

**ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RULES GOVERNING  
HOW TO MEET THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN WITH DYSLEXIA DIVISION OF  
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION RULES GOVERNING  
DYSLEXIA SCREENINGS AND INTERVENTIONS**

Effective \_\_\_\_\_

**1.00 PURPOSE**

- 1.01 These rules shall be known as the ~~Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing How to Meet the Needs of Children with Dyslexia~~. Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Rules Governing Dyslexia Screenings and Interventions.
- 1.02 The purpose of these rules is to establish guidelines for early screening, intervention and services to meet the educational needs of students with dyslexia.
- 1.03 Further clarification, guidance, and instruction regarding the applicable law and these rules is provided in the Arkansas Dyslexia Resource Guide, which can be accessed through the ADE's website.

**2.00 AUTHORITY**

- 2.01 These rules are enacted pursuant to the Arkansas State Board of Education's authority under Ark. Code Ann. §§ ~~6-11-105, 6-41-601 through 6-41-611~~ 6-41-610, and 25-15-201 *et seq.*
- 2.02 NOTE: These rules set forth the procedures outlined in Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-41-601 through 6-41-611 regarding screening, evaluation, and services for students with dyslexia or characteristics of dyslexia who may or may not otherwise qualify for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 U.S.C. §§1400 *et seq.* Students may display additional factors that complicate their dyslexia and may require more support than what may be provided for in these rules. At any time during the administration of the procedures set forth in these rules, students may be referred for evaluation for special education services in accordance with IDEA. While these rules may use similar terms as set forth in IDEA, no provision of these rules is intended to supplant, or in any way conflict with, IDEA. If a student with dyslexia is referred for special education services, public schools shall follow the requirements of IDEA. Also, school districts must continue to follow all requirements and meet all obligations to its students under § 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended, 29 U.S.C. § 794.

### 3.00 DEFINITIONS

3.01 “Alphabet Knowledge” means the ability to automatically recognize and name the twenty-six (26) lowercase and twenty-six (26) uppercase letters with ease and accuracy.

3.02 “Decoding” means to translate words, word parts, or nonwords into their corresponding pronunciation.

~~3.01~~03 “Dyslexia” means a specific learning disability that is:

~~3.01~~03.1 Neurological in origin;

~~3.01~~03.2 Characterized by difficulties with accurate and fluent word recognition and poor spelling and decoding abilities that typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language; and

~~3.01~~03.3 Often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities.

~~3.02~~04 “Dyslexia interventionist” means a school district or public school employee trained in a dyslexia program, such as a:

~~3.02~~04.1 Dyslexia therapist;

~~3.02~~04.2 Dyslexia specialist;

~~3.02~~04.3 Reading interventionist;

~~3.02~~04.4 Certified teacher; or

~~3.02~~04.5 Tutor or paraprofessional working under the supervision of a certified teacher.

~~3.03~~05 “Dyslexia program” means explicit, direct instruction that is:

~~3.03~~05.1 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;

~~3.03~~05.2 Systematic, multisensory, and research-based;

- 3.~~0305~~.3 Offered in a small group setting to teach students the components of reading instruction, including without limitation:
- 3.~~0305~~.3.1 Phonemic awareness to enable a student to detect, segment, blend, and manipulate sounds in spoken language;
  - 3.~~0305~~.3.2 Graphophonemic knowledge for teaching the letter-sound plan of English;
  - 3.~~0305~~.3.3 The structure of the English language that includes morphology, semantics, syntax, and pragmatics;
  - 3.~~0305~~.3.4 Linguistic instruction directed toward proficiency and fluency with the patterns of language so that words and sentences are carriers of meaning; and
  - 3.~~0305~~.3.5 Strategies that students use for decoding, encoding, word recognition, fluency, and comprehension.
- 3.~~0305~~.4 Delivered with fidelity. “Fidelity” means the intervention is done as the author of the program intended.

3.~~0406~~ “Dyslexia specialist” means:

- 3.~~0406~~.1 A professional at each education service cooperative or school district who has expertise and is working towards an endorsement or certification in providing training for:
  - 3.~~0406~~.1.1 Phonological and phonemic awareness;
  - 3.~~0406~~.1.2 Sound and symbol relationships;
  - 3.~~0406~~.1.3 Alphabet knowledge;
  - 3.~~0406~~.1.4 Decoding skills;
  - 3.~~0406~~.1.5 Rapid naming skills; ~~and~~
  - 3.~~0406~~.1.6 Encoding skills; and
  - 3.06.1.7 Language comprehension.

- 3.-0406.2 A dyslexia specialist shall be fluent in the Response to Intervention (RTI) process and provide training in administering screenings, analyzing and interpreting screening data, and determining appropriate interventions that are systematic, multisensory, and evidence-based.
- 3.-0507 “Dyslexia therapist” means a professional who has completed training and obtained certification in dyslexia therapy from a dyslexia therapy training program defined by the Arkansas Department of Education.
- 3.-0608 “Dyslexia therapy” means an appropriate specialized reading instructional program specifically designed for use in a dyslexia program that is delivered by a dyslexia interventionist.
- 3.09 “Early signs consistent with characteristics of dyslexia” means the clearest early indicators of dyslexia observed as early as kindergarten including difficulties acquiring phonemic awareness, learning letter/sound correspondences, and learning to decode print using phonemic decoding strategies.
- 3.10 “Encoding” means to translate spoken language into print.
- 3.11 “Language Comprehension” means the ability to understand both spoken and written language, including vocabulary and listening knowledge.
- 3.12 “Oral Reading Fluency” means the ability to read grade level text with an appropriate rate to support comprehension, self-correcting as necessary.
- 3.13 “Phonemic Awareness” means the ability to recognize and manipulate the individual sounds in spoken language.
- 3.14 “Phonological Awareness” means the ability to hear and manipulate the spoken parts of words including syllables, onset-rime, and phonemes.
- 3.0715 “Response to Intervention (RTI)” is the practice of:
- 3.-0715.1 Screening students to identify those needing extra support;
  - 3.-0715.2 Providing high-quality instruction and appropriate interventions matched to student needs;
  - 3.-0715.3 Closely monitoring progress to assess both the learning rate and the level of performance of individual students; and
  - 3.-0715.4 Basing instructional decisions about the intensity and duration of interventions on assessment data and individual

student response to intervention.

3.16 “Sound Symbol Recognition” means to automatically produce sounds or grapheme names, that is grade level letters or letter clusters, during recognition, production, or writing tasks.

3.17 “Substantial reading deficit” means:

3.17.1 A score at the lowest achievement level or benchmark on the screening or progress monitoring when using a high quality, evidence-based screener approved by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education; or

3.17.2 Evidence of minimum skill levels for reading competency in one or more of the areas of phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, oral language skills, reading fluency, and reading comprehension documented on consecutive formative assessments or documented in teacher observation data.

#### **4.00 REQUIRED SCREENING FOR K-3**

4.01 A school district shall screen all students in kindergarten, grade one, grade two, and grade three (K-3) using a high quality, evidence-based screener approved by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education and that is integrated into the statewide student assessment system. ÷

~~4.01.1 Each student in kindergarten, grade one, grade two (K-2);~~

~~4.01.2 A student in kindergarten, grade one, grade two (K-2) who transfers to a new school and has not been screened during the same school year;~~

~~4.01.3 A student in grade three (3) or higher who has difficulty, as noted by a classroom teacher, in any skills listed in 4.02 of these rules;~~

~~4.01.4 A student from another state who enrolls for the first time in Arkansas in kindergarten through grade two (K-2) unless the student presents documentation that the student:~~

~~4.01.4.1 Had the screening or a similar screening in the current school year; or~~

~~4.01.4.2 Is exempt from screening as set forth in Section 4.05 of these Rules.~~

- 4.02 The screening of students shall be performed with fidelity and include without limitation:
- 4.02.1 Phonological and phonemic awareness;
  - 4.02.2 Sound symbol recognition;
  - 4.02.3 Alphabet knowledge;
  - 4.02.4 Decoding skills;
  - 4.02.5 Rapid naming skills; ~~and~~
  - 4.02.6 Encoding skills; and
  - 4.02.7 Language comprehension.
- 4.03 The school district shall use the statewide student assessment system to be administered in kindergarten, grade one, grade two, and grade three (K-3) to administer the screener required under Section 4.01.
- 4.04 The school district shall administer the assessment required under Section 4.01;
- 4.04.1 Not less than thirty (30) days after the first day of the school year;
  - 4.04.2 In the middle portion of the school year; and
  - 4.04.3 At the end of the school year.
- 4.05 If a student is identified by the assessment required under Section 4.01 as indicating early signs consistent with the characteristics of dyslexia or a substantial reading deficit, that student shall be administered a dyslexia screening within fifteen (15) days of the screening.
- 4.05.1 Students in kindergarten, grade one, and grade two, (K-2) shall be administered a Level I dyslexia screening.
  - 4.05.2 Students in grade three (3) shall be administered a Level II dyslexia screening.
  - 4.05.3 Students shall be identified based on cut-points and indicators approved by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education.

- ~~4.06 If a student is found to require dyslexia intervention based on the dyslexia screening required in Section 4.05, the student shall receive early intervention by a trained interventionist pursuant to Section 6.00.~~
- ~~4.03 Every school district shall ensure that students are screened using the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) or an equivalent screener for phonological and phonemic awareness, sound symbol recognition, alphabet knowledge, and decoding skills, and by using an appropriate screener for rapid naming skills and encoding skills.~~
- ~~NOTE: DIBELS may indicate characteristics of a reading deficiency, which may include characteristics of dyslexia. DIBELS alone may be insufficient to determine the existence of dyslexia. Additional screening assessments will need to be administered to measure components that are not measured by DIBELS or the equivalent screener. Refer to the Arkansas Dyslexia Resource Guide for a list of screening instruments.~~
- ~~4.04 If the screener(s) used under section 4.03 shows that a student is at risk, or at some risk, then a Level I dyslexia screener shall be administered. The Level I dyslexia screening of a student shall be performed with fidelity and include the components listed under section 4.02.~~
- ~~4.05 The following students shall be exempt from dyslexia screening:~~
- ~~4.04.1 Students with an existing diagnosis of dyslexia for whom the school district is providing interventions;~~
  - ~~4.04.2 Students with a sensory impairment that prevents screening for dyslexia.~~

## **5.00 INTERVENTION AND SERVICES REQUIRED SCREENING FOR 3-12**

- ~~5.01 If the initial, Level I, or Level II dyslexia screening indicates that a student exhibits characteristics of dyslexia, the Response to Intervention (RTI) process shall be used to address the needs of the student.~~
- ~~5.02 If the Level II dyslexia screening conducted by the school district indicates that a student exhibits characteristics of dyslexia, the student shall be provided intervention services.~~
- ~~5.02.1 The Level II dyslexia screening shall be completed consistent with the Arkansas Dyslexia Resource Guide.~~
- ~~5.03 If it is determined the student has functional difficulties in the academic environment due to characteristics of dyslexia, the necessary~~

~~accommodations or equipment for the student shall be provided under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12131-12165, as they existed on February 1, 2013, if qualified under the applicable federal law.~~

5.01 A school district shall screen any student in grades three through twelve (3-12) experiencing difficulty in fluency or spelling as documented by a classroom teacher, a parent or legal guardian of the student, or another individual with knowledge of the student's academic performance.

5.01.1 Difficulty requiring a screening under Section 5.01 may be informed by the results of a statewide student assessment in addition to other considerations.

5.02 A screening required under Section 5.01 shall be performed with fidelity using screening measures of:

5.02.1 Oral reading fluency; and

5.02.2 Encoding.

5.03 If a student is required to receive a screener under Section 5.01, the school district shall:

5.03.1 Utilize a screener approved by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education; and

5.03.2 Administer the screener within fifteen (15) days of the identification of the student in question.

5.04 If the results of a screener required under Section 5.01 identify that a student exhibits deficits in fluency or spelling, the school district shall administer a Level II dyslexia screening within fifteen (15) days of the screening.

5.05 If a student is found to require intervention based on the Level II dyslexia screening the student shall receive early intervention by a trained interventionist pursuant to Section 6.00.

## **6.00 Requirements for Intervention**

6.01 If a student is identified as requiring a dyslexia intervention under this rule, the student shall receive early intervention by a trained interventionist using a dyslexia program approved by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education.



- 6.01.1 Dyslexia interventions shall be provided beginning no more than seven (7) days from the date the student is identified.
- 6.02 Early intervention provided pursuant to this rule shall continue until the deficit areas are remediated.
- 6.03 The progress of a student receiving early dyslexia intervention shall be documented within the individual reading plan and a report of this student's progress shall be provided to the parents of the student quarterly.
- 6.03.1 The progress report shall include the student's progress toward completing the dyslexia program;
- 6.03.2 The progress report shall include data points for measuring mastery of individual skills addressed in completed lessons of the dyslexia program; and
- 6.03.3 The progress report shall include data points for assessing progress toward grade level including but not limited to:
- 6.03.3.1 Decoding,
- 6.03.3.2 Word recognition,
- 6.03.3.3 Spelling, and
- 6.03.3.4 Fluency.
- 6.04 Students who qualify as students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and have an individualized education program (IEP) who demonstrate characteristic of dyslexia may receive dyslexia intervention as a related service as determined by the IEP team.
- 6.04.1 The IEP team determines who shall provide the dyslexia intervention including but not limited to:
- 6.04.1.1 A certified academic language therapist;
- 6.04.1.2 A dyslexia interventionist, or
- 6.04.1.3 Special education teacher.

## **67.00 INDEPENDENT, COMPREHENSIVE DYSLEXIA EVALUATION**

- 67.01 If a student's performance on an initial screener, Level I screening, or Level II dyslexia screening under Sections 4.00 or 5.00 of these rules indicate a need for dyslexia intervention services, the student's parent or legal guardian shall be:
- 67.01.1 Notified of the results of the dyslexia evaluation;
  - 67.01.2 Provided with information and resource materials including without limitation:
    - 67.01.2.1 The characteristics of dyslexia;
    - 67.01.2.2 Appropriate classroom interventions and accommodations for students with dyslexia; and
    - 67.01.2.3 The right of the parent or legal guardian to have the student receive an independent, comprehensive dyslexia evaluation by a:
      - 67.01.2.3.1 Licensed psychological examiner;
      - 67.01.2.3.2 School psychology specialist;
      - 67.01.2.3.3 Licensed speech-language pathologist;
      - 67.01.2.3.4 Certified dyslexia testing specialist; or
      - 67.01.2.3.5 Dyslexia therapist.
- 67.02 If a parent or legal guardian chooses to have an independent comprehensive dyslexia evaluation for the student, the parent or legal guardian shall:
- 67.02.1 Select an individual qualified under Section 67.01.2.3 to perform the comprehensive dyslexia evaluation; and
  - 67.02.2 Cover the cost of the comprehensive dyslexia evaluation.
- 67.03 A school district shall consider the diagnosis from the independent comprehensive dyslexia evaluation and provide the student with interventions determined to be appropriate by the school district from a district dyslexia interventionist. If the school district does not provide

intervention based upon the diagnosis, it must notify the student's parent or guardian of its reasoning.

NOTE: Whether an individual is qualified to conduct an evaluation or provide a diagnosis is dependent upon their licensure.

## **78.00 INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACHES**

78.01 Dyslexia intervention for a student whose dyslexia Level I or Level II screening under Sections 4.00 and 5.0200 of these rules indicates the need for dyslexia intervention services may include the following instructional approaches, but shall include all services deemed appropriate by the district:

78.01.1 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;

78.01.2 Individualized instruction to meet the specific needs of the student in a small group setting that uses intensive, highly concentrated instruction methods and materials that maximize student engagement;

78.01.3 Meaning-based instruction directed at purposeful reading and writing, with an emphasis on comprehension and composition; and

78.01.4 Multisensory instruction that incorporates the simultaneous use of two (2) or more sensory pathways during teacher presentations and student practice.

78.02 Until there are a sufficient number of graduates from a dyslexia therapy program established at the university level in Arkansas or from a dyslexia therapy program established at the university level in another state that is approved by the Arkansas Department of Education, the department shall allow dyslexia therapy to be provided by individuals who have received training and certification from a program approved by the department.

## **89.00 REPORTING BY SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

89.01 The superintendent of a school district shall annually report the results of the school district screening required under Sections 4.00 and 5.00 of these rules. Additional information concerning the manner of submission of the report may be found in the Arkansas Dyslexia Resource Guide.

89.02 Before July 15, a school district shall report on the website of the school district, or in writing to the parents of each student in the school district the following information:

89.02.1 The dyslexia intervention programs used during the previous school year that were specifically responsive to assisting students with dyslexia;

89.02.2 The number of students during the previous school year who received dyslexia intervention under Ark. Code Ann. § 6-41-602 et seq. and these Rules; and

89.02.3 The total number of students identified with dyslexia during the previous school year.

89.02.3.1 For purposes of Section 89.02.3, “identified with dyslexia” means students with a formal dyslexia diagnosis and students exhibiting the characteristics of dyslexia through a school-based or outside evaluation.

## **910.00 DYSLEXIA SPECIALIST**

910.01 ~~No later than the 2015 fiscal year, the~~ The Department of Education shall employ at least one (1) dyslexia specialist with a minimum of three (3) years of field experience in screening, identifying, and treating dyslexia and related disorders to provide technical assistance for dyslexia and related disorders to school districts across the state.

910.01.1 The dyslexia specialist shall:

910.01.1.1 Be highly trained in dyslexia and related disorders, including best-practice interventions and treatment models for dyslexia;

910.01.1.2 Be responsible for the accountability of screening results and the implementation of professional awareness required by Section ~~412.00~~ 12.00 of these rules and

910.01.1.3 Serve as the primary source of information and support for school districts in addressing the needs of students with dyslexia and related disorders.

910.02 The Department of Education shall ensure at least one (1) staff member at each education service cooperative is trained as a dyslexia specialist to provide necessary information and support to school districts.

#### **1011.0 DYSLEXIA INTERVENTIONISTS**

~~1011.01~~ ~~No later than the 2015-2016 academic year,~~ a A school district shall have at least one individual to serve as a dyslexia interventionist.

#### **112.00 PROFESSIONAL AWARENESS**

~~112.01~~ The Department of Education shall ensure that each teacher receives professional awareness on the following:

~~112.01.1~~ The characteristics of dyslexia; and

~~112.01.2~~ The evidence-based interventions and accommodations for dyslexia.

~~112.02~~ Professional awareness may be provided:

~~112.02.1~~ Online through Arkansas IDEAS;

~~112.02.2~~ At an education service cooperative; or

~~112.02.3~~ At another venue approved by the Department of Education.

#### **1213.00 EDUCATION IN TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS**

13.01 ~~No later than the 2015-2016 school year,~~ the The Department of Education shall collaborate with the Department of Higher Education to ensure that all teacher education programs offered at state-supported institutions of higher education provide dyslexia professional awareness of the:

~~1213.01.1~~ Characteristics of dyslexia; and

~~1213.01.2~~ Evidence-based interventions and accommodations for dyslexia.

#### **1314.00 DYSLEXIA RESOURCE GUIDE**

1314.01 The Department of Education shall maintain a committee for the purpose of developing and updating the Dyslexia Resource Guide

~~13~~14.02 The committee shall be appointed by the Commissioner of Education and include one (1) representative who has experience working in the field of dyslexia intervention from each of the following organizations:

~~13~~14.02.1 The Arkansas Association of Education Administrators;

~~13~~14.02.2 The Arkansas Department of Education, Division of Learning Services;

~~13~~14.02.3 The Arkansas Department of Higher Education;

~~13~~14.02.4 The Arkansas Education Association;

~~13~~14.02.5 The Arkansas School Boards Association;

~~13~~14.02.6 An Education Service Cooperative Administrator; and

~~13~~14.02.7 The Arkansas School Psychology Association.

~~13~~14.02.7.1 The committee member from the Arkansas School Psychology Association must have at least three (3) years of experience in testing for dyslexia.

~~13~~14.03 The committee also shall include three (3) professionals who have worked in public schools and who are knowledgeable in and have expertise in dyslexia screening and interventions.

#### **~~14~~15.00 ENFORCEMENT BY THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

~~14~~15.01 A school district that fails to comply with Ark. Code Ann. § 6-41-602 et seq. and these Rules shall be in violation of the Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts and may be placed on probationary status.

~~14~~15.02 A school district placed on probationary status under Rule 14.01 shall report the reason for being placed on probationary status on the website of the school district and by written notification to the parents of each student in the school district.