



INDIANA
DEPARTMENT of
EDUCATION

Universal Screener & Dyslexia Programming Guidance for Schools

2024-2025

Indiana Department of Education
Literacy Center

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Table of Contents

Universal Screening & Parent Notification	3
Administering a Universal Screener	5
Notifying Parents	5
Determining Students Who Are At Risk for Learning Characteristics of Dyslexia	5
Providing Appropriate Interventions for Students	6
Administering a Level I Diagnostic Assessment	6
Interventions for Students Based on Level I Diagnostic Results	7
Administering an Optional Level II Diagnostic Assessment	7
School Staffing and Training	8
Data Reporting Requirements	9
Appendix A: Approved Universal Screeners	10
Appendix B: Approved Dyslexia Training Programs	12
Appendix C: Request a Waiver from Dyslexia Training Requirements	14
Appendix D: Post-Screening Considerations for English Learners	15

Universal Screener and Dyslexia Programming Guidance for Schools

Updated August 2024

[Indiana Code \(IC\) 20-35.5](#) outlines requirements for supporting students with learning characteristics of dyslexia, and this document provides additional guidance for policies and procedures to support the implementation of dyslexia-related programming. Contact the Indiana Department of Education's (IDOE's) [Literacy Center](#) for additional support.

Universal Screening & Parent Notification

IC 20-35.5 requires schools to administer a universal screener to all kindergarten, first, and second grade students annually to identify students who may be “at some risk” or “at risk” for learning characteristics of dyslexia. This early identification of students who are not on track to be proficient readers allows early implementation of targeted support. Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) is also required to provide a list of approved universal screeners aligned with IC 20-35.5 and [IC 20-32-8.5-2](#), from which schools may select.

IC 20-35.5-2-2 Screening of students

Sec. 2. The screening of students shall include, as developmentally appropriate, the following:

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

The table below provides an overview of the required steps that **must be completed within 90 calendar days of the start of the school year** for students in kindergarten, first, and second grade.

	Public Schools	Charter schools	State Accredited Non-public and Other Eligible Schools (IC 20-51-1-4.7)
Step 1: Notify parents of planned Universal Screener administration.	X	X	X
Step 2: Administer Universal Screener to all Kindergarten, First, and Second Grade students.	X	X	X
Step 3: Notify ALL parents of screener results.	X	X	X
Step 4: Identify students who may be “at some risk” or “at risk” for learning characteristics of dyslexia.	X	X	X

1) Provide parents with information about intervention services and begin the response to intervention process to address the needs of the student immediately.			
Step 5: Provide parents of students who are identified “ at some risk ” or “ at risk ” for learning characteristics of dyslexia information and resource material that includes the following: (A) Characteristics of dyslexia. (B) Appropriate classroom interventions and accommodations for students with learning characteristics of dyslexia. (C) A statement that the parent may elect to have the student receive an educational evaluation by the school.	X	X	Highly Encouraged
Step 6: If student is “ at some risk ” or “ at risk ” for characteristic of dyslexia: 1) Obtain consent to administer Level I diagnostic assessment for learning characteristics of dyslexia. If parent provides consent, go to step 7. If parent does not provide consent, skip to Step 9 .	X	X	Highly Encouraged
Step 7: Administer Level I diagnostic assessment for learning characteristics of dyslexia.	X	X	Highly Encouraged
Step 8: 1) If Level I diagnostic assessment indicates the need for learning characteristics of dyslexia interventions, provide intervention services outlined in IC 20-35.5-2 OR 2) If Level I diagnostic assessment does not indicate the need for learning characteristics of dyslexia interventions, continue with response to intervention process to address the needs of the student.	X	X	Highly Encouraged
Step 9: If parent does not provide consent, continue with response to intervention process	X	X	Highly Encouraged

to address the needs of the student and do not administer Level I diagnostic assessment.			
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OPTIONAL: If the school believes more information is needed to support interventions, provide the parent with a consent form for Level II diagnostic assessment for learning characteristics of dyslexia. Administer the Level II diagnostic assessment as needed.

Administering a Universal Screener

Schools must ensure that all students in kindergarten, grade one, and grade two are universally screened, including for learning characteristics of dyslexia, each school year. **Universal screeners are brief, designed for all students, and provide an indicator if students may be at risk for learning characteristics of dyslexia.** The universal screener being administered must be approved by IDOE. Approved universal screeners are located in [Appendix A](#).

Notifying Parents

- Schools must notify all parents of the planned administration of the universal screener.
- Students who transfer or enroll after the start of the school year must participate in the universal screener if they have not participated in the administration of an approved universal screener at their previous school in the same school year.
- Students may be exempt from screening if they meet one or both of the following criteria:
 - The parent (or legal guardian) of the student objects to the screening, or
 - The student is already receiving [dyslexia-related interventions](#)

Students in grade three and beyond must participate in screening for learning characteristics of dyslexia if a classroom teacher identifies that the student struggles with the following skills:

- Phonological and phonemic awareness;
- Sound symbol recognition;
- Alphabet knowledge;
- Decoding skills;
- Rapid naming skills; and
- Encoding skills.

Determining Students Who Are At Risk for Learning Characteristics of Dyslexia

After the universal screener is administered, schools must use the results of the screener to determine if any students may be “**at some risk**” or “**at risk**” for learning characteristics of dyslexia. The local school may determine the criteria used to identify students **at some risk** or **at risk** for learning characteristics of dyslexia. IDOE strongly recommends that schools use the indicator provided by their assessment vendor based on the test design of the universal screener; however, schools may elect to adjust the criteria. Each school should document the exact criteria used to identify students at risk for learning characteristics of dyslexia for the given school year. Schools must also document if a student is identified as at risk for learning characteristics of dyslexia within that student’s records.

If students are determined **not** at risk for learning characteristics of dyslexia based on the selected criteria, the school must notify parents of the screener results and resume regular educational programming for the students.

Providing Appropriate Interventions for Students

If students are determined to be “**at some risk**” or “**at risk**” for learning characteristics of dyslexia, the school must complete all steps detailed below.

- Provide the parent(s) with the results of the universal screener Include information about the criteria used to identify students who are **at some risk** and **at risk** for learning characteristics of dyslexia.
- Provide the parent(s) with information about intervention services. This information must include:
 - Resources that explain or describe the learning characteristics of dyslexia.
 - A description or list of classroom interventions and accommodations which may be appropriate for students with learning characteristics of dyslexia (note that accommodations and interventions are student-specific and must be tailored to individual student needs).
 - A statement that the parent may elect to have the student receive an educational evaluation by the school, upon request.
- Immediately use the Response to Intervention (RTI)/Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) process to address the needs of the student. Immediate RTI/MTSS support is required for any student who is identified as **at some risk** or **at risk** for learning characteristics of dyslexia. Specific dyslexia-related interventions are not required until after the administration of the Level I diagnostic assessment; however, schools may elect to provide specific dyslexia-related interventions after universal screening, if desired.
- Request parental consent to administer a Level I diagnostic assessment to obtain more information about the student’s needs.

Administering a Level I Diagnostic Assessment

If students are determined to be **at some risk** or **at risk** for learning characteristics of dyslexia and parental consent is obtained, the school must administer a Level I diagnostic assessment for learning characteristics of dyslexia. **The Level I diagnostic assessment is used to gather specific information about the student’s needs and confirm if learning characteristics of dyslexia are present.** The selected Level I diagnostic assessment must be approved by IDOE. Level I diagnostic assessments provide greater detail of information for learning characteristics of dyslexia and student knowledge and skills. [Appendix A](#) provides a list of approved Level I diagnostic assessments from which schools may select. The Level I diagnostic assessment must be administered to students identified as **at some risk** or **at risk** for learning characteristics of dyslexia within 90 calendar days of the start of each school year.

The school must use the results of the Level I diagnostic assessment to determine if the student should receive interventions and programming that target learning characteristics of dyslexia

specifically. The local school may set their own criteria for this determination. IDOE strongly recommends that schools use set benchmarks and/or indicators from their selected assessment vendor (based on test design) to support this decision.

Interventions for Students Based on Level I Diagnostic Results

If the school determines that the student does **not** need to receive interventions that target learning characteristics of dyslexia specifically, the school should continue to provide support through RTI/MTSS programming, as initiated after the universal screener.

If the school determines that students **should** receive interventions that target learning characteristics of dyslexia specifically, the school must provide students with programming that meets all of the following requirements:

- Is systematic, sequential, and cumulative and does not assume prior skills or knowledge;
- Is research-based; and
- Includes the components of the science of reading:
 - Phonemic awareness;
 - Graphophonemic knowledge;
 - Structure of the English language;
 - Linguistic instruction directed towards proficiency and fluency; and
 - Strategies for decoding, encoding, word recognition, fluency, and comprehension.

Additional dyslexia interventions may include:

- Individualized instruction to meet specific needs of the student in a setting that uses intensive, highly-concentrated instruction methods and materials to maximize student engagement;
- Meaning-based instruction directed at purposeful reading and writing with an emphasis on comprehension and composition; or
- Instruction that incorporates the simultaneous use of two or more sensory pathways during teacher presentations and student practice.

Resources to support dyslexia interventions are available on [IDOE's dyslexia webpage](#).

Administering an Optional Level II Diagnostic Assessment

If the school believes more information is needed to support interventions following the Level I diagnostic assessment, the school may administer a Level II diagnostic assessment for learning characteristics of dyslexia. **Level II diagnostic assessments provide greater detail of information for learning characteristics of dyslexia and student knowledge and skills.** The selected Level II diagnostic assessment must be approved by IDOE. [Appendix A](#) provides a list of approved Level II diagnostic assessments from which schools may select. Parental consent is required prior to administering a Level II diagnostic assessment to a student.

School Staffing and Training

Each school corporation and charter school is required by law to employ at least one authorized reading specialist trained in dyslexia.

- The authorized reading specialist must successfully complete training through a “dyslexia training program” approved by IDOE. Approved dyslexia training programs are listed in [Appendix B](#).
- The authorized reading specialist must be employed by the school corporation or charter school, but may be either a reading specialist, a teacher, a tutor, or a paraprofessional working under the supervision of a teacher.
- The school corporation or charter school may enter into an agreement with a service provider or another school corporation in order to obtain or share services of an authorized reading specialist.
- The school corporation or charter school should keep documentation locally that these requirements are met each year, including (1) the name of the authorized reading specialist, (2) the training the specialist completed, and (3) the specialist’s role within the school corporation or charter school.
- If a school corporation or charter school is not able to meet the requirement to employ at least one authorized reading specialist trained in dyslexia, that school corporation or charter school may submit a petition for a waiver of training requirements to the Indiana Secretary of Education (via IDOE) using the instructions in [Appendix C](#).

Indiana law also requires each teacher serving in a school corporation or charter school to receive professional awareness information about dyslexia.

- The training must provide information on the learning characteristics of dyslexia, evidence-based interventions for dyslexia, and accommodations for dyslexia.
- The requirement applies to teachers at all grade levels and serving in all capacities.
- Teachers are required to receive this information once. Schools may elect to provide the information/training on a yearly basis, but this is not required. Schools must ensure that any teachers new to the school corporation or charter school either (1) receive the professional awareness information or (2) confirm and document their previous receipt of the professional awareness information at a different Indiana school corporation or charter school.
- IDOE provides an [online training](#) module as an option for schools to provide this professional awareness information to teachers.
- IDOE provides the [Dyslexia Toolkit](#) as an additional resource to support the dissemination of professional awareness information to teachers.

Data Reporting Requirements

Schools must report the following to IDOE within the yearly reading plan required by [Indiana Code 20-32-8.5](#):

- The number of students who were administered the universal screener;
- The number of students who were determined to be **at some risk** or **at risk** for learning characteristics of dyslexia; and
- The selected universal screener which was used to screen students in kindergarten through grade two.

This data will be reported each year as part of each school's reading plan. Schools should plan ahead and locally document this data during screening.

Additional reporting for public and charter schools to include response to screening each year. (e.g., types of interventions, any additional assessments administered, etc.) may also be requested in yearly reading plans, if needed.

Each school corporation or charter school must also report dyslexia related information on their public website no later than July 15 each year. The information must include (but does not have to be limited to):

- The learning characteristics of dyslexia intervention program(s) used during the previous school year to support students with dyslexia.
- The number of students who received learning characteristics of dyslexia intervention during the previous school year. This indicator represents the number of students who were identified as **at some risk** and **at risk** for learning characteristics of dyslexia during the previous school year and who received the appropriate interventions. It does **not** represent the number of students who were officially diagnosed with dyslexia.
- The number of students identified with dyslexia during the previous school year. This indicator represents the number of students who were officially diagnosed with dyslexia and may differ from the number of students who received dyslexia intervention under the guidelines within this document.

Appendix A: Approved Universal Screeners

IDOE reviewed and approved universal screeners and diagnostic assessment systems to ensure they meet the legislated requirements. The approved assessment systems ensure that students across the state are screened in a fair and trustworthy way that provides clear flags for learning characteristics of dyslexia. Schools should avoid selecting multiple assessments to measure criteria separately (which does not produce a research-based flag for support) and should instead move to a single assessment program with a research-based indicator included.

IDOE does not accept requests from schools for vendor approval due to the level of technical documentation required to approve assessment programs.

Approved Assessments Beginning School Year 2024-2025

Vendor Name	Assessment Name	Type/Purpose of Assessment	Formative Assessment Grant Eligible	Sales Contact Information
Amplify	mCLASS with DIBELS, 8th Edition	Universal Screener + Diagnostic (Level I/II)	Yes	Obie Martin 574-725-8585
Curriculum Associates	i-Ready Literacy Task	Universal Screener	No	Cory Howard 574-721-5306
EarlyBird Education	EarlyBird Diagnostic Assessment	Diagnostic (Level I/II) (Kindergarten only)	No	Randi Pund 404-428-0267
EarlyBird Education	EarlyBird Dyslexia Screener	Universal Screener (Kindergarten only)	No	Randi Pund 404-428-0267
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH)	Amira	Universal Screener + Diagnostic (Level I/II)	No	Lexy Hoffman 765-404-2801
Imagination Station Inc., dba Istation	Istation's Indicators of Progress (ISIP) for Reading	Universal Screener	No	Chris Blevins 972-533-0657

Lexia Voyager Sopris Inc	Acadience Reading K-6, RAN, Spelling	Universal Screener	No	Laurie Carmon 1-800-547-6747 ext. 9404
Pearson Clinical Assessments	Aimswab Plus	Universal Screener	No	Mallory Milara 941-3745-2303
Pearson Clinical Assessments	Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement (Third Edition) KTEA-3	Diagnostic (Level I/II)	No	Dan Zwiers 763-227-2538
Pearson Clinical Assessments	Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (Fourth Edition) (WIAT-4)	Diagnostic (Level I/II)	No	Dan Zwiers 763-227-2538
MA Rooney Foundation	Reading Foundations for K-1	Diagnostic (Level I/II)	No	Ann Puckett-Harpold 317-571-2973
MA Rooney Foundation	MARF Phonics Screener for 2-12	Diagnostic (Level I/II)	No	Ann Puckett-Harpold 317-571-2973
MindPlay Educational, LLC	MindPlay Dyslexia Screener	Universal Screener + Diagnostic (Level I/II)	No	Laura Close 317-409-4430
NWEA	MAP Reading Fluency Dyslexia Screener	Universal Screener	Yes	Jami Breslin 317-371-7358
EPS Learning	SPIRE	Diagnostic (Level I/II)	No	Sandy Duerr 240-610-6189
EPS Learning	SPIRE Initial Placement Assessments	Diagnostic (Level I/II)	No	Sandy Duerr 240-610-6189

Vendors may complete [this](#) form to update their contact information.



Appendix B: Approved Dyslexia Training Programs

IDOE approved dyslexia training programs based on requirements listed in [Indiana Code 20-35.5](#). Schools may select from this list of programs to fulfill training requirements for their authorized reading specialist.

Organization	Mode	Hours of Training	Hours of Practicum	Contact Information
Anderson University	In-person	15 credit hours	60	Katy Sample 765-617-8508
B.E.A.R Reading Center	In-person	60	100	Kim Haughee 574-288-0067
Brainspring	In-person or online	30	Optional: Up to 60 hours	Cara Martin 1-844-680-7094
Butler University	Hybrid	9 credit hours	20	Kelli Esteves 317-940-6462
Children's Dyslexia Center	In-person	60	100	Julie Bohannon 317-201-5949
Dyslexia Institute of Indiana	Online	40	10	Bill Herman 317-222-6635
Classmates Educational Group, Inc. SLANT System® for Structured Language Training	Live-online or In-person	40	60	Beth Hatlen 630-687-8962
Indiana University	Online	9 credit hours	N/A	Susan Klinker 812-856-8251
Institute for Multi- Sensory Education	In-person or online; any region of Indiana	30	Optional	Teresa Garretson 800-646-9788 x 210
Joellyn Hartley Dyslexia Consulting	In-person or online	40-45	1.5	Joellyn Hartley 765-969-3669



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

Kendore Learning	In-person or online	24	Optional	Jennifer Hasser 770-752-1724
MA Rooney Foundation	In-person or online	40	N/A	Ann Puckett-Harpold 317-571-2973
Marian University Center for Vibrant Schools	Hybrid	40	20 required, 40 optional	Anne Elsener 317-955-6084
Mayerson Academy	In-person or online	45	60	Caren Karlage 513-475-4145
Mindplay at Close Education	In-person or online	43	6	Laura Close 317-409-44330
Oakland City University	In-person or online	20-40	N/A	Karen Nasser 1-812-749-1483
Orton-Gillingham International	In-person	40	N/A	Elenn Steinberg 720-937-8242
Orton Gillingham Online Academy	In-person or online	30	Optional	Marisa Bernard 765-635-9820
Purdue University Northwest	In-person or online	20	5	Grace Pigozzi 219-785-5578
Teaching Basics	Online	30	N/A	Roxie Sporleder
The Reading Clinic: For General Educators	Hybrid	50	30	Jamey Peavler 317-260-6376
The Reading Clinic: For Interventionists	Hybrid	60	100	Jamey Peavler 317-260-6376
Therapeutic Language Consulting	In-person	30	50	Janet George 317-658-2480
Voyager Sopris Learning (LETRS)	Hybrid	162	30	Shalon Anderson
Wilson Language Training (WLT) Wilson Reading Systems (WRS)	In-person or online	90	65	Kim Merrick 508-368-1426

Vendors may complete [this](#) form to update their training program information.



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

Appendix C: [Request a Waiver from Dyslexia Training Requirements](#)

The school corporation superintendent (or designee) or charter school principal (or designee) may complete this application to request a waiver from staff dyslexia training requirements per Indiana Code 20-35.5-6.

School Name: _____

Indiana Department of Education LEA Identification Number: _____

Name of Applicant: _____

Contact Email: _____

Contact Phone (Optional): _____

Select the reason the corporation requests this waiver.

- The individual selected to perform the duties of reading specialist is unable to meet the training requirements within the required time period.
- The individual performing the duties of reading specialist left the position and the corporation or charter school is not able to timely employ another authorized reading specialist.

Provide a brief description of the corporation's plan to ensure a reading specialist trained in dyslexia is employed as quickly as possible, along with the anticipated timeline.

Has your school requested a waiver from dyslexia training requirements in the past three years?

- Yes
- No

Complete and submit this form on [JotForm](#).

Submit this form via email to the Literacy Center at INLitCenter@doe.in.gov.



Appendix D: Post-Screening Considerations for English Learners

Guidance published in previous school years allowed schools to exempt some English learners (ELs) from dyslexia programming (including universal screening and interventions). Beginning the school year 2022-2023, those exemptions were removed from the guidance. Schools are now required to provide dyslexia programming (including universal screening) to ELs, ensuring equitable support is available to this protected class. This guidance will support educators in their dyslexia programming decision-making process as it pertains to ELs and their respective proficiency levels.

Universal screeners for learning characteristics of dyslexia are available in languages other than English through some providers. Screeners may also be administered through a translator in cases where the assessment program provider approves this service. Before providing an assessment to a student in an alternate language, schools should consider the literacy level required to meaningfully engage with the assessment and whether the multilingual student meets that level in their native language.

Some ELs may have learning characteristics of dyslexia and may require interventions for dyslexia alongside support for learning English. However, sometimes an EL's English proficiency levels can negatively impact the validity of a universal screener score, resulting in a flag of "at risk" for learning characteristics of dyslexia when the true need is to develop English proficiency. Schools should consider a student's English proficiency levels when planning the best response for English learners using the data from universal screening.

IDOE recommends that schools consider the following principles when designing support for English learners following universal screening for learning characteristics of dyslexia.

- Schools have the flexibility to establish local criteria for flagging students who are at risk for learning characteristics of dyslexia.
- Schools should consider students' English proficiency levels along with screener results when flagging students as "at risk."
 - One example is to consider the student's performance level on the universal screener in combination with the student's most recent performance on a WIDA English language proficiency assessment. WIDA overall proficiency levels of 1.0 to 2.9 are likely to impact the "at risk" flag the most.
 - Schools should avoid setting criteria that is norm-referenced, or based on a percentage of lowest-performing students. Criterion-referenced flags (which are based on student proficiency with content/skills) are recommended to ensure students receive needed support regardless of how their peers may be performing. Norm-referenced criteria risks both flagging students for dyslexia interventions when they are not needed (when peers are high-performing) and not flagging students for dyslexia interventions when they are needed (when peers are low-performing).



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

- Schools may consider the EL's growth on WIDA ACCESS over time (if that data is available). For example, diagnostic assessment for learning characteristics of dyslexia may be considered if an EL has shown very little to no growth in the reading and/or writing domains on WIDA ACCESS over at least two consecutive administrations of the assessment, or if the student shows progress in speaking and listening in the English proficiency but little or no progress in reading and writing.
- Other data points should be used in combination with the universal screener to determine whether or not the student is truly at risk for learning characteristics of dyslexia. Some additional data points schools may consider include:
 - Teacher observations (e.g., general education classroom teacher and EL teacher of record).
 - Performance on classroom assignments.
 - Current English proficiency assessment data (e.g., WIDA).
 - Evidence gathered during current interventions or instruction.
 - Prior educational opportunities in the United States or in a native country.
 - Native language literacy.
 - Amount of time in the United States.
- Schools should consider individual student needs to provide the best supports for ELs, with those supports reflected in the student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP).
- Schools may consider possible rescreening at a later time when the student's English proficiency is higher.