Meeting the Needs of Children with Dyslexia in Public Schools

Act 1294 of 2013 and Act 1268 of 2015
A.C.A. § 6-41-601, Title 6, Subtitle 3, et al.

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Components of the Law

A.C.A. § 6-41-601 Findings
A.C.A. § 6-41-602 Definitions
A.C.A. § 6-41-603 Required screening and intervention
A.C.A. § 6-41-604 Additional dyslexia evaluation and services
A.C.A. § 6-41-605 Instructional approaches
A.C.A. § 6-41-606 Reporting by school districts
A.C.A. § 6-41-607 Dyslexia Specialist
A.C.A. § 6-41-608 Dyslexia Professional Awareness
A.C.A. § 6-41-609 Dyslexia and related disorder education in teacher education programs
A.C.A. § 6-41-610 Dyslexia Resource Guide
1. Choose a dyslexia program

“Dyslexia program” means explicit, direct instruction that is:

(A) Systematic, sequential, cumulative
(B) Multisensory and research based
(C) Offered in a small group setting to teach the components of reading
(D) Delivered with fidelity as the author intended

A.C.A. § 6-41-602
2. Train dyslexia interventionist(s)

(d) No later than 2015-2016 academic year, a school district shall have individuals to serve as dyslexia interventionists.

A.C.A. § 6-41-607
A.C.A. § 6-41-602 (2) “Dyslexia Interventionist” means a school district or public school employee trained in a dyslexia program.

(i) Dyslexia therapist
(ii) Dyslexia specialist
(iii) Reading interventionist
(iv) Certified teacher
(v) Tutor or paraprofessional working under the supervision of a certified teacher.
2015-2016 School Requirements

3. Screen and provide services

Initial Screener
All K-2
Any student in grades 3-12
(experiencing difficulty as noted by a classroom teacher)

Level I Dyslexia Screener
Students performing at risk/some risk on Initial Screener

Level II Dyslexia Screener
Can be used to determine a student’s eligibility for accommodations and equipment under Section 504.

A.C.A. § 6-41-603
A.C.A. § 6-41-603
Required Screening and Intervention

The Initial Screening and Level I Dyslexia Screening of a student shall be performed with fidelity and include the components:

- Phonological and phonemic awareness;
- Sound symbol recognition;
- Alphabet knowledge;
- Decoding skills;
- Rapid naming skills; and
- Encoding.
**What are the characteristics of dyslexia we are looking for?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics:</th>
<th>Poor Decoding (Nonsense Words)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor Word Recognition (Real Words)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor Fluency (Rate and Accuracy)</td>
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<td>Poor Spelling</td>
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<tr>
<th>Underlying Cause:</th>
<th>Poor Phonological Awareness</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor Rapid Naming</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Poor Alphabet Knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<th>Outcomes:</th>
<th>Poor Reading Comprehension</th>
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<td>(Especially under timed conditions)</td>
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A.C.A. § 6-41-603
Required Screening and Intervention

If the Level II Dyslexia Screening conducted by the school district indicates that a student exhibits the characteristics of dyslexia, the student shall be provided intervention services.

The information is also used to determine a student’s eligibility for accommodations and equipment under Section 504.
A.C.A. § 6-41-604
Level II Dyslexia Screening, Services and Parent Notification

If a student’s performance on an Initial, Level I, or Level II Dyslexia Screening indicates a need for dyslexia intervention services, the student’s parent or legal guardian shall be:

1) Notified of the results of the dyslexia evaluation; and
2) Provided with information and resource materials, including:
   a) The characteristics of dyslexia
   b) Appropriate classroom accommodations
   c) The right of the parent or legal guardian to have the student receive an independent, comprehensive dyslexia evaluation
A.C.A. § 6-41-604
Level II Dyslexia Screening, Services, and Parent Notification

• At any time, a parent may seek an independent, dyslexia evaluation.
  – Licensed psychological examiner
  – School psychology specialist
  – Licensed speech-language pathologist
  – Certified dyslexia testing specialist
  – Dyslexia therapist

• A school district shall consider the diagnosis and provide the student with interventions from a dyslexia interventionist at the school district.
Students with disabilities are not excluded from screening and/or dyslexia intervention services.
Special Education Dyslexia Contact

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A.C.A. § 6-41-606
Reporting by School Districts

A.C.A. § 6-41-606 The superintendent shall annually report the results of the school district screening required under § 6-41-603.
A.C.A. § 6-41-606
Reporting by School Districts

Assurance statement to be signed by the superintendent:

The school district is in compliance with A.C.A. § 6-41-601 concerning dyslexia screening.
A.C.A. § 6-41-608 Dyslexia Professional Awareness
No later than the 2014-2015 school year, the Department of Education shall ensure that each teacher receives professional awareness on
1) The indicators of dyslexia; and
2) Evidence based interventions for a student who is dyslexic.

A.C.A. § 6-41-610 Dyslexia Resource Guide
Created a Dyslexia Resource Guide Committee
1. Go to: [http://www.arkansased.org](http://www.arkansased.org)
2. Click on the “D”
3. Select “Dyslexia”
4. Review Related Files