

## **5339 – SCREENING FOR DYSLEXIA**

In accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:40-5.1 et seq., the Board of Education shall ensure each pupil enrolled in the school District who has exhibited one or more potential indicators of dyslexia or other reading disabilities is screened for dyslexia and other reading disabilities using a screening instrument selected pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:40-5.2. This screening shall be administered no later than the pupil's completion of the first semester of the second grade.

Pupils newly enrolling in the District or transferring into the District in kindergarten or grades one through six who exhibit potential indicators of dyslexia or other reading disabilities and who have not been previously assessed, shall be assessed using the District selected age-appropriate screening instruments. Pupils shall be assessed at the same time as other pupils enrolled in the pupil's grade if feasible. If other pupils enrolled in the pupil's grade have previously been screened, the assessment shall be conducted within 90 calendar days of the date the pupil is enrolled in the District.

For the purposes of this Policy, "dyslexia" is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological 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 growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

For the purposes of this Policy, "potential indicators of dyslexia or other reading disabilities" means indicators that include, but shall not be limited to, difficulty in acquiring language skills; inability to comprehend oral or written language; difficulty in rhyming words; difficulty in naming letters, recognizing letters, matching letters to sounds, and blending sounds when speaking and reading words; difficulty recognizing and remembering sight words; consistent transposition of number sequences, letter reversals, inversions, and substitutions; and trouble in replication of content.

In the event a pupil is determined, through the screening conducted in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:40-5.3, to possess one or more potential indicators of dyslexia or other reading disabilities pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:40-5.1 et seq., the Board shall ensure the pupil receives a comprehensive assessment for the learning disorder. In the event a diagnosis of dyslexia or other reading disability is confirmed by the comprehensive assessment, the Board shall provide appropriate evidence-based intervention strategies to the pupil, including intense instruction on phonemic awareness, phonics and fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension.

In accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:6-131, general education teachers in grades kindergarten through three, special education teachers, basic skills teachers, English as a second language teachers, reading specialists, learning disabilities teacher consultants, and speech-language specialists are required to complete at least two hours of professional development each year on the screening, intervention, accommodation, and use of technology for pupils with reading disabilities, including dyslexia. The Superintendent may make these professional development opportunities available to other instructional or support staff members as deemed appropriate. This requirement for professional development in reading disabilities may be part of the twenty hours of annual professional development required by N.J.A.C. 6A:9 et seq.

N.J.S.A. 18A:40-5.1; 18A:40-5.2; 18A:40-5.3; 18A:40-5.4; 18A:6-131

First Reading: April 26, 2016  
Adopted: May 24, 2016

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Potential indicators of dyslexia or other reading disabilities include, but are not be limited to:

1. Difficulty in acquiring language skills;
2. Inability to comprehend oral or written language;
3. Difficulty in rhyming words;
4. Difficulty in naming letters, recognizing letters, matching letters to sounds, and blending sounds when speaking and reading words;
5. Difficulty recognizing and remembering sight words; consistent transposition of number sequences, letter reversals, inversions, and substitutions; and
6. Trouble in replication of content.

For the purpose of screening, the District has chosen the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS).