Foundational Reading Skill Development and Dyslexia: Serving All Students
Literacy is understanding, evaluating, using, and engaging with written texts to **participate in society**, to achieve one’s goals, and to develop one’s knowledge and potential.

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2016
Senate Bill 48

As of May 2019, Governor Kemp signed Senate Bill 48 into law. SB 48 (The Dyslexia Bill) provides for identification of and support for students in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade with characteristics of dyslexia.
“Dyslexia ...”

• Can be diagnosed prior to conventional reading
• Does not go away
• Is a continuum
• Affects phonological processing (e.g., matching sounds to letters)
• Can affect comprehension (e.g., meaning making)
• Can be detected early via a neurobiological exam
  • Auditory attention shifting
  • Auditory processing
  • Auditory meaning making
  • Language development delays
Dyslexia Defined

The definition of dyslexia adopted by the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) states: "Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede the growth of vocabulary and background knowledge."

Online Resources:
- The International Dyslexia Association
- The Yale Center for Dyslexia & Creativity
- OSEP Dyslexia Guidance Letter
Georgia Law
“Learning Disabilities”

160-5-1-.34 GEORGIA SPECIAL NEEDS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
delineates which students are qualified to participate in the program

160-4-7-.14 PERSONNEL, FACILITIES AND CASELOADS
Special Education rule: Occurs as it regards class sizes and caseloads when serving students with specific learning disabilities

160-5-1-.08 CLASS SIZE
Regards class sizes when serving students with specific learning disabilities

160-4-7-.21 DEFINITIONS
Special education rule: The term occurs in the definition of a “child with a disability”
Georgia Law

Rule 160-4-7-.05 ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION AND CATEGORIES OF ELIGIBILITY

“Definition

(1) Specific learning disability is defined as a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia. The term does not apply to children who have learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing or motor disabilities, intellectual disabilities, emotional or behavioral disorders, environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage. [34 C.F.R. §300.8(c)(10)]”
“Dyslexia can look like and co-present with…”
Prevention First
Georgia Tiered System of Supports

**Tier I:** Primary Level of Prevention
- Instruction/Core Curriculum
  - The focus of the primary level of prevention is on all students.

**Tier II:** Secondary Level of Prevention
- Intervention
  - The focus of the secondary level of prevention is on students identified through screening as underperforming or at risk for poor learning/behavior outcomes or those who are need of acceleration/enrichment.

**Tier III:** Tertiary Level of Prevention
- Intensive Intervention
  - The focus of the tertiary level of prevention is on students who have not responded to primary or secondary level prevention. The instruction is evidence-based intensive instruction and is continuously adjusted and individualized to address the needs of each student.
## Tier 1
### Standards and Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speech and Language</th>
<th>Literacy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aural and oral development</strong></td>
<td><strong>Phonology</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Temporal processing</td>
<td>• Rhyming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Articulation</td>
<td>• Segmenting sounds (e.g., syllables, onset-rime)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Voice issues</td>
<td>• Blending sounds</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dialect</strong></td>
<td>• Deletion of sounds</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Explicit code-switching</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Syntax and Morphology</strong></td>
<td><strong>Phonics</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Prefix/suffixes/roots</td>
<td>• Letter-sound relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sentence structures</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Semantics</strong></td>
<td><strong>Concept and background knowledge development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Meanings as they relate to context</td>
<td>• Semantic instruction (e.g., agent-object; cause-effect, sequence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pragmatics</strong></td>
<td>• Vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What’s “appropriate”</td>
<td>• Concepts of print; familiarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
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<td>• Social and emotional development</td>
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</tbody>
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EFFECTIVE READING INSTRUCTION

Instructional design of high-quality programs should include:

- explicit and systematic strategies for instruction
- consistent instructional routines
- opportunities for practice with appropriate student support materials
- cumulative review
- alignment to the Georgia Standards of Excellence for English Language Arts
- integration of the components of reading rather than isolation each skill
Credit:
Georgia’s MTSS Pyramid

Tiered Systems of Supports is to ensure that the screening process will inform quality classroom instruction, necessary interventions, and intensive interventions for individual students.
Tier 1 to Tier 2
“Look Fors”

Early Literacy Challenges:
• difficulty with rhyming
• difficulty identifying the beginning, middle, and ending sounds in words
• difficulty identifying upper and lower case letters
• difficulty reading and writing own name

Reading Challenges:
• difficulty learning the sounds that correspond with letters
• difficulty sounding out (decoding) words
• difficulty differentiating between letters or words that look similar
• difficulty reading accurately (may leave out parts of words or add sounds)
• difficulty with reading fluency
• difficulty maintaining place while reading
• difficulty with comprehension of text

Writing Challenges:
• poor spelling
• difficulty copying with accuracy
• difficulty with correct use of capitalization and punctuation
• difficulty with legible handwriting and spacing
# Common Characteristics of Dyslexia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Potential Difficulties</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Grades K – 1 | Reading errors exhibit no connection to the sounds of the letters on the page (e.g., will say “puppy” instead of the written word “dog” on an illustrated page with a dog shown)  
Does not understand that words come apart  
Complains about how hard reading is, or disengages when it is time to read  
A familial history of reading problems  
Cannot sound out simple words like cat, map, nap  
Does not associate letters with sounds, such as the letter b with /b/. |
| Grades 2+ | Very slow to acquire reading skills; reading is slow and awkward  
Trouble reading unfamiliar words, often making wild guesses because the student cannot sound out the word  
Doesn’t seem to have a strategy for reading new words  
Avoids reading out loud  
Confuses words that sound alike, such as saying “tornado” for “volcano,” substituting “location” for “ocean”  
Mispronunciation of long, unfamiliar, or complicated words  
Avoidance of reading; gaps in vocabulary as a result |

*Taken from The Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity, Signs of Dyslexia, [http://dyslexia.yale.edu/dyslexia/signs](http://dyslexia.yale.edu/dyslexia/signs)*
“Catching” Dyslexia

Assumption:
5-10% of General Population have Dyslexia

(Annual Population Estimation = about 13,000)
(National Institutes of Health)

~130,000 Births Annually in Georgia
(Centers for Disease Control)

~ Students served:
186,099 in EIP (‘18)
(~ 31,000 per grade K-5)

Special Education SLD and SLI = 98,114 (‘18)
(~7500 per grade 1-12+)

18,833 children served annually in Preschool SpEd (ages 3-5)
(~ 6,278 per age)
System for Serving Students with Dyslexia

Birth
- Universal Screening
- Trigger Identification
- Assess/Diagnose

Prior to K-12
- General/Universal Services and Prevention
- Trigger Identification
- Assess/Diagnose
- Provide and Monitor Early Intervention
- Consider Eligibility for Special Services

K-12
- General/Universal Services and Prevention
- Trigger Identification
- Assess/Diagnose
- Provide and Monitor Early Intervention
- Consider Eligibility for Special Services
WHO would trigger identification?

Birth
- Maternal/pediatric nurse or doctor

Prior to K-12
- Pediatrician referral
- Department of Community Health referral
- Early Education Program referral
- Family referral to Preschool Special Education program for diagnostic assessment

K-12
- Classroom teacher identifies via formative assessments and refers to Student Support Team (SST)
- Student Support Team (SST) refers using the Response to Intervention (RTI) process
- SST identifies SWD category(ies) and annually reviews appropriateness and effectiveness of modifications
HOW? Formative and Diagnostic Assessments

Birth
- Universal Newborn Hearing Screening
- Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI)
- Dept. Public Health Maternal Child Health Assessment

Prior to K-12
- Ages and Stages Parent Questionnaire
- Georgia PreK Work Sampling System (PreK)
- School districts provide formative assessments for entrance/exit for Preschool Special Ed services (Child Outcome Summary submitted to GaDOE)

K-12
- G-Kids and Kindergarten Readiness Check (K)
- Keenville (COMING SOON) (K-3)
- Georgia Milestones (3-12)
HOW? Formative and Diagnostic Assessments

- Universal Newborn Hearing Screening
- Early Hearing Detection Inventory (EHDI)
- Dept. Public Health Maternal Child Health Assessment
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- Georgia Milestones (3-12)
State-wide Intervention Programs

Birth
- Language nutrition coaching training (e.g., Talk with Me Baby)
- Babies Can’t Wait (birth – 3 years)

Prior to K-12
- Children First (Dept. Public Health; Ages 0-5)
- Georgia PINES (3-5 years)
- Preschool Special Education programs
- Early Headstart and Headstart programs
- “Tier 1” instruction via Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) for emergent literacy skill development (PreK)

K-12
- “Tier 1” instruction via Georgia Standards of Excellence for foundational literacy skill development (K-3)
- Early Intervention Program (EIP) (K-5); Remedial Education Program (REP) (6-12)
- Special Education services (K-12) for Specific Learning Disability (including Dyslexia)
State-wide Intervention Programs

Birth

- Talk with Me Baby in hospital maternal ward
- Babies Can’t Wait (birth – 3 years)

Prior to K-12

- Children First (Dept. Public Health; Ages 0-5)
- Georgia PINES (3-5 years)
- Preschool Special Education programs
- Headstart programs
- “Tier 1” instruction via Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) for emergent literacy skill development (PreK)

K-12

- “Tier 1” instruction via Georgia Standards of Excellence for foundational literacy skill development (K-3)
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- Special Education services (K-12) for Specific Learning Disability (including Dyslexia)

Retention GAP

Workforce GAP

Awareness and Training Gap

Workforce GAP

Richard Woods, Georgia’s School Superintendent | Georgia Department of Education | Educating Georgia’s Future
Identification Patterns for Special Education

SWD FY18 CHILD COUNT by Age
ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE SCREENER FOR READING DIFFICULTIES

1. Phonological and phonemic awareness
2. Sound-symbol recognition
3. Alphabet knowledge
4. Decoding skills
5. Rapid naming
6. Encoding skills

A screener alone cannot identify dyslexia. The use of a screener can indicate that further individualized assessment is needed.
EVALUATION

When a student is having difficulties with reading and spelling as discovered in the MTSS and universal screening processes, an evaluation for dyslexia should be conducted.

An evaluation should contain 3 key components:

1. **Identification**: An effective evaluation identifies the likely source of the problem. It rules out other common causes of reading difficulties and determines if the student profile of strengths and weaknesses fit the definition of dyslexia.

2. **Intervention Planning**: An effective evaluation develops a focused remedial program. Students who have a specific learning disability in reading (dyslexia) need a specialized approach to reading instruction to make progress. It is crucial that this specialized instruction begin at the student's current level of reading skill development, rather than at the student's grade level. An effective evaluation helps parents and teachers see which specific skills are weak and where reading and spelling instruction should begin.

3. **Documentation**: An effective evaluation documents the history of a student's learning disability. One purpose of this documentation is to determine eligibility for special services, including special education. Documentation is also important for obtaining accommodations on college entrance exams (ACT, SAT), in college, or in the workplace.
Process and Procedures for the Identification of Dyslexia

Universal screener for reading difficulties and dyslexia

Student is at low risk for reading difficulties
- Continue evidence-based core reading instruction
  - Ongoing monitoring to observe for reading difficulties and/or characteristics of dyslexia and related disorders

Student may be at risk for reading difficulties
- Collect and review quantitative and qualitative data about the student
  - Analysis of screening results shows that the student exhibits reading difficulties that ARE NOT consistent with characteristics of dyslexia and related disorders
- Intensify (frequency, dosage, strength) and individualize academic interventions and progress monitor more frequently to determine growth trajectory toward goal. Initiate SST, and if additional individualized instruction is determined to be needed, begin IDEA/Section 504 evaluation process.

- Analysis of screening results and data shows the student does exhibit characteristics of dyslexia and/or related disorders
- Begin or continue academic interventions in small group setting and progress monitor to determine growth trajectory toward goal. If progress is not evident or growth is not as expected, adjust (frequency, dosage, strength) the intervention, and continue to progress monitor.
Once a school identifies that a student shows characteristic of dyslexia, it is important to provide aligned interventions that include **all** of the following principles:

- **Explicit** – explains skills, directly teaches, and models what is expected

- **Systematic and cumulative** – introduces concepts in a definite, logical sequence; orders concepts from simple to more complex

- **Multi-sensory** – links listening, speaking, reading, and writing together; involves movement and “hands-on” learning (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile).

- **Language-based** – addresses all levels of language, including sounds (phonemes), symbols (graphemes), meaningful word parts (morphemes), word and phrase meanings (semantics), and sentence formation (syntax)

- **Aligned to individual student need** – addresses the skill deficit(s) identified through targeted assessments
STRUCTURED LITERACY

Structured Literacy (SL) is a promising approach for educators interested in more effective ways to teach students with dyslexia. It is characterized by providing systematic, explicit instruction that integrates listening, speaking, reading, and writing and emphasizes the structure of language across the speech sound system (phonology), the writing system (orthography), the structure of sentences (syntax), the meaningful parts of words (morphology), the relationships among words (semantics), and the organization of spoken and written discourse.
Elements of Structured Literacy

- **Structured Literacy**
- **Elements**
- **Evidence-Based Elements**

- **Phonology** (study of sound structure of spoken words) is a key element of Structured Literacy Instruction. **Phonemic awareness** (ability to distinguish / segment / blend / manipulate sounds relevant to reading/spelling) is central to phonology.

- **Sound-Symbol Association** Once students develop phoneme awareness, they must learn the alphabetic principle—how to map phonemes to letters (graphemes) and vice versa.

- **Syllables** Knowing the six syllable / vowel grapheme types helps readers associate vowel spellings with vowel sounds. Syllable division rules help readers divide / decode unfamiliar words.

- **Morphology** A morpheme is the smallest unit of meaning in language. Studying base elements and affixes helps readers decode and unlock the meanings of complex words.

- **Syntax**—the set of principles that dictate the sequence and function of words in a sentence—includes grammar, sentence structure, and the mechanics of language.

- **Semantics** Semantics is concerned with meaning. The Structured Literacy curriculum (from the start) includes instruction in the comprehension and appreciation of written language.
Principles of Structured Literacy

Structured Literacy teaching is systematic and cumulative. **Systematic** means that organization of material follows the logical order of language. The sequence begins with the easiest and most basic concepts and elements and progresses methodically to the more difficult. **Cumulative** means each step is based on concepts previously learned.

**Explicit** Structured Literacy instruction requires direct teaching of concepts with continuous student-teacher interaction and does not assume students deduce concepts. (While **multisensory teaching** lacks the extensive research that validates Structured Literacy’s other teaching principles, decades of clinical results support efficacy of simultaneous association of auditory, visual, kinesthetic motor modalities for enhancing memory and learning in students with dyslexia.)

**Diagnostic** Teachers must be adept at individualizing instruction (even within groups) based on careful and continuous assessment, both informal (e.g., observation) and formal (e.g., with standardized measures). Content must be mastered to the degree of automaticity needed to free attention and cognitive resources for comprehension and oral/written expression.
LITERACY CONVERSATIONS

School instructional leaders must become highly knowledgeable and lead their professional learning communities in acquiring literacy skills during the school day, with their students, and with each other. Literacy conversations in a school community must be focused on the reader and the writer, not upon the literacy activities. These conversations must include all stakeholders who play a role supporting students learning to read.
## PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Note: GaDOE does not endorse any organization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Learning Opportunity</th>
<th>Website</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIM Institute for Learning and Research</td>
<td><a href="https://institute.aimpa.org/">https://institute.aimpa.org/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.asha.org/">https://www.asha.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Center for Effective Reading Instruction (CERI)</td>
<td><a href="https://effectivereading.org/">https://effectivereading.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cox Campus</td>
<td><a href="https://www.coxcampus.org/">https://www.coxcampus.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Dyslexia Resource</td>
<td><a href="https://dyslexiaresource.org/">https://dyslexiaresource.org/</a></td>
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<td>Dyslexia Training Institute</td>
<td><a href="https://www.dyslexiatraininginstitute.org/certification.html">https://www.dyslexiatraininginstitute.org/certification.html</a></td>
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<td>edWeb</td>
<td><a href="https://home.edweb.net/">https://home.edweb.net/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Institute for Multi-Sensory Education</td>
<td><a href="https://www.orton-gillingham.com/">https://www.orton-gillingham.com/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council (IMSLE)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.imslec.org/">http://www.imslec.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.voyagersopris.com/professional-development/letrs/overview">https://www.voyagersopris.com/professional-development/letrs/overview</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Microsoft Education Dyslexia Awareness Course</td>
<td><a href="https://education.microsoft.com/courses-and-_resources/courses/dyslexia-awareness-in-partnership_with-made-by-dyslexia">https://education.microsoft.com/courses-and-_resources/courses/dyslexia-awareness-in-partnership_with-made-by-dyslexia</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>SREB Teacher Training Resources</td>
<td><a href="https://www.sreb.org/dyslexia/training">https://www.sreb.org/dyslexia/training</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tennessee Center for the Study and Treatment of Dyslexia</td>
<td><a href="https://www.mtsu.edu/dyslexia/overview.php">https://www.mtsu.edu/dyslexia/overview.php</a></td>
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<td>Teacher Training Programs (Independent)</td>
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<td>University of Georgia Dyslexia Certificate Program</td>
<td><a href="https://online.uga.edu/degrees-certificates/graduate_certificate-dyslexia">https://online.uga.edu/degrees-certificates/graduate_certificate-dyslexia</a></td>
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Dyslexia Activity Delivery Dates

**Fall 2019**
- Draft Dyslexia Handbook
  - internal draft (Aug 16)
  - external review (Sept. 23)
  - revisions (Oct. 14)

**December 2019**
- Dyslexia Handbook delivered

**Spring 2020**
- Curate list of training opportunities

**October - November 2019**
- Disseminate Request for Applications for dyslexia pilot study

**December 11-12 2019**
- Announce selected pilot districts

**August 2020**
- Dyslexia pilot study begins
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 1, 2019</td>
<td>Dyslexia Informational Handbook released</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 30, 2019</td>
<td>Georgia Professional Standards Commission dyslexia endorsement made available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1, 2020</td>
<td>K-3 screening policies for students who have characteristics of dyslexia, other disorders, or both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020-2021 School Year</td>
<td>Three-year pilot program begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1, 2022</td>
<td>Evaluation of the results of the pilot program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2024-2025 School Year</td>
<td>Screening for all K-3 students for characteristics of dyslexia</td>
</tr>
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Need More Information?

https://www.gadoe.org/dyslexia
Preparing students for life.

www.gadoe.org

@georgiadeptofed

youtube.com/c/GeorgiaDepartmentofEducation

Thank you!
Caitlin McMunn Dooley, Ph.D.
cdooley@doe.k12.ga.us

Let me know how you liked the talk...fill out a survey here.