

Proposed SD 5 Year State Plan to Support Struggling Readers including Students with Dyslexia

BACKGROUND

Supporting students with learning disabilities is a priority of the Department of Education. There were 17581 special education students in kindergarten through age 21 in SD public school systems in December 2015. Special Education students make up approximately 13.43% of the k-12 student population. South Dakota does recognize dyslexia as a type of learning disability; and in December 2015, public districts identified 6,735 students with a specific learning disability.

It is important to point out in October of 2015, the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services released a [Dear Colleague letter](#) to states clarifying that dyslexia is a specific learning disability, and it is acceptable to use the term and evaluate students for dyslexia. The letter was disseminated to districts emphasizing the importance of addressing the unique educational needs of children with specific learning disabilities resulting from dyslexia during IEP team meetings and other meetings with parents.

Dyslexia was also topic of discussion during the 2016 legislative session. The outcome of the 2016 legislative session was to form a [Dyslexia Stakeholders Group](#) comprised of stakeholders concerned about students with dyslexia, K-12 educators, postsecondary representatives, and Department of Education representatives. The workgroup was tasked with meeting three different times to discuss the challenges facing students with dyslexia and how to best address their needs.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

Short Term Outcomes:

- SD classroom teachers, special education teachers, administrators, and para-professionals will increase their knowledge of dyslexia, as well as, understand the difference between screeners that can identify struggling readers and assessments used to diagnose dyslexia.

Intermediate Outcomes:

- Students with dyslexia will be identified by school evaluation teams.
- Educators will gain specific reading certification to support students in learning to read.

Long Term Outcomes:

- Teachers will have increased knowledge of and implement specific strategies, interventions, and/or accommodations to support struggling readers including students with dyslexia.
- Students with dyslexia will receive interventions addressing their needs.
- Parents of students with dyslexia will have improved communication with schools and teachers.

Impact:

- Increased student achievement of struggling readers.

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		SY 2016-2017	SY 2017-2018	SY 2018-2019	SY 2019-2020	SY 2020-2021	Capacity & Resources	Identify Needs
A. Identification of Students with Dyslexia	1. Pursue a plan to use Response to Intervention (RtI) to determine eligibility	Develop	Develop	Implement				Requires Admin. Rule
	2. Support schools in using screeners to identify students with characteristics of dyslexia.	Develop	Implement				✓	
	3. Work with Association of School Psychologists to ensure local evaluation teams have the knowledge and capacity to evaluate and diagnose dyslexia.	Develop	Implement	Implement				Funding
B. Guidance & Supports	1. Provide districts with information & resources/tools to support students with dyslexia as a learning disability.	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	✓	
	2. Offer Series of Professional Learning Opportunities							
	2a: Series of Online workshop opportunities	Spring	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing		Funding
	2b: Face to Face Dyslexia workshops	Summer	Summer	Summer	Summer	Summer		Funding
	2c: MTSS Summer Conference focusing on struggling readers		Summer		Summer		✓	
	2d: Foundational Reading Training		Aug. - Sept.	Aug. - Sept.				Expansion requires funding
3. Develop a program focused on structured literacy including professional development for k-3 classroom & SPED teachers.	Develop	Funding Needed	Pilot	Pilot	Pilot		Funding	
C. Connections with Postsecondary	1. Work with university programs to ensure structured literacy and dyslexia are taught in elementary education, special education, and reading endorsement programs.	Summer 17	Finalized fall 17	Implement				Funding
	2. Add a literacy interventionist certification.		Develop	Develop	Develop	Implement	✓	Admin. Rule
	3. Work with the universities to ensure DOE professional learning opportunities will meet the requirements for university reading endorsement programs.		Develop	Implement			✓	
D. Data & Feedback	1. Survey districts to better understand district practices regarding supporting students with dyslexia.	Sept.	Oct.- Dec.	Oct.- Dec.	Oct.- Dec.	Oct.- Dec.	✓	