

New Requirements Regarding Screening and Intervention for Children with Dyslexia

On January 9, 2021, Governor DeWine signed House Bill 436 which establishes new requirements. HB 436 establishes new requirements regarding screening and intervention for children with dyslexia. Below is a summary of highlights from HB 436, which includes mandatory student screening and new professional development requirements for educators with a tiered timeline for implementation, beginning with the 2022-2023 school year. The Ohio Department of Education (ODE), in collaboration with a newly formed committee called the Ohio Dyslexia Committee (to be made up of appointees of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, International Dyslexia Association in Ohio, Chancellor of Higher Education, and the State Speech and Hearing Professionals Board), will maintain a list of approved courses that fulfill the new professional development requirements. Each approved course will align with a guidebook to be developed by the Ohio Dyslexia Committee, be evidence-based, and require instruction and training for identifying characteristics of dyslexia and understanding the pedagogy for instructing students with dyslexia.

Teacher Training and Certification Requirements

- Beginning in the 2022-2023 school year, school districts must establish a multi-sensory structured literacy certification process for teachers providing instruction to students enrolled in grades K-3 that aligns with the guidebook developed by the Ohio Dyslexia Committee.
- Educators must obtain professional development in dyslexia instruction (between 6 and 18 clock hours), staggered depending on the grades of students for which the teacher provides instruction:
 - **Beginning of 2023-2024 school year**-Kindergarten & 1st grade teachers, including special education teachers
 - **Beginning of 2024-2025 school year**-2nd & 3rd grade teachers, including special education teachers
 - **Beginning of 2025-2026 school year**-Special education teachers in 4th through 12th grades
- Any professional development course completed by a teacher prior to the effective date that is then included on the list of approved courses will count toward the number of instructional hours in approved professional development courses.

Student Screening Requirements

- School districts shall do the following:
 - Beginning in the 2022-2023 school year, screen all students for dyslexia who are either enrolled in grades K-3, or who are enrolled in grades 4-6 and whose parent or classroom teacher requests a screening. Each school district shall also screen all students for dyslexia who are enrolled in grades K-6 and transfer into the district or school midyear.
 - Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, screen all students for dyslexia who are either enrolled in Kindergarten, or who are enrolled in grades 1-6 and whose parent or classroom teacher requests a screening.
 - Identify each student that is at risk of dyslexia based on the student's results on the tier one screening measure and notify the student's parent that the student has been identified as being at risk.
 - Monitor the progress of each at-risk student toward attaining grade-level reading and writing skills for up to six weeks. If no progress is observed during the monitoring period, the district or school shall notify the parent of the student and administer a tier two dyslexia screening measure to the student. Tier two screening results must be provided to the student's parents. If the student is identified as having dyslexia tendencies, the student's parent must be provided with information about reading development, risk factors for dyslexia, and descriptions for evidence-based interventions. If a student demonstrates markers for dyslexia, the student's parent must be provided with a written explanation of the district or school's multi-sensory structured literacy program.
- School districts shall also do the following:
 - Comply with the guidebook regarding best practices and methods for universal screening, intervention, and remediation using a multi-sensory structured literacy program, to be developed not later than December 31, 2021 by the Ohio Dyslexia Committee;
 - Select screening and intervention measures to administer to students from measures identified by ODE, in collaboration with the Ohio Dyslexia Committee;
 - Establish a multidisciplinary team to administer screening and intervention measures and analyze the results of the measures. The team shall include trained and certified personnel and a stakeholder with expertise in the identification, intervention, and remediation of dyslexia; and

- Report the results of screening measures to ODE.