

Ohio's New Dyslexia Laws: What they mean for students and families

Beginning with the 2023-24 school year, districts across the state of Ohio will be required to screen all K-3 students using a benchmark assessment aimed at identifying signs of struggles in early literacy skills. Children who have been identified by the screening process are not necessarily dyslexic. The school district cannot diagnose dyslexia, and the presence of a dyslexia diagnosis is not, by itself, grounds for an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

If your child is identified as displaying some characteristics of dyslexia, you will receive a letter from the district. The student will undergo additional diagnostic testing, and targeted interventions will be provided. These interventions will be based upon the results of the diagnostic, but will be specific structured literacy interventions. What that means is that the instructional practices will be explicit and systematic and designed to help all students (including those with dyslexia or with characteristics of dyslexia) gain the foundational reading skills needed to become proficient readers.

While many districts across the state are needing to make significant changes to their practices in response to these new laws, Lima City Schools has been using structured literacy practices for several years, and the overwhelming majority of our elementary teaching staff has undergone a two-year-long extensive training in how the brain learns to read (often called the Science of Reading). Our instructional practices, interventions, and curricular materials have all been aligned to a structured literacy approach.

For additional information, please visit the Ohio Department of Education's website (education.ohio.gov) and search: dyslexia.

What is Dyslexia?

Dyslexia is a brain-based learning disability that specifically impairs a person's ability to read.



Dyslexia is Brain-Based

The affected brain areas are associated with detection and processing of sounds and their corresponding letters.

Children born with the neurological impairments associated with dyslexia are more likely than other children to have family members with the impairment. Many, but not all, of these children will eventually experience reading difficulties.

Dyslexia Impairs the Ability to Read

Difficulty with phonological awareness inhibits the ability to effectively decode letters into blendable sounds to form words. A fundamental phonological processing problem may "block" access to other more advanced aspects of reading, such as word reading and comprehension.



Dispelling Myths About Dyslexia

Dyslexia does not imply the individual cannot read. People with dyslexia can learn to read with evidence-based explicit instruction, but may still have to put forth more effort.

Dyslexia does not otherwise impact the brain structure or functioning, or the intellectual, imaginative, or emotional capabilities of the individual.

Individuals with dyslexia do not necessarily see and write letters or words backwards.

For more information about dyslexia please visit ImprovingLiteracy.org