

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

Summary of Progress

IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DYSLEXIA

1. Pursue a plan to use Response to Intervention (RtI) to determine eligibility
 - The Department of Education (DOE) brought together a stakeholder group to investigate other states' processes and resources to better understand how to use the RtI process for determining Specific Learning Disability (SLD) eligibility.
2. Support schools in using screeners to identify students with characteristics of dyslexia
 - DOE is working with the South Dakota Association of School Psychologists to identify valid and reliable screeners.
3. Work with South Dakota Association of School Psychologists to ensure local evaluation teams have the knowledge and capacity to evaluate and diagnose dyslexia
 - DOE has been in contact with the South Dakota Association of School Psychologists to investigate options for trainings.

GUIDANCE & SUPPORTS

1. Provide districts with information and resources/tools to support students with dyslexia as a learning disability
 - During the 2016-17 school year a workgroup of stakeholders, including parents, was established to review the state's [dyslexia handbook](#) and an [informational flyer](#). The updated versions of the handbook and other resources are posted on [DOE's website](#). A press release was issued in August and shared with all district administrators and other educator email listservs.
 - In February 2017, DOE partnered with Marsha Weiland from Decoding Dyslexia to conduct a webinar focused on dyslexia for district curriculum directors and administrators.
 - This school year (2017-18) DOE highlighted October as Dyslexia Awareness Month by sharing resources and information via Thursday Tidbits, a newsletter for reading/language arts teachers; special education director calls and special education monthly newsletters.

2. Offer series of professional learning opportunities
 - 2a: Series of online workshop opportunities
 - DOE has started to identify existing online workshops that could be offered to districts.
 - 2b: Face-to-face dyslexia workshop
 - DOE partnered with the SD Speech-Language-Hearing Association (SDSLHA) and the International Dyslexia Association – Upper Midwest Branch to conduct a dyslexia training called “Literacy for All – Understanding Language, Learning and Dyslexia.” It was held Oct. 4, 2017, as a pre-session to the State Speech Language Pathologists (SLP) conference. It was open to anyone. The cost to DOE was approximately \$8,000.
 - 2c: MTSS (Multi-tiered System of Support) Summer Conference focusing on struggling readers
 - More than 350 educators attended the MTSS Summer Conference in June 2017. Sessions focused on support for schools implementing MTSS and included information about working with students with dyslexia. The 2018 conference is scheduled for June 20-21.
 - 2d: Foundational reading training
 - Two-part foundational reading trainings were held in August and September 2017 to support K-3 educators (48 participants) and 4-6 educators (42 participants).
3. Develop a program focused on structured literacy including professional development for K-3 classroom and special education teachers
 - In late August 2017, DOE was awarded a five-year grant from the federal Office of Special Education Programs. The goal of this South Dakota State Personnel Development Grant (SD SPDG) is to develop a systematic, cohesive, collaborative and sustainable evidence-based literacy model that uses data and engages families and can be implemented with any district needing support for struggling readers, especially students with specific learning disabilities (SLD). The expected outcome of the proposal is to develop and align a professional learning and development (PLD) system that provides special education and general educators with the knowledge and skills to provide access and instruction to students with SLDs so that their proficiency in literacy increases.

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
 - In summer 2018, DOE plans to work with the South Dakota Board of Regents to survey university programs to identify coursework where structured literacy and dyslexia are currently taught and identify workgroup members to develop guidelines.

2. Add a literacy interventionist certification
 - During the 2017-18 school year, DOE plans to gather information on other states' certification requirements for a literacy interventionist with the goal of creating certification rules.
3. Work with the universities to ensure DOE professional learning opportunities will meet the requirements for university reading endorsement programs
 - DOE will connect with the Deans of Education at the Education Discipline Council (EDC) meeting to discuss alignment of professional development (to be implemented through the federal SPDG grant) with the university reading endorsement.

DATA & FEEDBACK

1. Survey districts to better understand district practices regarding supporting students with dyslexia
 - DOE sent a survey to gather feedback from districts. In 2016, 56 responses were collected and reviewed; 30 individuals responded in fall 2017.