

INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

Policy 6445
(Form 6445)

Evaluation Services

Screening for Dyslexia

Dyslexia is a disorder that is neurological in origin, characterized by difficulties with accurate and fluent word recognition and poor spelling and decoding abilities that typically result from a deficit on the phonological component of language, often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction, and of which secondary consequences may include problems in reading, comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

In order to close the gap between struggling readers and their “normally” developing peers, the District will:

1. Identify students at risk for dyslexia or reading failure.
2. Form small groups for instruction and intervention.
3. Plan instruction and intervention.
4. Goal setting for individual student achievement.
5. Set criteria for intervention exit.

Screening

Each student, first through third grade, will annually be screened for dyslexia within the first thirty (30) days of the school year. Kindergarten students will be screened beginning in January of their kindergarten school year. In order to monitor progress or lack of progress, benchmark assessments will also be completed for K-3 students in the middle and at the end of each school year.

The dyslexia screening protocol set forth in this policy will also be administered to the following students:

1. K-3 Missouri transfer students who have not been previously screened.
2. K-3 out-of-state transfer students who do not have documentation of previous screening.
3. Students in grades 4 and above with a record of potential dyslexia related issues as determined by the classroom teacher or as requested by the student’s parent/guardian.

The following groups are exempt from dyslexia screening:

1. Students with an existing diagnosis of dyslexia.
2. Students with a sensory impairment (visual/auditory).
3. Students with severe intellectual disabilities.
4. Students who are English Learners where screening administration and/or interpretation are not available. However, English Learners may be screened for dyslexia-related risk factors through screening in the student's native language, where feasible.

Screening Components

There is no one test that encompasses all recommended skills. The District will utilize screening tools that are both reliable and valid. However, universal screening is not sufficient to identify students with dyslexia. Universal screening can reveal specific weaknesses that are consistent with dyslexia. Monitoring a student's response to high quality reading instruction may be the best way to identify students with severe dyslexia.

The District will identify the appropriate staff to complete student screenings. These staff members may include: classroom teachers, reading interventionists, Title I teachers, reading specialists, or coaches or any combination of these individuals.

Supports and Accommodations

Once identified, students with dyslexia will be provided with the supports and accommodations tailored to meet the individual student's needs. These accommodations will derive from the following supports and accommodations.

1. General classroom instruction modifications.
2. Instructional environment.
3. Technology
4. Social/Emotional
5. Design of Classroom Assignments
6. Test and Exams.

The District will consider the specific supports and accommodations set forth in DESE's "Serving Students at Risk for Dyslexia: Guidance to LEAs."

Practicing Teacher Assistance Problems

Practicing teachers will receive two hours of in-service training during the 2018-19 school year regarding dyslexia and related disorders. Teachers employed by the District in subsequent years, who have not received this training in another district will be provided the same training by video or by in-person training.

Such in-service training should include:

1. Introduction to dyslexia and dyslexia simulation;
2. Key areas of literacy and reading intervention;
3. Screening/progress monitoring, data-based decision-making, fidelity and classroom supports.
4. Training for secondary-level staff will be tailored to the unique needs of secondary students.
