



Guidelines for Dyslexia Screening and Early Literacy Intervention Pilot Program

Act 69 of 2014, the Dyslexia Screening and Early Literacy Intervention Pilot Program became effective on June 26, 2014 (24 P.S. Article XVII-C). This Act requires the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) to establish dyslexia and early literacy intervention pilot program. The purpose of the pilot program is to provide evidence-based early screening and multitier support systems, using evidence-based intervention services for students with potential risk factors for early reading deficiencies and dyslexia. The potential risk factors may include low phonemic awareness, low letter and symbol naming and inability to remember sequences. The pilot program will operate for three full years beginning with the 2015-16 school year. PDE will select at least three school districts to participate in the pilot program for three consecutive years.

The following guidelines and procedures detail requirements for school districts who wish to be considered for this pilot program. In order to be eligible for this pilot, districts must:

- Enroll between 3,000 and 15,000 students
- Provide full-day kindergarten
- Agree to participate in the program evaluation which must include:
 - Annual data reporting to PDE including information about the operation of the pilot program, in the manner prescribed by PDE which will ensure that all data will be collected, reported, and maintained in order to protect the confidentiality of student information. This data will be published on PDE's website after specific student information including personally identifiable information is removed.
 - A description of the methodology for evaluating the effects of the program on the student's identified risk factors.
- Submit a proposal that identifies each of the following:
 - An evidence-based core reading program that incorporates systematic phonemic instruction and develops basic reading skills for all students in the pilot program.
 - An evidence-based screening or low phonemic awareness and other evidence-based risk factors for early reading deficiencies and dyslexia. At a minimum, kindergarten students must be screened three times per year: at the beginning, middle and end of the school year.

- Diagnostic assessments for students scoring below the benchmark on nationally standardized norm-referenced screening assessments for phonological awareness, alphabetic knowledge, concept of word, and grapheme/phoneme correspondence.
- Intervention measures, including:
 - Multi-sensory structured language programs for students scoring below the benchmark;
 - Timely targeted instruction;
 - Strategic re-teaching; and
 - Intensive intervention consisting of explicit multisensory synthetic phonics instruction and structured language program delivered with fidelity by trained interventionists.
- A plan for parent notification, which must include:
 - Notifying parents or guardians of students suspected of having an early reading deficiency or dyslexia;
 - Notifying parents or guardians that the student is eligible to receive reading intervention services to measure the effectiveness of the early reading assistance programs;
 - A mechanism for parents or guardians to indicate in writing that parents or guardians voluntarily and knowingly consent to a student's continued participation in the pilot program; and
 - A mechanism for providing the parent or guardian of the student suspected of having an early reading deficiency or dyslexia, information about early reading deficiencies and dyslexia, and recommended evidence based resources and interventions.
- School districts seeking to be considered for this pilot program must submit evidence of ongoing support from the board president and superintendent confirming in writing that the district is committed to participating in the pilot programs for a period of at least three years.

CORE READING PROGRAM	
Evidence-based core reading program that incorporates systematic phonemic instruction and develops basic reading skills for all students in the pilot program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provide a scope and sequence for the kindergarten and first grade core reading program that will be implemented by the school district; specifically as it relates to systematic phonemic awareness, language, decoding, and encoding instruction. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide a technical report that provides data confirming that the core reading program to be implemented is evidence-based with systematic phonemic instruction and develops basic reading skills for all students in the pilot program.
EVIDENCE-BASED METHOD OF SCREENING	
An evidence-based screening for low phonemic awareness and other evidence-based risk factors for early reading deficiencies and dyslexia. At the minimum, kindergarten students must be screened three times per year: at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provide a copy (or copies) of the screening instrument(s) to be implemented for kindergarten that identifies students with low phonemic awareness and other evidence-based risk factors for early reading deficiencies and dyslexia. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide a technical report that provides data confirming the screening instrument to be implemented is evidence-based. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide an assessment calendar that indicates screening will be conducted at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. <input type="checkbox"/> Identify how the screening data will be used.
INTERVENTION MEASURES	
Intervention measures, including: multi-sensory structured language programs for students scoring below the benchmark; timely targeted instruction consisting of strategic re-teaching; intensive intervention consisting of explicit multisensory synthetic phonics instruction; and a structured language program delivered with fidelity by a trained interventionist.	<p>Provide an implementation and training plan as well as instructional tools selected that will meet the following criteria for students below the benchmark:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-sensory structured language program <input type="checkbox"/> Timely targeted instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic re-teaching <input type="checkbox"/> Intensive intervention, which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Explicit multisensory synthetic phonics o Structured language program o Services are delivered with fidelity by trained interventionist

DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENTS	
<p>Diagnostic assessments for students scoring below the benchmark on nationally standardized, norm-referenced screening assessment of phonological awareness, alphabetic knowledge, concept of word, and grapheme/phoneme correspondence.</p>	<p>Provide a copy (copies) of the diagnostic assessments utilized to assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Phonological awareness <input type="checkbox"/> Alphabetic knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Concept of word <input type="checkbox"/> Grapheme/phoneme correspondence <p>Discuss how the diagnostic assessment data will be used within the program.</p>
PLAN FOR PARENT NOTIFICATION	
<p>When a student is suspected of having an early reading deficiency or dyslexia, the participating school district must notify the student's parent or guardian that the student, as part of the pilot program, is eligible to receive reading intervention services to measure the effectiveness of the early reading assistance program.</p> <p>The participating school district requires the parent or guardian to voluntarily and knowingly consent, in writing, to the student's continued participation in the pilot program.</p> <p>Each participating school district shall provide to the parent or guardian of the student suspected of having an early reading deficiency or dyslexia, information about early reading deficiencies and dyslexia, and recommended evidence-based resources and interventions.</p>	<p>Provide a copy (copies) of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Proposed notification letter to parent or guardian indicating that the student, as part of the pilot program, is eligible to receive reading intervention services. <input type="checkbox"/> Explain how the school district will obtain and maintain written evidence that the parent or guardian voluntarily and knowingly consents to the student's continuing participation in the pilot program. Provide a copy of the relevant documents. <input type="checkbox"/> Information about early reading deficiencies and dyslexia, and recommended evidence-based resources and interventions that will be provided to the parent or guardian

PROGRAM EVALUATION	
<p>Participate in the program evaluation identified by PDE in consultation with the International Dyslexia Association, or another recognized organization that specializes in and has expertise in the scientific basis of dyslexia.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Annually report to PDE data and information about the operation of the pilot program as prescribed by PDE. <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in specific protocols recommended by the program evaluator as part of evaluating the effects of the program on the students' identified risk factors.
COMMITMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION	
<p>Participate fully in screening, assessment, core reading, intervention measures, data collection, and program evaluation.</p> <p>Participate in technical assistance and support provided by PDE through Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) for full implementation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provide a signed statement of board action as evidence of ongoing support from the board president and superintendent confirming their participation and committing support for the full implementation for a period of at least three (3) years. <input type="checkbox"/> Identify district and school staff that will be involved in this pilot program for at least three years, including the primary contact for the district. <p>Provide an assurance that the district will participate in the technical assistance and support provided by PDE and PaTTAN.</p>