs	Person(s) Responsible	Status
Retaining Certified Educators				
a. What positive incentives will we provide for maintaining certification and continuing employment with the district (for example, perk days or additional planning time)?				
b. How will we provide relevant continuing professional development?				
c. How will we limit competing priorities (for example, waiving district wide professional development not relevant to a position)?				
d. 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.				
e. Providing pathways for professionals who obtain certification to enter leadership roles (lead teachers, reading specialists, literacy coaches, literacy coordinators, principals, curriculum staff).				



f. How will we clearly articulate the support from leadership?				
g. How will we ensure certified personnel are available to meet the intensity of needs presented each year?				