

Initial Dyslexia Guidance: REVISED 3.19

The General Assembly passed SEA 217 that addresses “Dyslexia”, and adds a number of new requirements for both the Department and schools.

The Indiana Department of Education is issuing this preliminary guidance to bring awareness of this legislation to school corporations and charter schools. Please note that the requirements of this legislation go into effect for schools with the **beginning of the 2019-2020 school year**.

Screening

- A school corporation’s and charter school’s **reading plan shall include indicators to screen for risk factors of dyslexia, using a screening tool approved by the department** that screens for characteristics of dyslexia.
- This mandatory universal screener approved by the department shall include indicators for dyslexia and must be reported in the kindergarten through grade two reading plan
- This screening shall include, as developmentally appropriate, the following:
 - Phonological and phonemic awareness
 - Sound symbol recognition
 - Alphabet knowledge
 - Decoding skills
 - Rapid naming skills
 - Encoding skills
- **If a student is determined to be at risk, or at some risk, for dyslexia, after the universal screening, the school corporation or charter school shall administer a level 1 dyslexia screening to the student.** Based on the results of the level 1 screener, a school corporation or charter school may administer a level 2 screener. Both level 1 and 2 screeners must include the components listed above. **These screeners must be completed consistent with the Indiana dyslexia resource guide to be released by the department.**
- Students who must be screened :
 - Students in kindergarten, grade 1 and grade 2
 - A kindergarten through grade 2 student who transfers to a new school; and has not previously been screened during the school year
 - A student in grade 3 or higher who has difficulty as noted by the classroom teacher in,
 - Phonological and phonemic awareness;
 - Sound symbol recognition;
 - Alphabet knowledge;
 - Decoding skills;

- Rapid naming skills; and
- Encoding skills
- A student in kindergarten through grade 2 from another state who enrolls in an Indiana school for the first time unless the student has documentation that he/she has had a dyslexia or similar screen during the school year or is exempt from the screening.
- If any of the screeners indicate that a student has the characteristics of dyslexia, the school corporation or charter school shall use the response to intervention process to address the needs of the student.
- A school corporation or charter school is not required to administer a universal screening if the parent objects to the screening or the student is already receiving intervention services for dyslexia.
- A parent/guardian must consent to a level 1 or 2 screening before it is administered.

Notification and Services:

- If the student's **performance on any of the screeners indicates a need for dyslexia intervention services**, the school corporation or charter school **shall**:
 - **Notify the parent/guardian of the results of the screening(s)**
 - **Provide** the student's parents/guardians with information and **resource material** that includes:
 - **Characteristics** of dyslexia
 - **Appropriate classroom interventions and accommodations** for students with dyslexia
 - A statement that the parent/guardian may elect to have an educational evaluation by the school

Instructional Approaches

- If screeners indicate the need for intervention services, the **intervention may include**:
 - **explicit, direct instruction that is systematic, sequential, and cumulative and follows a logical plan** of presenting the alphabetic principle that targets the specific needs of the student without presuming prior skills or knowledge of the student;
 - **individualized instruction to meet the specific needs of the student** in a setting that uses intensive, highly concentrated instruction methods and materials that maximize student engagement;
 - **meaning based instruction directed at purposeful reading and writing with an emphasis on comprehension and composition**;
 - **instruction that incorporates the simultaneous use of two or more sensory pathways** during teacher presentations and student practice; and
 - other instructional approaches as determined appropriate by the school corporation or charter school

Reporting

- In accordance with the reading plan, a school **must report** the **number of students who were:**
 - administered the **universal screener**
 - determined to be at **risk for dyslexia**
- Before July 15th of each school year, each school **shall report on their website the following information:**
 - the dyslexia **interventions that were used during the previous year**
 - the number of **students who received dyslexia interventions**
 - the total **number of students identified as being at risk for dyslexia** during the **previous** school year
 - this information **shall not be provided if fewer than 10 students** are identified

Reading Specialist trained in dyslexia

- **Not later than the 2019/2020 school year**, each school corporation and charter school shall **employ at least one (1) individual** to serve as an authorized reading specialist trained in dyslexia for the **school corporation or charter school**.
 - “Authorized reading specialist trained in dyslexia” is defined as an employee of a school corporation or public school, including charter school, who has **successfully completed training in a dyslexia program approved by the department**
- A school corporation or a charter school may enter **into an agreement** with a service provider or another school corporation or charter school; to **obtain or share services provided by an authorized reading specialist trained in dyslexia**.
- A school corporation or charter school may submit a **written petition for a waiver needed to hire an individual that does not meet the training requirements**, and shall be **granted** the waiver if an **individual is unable to complete the training** in the required time period or an authorized reading specialist leaves the specialist and the school is **not able to timely employ a new authorized specialist**.
 - **waivers will not exceed the period of one year.**

Schools are urged to also be mindful of the requirements of IDEA and Article 7, which have not been altered by this new legislation.