

Arkansas

Dyslexia Legislation

Has Legislation? Yes

[Arkansas Senate Bill 788](#) and [Act 1294](#)

In 2015, Arkansas passed SB 788. The bill (a) defines dyslexia, (b) establishes screening requirements, (c) establishes evidence-based screening requirements, (d) creates a dyslexia specialist position at the Arkansas Department of Education, (e) outlines professional development requirements, and (f) calls for a plan to collaborate with institutions of higher education for teacher training.

Screening

Required? Yes

Screening is required for: 1) Each student in kindergarten through grade two (K-2); 2) Kindergarten through grade 2 (K-2) students who transfer to a new school and have not been screened; 3) Kindergarten through grade 2 (K-2) students who transfer from another state and cannot present documentation that the student has had similar screening; 4) A student in grade three or higher experiencing difficulty, as noted by a classroom teacher. Students with sensory impairments, extant dyslexia diagnoses, or severe cognitive impairments may be exempt.

State Recognized Screeners

Screeners must measure: phonological and phonemic awareness, sound-symbol recognition, alphabet knowledge, decoding skills, and rapid naming skills. Recognized screeners include: DIBELS, AIMSweb, Istation ISIP, NWEA Skills Checklist, Lakeshore: Alphabet Letter Identification, Core Literacy Library: Phoneme Segmentation Test, Scholastic: CORE Phonics Survey, Decode: Consonant Blends and Digraphs, FCRR: Oral Reading Fluency Passages, Ultimate Phonics Reading Test, Arkansas Rapid Naming Screener (AR-RAN), Word Journeys, and Words Their Way. See the state handbook for specific grade-level and content correspondences.

Pre-service

Required?Yes

According to the state dyslexia resource guide, "No later than the 2015-2016 school year, the Department of Education shall collaborate with the Department of Higher Education to ensure that all teacher education programs offered at state-supported institutions of higher education provide professional awareness of the characteristics of dyslexia and evidence-based interventions and accommodations for dyslexia. Professional development providers interested in delivering this professional awareness piece should apply for ADE approval through the Arkansas Professional Development Submission and Management System (PDSAM).

In-service

Required?Yes

By fiscal year, 2015, at least one staff member at each education service cooperative is trained as a dyslexia specialist to provide necessary information and support to school districts; and each teacher must receive professional development on the characteristics of dyslexia and evidence-based interventions and accommodations for dyslexia.

Intervention

Required?Yes

If the initial screener, level I, or level II screener indicates the characteristics of dyslexia, the Response to Intervention process shall be used. The law indicates that intervention may include "Explicit, direct instruction that is systematic, sequential, and cumulative and follows a logical plan of presenting the alphabetic principle that targets the specific needs of the student without presuming prior skills or knowledge of the student; [...]."

Literacy State-identified Measurable Result (SIMR) - Part B

Has Literacy SIMR?Yes

Resources

[Arkansas State Dyslexia Resource Guide](#)

[Arkansas Department of Education Dyslexia Resources](#)

[Decoding Dyslexia Arkansas](#)

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