Alaska Legislative Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia

Final Report

March 29, 2019

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The Reading Proficiency & Dyslexia Task Force

HB 64, passed by the Alaska Legislature in the spring of 2018, created the Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia Task Force to make recommendations to the Governor, State Board of Education, and the Alaska Legislature about how to improve reading outcomes for Alaska students.

The Task Force consisted of 12 members: six from the legislature and six public members:

Legislative Members:
Representative Harriet Drummond, Chair
Representative Ivy Spohnholz
Representative Colleen Sullivan-Leonard
Senator Cathy Giessel
Senator Gary Stevens
Senator Tom Begich

Public Members:
Dianne Orr, *Retired teacher and current administrator*
Norm Wooten, *Association of Alaska School Boards*
Kim Bautista, *Association of Elementary School Principals*
Camille Booth, *Nonprofit*
Marta Lastufka, *Parent*
Ambrose Bucy, *Student*

The Task Force met on four occasions:
October 22, 2018
October 31, 2018
November 19, 2018
November 26, 2018

The Task Force heard presentations from the following speakers:
Posie Boggs, *Alaska Reading Coalition*
Dr. Donna Dearman, *MatSu School District*
Camille Booth, *Southeast School Districts*
Dianne Orr and Deena Bishop, *Anchorage School District*
Stephanie Cornwell, NWABSD, *Department of Education & Early Development*
Nancy Duggan, *Decoding Dyslexia Massachusetts*
Audie Alumbaugh, *Decoding Dyslexia Arkansas*
Ann White, *Pediatrician and Parent*
Susannah Olness, *Physician and Parent*
Heather Walton, *Reading Write AK*
Marta Lastufka, *Parent*
Jennifer Athey, *Parent*
Mary Claire Kretzschmar, *Parent*
Diane Kardash, *University of Alaska Fairbanks*
Dr. Lisa Parady and Lexie Domaradzki, *Alaska Council of School Administrators*
Misty Nelson, *Teacher*
Jennifer Weizman, *Teacher*
Kim Evans, *Teacher*
Janet Donnely, *Teacher*
Vicki Campbell, *Teacher*

Special thanks to:
Posie Boggs, Hans Neidig, Jennifer Hall Jones, and the entire Alaska Reading Coalition, *for considerable informational assistance*
Ira Slomski-Pritz, *for drafting the report*

“Once you learn to read, you will forever be free.”

— Frederick Douglas

Executive Summary

Many people who pick up this report will have no problem reading this sentence. Reading can become almost as automatic and effortless as breathing. Once fluent readers see familiar words, they can't help but to comprehend them, leaving little time to marvel at the brain's ability to understand stories, arguments, ideas, jokes, instructions, just from seeing a series of squiggly lines on a page.

Virtually every facet of modern life involves reading. Whether studying biology, applying for a job, or considering a doctor's note, those who struggle to read face disadvantages that often prove insurmountable. Considerable research shows that an inability to read often leads to lifelong consequences that range from lower educational achievement to decreased mental and physical health. Reading struggles can cascade into broader struggles, including dropping out of high school, missing out on employment opportunities, and ending up in the criminal justice system.

Disadvantages begin early in life. By fourth grade, curriculum that teaches students how to read switches to curriculum that uses reading to teach new skills. If a student still struggles to read at the end of third grade, that student will likely fall further and further behind in school.

Students struggle to read for a variety of reasons. Some enter kindergarten without foundational oral language skills; some do not enter the classroom healthy, nourished, and ready to learn; some are learning English as a second language. Up to one in five students have dyslexia — a neurological condition that makes learning to read challenging. This report highlights dyslexia not only because its high incidence, but also because it has been consistently overlooked.[1]

Despite these challenges, we now know that almost every child is capable of learning to read. Research shows that when children receive a sufficient amount of the right reading instruction, almost all students will succeed. Even children who are at risk for reading failure will learn to read if we identify them early and provide them with comprehensive and evidence-based interventions.[2] In Alaska, every student should be able to read by the end of third grade.

According to the 2017 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), only 28% of Alaska students read proficiently by fourth grade, earning Alaska a rank of 51st out of 52 jurisdictions for reading performance.[3] In 2015, 47,000 students out of 130,000 did not meet state English Language Arts standards.

While the state of reading proficiency in Alaska is unacceptable, it is also eminently solvable. Scientists have a robust understanding of how students learn to read. In fact, they know more about reading acquisition than any other field in education. There are thousands of studies on reading acquisition, and hundreds more come out every year. These studies don't just reveal ways to

1 See section "Neurological Barriers" more information, including a definition of dyslexia.

2 Nancy Duggan; Hearing on Literacy: Why Kids Can't Read, testimony, 1997 US Congress, House, Committee on Education and the Workforce, Reid Lyon, "Hearing on Literacy." U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Education and the Workforce, Washington D.C., July 10, 1997. http://www.literacyhow.com/wpcontent/uploads/2015/08/3-HEARING-ON-LITERACY-1.pdf

3 NAEP "NAEP Reading Report Card." The Nation's Report Card. Accessed February 22, 2019. https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading_2017/nation/scores?grade=4.

marginally improve student reading performance—they consistently demonstrate the dramatic possibility of early intervention with effective reading instruction: almost all students can succeed.[4]

But by and large, those practices haven't made their way into the classroom in Alaska. The growing understanding of reading acquisition in scientific fields has yet to spread to education fields. Studies have shown that across the country, K-3 teachers, literacy specialists, and English language learner (ELL) teachers remain generally unfamiliar with the science of reading.[5] Many universities do not equip new teachers with the tools they need to successfully teach all students to read, which compounds a teacher's existing difficulty of providing tailored instruction in large classrooms with students who bring social and behavioral challenges. Most teachers do not read the scientific journals that publish reading research, and if they tried, it would be hard to keep up with the onslaught of new studies. Furthermore, a contentious divide among educators, dubbed the "Reading Wars," has created an atmosphere of defensiveness in parts of the education community about reading practices.[6]

This Task Force hopes to help bridge the gap. Other states have implemented evidence-based reforms and improved student reading abilities across the board. Alaska can do the same. The Alaska Legislative Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia provides recommendations so that every Alaska student achieves their full reading potential—whether they are typical readers, English language learners, or students with dyslexia.

The Task Force recommends that the State, school districts, and teachers:

- Provide students with evidence-based reading instruction based on the science of reading.
- Catch at risk students early, and provide rapid intervention.
- Ensure all students enter school ready to learn through early intervention, including voluntary universal Pre-K.
- Provide appropriate instruction for a range in student aptitudes by implementing a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) structure.
- Ensure that teachers have the tools they need, through science-based teacher training at the University's School of Education and ongoing training for teachers in the workorce.
- Recognize Dyslexia early and respond with proven interventions.
- Ensure equitable access for districts in rural Alaska, especially by ensuring rural schools have the broadband capabilities to access high-quality online reading instructional tools.
- Ensure districts and schools implement new reading practices with fidelity.

4 David Kilpatrick, Essentials of Assessing, Preventing, and Overcoming Reading Difficulties (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2015), 4-8.
5 Ibid., 5.
6 Ibid., 11

Reading by Third Grade Matters

In any given fourth grade classroom, some students read with ease, while others struggle to make meaning from basic texts. Those students, before even turning ten years old, have been placed on divergent life trajectories. Reading ability often determines an individual's success in school and the workforce. Reading failure leads to negative outcomes for the individual and increased cost to government and society.

The students who develop strong reading abilities at an early age will be better equipped to do well in school. They will use reading skills to acquire more advanced ones, such as writing, analytical thinking, science, and math. They will likely graduate from high school and seek postsecondary education and training. They will enter the workforce better prepared. Research consistently shows that reading itself is one of the most commonly and intensively used skills among all types of jobs across the entire U.S. economy.[7] Nationally, $3.1 billion is spent annually to improve reading skills of entry level workers.[8]

The students that don't read proficiently by third grade fall further and further behind. As their peers use reading skills to acquire new skills, these students remain on square one. Until third grade, students spend class time learning to read. After third grade, students use reading to learn new skills. In fourth grade, up to one half of the printed curriculum is incomprehensible to students who read below grade level.[9] Older students take more time to learn reading skills, and they may miss curriculum as they forgo class for extra reading coaching. As early as first grade, as they struggle with a skill that has become easy for their peers, many struggling readers blame themselves and begin to view themselves as incapable.[10] Underestimating their abilities, some will decide school is not right for them, and never graduate from high school. A student who can't read proficiently by third grade is four times less likely to graduate by the age of 19. If that student comes from a low-income family, that student is 13 times less likely to graduate.[11]

"A student who can't read proficiently by third grade is four times less likely to graduate by the age of 19. If that student comes from a low-income family, that student is 13 times less likely to graduate."

Youth who fail to complete high school by the age of 20 will more likely be arrested, have children as teenagers, and they are seven times more likely to be persistently poor.[12] One study of the Texas criminal justice system found that 80% of prison inmates functionally cannot read, and that 48% had dyslexia.[13] That is why the 2018 federal criminal justice reform legislation, the First Step Act, included a provision to screen inmates for dyslexia and provide them with dyslexia services.[14]

7 Business Roundtable, Why Reading Matters and What to Do About It: A CEO Action Plan to Support Improved US Literacy Rates, 2016, 1-15.

8 Deena Bishop, Testimony, Alaska Legislative Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia, October 31, 2018.

9 The Children's Reading Foundation; Early Warning! Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters (Baltimore: Annie E Casey Foundation, 2010).

10 Luciane Piccolo et al., "Reading Anxiety in L1: Reviewing the Concept," Early Childhood Education Journal 45, No. 4, (2019): https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-016-0822-x

11 Sarah Sparks, "Study: Third Grade Reading Predicts Later High School Graduation," Education Week April 8, 2011.

12 Children's Reading Foundation, Early Warning, 9-11.

13 Kenneth Moody, et al. "Prevalence of Dyslexia among Texas Prison Inmates." Current Neurology and Neuroscience Reports., U.S. National Library of Medicine, June 2000, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/10876375.

14 Federal First Step Act Includes Sen. Bill Cassidy's Provision for Screening Inmates for Dyslexia," The Livingston

An inability to read proficiently increases the likelihood of mental health and/or substance misuse issues, poverty, and decreased physical health.[15] Struggling readers are more likely to end up using social services like Medicaid, and they are more likely to end up incarcerated.[16]

Poor reading performance comes with a big price tag, and it's not just the individual that pays the price: by one estimate, every student who does not complete high school costs society $260,000 in lost earnings, productivity, tax revenue, and costs associated with increased use of government services over their lifetime.[17] The State foots the bill for higher usage of social services and increased interaction with the correctional system.

Parish News, 18 Dec. 2018, www.livingstonparishnews.com/news/federal-first-step-act-includes-senbill-cassidy-s-provision/article_7bfc1708-02df-11e9-b7d3-c335b91dab49.html?utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter&utm_campaign=user-share

15 Erin Marcus, "The silent epidemic—the health effects of illiteracy," New England Journal of Medicine, 355 (2006): 339–341. https://doi.org/10.1056/NEJMp058328

16 Nancy Duggan, Testimony, the Alaska Legislative Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia, November 19, 2018

17 Richard W Riley and Terry K. Peterson, "Before the 'Either-Or' Era." Education Week, February 21, 2019. https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2008/09/24/05riley.h28.html.

The Science of Reading: An Overview

> *"We are absurdly accustomed to the miracle of a few written signs being able to contain immortal imagery, involutions of thought, new worlds with live people, speaking, weeping, laughing."*
>
> — Vladimir Nabokov

During the past two decades, the scientific understanding of reading and reading difficulties has advanced dramatically. Educators can now turn to rigorous science to inform teaching practices, including countless well-designed studies that demonstrate effective teaching practices.

Reading depends on brain systems used for spoken language.[18] From infancy, our brains develop the capability to process spoken language. By the time we begin to learn to read, our brains efficiently make meaning from the words we hear. Developing vocabulary and learning how words and phrases are used prepares our brains for the task of reading.

Unlike with spoken language, our brains do not start reading automatically. Some schools of thought suggested that people learn to read naturally and easily. A strong scientific consensus now indicates that is not the case.[19] The sheer number of children that never learn to read underscores the scientific understanding.

Cognitively speaking, the reading process begins with vision. The part of the brain that registers visual inputs—the occipital lobe—makes sense of the light passing through the readers' eyes, identifying distinct letters and punctuation. Recognizing written language, the part of the brain that allows us to read activates. The area, dubbed the Visual Word Form Area, acts as an interface between our visual processing system and the spoken language system. Remarkably, whether someone is reading Chinese or English, the Visual Word Form Area remains consistent across cultures and can be identified at precise coordinates in the brain. If an individual experiences damage to that part of the brain, she will lose the ability to read. She will continue to see, recognize objects and faces, and even write—though she will be unable to read what she writes.

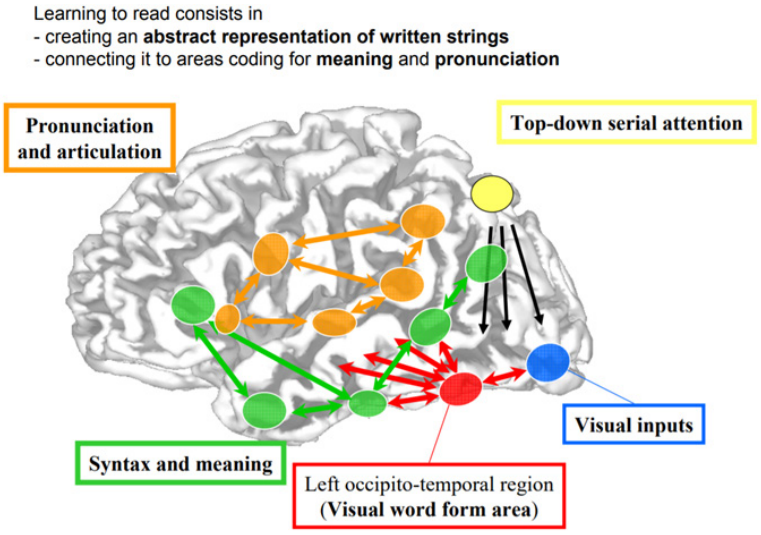

Figure 1. A Simple View of the Brain Architecture for Reading

The Visual Word Form Area does not automatically make meaning from text. Instead, we must train that area of the brain—originally used to identify objects in our environment — to recognize

18 Sally Shaywitz and Bennett Shaywitz, "Reading Disability and the Brain," Education Leadership 61, No. 6 (2004): 6-11. http://www.educationalleader.com/subtopicintro/read/ASCD/ASCD_323_1.pdf

19 Reid Lyon and Vinita Chhabra, "The Science of Reading Research," Education Leadership 61, No 6 (2004): 12-17. http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/mar04/vol61/num06/The-Science-of-ReadingResearch.aspx

letters and words and make meaning from them. When successfully trained, two additional regions of the brain engage simultaneously: one responsible for processing meaning, and one responsible for pronunciation and articulation, so that the brain makes the connection between vision and oral language.[20] Ultimately, reading is the synthesis of interdependent processes occurring in these neural regions: oral language comprehension and decoding and word recognition.[21] In order to connect written text with the brain's language system, readers must learn to decode words, a complex skill that involves phonological knowledge (awareness of sound patterns in words) and the application of alphabetic principle (the idea that letters and groups of letters represent sounds) to read words with regular patterns. This requires phonemic awareness: readers understand that the words they hear can be broken down into smaller pieces of sound, and have an ability to manipulate those distinct sounds. When successful, students break down words into smaller groups of letters, and match those letters to familiar sounds.

The fundamental insight that groups of letters represent sounds does not typically come naturally to children.[22] It must be taught. Doing so gives students a powerful tool: instead of individually memorizing tens of thousands of words, they can decode new words as they encounter them.

At first all students struggle to decode words. Every word requires effort. With more practice, students decode the same words over and over again and begin to recognize them automatically. With time, they recognize most words automatically, and understanding the text requires less effort. Scientists see this play out on brain scans. In preschool, before students learn to read, the part of the brain associated with reading shows no activity. During the first year of reading instruction, that part of the brain flares up with a high level of activity. With a strong foundation in phonological and phonemic awareness, over time the brain repatterns itself into an efficient word recognizer, where it identifies words within 500 milliseconds and cannot help but make meaning from the text. In this automatic phase, brain scans show less-effortful activity.

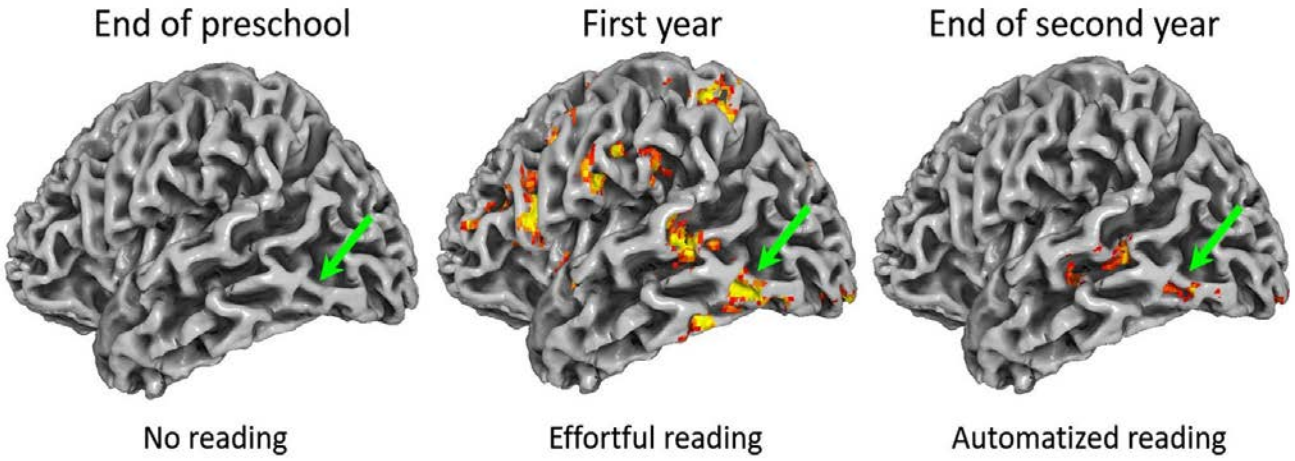

Figure 2. Reading Development in the Brain

20 Stanislas Dehaene, "Reading the Brain," Lecture, Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies, Vancouver, British Columbia, April 7, 2012.

21 Ibid.

22 Castles, A., Rastle, K., & Nation, K., "Ending the reading wars: Reading acquisition from novice to expert," Psychological Science in the Public Interest 19, No. 1 (2018): 11

Automatic word recognition creates the illusion that the brain analyses the whole word at once. That is not the case. The brain continues to analyze groups of letters, it just analyses groups of letters within the word simultaneously rather than in series.[23]

Skilled readers end up with two cognitive processes that allow them to read words: one translates letters to sounds and then to meaning, and the other goes straight from letters to meaning. These processes work in tandem to allow for optimal word processing of both familiar and new words. We learn to automatically process familiar words with little effort, and have the tools to read words we haven't seen in print before.[24]

23 Stanislas Dehaene, "Reading the Brain," Lecture, Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies, Vancouver, British Columbia, April 7, 2012.

24 Castles et al., "Ending the Reading Wars."

Barriers to Reading Proficiency in Alaska

"Our highly creative, inventive son struggled with nearly every aspect of school from the moment his formal education started. For him reading, writing and math were all difficult and, in spite of some wonderful teachers, those struggles persisted.

His teachers, who we respected and trusted, had many responses to our son's challenges. The most hurtful being that he just wasn't trying. We were told that he was lazy.

Nobody works harder than a Dyslexic student. In fifth grade Ambrose still could not read or write with any skill and he was not getting the help he needed. It was also evident that school was hurting our son. School had damaged his confidence, his love for learning and his self-esteem. The next year we decided to homeschool. By then we were convinced he had dyslexia, and traveled to Seattle for testing which confirmed it (as well as dyscalculia and dysgraphia). We searched for multi-sensory homeschool curriculum, we hired tutors, and we worked hard to give Ambrose opportunities to discover and expand his strengths. We traveled back to Seattle for intensive sessions with teachers skilled in evidence based, linguistic methods of learning.

We created a support group for other families with dyslexia, met with our school's special education director and our district's superintendent who told us that Juneau couldn't serve the 20% of its students who were dyslexic because the district couldn't afford it.

Out of desperation we asked for, and received, leave of absences from our jobs, and for a year our family lived at The Kildonan School in rural New York which has been serving dyslexic students for 50 years. There, my husband and I worked as dorm parents so Ambrose could finally get the education he deserved.

Ambrose was tested when he arrived at Kildonan for a baseline. In the spring he was tested again just before the school year ended. Testing is broken down covering 12 different skills and strategies which measure things like word identification, accuracy, fluency and comprehension, as well as spelling and mathematics. In that one school year the least he progressed in some areas was two and a half grades and the most was six and a half grade levels. Which was remarkable, but even more valuable was the fact that we watched our boy begin to shine again. He regained much of the confidence he had lost in public school and began to grow into a capable and self-assured young man.

Ambrose now reads most literature at a college level. As a high school Junior his year includes taking a combination of online, public school and college classes. He will graduate in 2020."

- Marta Lastufka

Educational Barriers

Instruction That Doesn't Align with the Science of Reading

We now have a robust scientific understanding of how to teach reading. Researchers have developed and sequenced reading instruction methods that align with cognitive reading processes. When those methods are implemented, they work. In a large study funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Development, the number of students who required ongoing special education dropped from the national average of 30% to 3%.[25] Multiple empirical studies demonstrate that even students with severe reading disabilities can achieve normal reading proficiency if provided with the appropriate intervention.[26] Every year, scientific journals publish hundreds of new research reports on reading. [27]

To this day, to the consternation of reading researchers that have witnessed remarkable advances in the field, a large gap remains between reading researchers and educators. Despite decades of robust research, best reading-instruction practices have not consistently appeared in classrooms. Surveys demonstrate that the teachers and literacy specialists responsible for teaching reading generally remain unaware of the scientific findings on reading acquisition. Undergraduate and graduate literacy textbooks often fail to draw from scientific research.[28] Most cutting-edge reading research is published in scientific journals that educators do not read or have access to, and very few publications synthesize the findings for a non-technical audience.[29]

Without the right tools and foundational knowledge, even the most talented and devoted teachers will struggle to ensure all of their students read proficiently. Teaching universities have not equipped teachers in Alaska and across the country with the science of reading.

Furthermore, division within the education community has slowed adoption of science-based reading instruction. Dubbed "Reading Wars," a rift between proponents of phonics instruction—explicitly teaching sounds and letters—and proponents of the "whole language" approach—which emphasizes that children learn to read through exposure to a literacy-rich environment—continues to divide the education community.The schism, however, does *not* exist among scientists that study reading. Thousands of studies conducted across the globe have produced a strong scientific consensus on how children learn to read, and affirm that during the early stages, systematic phonics instruction is a critical component of comprehensive reading instruction. This scientific consensus has been reaffirmed by numerous governmental reviews, including the National Reading Panel in the United States (2000), the Rose Review in the United Kingdom (2006), and a review by Australia's Department of Education, Science and Training (2005).[30] Effective teaching does not end with phonics instruction — far from it. Nor does the fact that a scientific consensus exists around many aspects of reading instruction imply that teaching reading is simple, that all questions have been answered, or that it is easy to implement evidence-based curriculum across diverse classrooms. However, the science has made clear that when teaching practices align with the neurological reading development processes, students succeed.

25 Frank Vellutino, et al., "Cognitive Profiles of Difficult-To-Remediate And Readily Remediated Poor Readers: Early Intervention as a Vehicle For Distinguishing Between Cognitive And Experiential Deficits As Basic Causes of Specific Reading Disability," Journal of Educational Psychology, 88, (1996): 601–638.
26 David Kilpatrick, Essentials of Assessing, Preventing, and Overcoming Reading Difficulties, 3.
27 Ibid., 6.
28 Ibid., 5.
29 Ibid., 6.
30 Castles, et al., "Ending the Reading Wars," 6.

What Is Evidence-Based Reading Instruction?

In 1997, Congress convened the National Reading Panel (NRP) consisting of leading scientists in reading research, representatives of teaching universities, teachers, administrators, and parents. The NRP set out to survey the existing research, and report on the most effective reading practices. The NRP report outlines several components of effective reading instruction:

- **Explicit instruction in phonemic awareness:** Phonemic awareness is the knowledge that spoken words can be broken apart into smaller segments of sounds (phonemes). In particular, children who are not read to at home benefit from explicit instruction in this area. [31]

- **Systematic Phonics instruction:** Systematic phonics instruction teaches students the relationship between letters or groups of letters (graphemes) and sounds (phonemes) in an ordered manner. This enables students to decode most written words. Though scientific consensus has established that systematic phonics instruction during initial periods of reading instruction is critical, questions remain about the best way to implement phonics instruction in the classroom.[32]

- **Methods to improve fluency:** Fluency means the ability to read quickly, accurately, and with ease. Children gain fluency through practice, with support from teachers.
  - *Guided oral reading:* The National Reading Panel found that one effective method that supports fluency in typical readers involves students reading out loud while a teacher provides assistance and feedback.[33]
  - *Orthographic mapping:* Recent research demonstrates that orthographic mapping—the mental process that students use to turn words into instantly recognizable sight words without sounding them out—is critical to developing reading fluency. Students who remember words they read become good readers, while students who do not often struggle to read.[34] Fluency coaching that neglects orthographic mapping will not ensure that every student succeeds.

- **Vocabulary:** Teaching students new words builds the foundational knowledge that allows them to make sense of texts. Vocabulary can be taught with principles of morphology, the understanding that the English language relies heavily on prefixes, suffixes, and root words with consistent meanings.

- **Reading Comprehension Strategies:** Exercises to ensure students understand what they read.

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31 National Reading Panel (U.S.). 2000. Report of the National Reading Panel: teaching children to read: an evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction : reports of the subgroups. [Washington, D.C.]: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, National Institutes of Health. https://www.nichd.nih.gov/research/supported/nrp

32 Castles et al., "Ending the Reading Wars," 14.

33 National Reading Panel, 3-3.

34 David Kilpatrick, Essentials of Assessing, Preventing, and Overcoming Reading Difficulties (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2015), 129.

Federal statute now defines these five components of reading instruction as Essential Components of Reading Instruction, and directs that reading instruction includes all five components. [35]

Additional literature reviews highlight the importance of additional components of reading instruction.[36]

- **Motivation:** Cultivating a love of reading so that a student chooses to read independently.
- **Writing:** Writing has been identified as a critical element of adolescent literacy programs because writing skills such as grammar and spelling reinforce and improve reading skills.[37]

Effective reading programs, preservice education, and professional development must include these elements explicitly, systematically, comprehensively, and at developmentally appropriate stages in reading development.[38] Understanding the science of reading allows teachers to match instruction to the cognitive needs of their students. While outlining a full reading curriculum goes beyond the scope of this report, consider how the essential components of reading instruction cognitively support reading development:

I. Teaching phonemic awareness and phonics initiates development of the brain's reading abilities, and allows students to crack the alphabetic code to decode individual words.

To read, we must train our brain to connect written language with our oral language systems. To facilitate that process, early stages of reading instruction should include explicit phonemic awareness exercises. Understanding that letters represent sounds in the English language allows students to begin decoding words. Virtually all students will require at least some assistance in making this connection.[39] Meta-analyses of reading studies demonstrate that teaching phonemic awareness significantly improves students reading abilities.[40]

Countless studies demonstrate that systematic and explicit phonics instruction builds upon that foundation, and helps students decode words. Most notably, the National Reading Panel conducted a meta-analysis comparing systematic phonics instruction to nonsystematic or no-phonics instruction and found that systematic phonics instruction improved decoding, spelling, and text comprehension. Effectiveness increased when phonics instruction began before first grade.[41]

Responding to the scientific findings, England implemented systematic phonics instruction in state funded schools nationwide. Because schools implemented the policy at different times,

35 20 U.S. Code § 6368. The statute further defines "scientifically based reading research," "reading," and "Screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based instructional reading assessments."
36 Ibid.
37 Steve Graham and Michael Hebert, "Writing to Read: Evidence for How Writing Can Improve Reading," A Carnegie Corporation Time to Act Report, 2010. https://www.carnegie.org/media/filer_public/9d/e2/9de20604-a055-42da-bc00-77da949b29d7/ccny_report_2010_writing.pdf
38 Shaywitz and Shaywitz, "Reading Disability and the Brain."
39 Castles et al., "Ending the Reading Wars," 11.
40 National Reading Panel, 2-1 – 2-9.
41 Castles et al., "Ending the Reading Wars," 11.

researchers could compare the reading abilities of students who received phonics instruction with similar students who did not. Researchers found that the policy significantly improved students' reading abilities, measurable even years later. This was even true for students prone to start school as struggling readers, either because they came from economically disadvantaged families or because they were learning English as a second language.[42]

II. Increasing reading quantity to achieve fluency and automaticity.

In order to transition from struggling to decode individual words to fluently breezing through texts, one factor stands out as fundamental — reading quantity.

Effective reading instruction makes students want to read. Reading quantity is the most important factor that determines how well a student advances from a beginning to a skilled word reader. Every word a student reads contributes to their mental database of orthographic knowledge. To achieve reading fluency, new readers benefit from seeing as many words as possible.

Effective reading instruction fosters love of reading so that students read independently. Even in classrooms where teachers try to increase exposure to written text, students who choose to read independently will retain a dramatic advantage over their peers who do not. In one study that tracked reading habits of a group of fifth graders, the students that read the most encountered more than 4 million words over the course of a year, compared to around 60,000 words encountered by those who read the least.[43]

Fostering a love of reading is easier said than done. There are no simple formulas for success, though teachers and researchers have developed some strategies:

- *Maximize the value of reading:* Children find more value in reading when they can read materials that interest them, materials that are practical, or materials that their friends are reading.

- *Make the choice to read easy:* Even if children want to read, they may want to do another activity more. Increasing the availability of desirable reading material by making it visible and accessible in classrooms and in homes may increase the frequency a student chooses to read.

III. Comprehending entire texts

Comprehension is more than the sum of decoding individual words. Reading comprehension is complicated — not a single process that any one model can explain. Rand Reading Study Group defines reading comprehension as: "the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language."[44] In practice, this involves developing a mental construct of what is described by the written material. Readers

42 Stephen Machin, Sally McNally, and Martina Viarengo, "'Teaching to teach' literacy," Centre for Economic Performance Discussion Paper No. 1425 (2016). Retrieved from http://cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download/dp1425.pdf

43 Castles et al., "Ending the Reading Wars," 26.

44 RAND, "Reading for Understanding, toward an R&D Program in Reading Comprehension" 2002.

connect information from the text to knowledge they already have to create meaning. In practice, this involves developing a mental construct of what is described by the written material. Readers connect information from the text to knowledge they already have to create meaning.

Consider the sentences:

Denise was stuck in a jam. She was worried what her boss would say.

In order to understand these sentences a reader must not only be able to read each word, but also to determine meanings of individual words specific to the context; make connections between sentences to understand that "she" refers to "Denise;" use background knowledge to infer that Denise was running late because of a *traffic* jam.[45]

Components of effective instruction that boosts reading comprehension include:

- *Teaching comprehension strategies*
  - Research shows students can quickly learn reading strategies and apply them to new texts. More research is needed to determine which strategies are best, and when in the teaching progression they should be taught.[46]

- *Build background knowledge*
  - By learning to understand and speak oral language, children learn vocabulary, grammar, and narrative skill before entering the classroom. Not all students enter school with the same foundation. Identifying students that need oral language support early on and intervening yields increased comprehension later on.
  - Not all students enter the classroom with the same vocabulary, and explicit vocabulary instruction helps provide all students with background knowledge necessary to understand texts.

45 Castles, et al., "Ending the Reading Wars," 7.
46 Ibid, 7.

Waiting To Fail: Alaska Schools Wait Too Long To Support Struggling Readers

Alaska schools do not screen all students at a young age for reading difficulties. And some districts that implement universal screeners do not follow-up with timely interventions. Rather than supporting students who show early signs of reading difficulties, schools often wait until a student's performance falls dramatically behind their classmates. This waiting for failure model runs contrary to known science of reading remediation: the earlier you intervene, the better.

Children who read below grade level in third grade rarely catch up, and 75% of children who do not read proficiently at age nine will struggle to read for the rest of their lives.[47] It is still possible for students to catch up after third grade, but that requires more timely and costly interventions than those implemented earlier. Research shows that it takes four times longer to intervene in fourth grade as it does in kindergarten.[48] Children's brains become less plastic and receptive to intervention over time, making the window for optimal intervention relatively short, before age eight.[49] Repeated failure in school often lowers a student's self-esteem, which in turn makes students less receptive to reading interventions.[50]

"75% of children who do not read proficiently at age nine will struggle to read for the rest of their lives."

When it comes to dyslexia and other language-based reading challenges, many Alaska schools fail to identify students until after the window of optimal intervention. The IDEA's Child Find Mandate requires all school districts to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities. Among the students under the highest incidence categories of Individualized Education Programs (IEP) — Specific Learning Disability (SLD), Communication, and Health — 494 are in kindergarten, 755 in second grade, and 1172 are in fifth grade.[51]

47 Kirsten Weir, "Catching Reading Problems Early," Monitor on Psychology 42, No. 4 (2011), 46.
48 Reid Lyon and J. Fletcher, "Early Warning System," Education Matters (2001), 23–29; International Dyslexia Association, Universal Screening: K–2 Reading," 2017
49 Pamala Nevills and Patricia Wolfe, Building the Reading Brain, (Thousand Oaks CA: Corwin Press, 2009).
50 J.Ron Nelson, et al., "Learner Characteristics That Influence the Treatment Effectiveness of Early Literacy Interventions: A MetaAnalytic Review," Learning Disabilities Research and Practice 18, No. 4, 255-67.
51 Department of Education and Early Development. https://educataion.alaska.gov/sped/618data

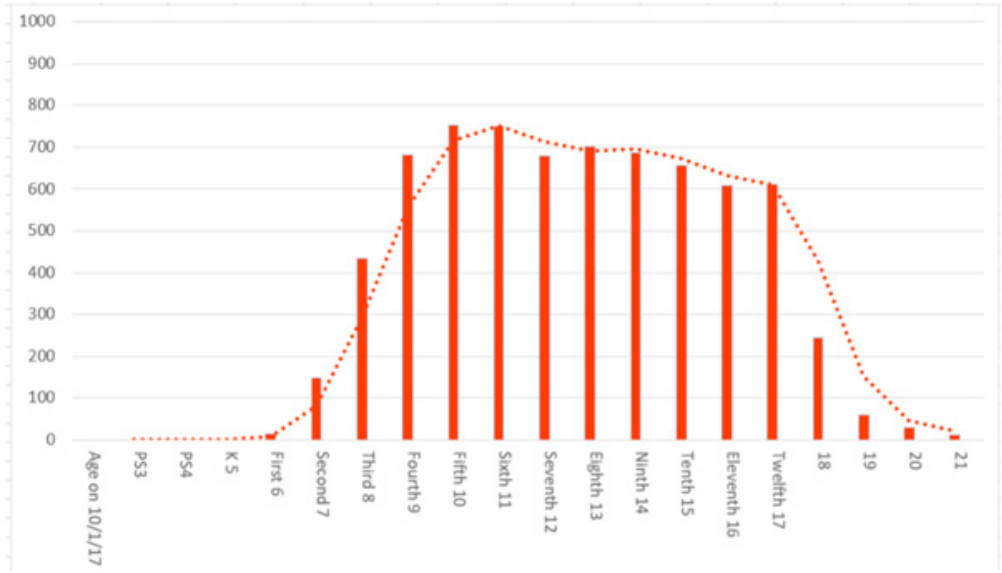

Figure 3. Alaska Students on Individual Education Programs (IEPs) for a learning disability/dyslexia by age/grade. Most Alaska students with a learning disability do not receive an IEP until after second grade.[52]

Limited Connectivity In Rural Districts

High quality general education and dyslexia intervention tools are available online at low cost. Limited and slow digital connectivity inhibits student and teacher access to these tools in most of Alaska's school districts, the vast majority of which cover rural areas.[53] Effective online intervention tools require high speed connectivity because they are data rich and provide feedback in real time. According to the 2015 Alaska Broadband Audit Report: 42% of Alaska schools do not meet the short-term E-rate benchmark of 100 Kbps per student and staff member; 93% have speeds less than 1000 Kbps per student and staff member, the long-term national connectivity goal; and school districts serving primarily Alaska Native students have the lowest capacity.[54]

Limited Data On Reading And Dyslexia

Dyslexia is not tracked by the state. Schools classify struggling readers under the broader qualifying category of Specific Learning Disability (SLD), an umbrella category that includes any disorder "in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations." Despite the name, Specific Learning Disability is far from specific, and includes subcategories that do not pertain to reading.[55]

52 Duggan, testimony, November 19, 2018
53 Stephanie Cornwell, "Smaller and more Rural District Outcomes," Testimony, Alaska Legislative Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia, October 31, 2018.
54 Connect Alaska, "Alaska School Broadband Audit Report," 2015. http://www.connectak.org/sites/default/files/connected-nation/alaska_school_broadband_audit_report_final.pdf
55 Individuals with Disabilities Act

For two years, the Department of Education and Early Development provided districts funding to implement a literacy screener to students. Districts chose from five screeners: NWEA MAP, DIBELS, AimsWeb, easyCBM, and STAR. Because the state collected data from five distinct screeners, and the state only collected one year of screener data, it was not possible to draw any conclusions about the state of reading proficiency in Alaska.[56]

The state PEAKS assessment measures English Language Arts performance of students, which is broader and less precise than reading. The state does not report broken down scores that show reading proficiency levels.

The national NAEP assessment does include reading measurements, and is the primary mechanism for evaluating how Alaska's performance compares to that of other states.

High Turnover Rates

Alaska schools experience a high rate of teacher turnover. Between 2004 and 2014, turnover averaged 20% per year in rural districts—well above the national average of eight percent. Twelve districts experienced rates higher than 30%.[57] Turnover rates affect student learning and challenge districts. Some urban districts like Anchorage experience less teacher turnover, but considerable student turnover or mobility within the district. These students can miss out on vital curriculum when wide variations in reading instruction exists between schools.

56 Department of Education and Early Development, Testimony, Alaska Legislative Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia, October 31, 2018.

57 Dayna Jean DeFeo et al., "The Cost of Teacher Turnover in Alaska," Institute of Social and Economic Research, March 31, 2017.

Socioeconomic Barriers

Young Alaskans do not enter kindergarten on a level playing field. The fortunate ones show up to school healthy, nourished, with foundational language skills, and with basic behavioral skills that let them focus on learning. Through no fault of their own, many young Alaskans do not show up to kindergarten ready to learn for a variety of reasons. Research has also shown that despite socioeconomic barriers, when students receive early and effective intervention, all students can succeed.

Prenatal Health

Problems may begin at birth or even earlier. Prenatal exposure to cigarette smoke, alcohol and other drugs can cause premature birth and long-lasting impairments to the child's cognitive and behavioral development.[58] Babies born with low birth weights grow up at risk for neurodevelopmental problems, behavioral problems, and attention deficit problems such as ADHD that interfere with learning to read.[59]

Language Exposure at Home

The rate at which children acquire vocabulary and oral language skills before entering school depends on exposure to literacy experiences at home. Not all young Alaskans get the same learning opportunities. Research shows that preschoolers whose parents read to them become better readers. Time and money are scarce in low income families, and children in those families on average begin falling behind due to reduced language exposure. Nationally, a typical middle-income neighborhood boasts more than a dozen books per child, while in low income neighborhoods that ratio is closer to one book for every three hundred children.[60] Children in low income families engage in less conversation, and typically hear simpler vocabulary. By age three, children from low income families have typically heard millions fewer words than their peers in wealthier households.[61] More research is needed to establish the causal links between the home literacy environment and reading aptitude. The quality of a child's language experience may matter more than quantity. Emerging research shows that the number of conversational turns has a more significant impact on a child's language development than the number of words they hear. Talking *with* a child is likely more important that talking *to* a child.[62] Regardless of cause, the effect has been well-documented: students from low income families typically enter kindergarten with one-fourth the vocabulary of their classmates, over a year behind in developing language and pre-reading skills.

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58 Anne Case and Christina Paxson, "Children's Health and Social Mobility," Future Child Fall 16, No. 2 (2006) 151-73. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17036550

59 Ibid.

60 Susan B Neuman and David K. Dickinson, ed. Handbook of Early Literacy Research, Volume 2. New York, NY: 2006.

61 Betty Hart and Todd Risley, "The Early Catastrophe: The 30 Million Word Gap," American Educator 27, No. 1, 2003: 4–9.

62 Rachel Romeo et al., "Beyond the 30-Million-Word Gap: Children's Conversational Exposure Is Associated With Language-Related Brain Function," Psychological Science 29, No. 5 (2018): 700-710. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5945324/

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Too many Alaska children experience trauma, which significantly inhibits their ability to learn. While exposure to some adversity during childhood is normal, sustained and repeated exposure to significant stress without supportive relationships rewires children's brains and impairs cognitive development. These Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are common in Alaska: two in three Alaska children live through traumatic experiences.[63] Hundreds of studies show that ACEs can negatively impact individuals long after childhood in almost every facet of life: individuals with four or more ACEs are twelve times more likely to attempt suicide; ten times as likely to use injection drugs; seven times as likely to be an alcoholic; three times more likely to earn less than $20,000 annually; two times as likely to drop out of high school; and twice as likely to have health challenges such as heart disease, stroke, cancer, and diabetes than their peers.[64]

Trauma inhibits many students from achieving their full academic potential, including achieving reading proficiency. Children who experience ACEs are more likely to demonstrate poor literacy skills, attention and social problems, more aggressive behavior.[65]

Outcomes	0 ACEs	4 or more ACEs	Increase from those with 0 to 4+ ACEs
Learning Disabilities	6.2%	23%	3.6 times greater
Attention Deficit Disorder	4.7%	21%	4.5 times greater
Individual Education Plan	7%	27%	3.8 times greater
Repeated a Grade	2.9%	16%	5.4 times greater

Figure 4. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Incidences Among Alaskan Students and Select Outcomes (National Survey of Children's Health)

Social and Emotional Skills

Learning in school requires a foundation of social and emotional skills. Not all Alaska children develop those skills by the time they enter school. In addition to cognitive skills, successful students can manage emotions, follow directions, take turns, share, take responsibility, work independently and cooperatively, stay on task, and have foundational executive function — the ability to control oneself, plan, learn rules and act appropriately to the situation. Children who have a strong foundation in these skills tend to develop higher literacy skills.[66]

63 Alaska Division of Public Health, "2014-2015 Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System," "Alaska Division of Public Health & Centers for Disease Control

64 Alaska Children's Trust, Adverse Childhood Experiences in Alaska, A McDowell Report prepared for the Alaska Children's Trust, https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58e7e4676a496342ee566554/t/5916aabd2994ca3bd87a4b49/1494657727757/ACTAdverseWEB.pdf; DEED, "Transforming Schools: A Framework for Trauma-Engaged Schools," (2019).https://education.alaska.gov/tls/safeschools/pdf/transforming-schools.pdf

65 Manuel Jimenez et al., "Adverse Experiences in Early Childhood and Kindergarten Outcomes," Pediatrics 137, No. 2 (2015). http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/early/2016/01/13/peds.2015-1839.full.pdf

66 Annie E Casey Foundation, "Early Warning."

Challenges for English Language Learners

Limited English fluency amplifies the challenges associated with learning to read English. English Language Learners (ELL) often lack background knowledge critical to understanding a text. Idioms, figurative language, dialects can all add confusion. Assuming that all of their reading challenges derive from their ELL status, schools often diagnose English Language Learners with learning disabilities two to three years later than their native English-speaking peers. Older ELL students may face the opposite problem: a misdiagnosis with a disability when the problem stems from a lack of English fluency.[67]

67 Grace Tatter, "English Learners and Reading Challenges," Usable Knowledge, Harvard Graduate School of Education, October 19, 2018.

Neurological Barrier: Dyslexia

Overview Of Dyslexia

Dyslexia makes reading acquisition challenging for up to one in five students. Dyslexia and other language-based difficulties are some of the most significant factors inhibiting reading proficiency in classrooms, yet remain poorly understood and often ignored. *Dyslexia affects up to 20% of the population, including 80-90% of students with identified learning disabilities, and has been uncoupled from IQ.*[68]

Simply put, "dyslexia is an unexpected difficulty in [word level] reading for an individual who has the intelligence to be a much better reader."[69] The common misconception that dyslexia involves mixing up letters, or confusing letters like b and d, is inaccurate. Individuals with dyslexia have trouble breaking down words into smaller units, and attempts to do so feel mentally exhausting. Often, dyslexia comes with emotional consequences as well: children with dyslexia often feel broken, less smart than their peers, or worry that others will think less of them.[70]

The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) defines dyslexia as follows:

> *"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."*[71]

The IDA definition has become widely accepted and adopted by policy makers across the country. It is helpful to consider each component of the definition:

- *Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin.*

  The Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) lists dyslexia as one of the qualifying conditions under the special education eligibility category Specific Learning Disability (SLD).

  The root cause of dyslexia is not poor instruction, lack of motivation, or inadequate exposure to books at home—dyslexia originates in the brain. The specific cause of dyslexia is not known,

68 Emilio Ferrer et al., "Uncoupling of reading and IQ over time: empirical evidence for a definition of dyslexia," Psychological Science, No. 21 (2010): 93–101; Sally Shaywitz et al., "Issues in the definition and classification of attention disorder," Topics in Language Disorders 14, No. 4 (1994): 1–25; Karen Peart, "Closing the Dyslexia Achievement Gap," Yale News, 2015. https://news.yale.edu/2015/11/03/closing-dyslexia-achievementgaphttp://dyslexia.yale.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/YCDC-Guide-to-Talking-AboutDyslexia_Final032017.pdf; Emilio Ferrer, et al., "Uncoupling of Reading and IQ Over Time: Empirical Evidence for a Definition of Dyslexia," Psychological Science 21, No. 1 (2010): 93–101.

69 "Understanding Dyslexia," Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity. http://dyslexia.yale.edu/wpcontent/uploads/2017/08/YCDC_Dyslexia_one_pager_final.pdf

70 Gabrielle Emanuel, "Millions Have Dyslexia, Few Understand It," NPR, November 28, 2016. https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2016/11/28/502601662/millions-have-dyslexia-few-understand-it

71 International Dyslexia Association, "Definition of Dyslexia," https://dyslexiaida.org/definition-of-dyslexia/

but brain imaging studies show differences in brain activity in individuals with dyslexia—differences that exist before the child receives any formal reading instruction.[72] Dyslexia is genetic: one fourth to one half of children who have a parent with dyslexia also have the disorder.[73]

- *It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities.*

  Although some students with dyslexia can show a variety of speech and language problems prior to entering the formal school environment, their problems become very noticeable once they try to learn to read.[74] They struggle to acquire accurate and/or fluent decoding and encoding skills, which interferes with their ability to recognize words automatically, read text independently, and spell words correctly.[75]

- *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.*

  Students with dyslexia struggle to connect letters with corresponding sounds, an issue that typically stems from challenges with phonological awareness — the ability to recognize and manipulating individual sounds in words. Dyslexic students consequently struggle to read fluently, spell, and often learn a second language.

  A dyslexic student's struggle to read has nothing to do with the student's intelligence; on the contrary, a key indicator of dyslexia is difficulty reading when an individual has the intelligence to be a much better reader.[76]

- *Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.*

  Discouraged, dyslexic students often try to avoid reading. This compounds the underlying problem because students who read more hone their reading abilities and build vocabulary more quickly than those who do not. Without intervention, dyslexic students often fall further and further behind their peers.

The brain activity of dyslexic students looks different from that of typical readers, and thus can be differentiated from students with reading struggles due to other issues. The visual word form area and areas dedicated to pronunciation and meaning all are in the left hemisphere of the brain. Though the cause of the problem remains uncertain, dyslexic brains have trouble making the connections between these parts of the brain. Brain scans show that when dyslexic students try to read, those important brain areas in the left hemisphere of the brain show less activity.

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72 Elizabeth Norton et al., "Neurobiology of Dyslexia," Current Opinion in Neurobiology 30 (2015): 73-78. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4293303/

73 Sally Shaywitz and Bennett Shaywitz, "Reading Disability and the Brain," Educational Leadership 61, No. 6 (2004): 6-11. http://www.educationalleader.com/subtopicintro/read/ASCD/ASCD_323_1.pdf

74 Hugh Catts & Alan Kahmi, Language and Reading Disabilities, (Pearson, 2005).

75 "The New Jersey Dyslexia Handbook: A Guide to Early Literacy Development and Reading Struggles," September 2017, http://www.akleg.gov/basis/get_documents.asp?session=30&docid=57064.

76 The Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity, "What is Dyslexia." https://dyslexia.yale.edu/dyslexia/what-isdyslexia/

Instead, they compensate by using a different area of the brain altogether: a section of the right hemisphere of the brain that deals with space and patterns, not speech. These students learn to recognize words as they would recognize an image. Instead of sounding out printed text, they memorize words as visual symbols, just like one might learn to associate a square under a triangle with the word "house."

Individuals do not outgrow dyslexia. It is a persistent and chronic condition. Without the proper amount and type of instruction, dyslexic students will struggle to become fluent readers. However, with early identification and the right instruction, almost all dyslexic children can learn to read fluently. Research shows that when provided with high quality instruction at an early age, dyslexic brains repattern themselves to look like typical reading brains.[77]

77 Elizabeth Huber, et al, "Rapid and widespread white matter plasticity during an intensive reading intervention," Nature Communications 9, No 1, (2018).

Previous & Current Reading Initiatives in Alaska

Statewide Initiatives

Alaska Reading First program, 2003-2009

In 2003, the State of Alaska received a federal grant to launch a six-year literacy pilot initiative: The Alaska Reading First program. The program sought to improve K-3 reading instruction so that all students read at grade level by third grade. 14 schools participated, and used program funds to select and implement a core reading program; hiring a full-time reading coach; creating a Reading Leadership Team to guide program implementation; professional development; student assessments; screening for students who need intensive instruction, and providing targeted intervention. The program produced qualified positive outcomes. All grades dramatically improved from baseline performance between 2004 and 2008, but the progress was uneven: while the third grade showed consistent year over year growth (from 39% proficient to 52% proficient), all other grades showed plateaus in progress after their first or second year of implementation.[78]

Alaska's Education Challenge, In Progress

Spearheaded by the Department of Education and Early Development in 2017, Alaska's Education Challenge brought together administrators, educators, parents, lawmakers, and other education stakeholders to meet the challenge of improving Alaska's education system. The first priority identified by the department is to ensure Alaska students read at grade level by third grade.

Recent Legislation

In 2018, the State enacted SB 104, which seeks to establish evidence-based curriculum across the state. The law provides DEED with two content specialists and a support person, and tasked the department with identifying the best ELA and math curriculum, then run pilot programs in rural and urban districts. The department will provide training to the districts on how to implement the curriculum.

District-Level Reading Initiatives

In the last decade, many districts have initiated system changes to improve student reading outcomes. Compared to 2005, more districts use reliable and valid universal screeners; more use research-based reading materials in classrooms; and more have begun implementing a MultiTiered System of Support(MTSS) or Response to Intervention/Instruction (RTI) process systemwide. For the most part, the implementation of RTI/MTSS is in early stages—most districts reported that implementation is currently in the development or operationalization phase.[79]

Some districts with mature reading programs have shown considerable success:

78 Northwest Regional Educational Lab, "Alaska Reading First: Annual Evaluation Report 2007-2008," June 2008. http://www.akleg.gov/basis/get_documents.asp?session=30&docid=57015

79 Lisa Parady, Testimony, Alaska Legislative Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia, November 26, 2018.

The Matanuska Susitna Borough School District

The Mat-Su school district is larger than West Virginia and home to over 19,000 students, consisting of 47 schools with enrollments ranging between 20 and 1300 students.

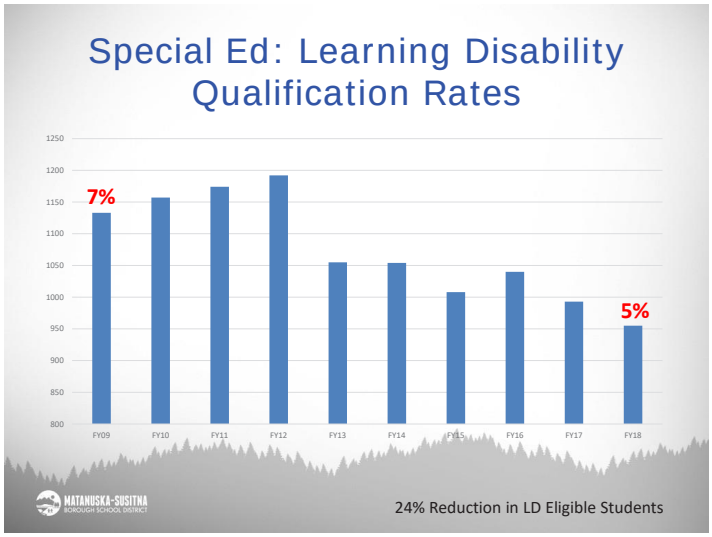
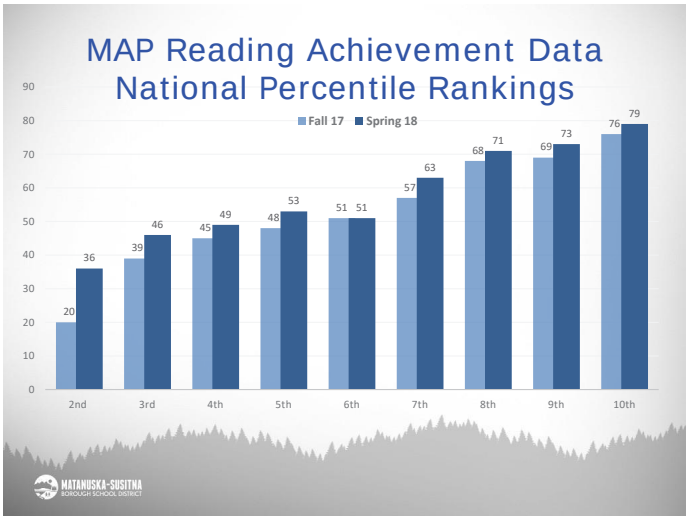


Figure 5.1

In 2005, the district adopted a Pyramids of Support system in middle schools. That system evolved into a multi-tiered RTI approach in 2008, and standardized curriculum across the district with evidence-based reading materials.

Curriculum requirements include: explicit instruction in phonemic awareness, systematic phonics instruction, methods to improve fluency and oral reading, vocabulary, and comprehension.

The district found that progress does not happen overnight, but is possible. It took 10 years to get sustained improvement across the district. Now, at a 51% proficiency rate, the district outperforms the rest of the state's average 42% proficiency in the PEAKs English Language Arts Assessment. The district has seen a 24% reduction in learning disability qualification rates, and a graduation rate that increased from 70% to 83% since 2010.[80]



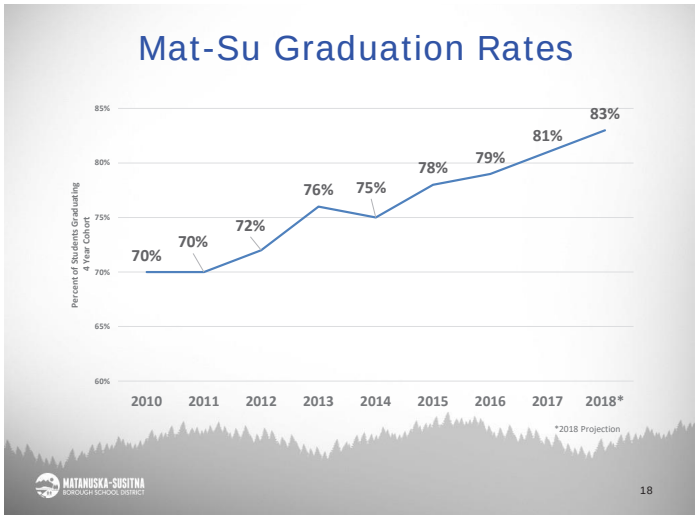


Figure 5.2

80 Donna Dearman, Testimony, Alaska Legislative Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia, October 22, 2018.

Dyslexia intervention in Craig, Klawock, Hydaburg, and Annette Island

Through a U.S. Department of Education grant, four rural Southeast Alaska districts participated in the STRIVE project, a remedial reading program targeting dyslexia. The districts adopted research-based, multi-sensory, and culturally appropriate practices to enhance relationships among and across generations. During the 2008-2009 school year, the 42 program participants on average showed a two grade level improvement over the course of only seven months.[81]

Since first receiving funding in 2006, the program expanded: of the 777 students enrolled in the four districts in 2014, 307 participated in the program — 39.5% of students. Grant funding was in place until 2018, though three of the four school districts continue to have a dyslexia program.

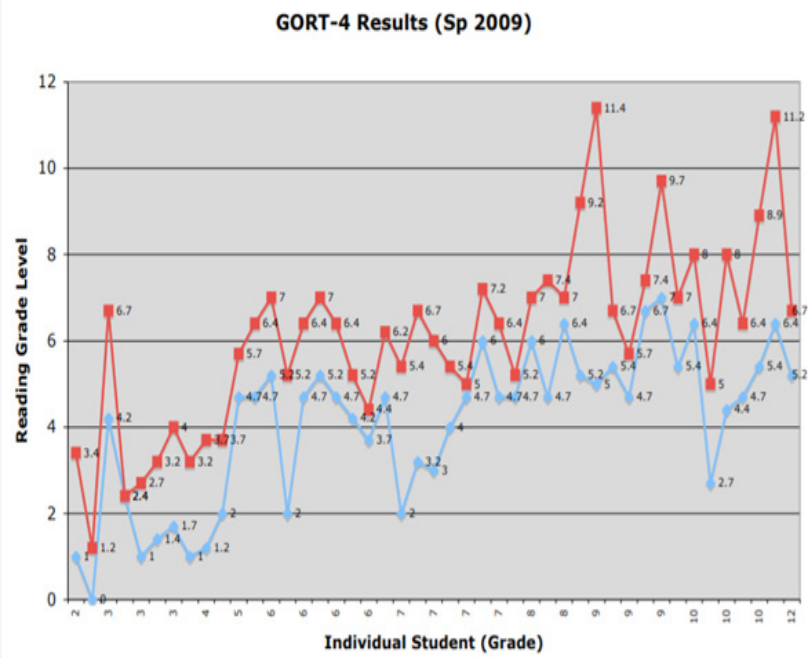


Figure 6. Each dot represents a student's score on the GORT-4 reading assessment. The blue dots represent scores from the fall 2008 assessment, and the red dots represent the spring 2009 assessment results.

81 Camille Booth, Testimony, Alaska Legislative Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia, October 22, 2018

Other states have addressed dyslexia head on and improved student reading outcomes.

While Alaska's reading proficiency scores have remained stagnant over the last decade, some 80 percent of other states show improved reading scores. In some of those states, the improvement has been dramatic. North Carolina, Maryland and Florida stand out as states that have implemented reform with positive outcomes. Very few states are doing nothing because the science is prevalent and the need for action is strong. Dyslexia legislation was the number one education-related legislation across the country in 2018, with 33 bills introduced nationally between January and March. As of March 2018, 42 states had dyslexia laws on the books, up from only 22 in 2013. Most states updated their education codes to clearly define dyslexia and provide guidance to districts on identifying the condition and providing evidence-based interventions. Ten states created a dyslexia handbook, which provide guidance to districts, educators, and parents on responding to dyslexia.[82]

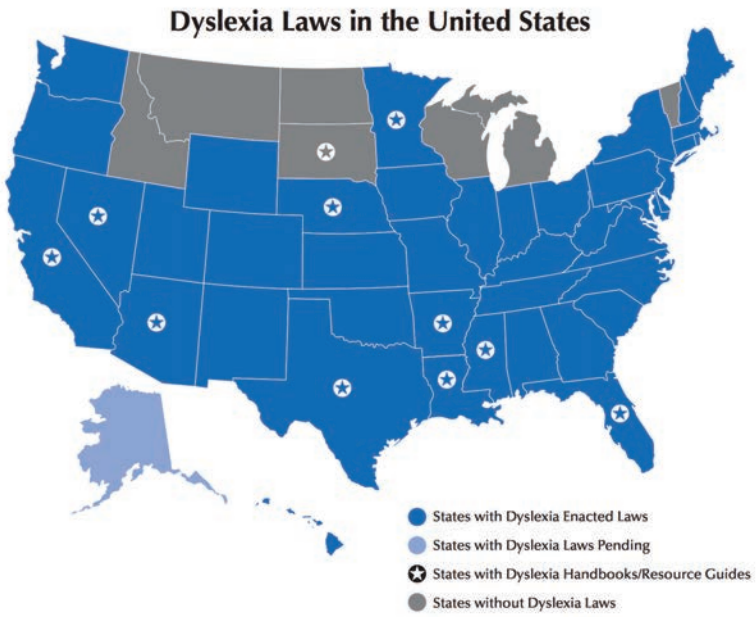


Figure 7. Dyslexia Laws in the United States

The recent dyslexia legislation passed in other states generally falls under the following categories:

Raising Awareness
States defined dyslexia more precisely in statute, often based on International Dyslexia Association guidelines.[83] The definitions focus on the neurological origin of dyslexia, in contrast to the unspecific definition in the IDEA. States also issued memos to encourage district personnel to talk explicitly about dyslexia.[84] All 42 states with dyslexia laws encourage the use of the term dyslexia.

Early screening and intervention
Today, 18 states have implemented universal screening for dyslexia, or are expanding completed pilot programs into universal ones.[85] That's up from only two states with universal screening for dyslexia in 2013. Oregon's SB 1003 (2017) mandates that schools screen all children for risk factors of dyslexia upon enrolling in school for the first time, whether that's kindergarten or first grade. Others states go beyond the initial screening and emphasize the importance of continuous progress

82 Martha Youman and Nancy Mather, "Dyslexia Laws in the USA: A 2018 Update," Perspectives on Language and Literacy, Spring 2018.
83 For example, See MA HB 330 (2017)
84 California Department of Education, "California Dyslexia Guidelines," 2017. https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/ac/documents/cadyslexiaguidelines.pdf
85 Decoding Dyslexia Maryland "Overview of State Reading Screening Requirements, Practices and Research," 2017. http://www.akleg.gov/basis/get_documents.asp?session=30&docid=57024

monitoring.[86] Despite the growth of universal screening, many states still do not have guidelines in place to best assist students with dyslexia once they are identified.

Teacher training

Many states have focused on training teachers to recognize dyslexia, in order to ensure appropriate screening and effective interventions. Some require all special education teachers to take dyslexia training.[87] Some also require that each district appoint a dyslexia specialist to solely work on supporting students with dyslexia. Eleven states require prospective elementary and special education teachers to pass a test about the science of reading in order to receive a teaching certification.[88]

Provision of intervention/accommodations

Some states have mandated that districts implement evidence-based dyslexia interventions. Utah's SB 117 (2015) created a pilot program to provide interventions for students at risk for or experiencing reading difficulties, including dyslexia, and resulted in improved reading outcomes. Other states have made efforts to accommodate the learning of dyslexic students, including disseminating information about the use of assistive technology.

Overall rights

States have passed a variety of laws to protect individuals with dyslexia, including: not requiring students with dyslexia to take college entrance exams; preventing employers from discriminating against individuals with dyslexia; and preventing retention if the student has been diagnosed or is being evaluated for dyslexia. Moving forward begins with rejecting complacency with the status quo. To progress, we must set a higher bar for ourselves. Virtually all Alaska students are capable of learning to read. Anything short of that represents our collective failure—not the failure of students. The State of Alaska, school districts, teachers, parents must commit to reach this achievable goal: Alaska students learn to read proficiently by the end of third grade.

86 Arkansas Dyslexia Resource Guide, 2016. http://www.arkansased.gov/public/userfiles/Learning_Services/Dyslexia/DRG-Final-12-13-17-JS1.pdf

87 CT HB 7254 (2017)

88 National Council on Teacher Quality, "Strengthening Reading Instruction through Better Preparation of Elementary and Special Education Teachers," August 2018, 1. https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/Strengthening_Reading_Instruction_Databurst

Testimonials: Progress is Possible

The State of Arkansas passed multiple laws designed to move the state away from balanced literacy/whole language instruction to science-based reading instruction. The Reading Initiative for Student Excellence (RISE) has resulted in colleges of education reconfiguring their curriculum, and the state Department of Education retraining current teachers.

At first, the reform was met with considerable resistance by teachers and other education stakeholders. But then, it started to work. Teachers could see the results. Here's what some Arkansas teachers and administrators have to say about the new reading curriculum now:

I am a Dyslexia Coordinator for a charter school system in Arkansas. I have a BSE in both Elementary Ed. and Special Ed. and a M. Ed. in Special Ed. All along, I was taught to "follow the Teacher's Guide and cover the Standards" in order to teach kids to read. But it wasn't working. I knew my Resource students were smart, but had zero strategies to decode words, so I began to supplement with some phonics. It helped minimally and I was always searching to find something that would help my students read. After Arkansas passed their first Dyslexia Law in 2013, I thought, "Huh, what is that all about?" Shortly after, I attended a Dyslexia presentation by Susan Barton. That was my "Ah-ha" moment. I finally realized what my students were missing and needed in order to learn how to read! I went back to school again to learn about the Science of Reading and received my Dyslexia Endorsement. I have spent thousands of dollars to educate myself and purchase my own materials, of which I'm not sorry. My one true regret is that I didn't know earlier what I know now and the negative effect it had on SO many children.

– Patricia James

I love that the Science of Reading provides me with a systematic approach that allows every student in my class to experience success. I have seen it help all learners, from those who struggle most, to those who need enrichment. As a teacher, I have learned that addressing all of the components of the Science of Reading (phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension builds strong, confident readers and writers.

– Lisa Henry

Going through the Science of Reading training has created a ripple effect throughout our school building. Our teachers have become very diagnostic during our conversations about kids. They come to grade level meetings with arms full of data which pinpoint exactly what students can and cannot do. Our conversations are about meeting our students where they are and pushing them on to the next level. We are constantly analyzing our schedules, lessons and activities to make sure that what we are having students do is based in the Science of Reading. Teachers have had to shift their thinking from a mindset of "I am the expert" to "Maybe I need to think about this differently." We are shifting our building culture so teachers are more comfortable being observed by other teachers and visiting other classrooms. One thing that we keep at the front of our minds is that this is a journey. We will not fix things overnight but we are on the right track to closing the reading gap, one student at a time.

— Bonnie Bedford

LOVE RISE- it has completely changed our school K-5. We went all in the first year and our results are so exciting. If you want to talk to a staff who has bought in 100%, come visit us! Seriously, if you are ever near Van Buren, please come see us. It will make you know for sure that what you are doing is making a difference in the lives of children. Thanks so much for being out front leading the way!

— Mary McCutchen, Principal

As an Interventionist, I serve the students who suffer most when schools don't give their students insight into the code. These are students with characteristics of dyslexia. They have an especially hard time understanding the relationship between sounds and letters. Now that the Science of Reading instruction is being embedded into Tiers 1, 2 and 3, the success these students are experiencing is encouraging and inspiring. Giving these students the tools they need to decode words is life-changing for them. Becoming a reader will change the course of a child's life, and I am honored and blessed to be a small part of helping children learn to read.

– Lesley Morse

I graduated from college in 2015 with my BS in Early Childhood Education. It wasn't until I was teaching in the classroom that I ever heard the words "phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, and fluency". I felt completely overwhelmed during my first year of teaching because I could not effectively implement what was needed due to lack of knowledge! I currently use a science of reading curriculum with my students who receive intervention for characteristics of dyslexia. I have really enjoyed seeing the growth my students make with letter formations as well as letter/sound connections. They are learning to segment, blend, decode, and encode with this program. What I love is how they practice Jailbird rule-breaker words and sounds in a multisensory sequence. Their learning is carrying over into their general education classroom, while improving their self-confidence. My ah-ha moment was when parents noticed and commented about the difference in their child's schoolwork coming home and the sense of pride they felt about being smart! I'm so thankful to be using Connection to cultivate strong, successful readers.

— Kelsie King, Dyslexia Interventionistformations as well as letter/sound connections

To progress, we must set a higher bar for ourselves. Virtually all Alaska students are capable of learning to read. Anything short of that represents our collective failure — not the failure of students. The State of Alaska, school districts, teachers, parents must commit to reach this achievable goal: Alaska students learn to read proficiently by the end of third grade.

A. Evidence-Based Reading Instruction Grounded in the Science of Reading Allows All Students to Succeed.

Good reading instruction is good reading instruction. While every student is different, evidence-based reading instruction benefits students with dyslexia, students from every socioeconomic background, English Language Learners, and it helps typical readers become even better ones. What differs among students is the dosage of instruction needed to achieve reading proficiency.[89]

Many challenges associated with dyslexia and other language-based difficulties can be overcome with effective instruction.

A very few high-aptitude children will learn from almost any instructional method. A majority of students will require systematic, comprehensive evidence-based reading instruction. Without intensive, evidence-based, systematic instruction, children with dyslexia will struggle to read, potentially for the rest of their lives. No matter the students' IQ, socioeconomic status, or race, all students benefit from effective, evidence-based reading instruction.[90]

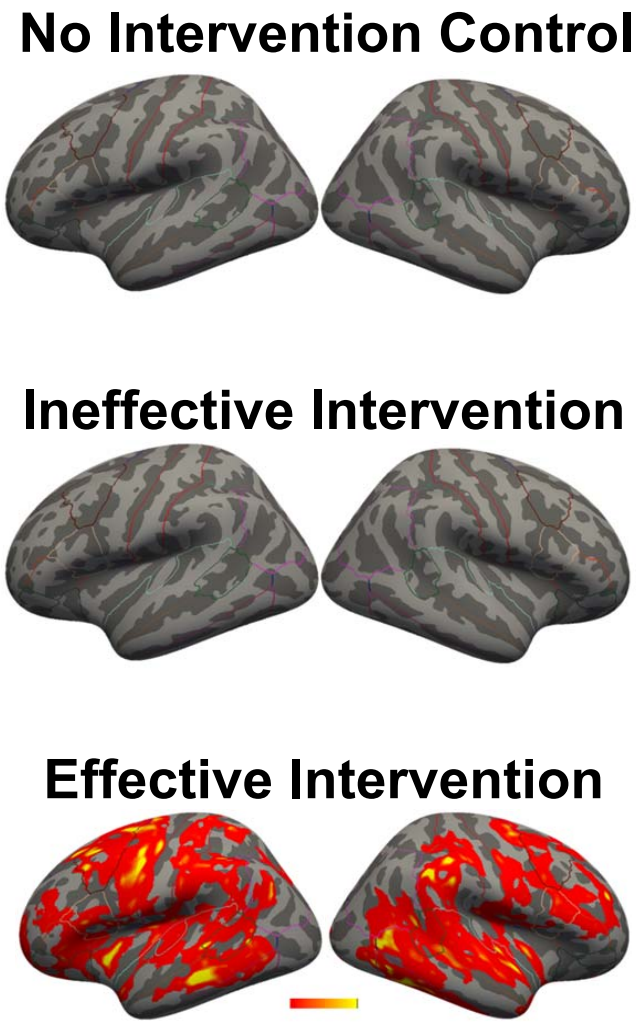


Figure 8. Effective instruction helps rewire the dyslexic brain so that the child can read.[91]

89 Posie Boggs, Testimony before the Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia, October 22, 2018.
90 Robin Morris, et al., Multiple-Component Remediation for Developmental Reading Disabilities: IQ, Socioeconomic Status, and Race as Factors in Remedial Outcome," Journal of Learning Disabilities 45, NO. 2, (May 2010).
91 John Gabrieli, Professor of Health Sciences and Technology and Cognitive Neuroscience, MIT, Testimony before the Massachusetts Joint Committee on Education, http://www.akleg.gov/basis/get_documents.asp?session=30&docid=57058.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) should develop a statewide reading plan that is rigorous, evidence based, and based on the science of reading. The reading plan should include all of the Essential Components of Reading Instruction, as defined in federal statute: explicit instruction in phonemic awareness, systematic phonics instruction, methods to improve fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension strategies.
  - DEED should develop such a plan utilizing the funding and structures established by SB 104 (30th Legislature).
  - The reading plan should include an implementation plan that is unique to each district.
  - The reading plan should provide guidance to districts on best practices for teaching reading to students with dyslexia.
  - Successful implementation of effective reading curriculum will give teachers more tools and knowledge, and allow them to use their judgement and discretion in applying those tools.

- Districts should retain knowledgeable reading specialists who demonstrate competency in evidenced-based reading assessment and instruction on a national certification exam such as the Advanced MTEL Reading Specialists exam, or by certification by the Center for Effective Reading Instruction.

- The State and districts must be discerning consumers of curriculum. Many English Language Arts curricula use deceptive marketing to brand themselves as evidence-based, but lack core components of reading instruction. DEED should make information available to districts to help them vet reading curriculum.

B. Early Detection of At-Risk Readers and Rapid Intervention

> *"If the persistent achievement gap between dyslexic and typical readers is to be narrowed, or even closed, reading interventions must be implemented early, when children are still developing the basic foundation for reading acquisition."*
>
> — Emilio Ferrer, UC Davis psychology professor and dyslexia researcher

Dyslexic students, English language learners, and other struggling readers fall behind at a young age, and the gap persists or widens over time. If we identify at risk readers at an early age and provide them with evidence-based reading interventions, those students succeed.

When it comes to reading, success begets success. Students who enter kindergarten with a strong base vocabulary and strong phonemic awareness are well positioned to learn the alphabetic system. These students have the requisite tools to connect spelling with sound, and they progress to become independent readers. Students who can read independently can develop a love for reading, which in turn leads to more reading.[92]

92 Kerry Hempstall, "What are These Matthew Effects?" National Institute for Direct Instruction, https://www.nifdi.org/news-latest-2/blog-hempenstall/399-what-are-these-matthew-effects

Early obstacles, on the other hand, often create downward spirals. Students who enter kindergarten with limited vocabulary knowledge fall farther and farther behind. Students learning English enter school with a smaller vocabulary. As early as first grade, dyslexic students have lower reading scores. Without proper instruction and intervention, they never catch up.[93] Cognitively, children require exponentially more intense remediation to achieve positive outcomes as they age.[94]

One study conducted by neuroscientists from MIT and Harvard Medical School screened nearly 1500 children as they entered kindergarten, and tracked children's reading progress through second grade. They found that the screening results from the beginning of kindergarten predicted reading ability at the end of second grade.[95]

Early intervention is more effective, requires less time, and it's cheaper than lengthier interventions later in life. Districts spend more money on remediation from fourth grade onwards, even though intervention is more effective earlier.[96]

Implementing effective reading programs as early as kindergarten or even preschool offers the potential to close the achievement gap for all students. This is particularly true for students with dyslexia. Signs of dyslexia begin to show up as early as four or five. Screening students in key phonological processing skills can identify students who will likely struggle to read, and who may later be formally diagnosed with dyslexia.[97] Screening tools are low cost and require just minutes to administer.[98]

Early intervention works. A meta-analysis of 22 studies showed that brain abnormalities typical of dyslexia were normalized through evidence-based early interventions.[99] These data are consistent with prior reports of the general lack of substantial improvement in reading if interventions are delayed until after the first grade.[100]

"In 4th grade, students need two hours of instructional time to make the same gains as made in 30 minutes of instruction time in Kindergarten."

Joseph Torgesen, 2004

93 Emilio Ferrer et al., "Achievement Gap in Reading is Present as Early as First Grade and Persists Through Adolescence," Journal of Pediatrics 167, No. 5 (2015): 1121-1125.
94 Emerson Dickman "A Process to Bridge the Gap from Evidence-Based Policy to Practice," Perspectives on Language and Literacy 44, No. 4 (Fall 2018): 27-32.
95 Gabrieli, Testimony.
96 Dr. Vincent Alfonso, "We Need Universal Screening for Early Childhood Development," Interview, November 2, 2018. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=64eCpKc03Po&feature=youtu.be.
97 Duggan, Testimony, November 19, 2018.
98 C. Leitão et al., "The Effectiveness of a classroom-based phonological awareness program for 4-5 year olds," International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology 21, No. 1 (2019): 1-13.
99 Duggan, Testimony, November 19, 2018.
100 Joseph Torgesen, "Lessons learned from research on interventions for students who have difficulty learning to read," in The Voice of Evidence In Reading Research, ed. P. McCardle and V. Chhabra (Baltimore, MD: Brookes, 2004), 355–382.

Some within the school system are reluctant to intervene early barring a formal medical diagnosis of dyslexia or serious academic underperformance. But identifying students that are at risk is distinct from giving diagnosis, and sufficient to start providing additional support. Teachers and specialists need to have the tools to screen for reading difficulties early and provide immediate intervention as needed.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Child Find section mandates that districts identify students with disabilities, including dyslexia. Districts should implement universal screening for all students to identify at-risk readers, beginning when children first enter school in kindergarten or first grade, or transfer from another school, using a systems-based approach to screening, identification, and intervention for struggling readers.
  - At ages four and five, districts should screen for pre-literacy language processing skills, phonological processing, phonemic awareness and rapid automatized naming.
  - At age six, schools should add screening for letter sound knowledge.
- Students determined to be at risk of reading failure should receive immediate support at the appropriate level.

C. Increase School-Readiness Through Early Intervention

Most of a child's brain development happens before the age of three. By the time students enter kindergarten, varying socioeconomic factors already introduce a performance gap that only grows over time. The most effective interventions begin early, and prevent the gap from forming in the first place. Currently new parents and young children are served by a patchwork of services, and many families fall through the cracks.

High-quality pre-K can provide a foundation for reading development. A significant body of research now finds positive effects of pre-K participation on reading development. Across the country, publicly funded pre-K programs have been delivered at scale to thousands of students, with positive outcomes[101]:

- In Georgia, public pre-K improved early reading skills, including phonemic awareness, letter-word identification, and letter knowledge.[102]
- In West Virginia and Arkansas, pre-K increased students vocabulary growth by 30%, and more than doubled print concept comprehension.[103]
- In New Mexico, participation in pre-K resulted in improvement in children's vocabulary, phonological awareness, and understanding of print concepts.[104]

101 Business Roundtable, "Why Reading Matters – and What to Do About It: A CEO Action Plan to Support Improved U.S. Literacy Rates," 2016, 15-16.

102 Ellen S. Peisner-Feinberg et al., "Effects of Georgia's Pre-K Program on Children's School Readiness Skills: Findings from the 2012-2013 Evaluation Study," University of North Carolina Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center, March 2014.

103 Cynthia Lamy, W. Steven Barnett and Kwanghee Jung, "The Effects of West Virginia's Early Education Program on Young Children's School Readiness," National Institute for Early Education Research, December 2005.

104 Hustedt et al., "The New Mexico PreK Evaluation: Impacts from the Fourth Year (2008-9) of New Mexico's

- Pre-K in Oklahoma put participating students six to eight months ahead of their peers on measurements of reading development.[105]

The benefits of high-quality Pre-K programs have been so thoroughly demonstrated that some governments, including the City of Chicago and the State of Utah, fund Pre-K through the cost savings associated with reduced special education placements and improved academic performance. Pre-K must be high quality and include foundational literacy skills in order to improve reading outcomes. performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The State should pass legislation enacting universal voluntary Pre-K that includes fundamental literacy components and appropriate screening.
- Alaska's early childhood system should align, integrate and coordinate services and supports for children birth through age eight, to ensure each child is ready to succeed in school and life. Children must reach critical health and well-being benchmarks in order to thrive, be ready to for kindergarten and ready to learn. To support children reaching these important benchmarks, services and supports should use a "whole-child" approach that includes an emphasis on coordinating and integrating primary and preventive health care, early intervention, and quality early care and education.

D. Reading Intervention at The Appropriate Dosage

While every student benefits from evidence-based reading instruction, different students need different amounts. Response to Instruction/Intervention (RTI) or Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) describe an instructional design that provides increasing levels of support for students who need it. Typically, these systems have three tiers:

- *Tier I — High quality universal education* Core curriculum delivered to all students in the general education setting.
- *Tier II — Targeted instruction* For students not achieving at the desired standards, Tier II provides interventions that supplement the core curriculum. Interventions are targeted and usually provided in small groups, either in the classroom or elsewhere.
- *Tier III — Intensified Instruction* For students performing significantly under standards and who have not responded to Tier I or Tier II instruction. Tier III instruction may replace or supplement universal instruction.[106]

Effective programs include the following components delivered through all three tiers of instruction:

- *Assessment* — All students take a universal screener. Those that perform below standards need targeted assessments to identify specific skill deficits.
- *Instruction* — Evidence based curriculum delivered in tiers.

StateFunded PreK Program," National Institute for Early Education Research, November 2010.

105 William T. Gormley et al., "The Effects of Universal Pre-K on Cognitive Development," Developmental Psychology, Volume 31, Number 6, 2005.

106 Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, "Alaska Response to Instruction/Intervention," October 21, 2008. https://education.alaska.gov/esea/rti/docs/RTI_Definitions.pdf.

- *Progress Monitoring* — Continuous data collection and monitoring allows for data-informed decision making. Progress assessments increase in frequency at higher tiers.
- *Professional Development* — To ensure teachers have the tools they need to deliver evidence-based curriculum, including the elements of the science of reading, and how to recognize and support students with dyslexia.

RECOMMENDATION:

- Districts should implement a RTI/MTSS structure to support the reading development of all students.

E. Teacher Education

Teaching goes beyond reading a script—though for teachers that don't know the fundamental reading science, a script can be helpful. In order for teachers to meet the needs of all students, they must understand the science of reading, and have the preparation to deliver evidence-based curriculum. This baseline knowledge allows experienced teachers to go beyond any script, and use their own discretion to achieve the best outcomes for students. Not all university teacher preparation programs teach the science of reading, or teach instruction practices that align with the latest research.[107] Publications geared towards educators rarely cover cutting edge reading research. The fields of early childhood education, literacy, and special education remain isolated from the education-specific scientific fields carrying out critical empirical reading research.[108]

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The University of Alaska School of Education should teach reading instruction practices grounded in the science of reading and move away from the balanced literacy/whole language approach. University of Alaska education curriculum should include a learning lab designed to give teaching students guided practice teaching reading.
- The State should fund an Institute of Reading Excellence at the University of Alaska to provide a uniform training program in evidence-based universal and diagnostic reading screening and evidence-based reading instruction. The training should be supported by the body of reading science from the National Institutes of Health or equivalent research centers.
- Districts should provide professional development and education for teachers that includes the elements of the science of reading, how to recognize dyslexia, and how to support students with dyslexia.
- The State should establish a forgivable loan program for the purpose of identifying and recruiting qualified university students and paraprofessionals to study reading science and dyslexia remediation.

107 Boggs, Testimony, October 22, 2018.
108 David Kilpatrick, Essentials of Assessing, Preventing, and Overcoming Reading Difficulties

F. Dyslexia Awareness and Intervention

Dyslexia is widely misunderstood or unrecognized in Alaska districts

Many within the state and local school systems are reluctant to even reference dyslexia, or believe doing so is prohibited by the district. In districts across the country, this belief was so widespread that in 2015 the U.S. Department of Education issued a letter to districts clarifying that no federal statute or regulation prohibits using the term dyslexia. To the contrary:

> *"In implementing the IDEA requirements discussed above, the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) encourages State and Local Education Agencies (SEAs and LEAs) to consider situations where it would be appropriate to use the terms dyslexia, dyscalculia, or dysgraphia to describe and address the child's unique, identified needs through evaluation, eligibility, and IEP documents. OSERS further encourages States to review their policies, procedures, and practices to ensure that they do not prohibit the use of the terms dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia in evaluations, eligibility, and IEP documents. Finally, in ensuring the provision of free appropriate public education, OSERS encourages SEAs to remind their LEAs of the importance of addressing the unique educational needs of children with specific learning disabilities resulting from dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia during IEP Team meetings and other meetings with parents under IDEA."*[109]

Nevertheless, the mention of dyslexia remains taboo in Alaska. Educators and parents testified that school districts prohibit teachers from saying dyslexia because it would make the district liable to pay for assessment and remediation.[110]

Families seek high cost remediation outside of school districts

Without dyslexia-specific supports in place in the school system, some families that can afford it look for remediation outside of the school. Private practitioners offer rigorous and evidence-based reading instruction designed for dyslexic students, but they are expensive. Families spend thousands of dollars, sometimes tens of thousands of dollars, so that their child learns to read.[111] Notably, no private reading remediation service uses the whole language or "balanced literacy" approach. Private reading services use interventions based on the science of reading.

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109 Yudin Letter from US Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), October 23, 2015.

110 Posie Boggs, Marta Lastufka, Misty Nelson, testimony before the Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia, October 22 and November 26, 2018.

111 Mary Claire Kretzschmar, Posie Boggs, Marta Lastufka, Testimony to the Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia, October 22, 2018 and November 26, 2018.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- DEED should issue a letter to districts clarifying state and federal policy on dyslexia.
- Districts should encourage teachers to speak openly about dyslexia, including to parents, and provide training so that teachers are comfortable recognizing and responding to dyslexia. Recognizing and screening is distinct from diagnosing.
- DEED should create a Dyslexia Resource Guide to serve as a resource for parents, teachers, and districts. The Resource Guide should include:
  - Guidance to districts and teachers on how to test for dyslexia and recognize symptoms beyond an initial screening.
  - Guidance for effective dyslexia screening, and information about available screeners.
- Districts should have a dyslexia response system in place, including screening to evaluate students for characteristics of dyslexia, and trained dyslexia interventionists available to tutor students.
- Absent options for dyslexic students to receive high-quality and tailored reading instruction within the school system, parents of students with diagnoses of dyslexia who pay for private tutors should be reimbursed by districts for the tutoring cost. Districts should allow tutoring to occur during the school day in the students' school building at no cost to the parents or tutors.

G. Ensure Access to Reading Resources in Rural Alaska

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The Alaska Legislature should enact and fund legislation to increase broadband capacity in Alaska schools that do not have connectivity speeds sufficient to use online reading instructional tools.
- Districts should make available an online reading instructional program to every student shown to be below proficient in reading/English Language Arts.
- The state should vet and compile high quality online reading instruction programs that:
  - must differentiate instruction for each student;
  - must include instruction individualized to teach each pupil the five strands of literacy: Phonics, Phonemic Awareness, Vocabulary, Comprehension, and Fluency and must differentiate instruction for each student in these critical functions;
  - must contain internal assessments, tracking, and reports for teachers, administrators and parents;
  - must have additional resources to enable the teacher to more effectively meet the needs of each student;

- must provide immediate feedback to students and automatically remediate when needed;
- must include grade-level appropriate digital books with literature text and informational text.
- must include human voices, rather than computer-generated ones.

- The Alaska Legislature and the Governor's administration should take action to reduce high teacher turnover rates in rural Alaska.

H. Implementation Fidelity

Mandating the adoption of evidence-based best practices does not guarantee effective implementation. In addition to selecting high quality programs, improving student outcomes depends on transforming systems to enable teachers to implement the new program with fidelity.[112] Research shows that when teachers are only provided with workshop training, and no additional supports to improve their practice, only five percent of teachers will effectively apply the skills in the classroom.[113] Without implementation teams using defined implementation methods, research shows it takes 17 years before half of an intended new initiative becomes regular practice.[114]

Implementation science—the scientific study of the methods to promote the systematic uptake of research findings and other evidence-based practices into routine practice — offers schools, districts, and the state tools to ensure what is named best practice on paper manifests in the classroom. According to the implementation science model, intended outcomes result from the confluence of three factors:

- *Effective Interventions* Evidence-based interventions, as discussed previously.
- *Effective Implementation* The system supports provided directly to implementers, including training, coaching, and the time to learn and apply new skills, progress monitoring, and flexibility to adapt intervention.
- *Enabling Contexts* The policies or practices that allow for change to happen. For example, a state dyslexia law that allows for reform at a district level.

Several factors can inhibit successful implementation of evidence-based practices:

- *Time Constraints* Limited time to learn and evaluate new practices.
- *Knowledge Gap/Weak in-service* Low quality teacher training and preservice preparation.
- *"The Implementation Dip"* Initially, any new practice lowers efficiency until it becomes automatic and becomes easier to implement.

112 Dickman, "A Process to Bridge the Gap from Evidence-Based Policy to Practice" Perspectives on Language and Literacy 44, No. 4 (Fall 2018)
113 Ibid, 11.
114 Ibid, 11.

Successful implementation results in instruction informed on three levels:[115]

- The intervention is evidence based with a successful track record.
- The instructor has sufficient knowledge and training to implement the intervention with fidelity.
- The intervention must be delivered with the appropriate intensity and duration.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The Alaska Legislature should pass legislation to ensure that the recommendations of this task force result in implementation at a State and district level, including by ensuring districts have adequate funding to implement the recommendations of the Task Force.

- DEED should hold districts accountable to faithful implementation:
  - by establishing meaningful measures of progress.
  - by setting clear standards for screenings, interventions, and core reading curriculum.
  - by putting in place incentives or consequences for districts that do not comply with screening, intervention, or curriculum standards.
  - by mandating reporting from districts for the above areas.
  - As necessary, the State and districts should consider contracting with nationallyestablished technical experts to provide comprehensive education consulting inreading instruction.

- The State should ensure that districts report a standalone reading proficiency score to parents, teachers, and the State.

115 Dickman, "A Process to Bridge the Gap from Evidence-Based Policy to Practice," 28.

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Appendices

The following appendices include Alaska HB 64, the U.S. Department of Education Dyslexia Guidelines to Districts, agendas from the meetings of the Alaska Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia, as well as the slides presented at those meetings.

LAWS OF ALASKA

2018

Source
SCS CSHB 64(EDC)

Chapter No.
_____

AN ACT

Relating to the establishment of the Legislative Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia.

_____

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

THE ACT FOLLOWS ON PAGE 1

AN ACT

Relating to the establishment of the Legislative Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia.

*** Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to read:

LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS. The legislature finds that

(1) approximately 43,300 students in the state do not meet Alaska English Language Arts standards as indicated by the Alaska Measures of Progress test, and reading proficiency scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress for students in the state were stagnant from 2003 through 2015;

(2) results of student assessments indicate that reading instruction and reading proficiency for students in the state should be improved;

(3) dyslexia, the most common specific learning disability, affects between three and 17 percent of the student population and accounts for approximately 80 percent of

all specific learning disabilities;

(4) the scientific consensus is that, when learning to read, typical and atypical learners have overlapping instructional needs, including the need for highly knowledgeable and skilled reading teachers to improve reading proficiency outcomes;

(5) parents and other caregivers are responsible for ensuring that their children learn to read through the public school system or other means of instruction; and

(6) the residents of this state also hold the legislature, the governor, and the state Board of Education and Early Development accountable for student reading proficiency outcomes and for leading reforms of the state's public education system.

*** Sec. 2.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to read:

LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON READING PROFICIENCY AND DYSLEXIA. (a) The Legislative Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia is established as a joint task force of the Alaska State Legislature.

(b) The task force established under (a) of this section shall

(1) examine

(A) the effects of current state statutes and regulations on reading proficiency outcomes;

(B) the effects of dyslexia on reading proficiency outcomes in the state and in other jurisdictions;

(C) dyslexia education instructional practices and laws in other jurisdictions;

(D) educational reforms related to reading that have been implemented in the state and the reasons for the success or failure of those reforms at the local level;

(2) evaluate and make recommendations regarding

(A) reading instructional practices for all public school students in the state;

(B) the diagnosis, treatment, and education of children affected by dyslexia;

(C) methods to improve reading proficiency and reading instruction for all public school students in the state;

(D) possible legislation or other policy recommendations to improve reading proficiency outcomes;

(E) methods to mitigate the effects of dyslexia on reading proficiency, including

(i) early screening, early identification, and early intervention for students in preschool through grade three;

(ii) screening, identification, and intervention for students in grades four through 12;

(iii) training all relevant educational staff in the use of evidence-based screening and identification instruments; and

(3) identify evidence-based, multi-sensory, direct, explicit, structured, and sequential approaches to instructing students affected by dyslexia.

(c) The task force shall, not later than March 29, 2019, submit a final report summarizing the findings and recommendations of the task force to the governor, the state Board of Education and Early Development, and the senate secretary and chief clerk of the house of representatives and notify the legislature that the report is available.

(d) The task force consists of 12 members as follows:

(1) three members of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives, including at least one member of the minority organizational caucus;

(2) three members of the senate appointed by the president of the senate, including at least one member of the minority organizational caucus; and

(3) six members of the public to be appointed jointly by the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the senate as follows:

(A) one member who is an active or retired teacher in kindergarten through grade three with significant experience teaching reading to students developing typically and atypically in the state;

(B) one member representing the Association of Alaska School Boards;

(C) one member representing either the Alaska Council of School Administrators or the Alaska Association of Elementary School Principals who is

knowledgeable about reading instruction and dyslexia;

(D) one member representing a nonprofit organization with a mission related to reading and education;

(E) one member who is a parent of a child with a reading disability; and

(F) one member who is a student enrolled in good standing in a public high school in the state who demonstrates leadership and has an interest in promoting reading proficiency.

(e) The speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the senate shall jointly appoint the chair of the task force from among the legislative members of the task force. A majority of the task force constitutes a quorum. The task force meets at the call of the chair and may meet telephonically.

(f) A vacancy on the task force shall be filled in the same manner as the original selection or appointment.

(g) The task force may request data and other information from the Department of Education and Early Development, school districts, and other state agencies.

(h) The staff of the legislator who chairs the task force shall provide administrative and other support to the task force.

(i) Members of the task force serve without compensation and are not entitled to per diem or travel expenses.

(j) The task force expires on June 30, 2019.

(k) In this section,

(1) "dyslexia" means a learning disability that is neurobiological in origin and is characterized by difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities;

(2) "relevant educational staff" includes school psychologists, special education teachers, other teachers, principals, and superintendents;

(3) "task force" means the Legislative Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

October 23, 2015

Dear Colleague:

Ensuring a high-quality education for children with specific learning disabilities is a critical responsibility for all of us. I write today to focus particularly on the unique educational needs of children with dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia, which are conditions that could qualify a child as a child with a specific learning disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSERS) has received communications from stakeholders, including parents, advocacy groups, and national disability organizations, who believe that State and local educational agencies (SEAs and LEAs) are reluctant to reference or use dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia in evaluations, eligibility determinations, or in developing the individualized education program (IEP) under the IDEA. The purpose of this letter is to clarify that there is nothing in the IDEA that would prohibit the use of the terms dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia in IDEA evaluation, eligibility determinations, or IEP documents.

Under the IDEA and its implementing regulations "specific learning disability" is defined, in part, as "a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, *dyslexia*, and developmental aphasia." See 20 U.S.C. §1401(30) and 34 CFR §300.8(c)(10) (emphasis added). While our implementing regulations contain a list of conditions under the definition "specific learning disability," which includes dyslexia, the list is not exhaustive. However, regardless of whether a child has dyslexia or any other condition explicitly included in this definition of "specific learning disability," or has a condition such as dyscalculia or dysgraphia not listed expressly in the definition, the LEA must conduct an evaluation in accordance with 34 CFR §§300.304-300.311 to determine whether that child meets the criteria for specific learning disability or any of the other disabilities listed in 34 CFR §300.8, which implements IDEA's definition of "child with a disability."

For those students who may need additional academic and behavioral supports to succeed in a general education environment, schools may choose to implement a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS), such as response to intervention (RTI) or positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS). MTSS is a schoolwide approach that addresses the needs of all students, including struggling learners and students with disabilities, and integrates assessment and intervention within a multi-level instructional and behavioral system to maximize student achievement and reduce problem behaviors.

MTSS, which includes scientific, research-based interventions, also may be used to identify children suspected of having a specific learning disability. With a multi-tiered instructional

framework, schools identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes, including those who may have dyslexia, dyscalculia, or dysgraphia; monitor their progress; provide evidence-based interventions; and adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness. Children who do not, or minimally, respond to interventions must be referred for an evaluation to determine if they are eligible for special education and related services (34 CFR §300.309(c)(1)); and those children who simply need intense short-term interventions may continue to receive those interventions. OSERS reminds SEAs and LEAs about previous guidance regarding the use of MTSS, including RTI, and timely evaluations,[1] specifically that a parent may request an initial evaluation at any time to determine if a child is a child with a disability under IDEA (34 CFR §300.301(b)), and the use of MTSS, such as RTI, may not be used to delay or deny a full and individual evaluation under 34 CFR §§300.304-300.311 of a child suspected of having a disability.

In determining whether a child has a disability under the IDEA, including a specific learning disability, and is eligible to receive special education and related services because of that disability, the LEA must conduct a comprehensive evaluation under §300.304, which requires the use of a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child. This information, which includes information provided by the parent, may assist in determining: 1) whether the child is a child with a disability; and 2) the content of the child's IEP to enable the child to be involved in, and make progress in, the general education curriculum. 34 CFR §300.304(b)(1). Therefore, information about the child's learning difficulties, including the presenting difficulties related to reading, mathematics, or writing, is important in determining the nature and extent of the child's disability and educational needs. In addition, other criteria are applicable in determining whether a child has a specific learning disability. For example, the team determining eligibility considers whether the child is not achieving adequately for the child's age or to meet State-approved grade-level standards when provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the child's age or the relevant State standards in areas related to reading, mathematics, and written expression. The team also must determine that the child's underachievement is not due to lack of appropriate instruction in reading or mathematics. 34 CFR §300.309(a)(1) and (b). Section 300.311 contains requirements for specific documentation of the child's eligibility determination as a child with a specific learning disability, and includes documentation of the information described above. Therefore, there could be situations where the child's parents and the team of qualified professionals responsible for determining whether the child has a specific learning disability would find it helpful to include information about the specific condition (e.g., dyslexia, dyscalculia, or dysgraphia) in documenting how that condition relates to the child's eligibility determination. 34 CFR §§300.306(a)(1), (c)(1) and 300.308.

[1] *See* OSEP Memo 11-07 (January 21, 2011) available at: www.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdcltrs/osep11-07rtimemo.pdf Under 34 CFR §300.307(a)(2)-(3), as part of their criteria for determining whether a child has a specific learning disability, States must permit the use of a process based on the child's response to scientific, research-based intervention, and may permit the use of other alternative research-based procedures in making this determination.

Stakeholders also requested that SEAs and LEAs have policies in place that allow for the use of the terms dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia on a child's IEP, if a child's comprehensive evaluation supports use of these terms. There is nothing in the IDEA or our implementing regulations that prohibits the inclusion of the condition that is the basis for the child's disability determination in the child's IEP. In addition, the IEP must address the child's needs resulting from the child's disability to enable the child to advance appropriately towards attaining his or her annual IEP goals and to enable the child to be involved in, and make progress in, the general education curriculum. 34 CFR §§300.320(a)(1), (2), and (4). Therefore, if a child's dyslexia, dyscalculia, or dysgraphia is the condition that forms the basis for the determination that a child has a specific learning disability, OSERS believes that there could be situations where an IEP Team could determine that personnel responsible for IEP implementation would need to know about the condition underlying the child's disability (e.g., that a child has a weakness in decoding skills as a result of the child's dyslexia). Under 34 CFR §300.323(d), a child's IEP must be accessible to the regular education teacher and any other school personnel responsible for its implementation, and these personnel must be informed of their specific responsibilities related to implementing the IEP and the specific accommodations, modifications, and supports that must be provided for the child in accordance with the IEP. Therefore, OSERS reiterates that there is nothing in the IDEA or our implementing regulations that would prohibit IEP Teams from referencing or using dyslexia, dyscalculia, or dysgraphia in a child's IEP.

Stakeholders requested that OSERS provide SEAs and LEAs with a comprehensive guide to commonly used accommodations[2] in the classroom for students with specific learning disabilities, including dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia. The IDEA does not dictate the services or accommodations to be provided to individual children based solely on the disability category in which the child has been classified, or the specific condition underlying the child's disability classification. The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) funds a large network of technical assistance centers that develop materials and resources to support States, school districts, schools, and teachers to improve the provision of services to children with disabilities, including materials on the use of accommodations. The U.S. Department of Education does not mandate the use of, or endorse the content of, these products, services, materials, and/or resources; however, States and LEAs may wish to seek assistance from entities such as the National Center on Intensive Intervention at: http://www.intensiveintervention.org, the Center for Parent Information and Resources available at: http://www.parentcenterhub.org, and the National Center on Accessible Educational Materials available at: http://aem.cast.org/. For a complete list of OSEP-funded technical assistance centers please see: http://ccrs.osepideasthatwork.org/.

In implementing the IDEA requirements discussed above, OSERS encourages SEAs and LEAs to consider situations where it would be appropriate to use the terms dyslexia, dyscalculia, or dysgraphia to describe and address the child's unique, identified needs through evaluation, eligibility, and IEP documents. OSERS further encourages States to review their policies,

[2] Although the IDEA uses the term "accommodations" primarily in the assessment context, OSERS understands the request to refer to the various components of a free appropriate public education, including special education, related services, supplementary aids and services, and program modifications or supports for school personnel, as well as accommodations for students taking assessments.

procedures, and practices to ensure that they do not prohibit the use of the terms dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia in evaluations, eligibility, and IEP documents. Finally, in ensuring the provision of free appropriate public education, OSERS encourages SEAs to remind their LEAs of the importance of addressing the unique educational needs of children with specific learning disabilities resulting from dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia during IEP Team meetings and other meetings with parents under IDEA.

I hope this clarification is helpful to both parents and practitioners in ensuring a high-quality education for children with specific learning disabilities, including children with dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia. If you have additional questions or comments, please email them to sld@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Michael K. Yudin

Alaska Legislative Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia

AGENDA
Monday, October 22, 2018
Anchorage LIO Denali Conference Room
Internet Stream: http://akleg.gov/index.php#tab5

1:00 p.m. Call to Order

Opening/Introductions

1:30 p.m Organization

Establishment of Timeline, Schedule, Directives & Goals

1:45 p.m. Posie Boggs, Alaska Reading Coalition
"The Great Divide in Reading Outcomes"

2:30 p.m. Q & A with Posie Boggs

2:45 p.m. Break

3:00 p.m. Dr. Donna Dearman
"Large District Reading Outcomes"

3:20 p.m. Camille Booth

"Smaller and More Rural District Reading Outcomes"

3:40 p.m. Q&A with Dr. Dearman and Camille Booth

4:20 p.m. Wrap up

HOMEWORK

Watch lecture by Dr. Stanislaus Dehaene on "Reading the Brain."
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MSy685vNqYk&feature=youtu.be

Read article by Anne Castles, Kathleen Rastle, Kate Nation on "Ending the Reading Wars: Reading Acquisition from Novice to Expert."
http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1529100618772271

Alaska Reading Coalition

A coalition designed to ensure reading proficiency for all Alaskan students

Literate Nation Alaska, NAACP Anchorage, The Alaska Branch of the International Dyslexia Association, Decoding Dyslexia Alaska, Juneau Dyslexia, The Alaska Literacy Program, ITV Education & Disability Support Services, Assistive Technology Library, Connections that Work, LLC, Future Frontiers Tutoring, The Missing Links, Turning Leaf Literacy Center, and Read Write Alaska.

1

Summary: people don't understand the science or the simple process of reading. Our message is:

- It's science
- We know how to teach reading, we aren't doing it
- We can do it because we have road maps from places that are doing it.
- The science of reading is the body of knowledge that researchers have determined to be relevant to reading, reading acquisition, the assessment of poor reading, and remediation.
- It includes instruction related to interventions for helping nonreaders and poor readers to become competent readers.
- It includes instruction that helps proficient readers become advanced readers

2

The Great ***Reading*** Divides in Alaska.

October 22, 2018

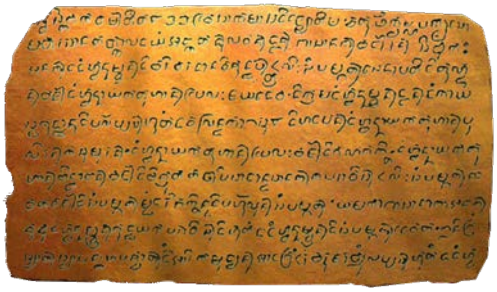
Definitions: Social or Scientific

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the only assessment that measures what U.S. students know and can do in various subjects across the nation, states, and in some urban districts.

The Great ***Reading*** Divides in Alaska.
This Means that We ***Cannot*** Leave Reading to Chance.

What is reading?

- Reading is a multifaceted process involving word recognition, comprehension, fluency, and motivation. These facets integrate to make meaning from print. Simply put, reading is making meaning from print. (Reading Rockets)
- Reading is the “pot of gold” at the end of the rainbow.



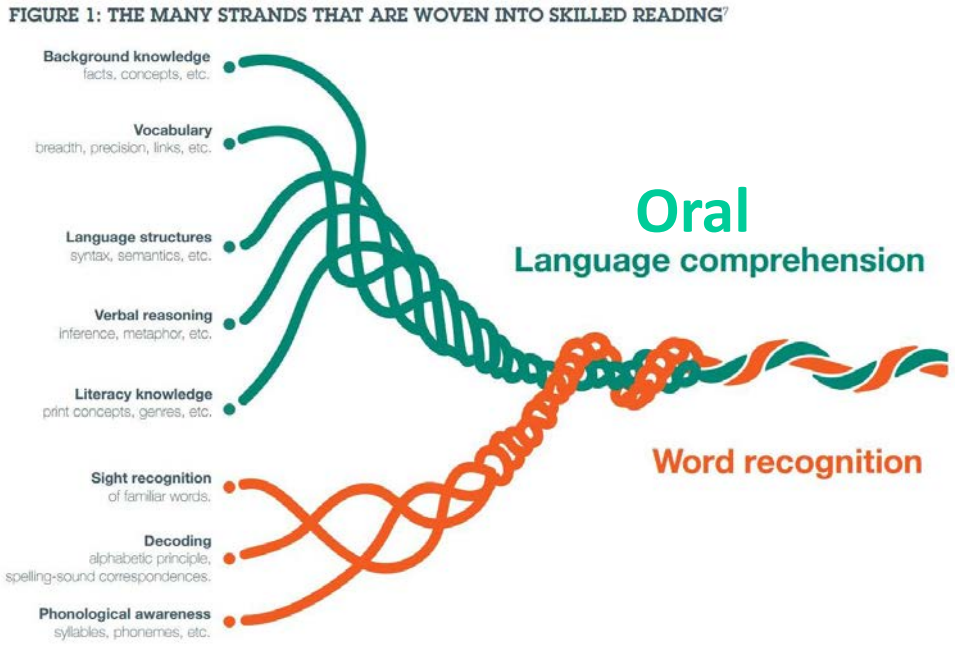
5

The Simple View of Reading: two interdependent processes

Proposed by researchers Gough and Tunmer in 1986 the simple view of reading and essential concepts have been thoroughly researched many times since then.

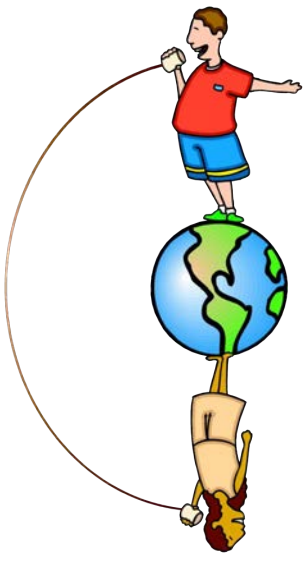
6

The many subskills that together weave reading



7

Oral Language Comprehension



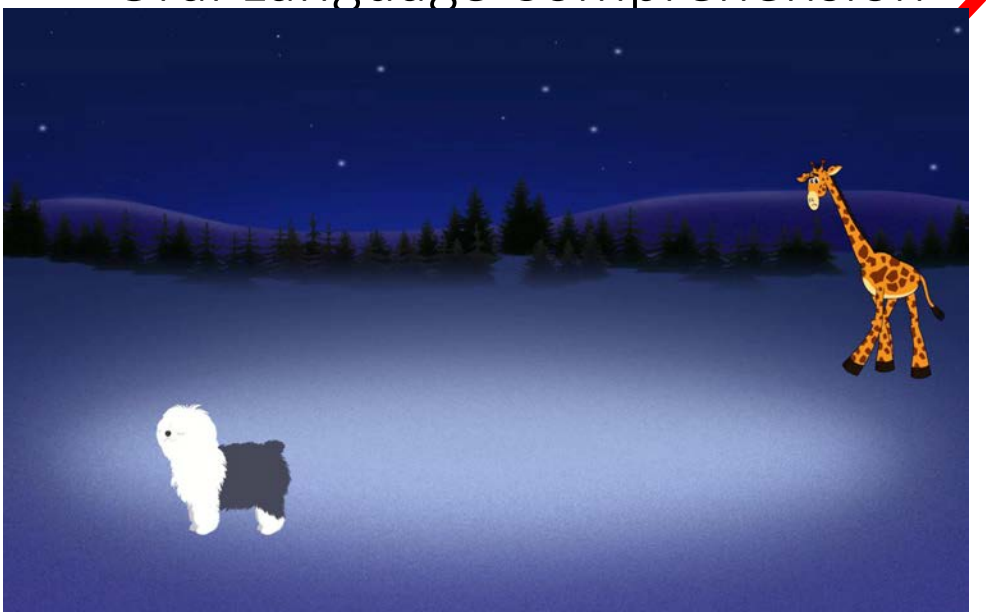
oral and heard

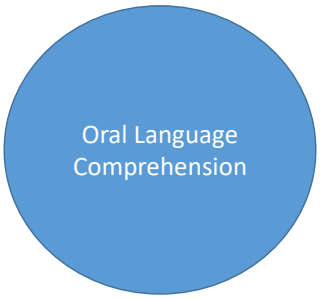
Reading Comprehension

print you see

8

Oral Language Comprehension





9

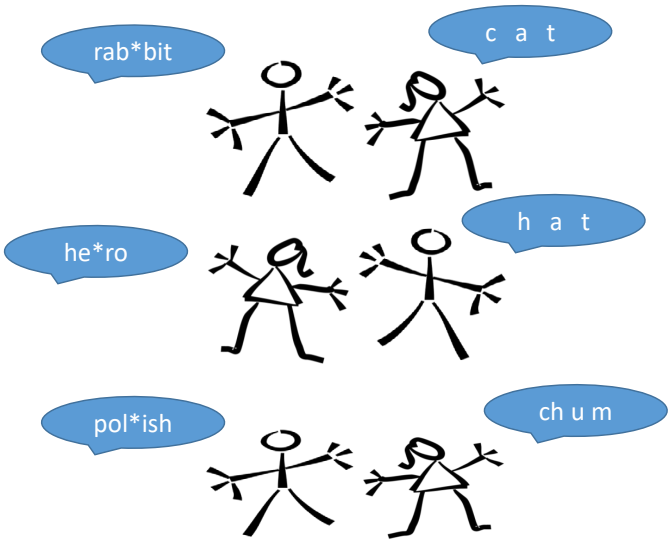
The Simple View of Reading: two interdependent processes

English Language Learner: low score

Student with dyslexia: high score

10

Decoding and automatic word recognition



moose

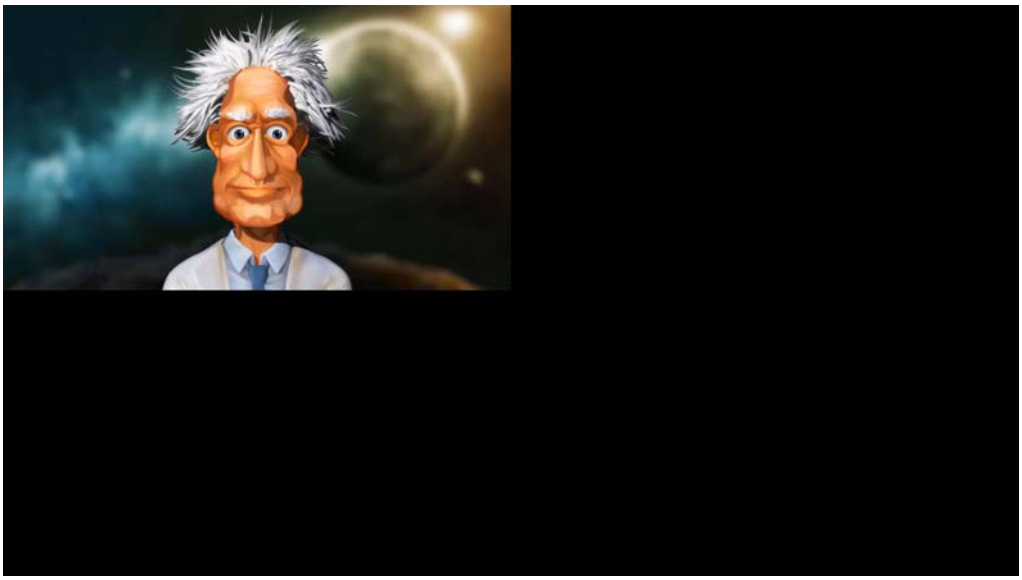
11

Let's try that again. Do Not Read this Word!!!

sphygmomanometer

12

So how is a word read?



13

The Simple View of Reading: two interdependent processes

English Language Learner: low score

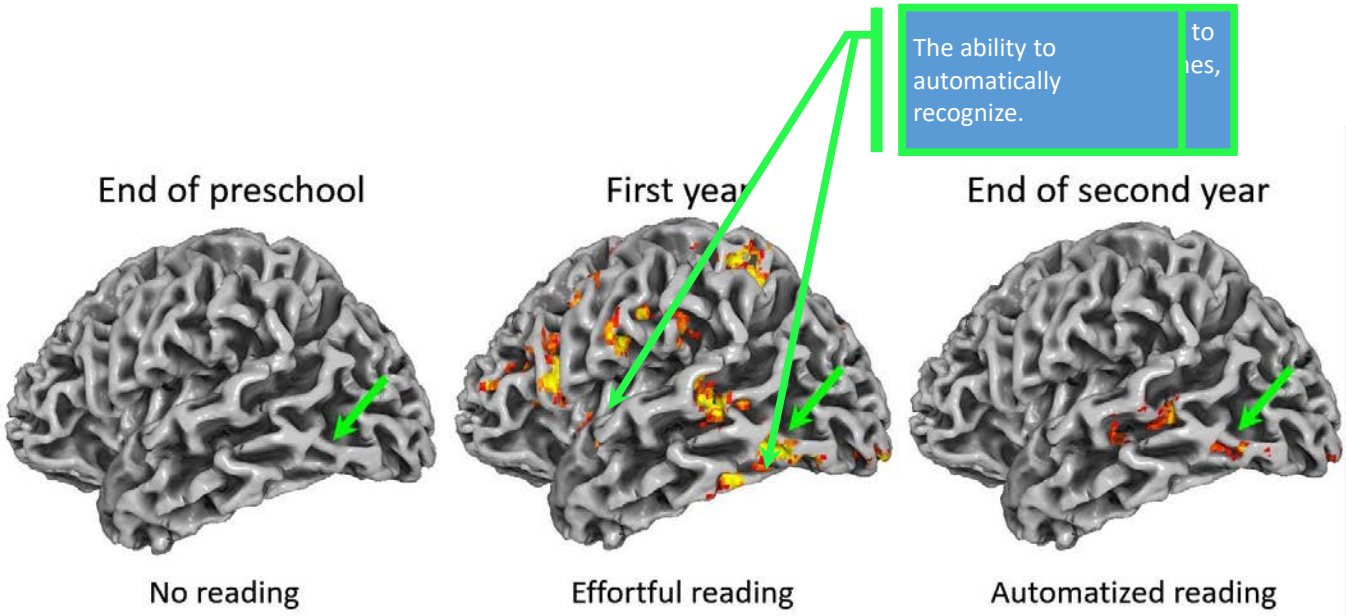
Student with dyslexia: high score

English Language Learner: ok score

Student with dyslexia: low score often driven by low phonological and phonemic awareness.

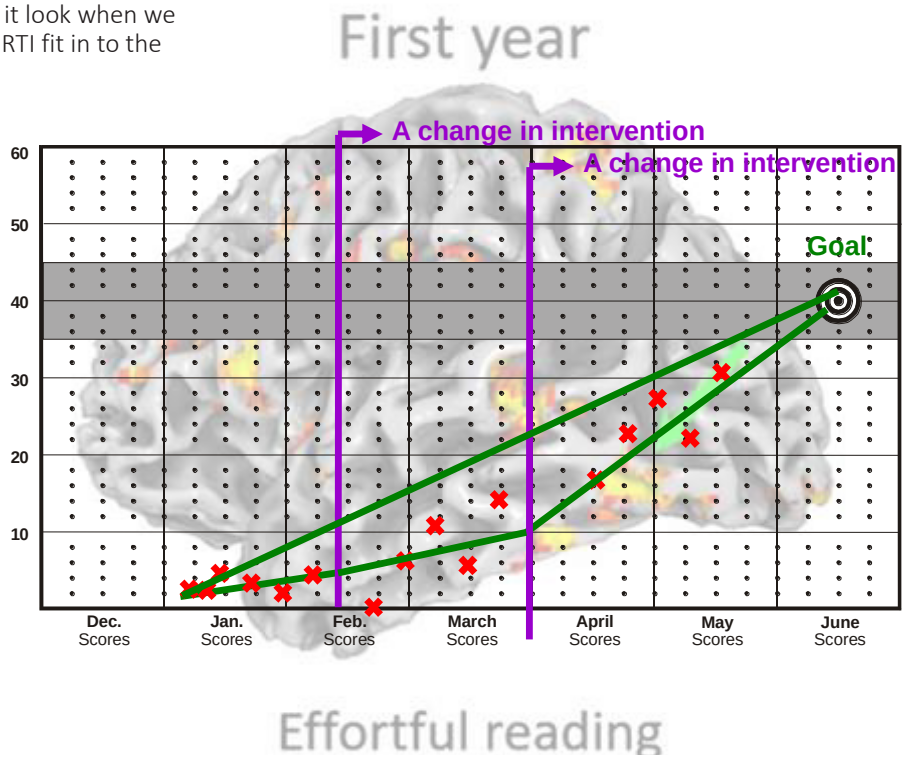
14

The Development of Reading in a Single Child



15

What about when learning to read is a struggle? How does it look when we intervene? How does RTI fit in to the reading brain?



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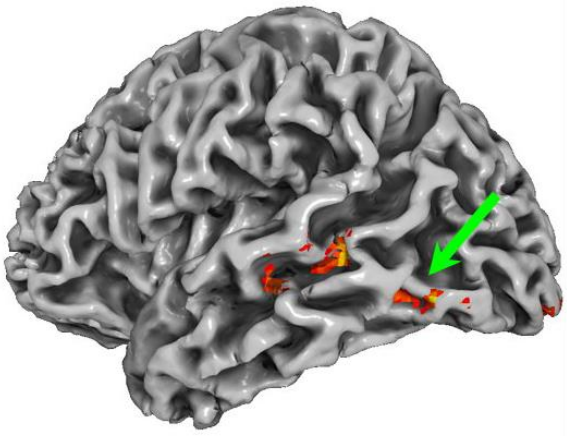
End of second year



Automatized reading

In summary, Dehaene leaves us with these truths.

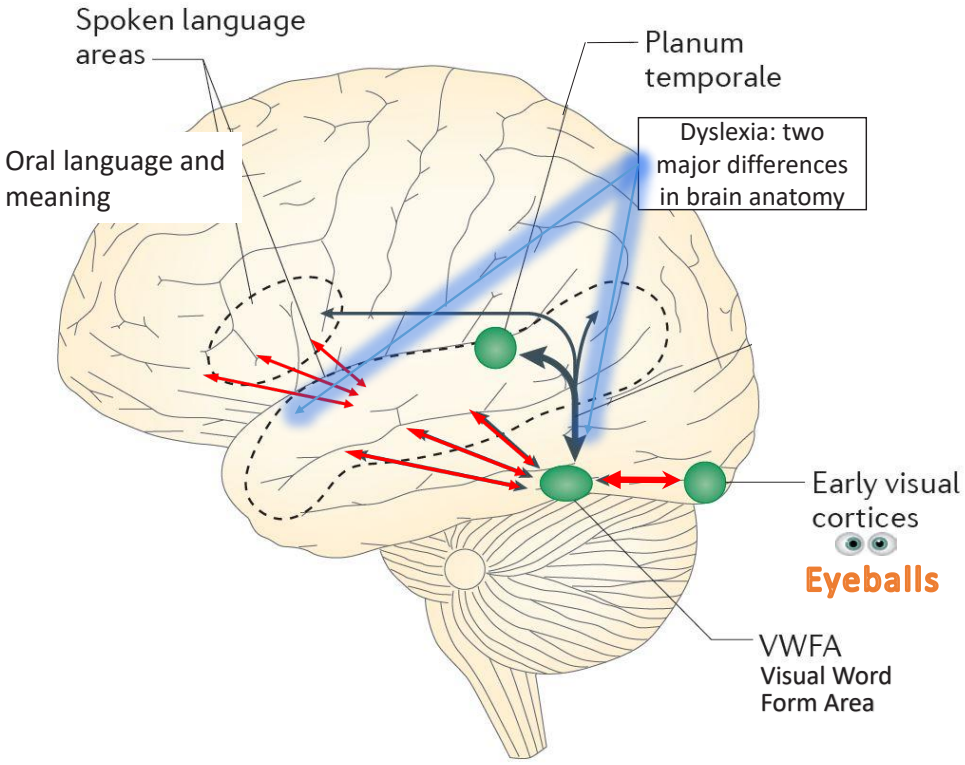
In spite of variations in the speed at which we learn, all children have similar reading brains.

Their cerebral circuits are well tuned to systematic letter sound correspondences and have everything to gain from phonics and phonemic awareness. Instruction gives kids freedom to read anything & anywhere.

He continues to reiterates the need for early diagnosis.

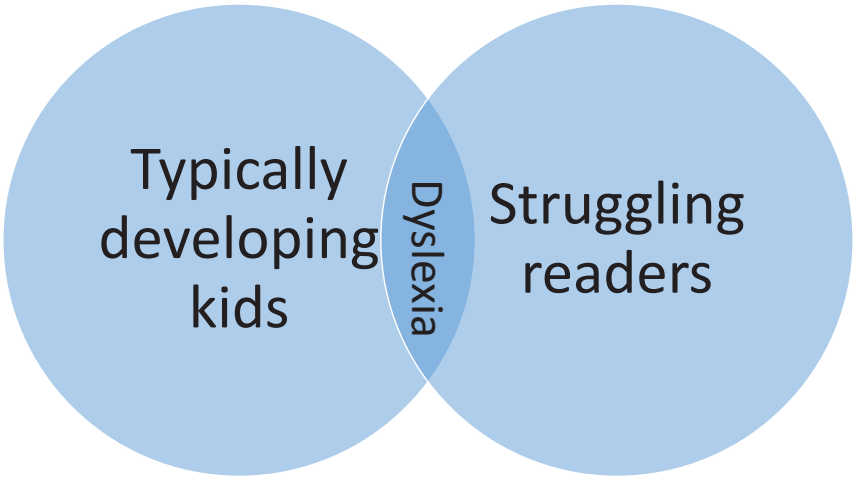
And then finally, he states that although decoding is essential for beginning readers, vocabulary enrichment is equally important, particularly when the student comes from a underprivileged background, or from a family where English is a 2nd language like many students in Alaska.

17



18

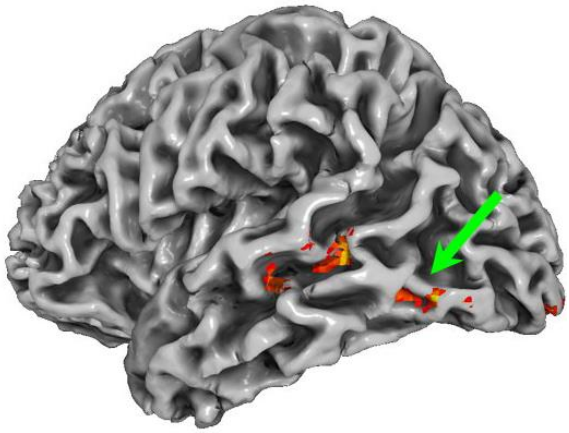
Good reading instruction is Good reading instruction. (Wisconsin)



19

Any statewide reading plan in Alaska needs to #saydyslexia.

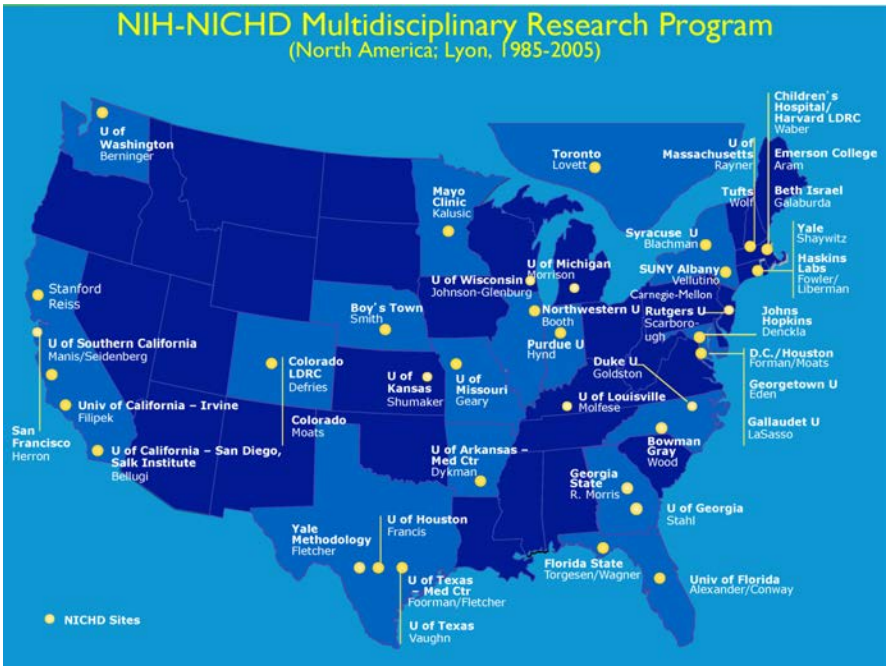
End of second year



Automatized reading

20

Dr. Brenda Warren, **Board President, on the** Green Bay Area Public Schools Board. She has a PhD in Education Leadership, was a Pediatrician practicing between 1989-1996. She is speaking during the comment time while she sits on the Wisconsin Reading Task Force.



Alaska hires teachers from the following states in the order of frequency:
Alaska (UAA)
Oregon
Washington
Arizona
Michigan
Utah
Montana

per Toni McFadden, Alaska Teacher Placement

22

A startling gap

- Journals That Report Empirical Research on Reading are not in education
- Six reading and literacy journals that publish only empirical studies on reading acquisition or difficulty
- 26 non-literacy related journals regularly include empirical studies on reading
- There are 18 academic disciplines are represented among reading researchers
- more than 19 countries
- Inadequate and poor leadership
- "Books that accurately review reading research written for educational professionals are surprisingly scarce" (Kilpatrick, 2015)

Rapid Reference 1.1 Journals That Report Empirical Research on Reading

Reading/literacy journals that publish only empirical studies on reading acquisition and/or reading difficulties

Annals of Dyslexia
Dyslexia
Journal of Research in Reading
Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal
Scientific Studies of Reading
Written Language and Literacy

Reading/literacy journals that routinely publish empirical studies on reading acquisition and/or reading difficulties

Journal of Literacy Research
Literacy Research and Instruction
Reading Psychology
Reading Research Quarterly

C. Disciplines

The following are academic disciplines represented among reading researchers.

Deaf education
Education
Linguistics
Literacy/reading education
Medicine—neurology
Medicine—pediatrics
Medicine—ophthalmology
Optometry
Psychology—behavioral
Psychology—cognitive
Psychology—developmental/child
Psychology—educational
Psychology—experimental
Psychology—neuropsychology
Psychology—psycholinguistics
Psychology—school
Special education
Speech/language pathology

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To summarize: Silos cause reading professors themselves, to become instructional casualties.

- Silos amongst the early childhood education, literacy, and special education fields create isolation from the education-specific scientific fields carrying out critical empirical reading research. (Kilpatrick, 2015)
- This is discouraging since reading instruction research has an effect on the professors charged with educating Alaska's teacher candidates on how to teach reading. Consequently, isolation due to these silos causes reading professors themselves, to become instructional casualties.

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Indoctrination of Professors and Teachers in Higher Education versus Science

- "an overwhelming challenge to get them to look to the science and research in the field and not to their neighbors for direction on how to teach reading effectively
- If everyone else is doing it, at least they are not alone in their ignorance and for them that is consolation enough."

Michele Boutwell, Coordinator and a Special Education School Improvement Specialist Hewes Educational Center 2018, 2017

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Indoctrination of Professors and Teachers in Higher Education versus Science, *cont.*

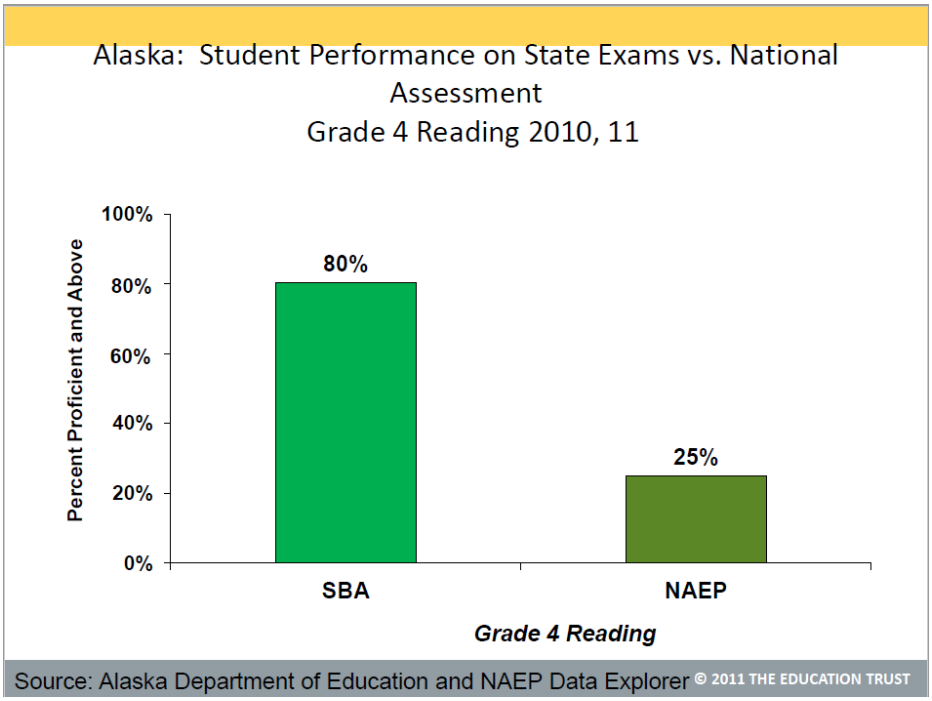
26

PEAKS does NOT measure early reading

- We only measure ELA in third grade
- Measures how well children can navigate and understand a passage, but not if they can actually read the passage (headers, keywords)
- We stopped funding the K literacy assessment
- AK does have a reading problem, but the first problem is that we don't have any overall data that shows us what is happening or here.

27

How do the universities of education affect Alaska's reading outcomes? Flat scores no matter how low you set the bar.



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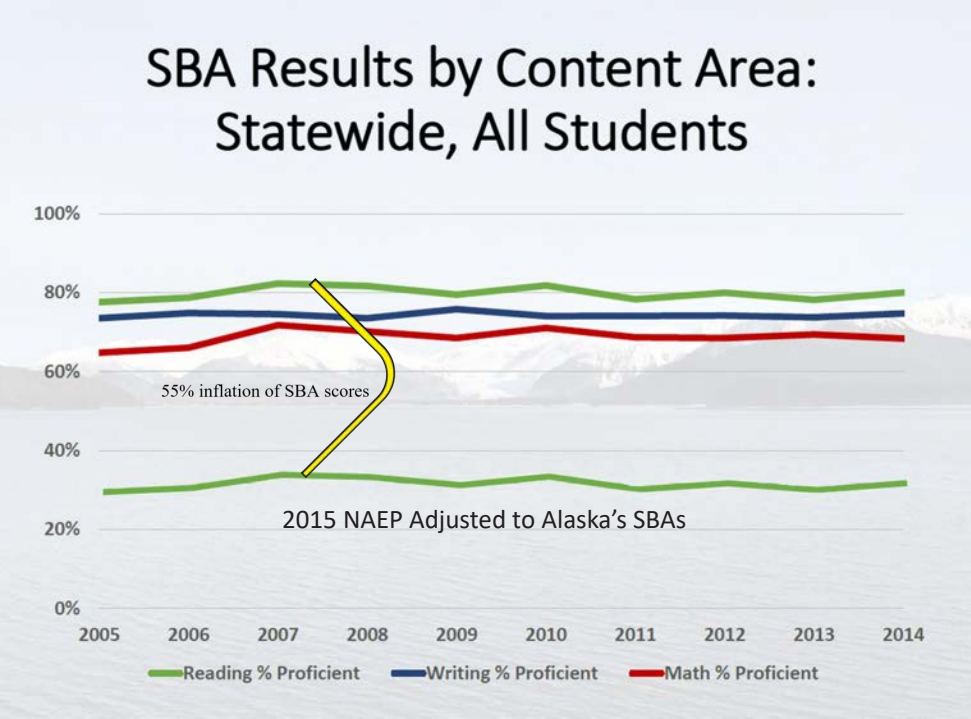

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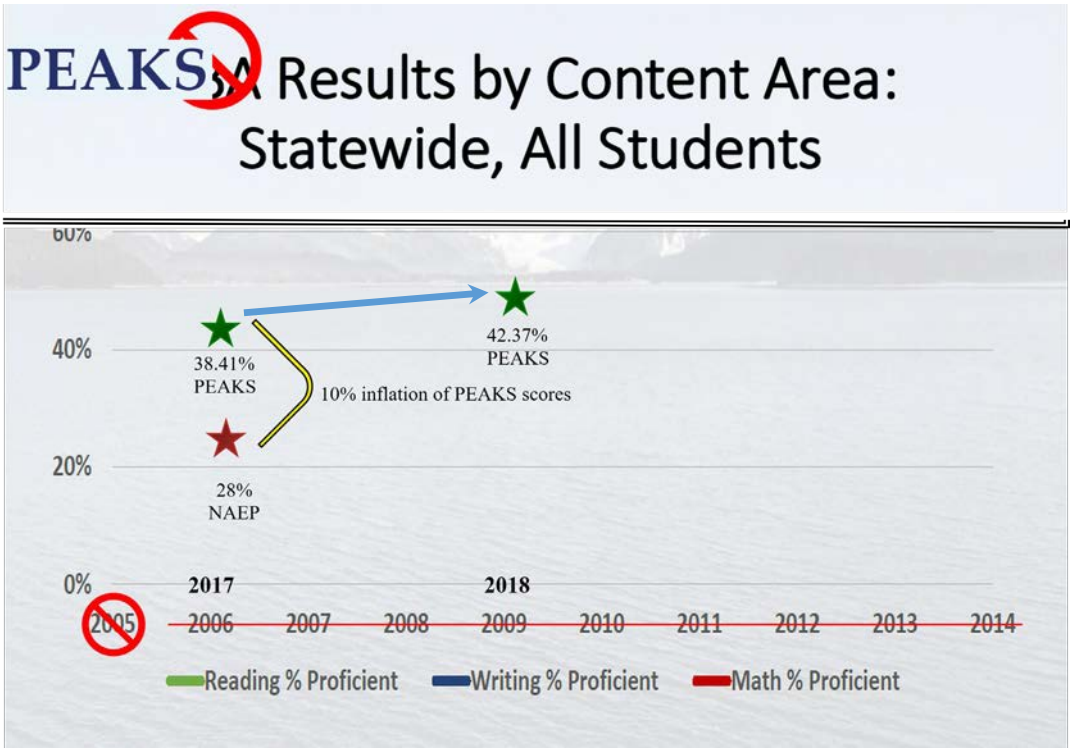
Here is what we are watching closely



30

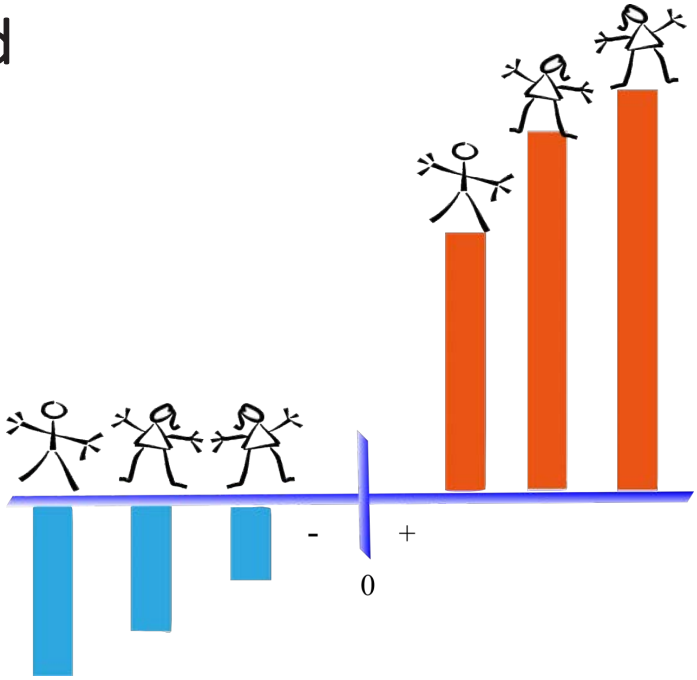
"Studies have concluded that the societal impact of highly skilled kindergarten teachers is profound enough to justify an annual salary of $320,000."

Raj Chetty, Harvard Economist

If science proves the importance of K-1 teachers to lay the ground work for literacy, then why are we ignoring the importance of Certified Teachers of Reading in every Classroom—highly knowledgeable and skilled?

31

VAMs, **Value-added modeling and why we are not in the VAMs fan club**



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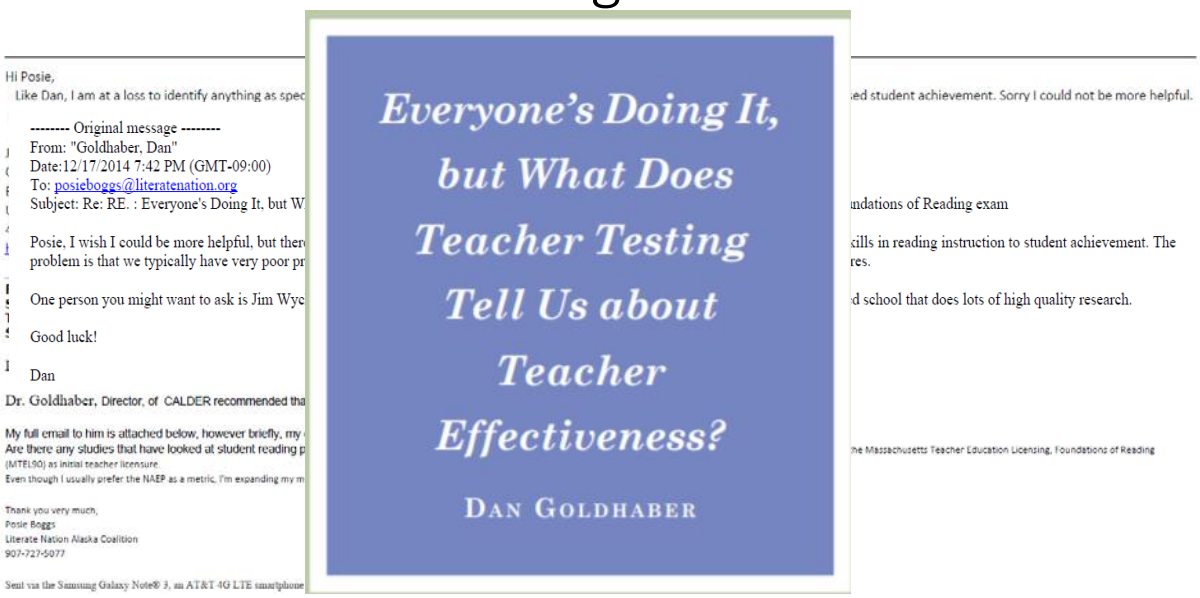
Value Added Modeling



Characterizing the Knowledge of Educators Receiving Training in Systematic Literacy Instruction

Soon to be published
In press, *Annals of Dyslexia*

K. Melissa McMahan, Eric L. Oslund, and Timothy N. Odegard

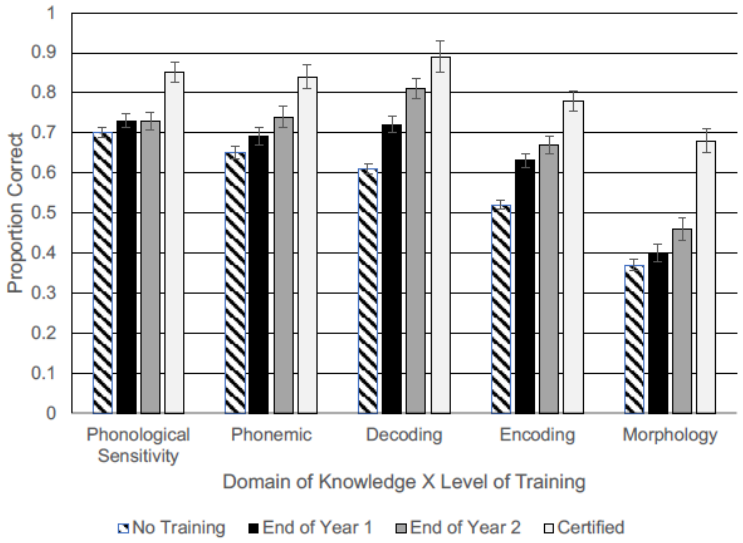
Middle Tennessee State University

Findings

Soon to be published
In press, *Annals of Dyslexia*

Figure 1

Performance on the Knowledge Test Subdivided by Level of Training and Domain of Knowledge



Characterizing the Knowledge of Educators Receiving Training in Systematic Literacy Instruction
K. Melissa McMahan, Eric L. Oslund, and Timothy N. Odegard, Middle Tennessee State University

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Underperforming Teacher Prep Programs

"Finland had a 10% graduation rate in the 1950s.

In the late 1960s they shut down their Teacher Training Colleges, which were wildly varying in selectivity and quality and moved them to their most elite universities where they were producing their best teachers."

Finland

(Amanda Ripley, The Smartest Kids in the World: And How They Got That Way, 2013)

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Barriers that Alaska must workaround to improve reading

- Cultural and social dynamics in university education programs
- University professors tied to products
- Teacher Effectiveness and knowledge and lack of acknowledging that teacher knowledge is important (Dan and Wyckoff)
- It is not all about curriculum. Teachers teach reading not curriculum.
- Hopelessness
- Silos between Research Centers and the classroom

Topics for the Task Force to consider

- A reading framework at the state level that includes the science of reading.
- Early Literacy Screening prescribed and specifically based on science and research
- Say Dyslexia – Your strongest teacher do. They know scientific instruction
- Professional Development that is ongoing and at times prescriptive
- Summer school and/or extended day to increase dosage
- Specialists (real ones) who pass reading competency exams & certification
- Licensure requirements
- Third grade reading policies, Dyslexia definition, screening, interventions
- Accountability via RTI to both DEED and the Legislature

#saydyslexia and un**tie** the teacher's hands and **u**nite the whole of Alaska's reading landscape

Colorado Reading to Ensure Academic Development (READ) Act

- Passed in the 2012 session, the READ Act:
  - Focuses on students identified highest risk category
  - Requires continual parent communication (READ Plan)
  - Provides funds to support intervention
  - Includes a provision related to advancement decisions for students completing K-3 who remain in the highest risk category
- Focuses on universal screening assessment, identification and intervention for students at risk to not read at grade level by the end of the third grade
  - Early screening for risk of reading challenges
  - Diagnostic assessment to identify specific reading skill gaps
  - Evidence-based instruction for all students and those receiving intervention supports
  - Continuous progress monitoring

Start the site work: a long term reading plan.

Colorado READS Act

Alaska has not started

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Phonological Awareness Simulation

- Earliest levels –**preschool to K-1, and struggling older readers**
- K-1, **and struggling older readers**
- 1st & 2nd grade, and **older struggling readers including adults**
- Late 2nd to 3rd grade and **older struggling readers including adults**

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MATANUSKA SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Large District Reading Outcomes

Presented to the Task Force on
Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia
October 22, 2018

Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District

- The Mat-Su School District spans an area larger than the entire state of West Virginia.
- MSBSD has 47 schools ranging in enrollment from 20 to 1,300 students.
- The district's enrollment is currently just over 19,000.

Statistics that Impact Instruction in the MSBSD

- The Mat-Su School District has a 38% Transient Rate
  - Students attending at least two schools in one year
- Diverse Student Population Needs
  - 4% are English Language Learners
  - 15% are in Special Education Services
    - 500 Qualify for Intensive Funding
  - 44% of the students live in poverty
    - 305 are Families in Transition (Homeless)

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Phi Delta Kappa (PDK) Audit 2002

- PDK is a professional organization whose mission is to be the experts in cultivating great educators for tomorrow while continuing to ensure high-quality education for today.
- 20 Findings
  - Policies are Inadequate to Provide Local Curriculum Management Direction
  - Curriculum Coordination Among Schools and Articulation by Grade Levels Are Minimal and Contribute to Unequal Access (**Transient Rate**)
  - The Scope of Assessment is Inadequate to Guide Curricular and Instructional Decision-Making
  - Program Interventions for Improvement of Student Achievement Lack Sufficient Design and Full Implementation

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum

"I rank this as the first factor… having the most impact on student achievement.

A guaranteed and viable curriculum is primarily a combination of an opportunity to learn and time."

Marzano, 2000

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

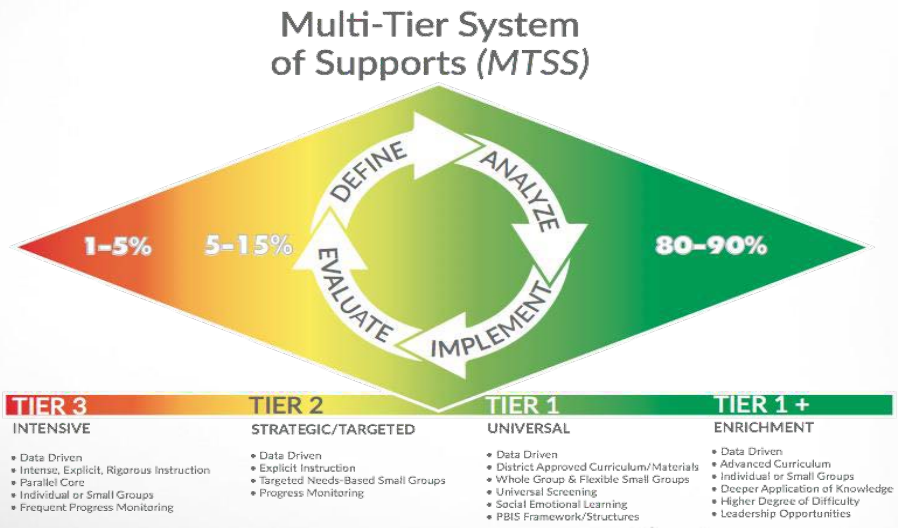
What are we going to teach?

- Literacy Curriculum Requirements
  - Explicit instruction in phonemic awareness
  - Systematic phonics instruction
  - Methods to improve fluency and oral reading
  - Methods to increase vocabulary
  - Ways to enhance comprehension

"Teaching Children to Read Report"
National Reading Panel, 2000

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

How are we going to teach students?



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Tier 1 Instruction

- All students receive high quality, scientifically based core instruction in the general education classroom. Universal screening data is used to identify student academic needs.
  - Core should be effective for at least 80% of your students. If it is not, **you have a core problem**.

- <u>Tier 1 Core Literacy Program</u>:
  - Elementary: Journeys by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
  - Secondary: Collections by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Tier 2 Instruction
Core + More

- All students requiring additional academic support, receive small group supplemental instruction
  - Teachers progress monitor (bi-weekly) using multiple assessments; AIMSweb, and program-embedded assessments

- Tier 2 Programs: SRA Direct Instruction, Sonday, Read Naturally, Lexia Core 5, Moby Max, and Rewards

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Tier 3 Instruction
Core Replacement

- All Students who require significant academic support, receive intensive strategic specifically designed instruction to meet student needs.
  - Typically, instruction is delivered in small group and time is extended beyond instruction provided in Tier 1.
  - Frequent progress monitoring (Weekly) is used to determine the impact of the intervention on student learning.

- Tier 3 programs: SRA Direct Instruction-Reading Mastery Signatures, Corrective Reading, and Spelling Mastery
  - Tier 3 Often Requires a Layering of Tier 2 Interventions to Create a Comprehensive Literacy Program
    - Example: Corrective Reading Decoding, Corrective Reading Comprehension, Spelling Mastery, and a Writing Intervention

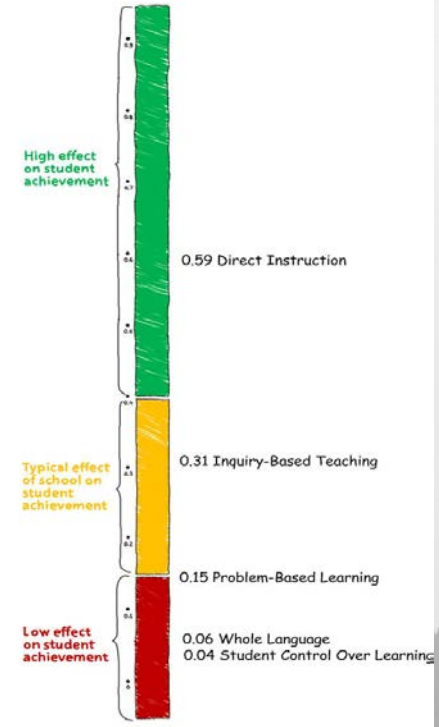
MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Tier 3
Direct Instruction Requirement

Meta-Analysis of 300 research studies exploring the impact Direct Instruction has on student results:

- Above Average Gains for students of all ages

John Hattie



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

How are we going to assess student learning?

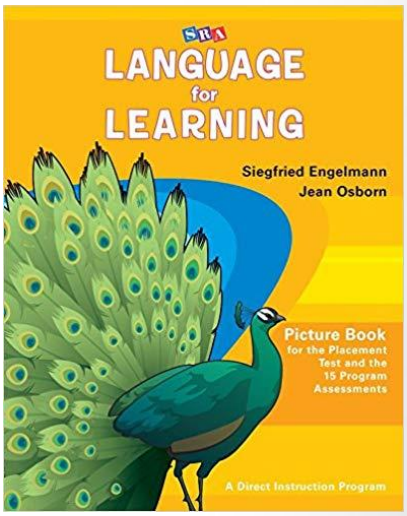
- Assessment Format
  - **Universal Screening – All Students**
    - AIMSweb (Fall, Winter, and Spring)
      - Kindergarten: Letter Naming and Letter Sound
      - 1st through 3rd: Reading Curriculum-Based Measures (R-CBM)
    - Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)
      - Fall and Spring for All Students; Recommend Winter for Targeted Students
      - 2nd through 10th Grade
  - **Program Embedded Assessments – All Students**
    - All literacy programs have built in unit assessments
  - **Progress Monitoring – Targeted Students**
    - AIMSweb assessment is administered depending on the intensity of intervention and student need
      - Tier 2: Bi-Weekly Tier 3: Weekly

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

What do we do if student's aren't learning?

Addressing the Achievement Gap in K-1

"Children who enter school with limited vocabulary knowledge grow more discrepant over time from their peers who have rich vocabulary knowledge."



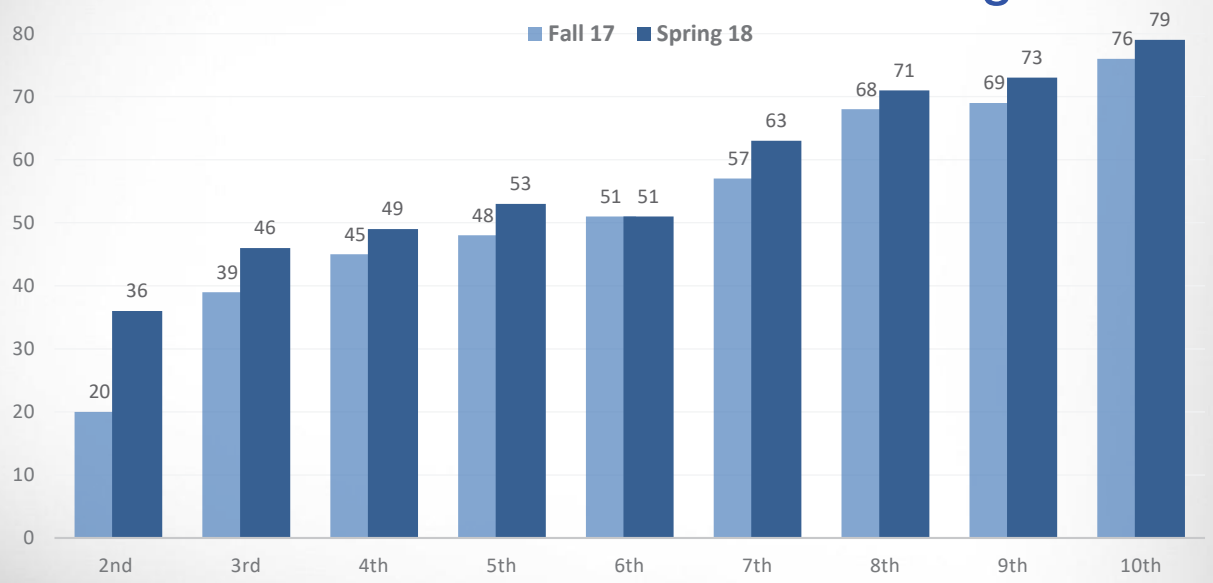
Baker, Simmons, & Kame'enui, 1997

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

What does reading achievement look like in the Mat-Su?

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

MAP Reading Achievement Data
National Percentile Rankings



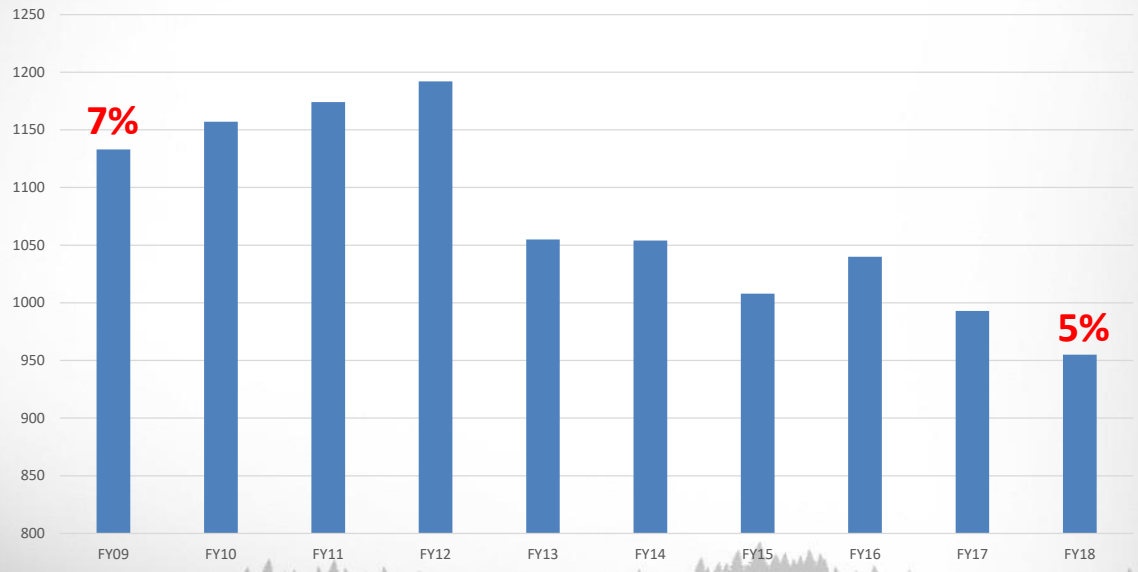
MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.E.A.K.S - AK State Assessment Results
English/Language Arts, Spring 2018

Alaska	**42%**
Anchorage	46%
Fairbanks	46%
Juneau	48%
Kenai	50%
Mat-Su	**51%**

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

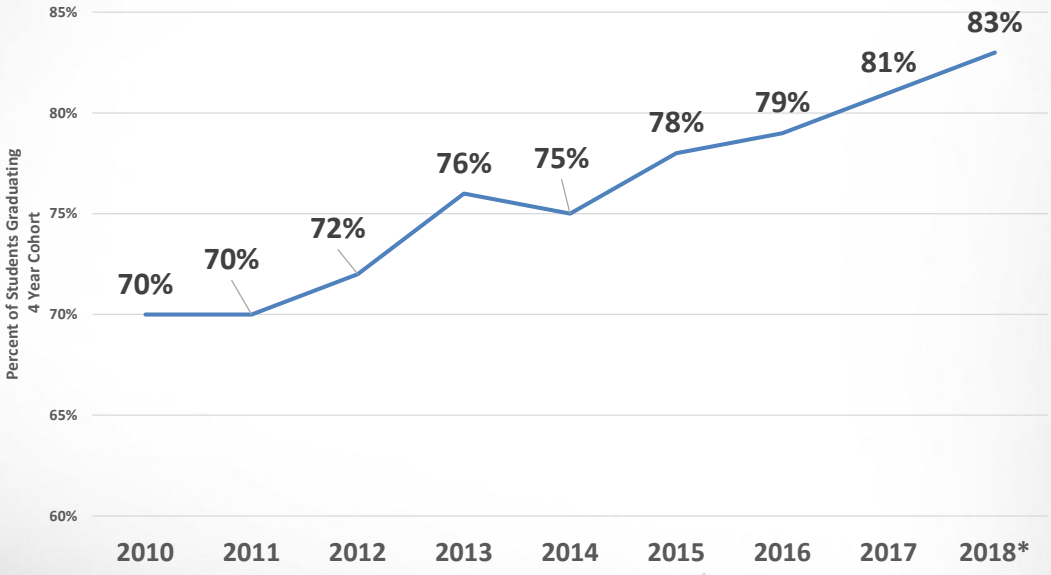
Special Ed: Learning Disability Qualification Rates



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

24% Reduction in LD Eligible Students

Mat-Su Graduation Rates



*2018 Projection

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Questions
MATANUSKA-SUSITNA
BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

SMALLER AND MORE RURAL DISTRICT OUTCOMES

Strategies for the Science of Reading in Small Schools

OVERVIEW

- About Me
- A MTSS Model
  - Elements of Effective Reading Instruction
  - School-Wide Strategies
  - School-Wide Supports
  - TIERS
    - Assessment
    - Instruction
    - Intervention
    - Progress Monitoring
    - Professional Development
- Outcomes of the System
  - Data Charts
- My Son's Story
- Questions

ABOUT ME

- Originally from Metlakatla, graduate of UAS and UAA, now live in Ketchikan
- Director of Student Services in Hydaburg
- Principal at Craig Elementary and Middle School from 2001-2008
- Director of STRIVE Dyslexia Program from 2008-2009
- PRIDE Dyslexia Reading Program (tutoring business, private sector) from 2010–2016
- Parent of 3 dyslexic children, now adults

A MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT (RTI) MODEL

Focusing on All Readers

ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE READING INSTRUCTION

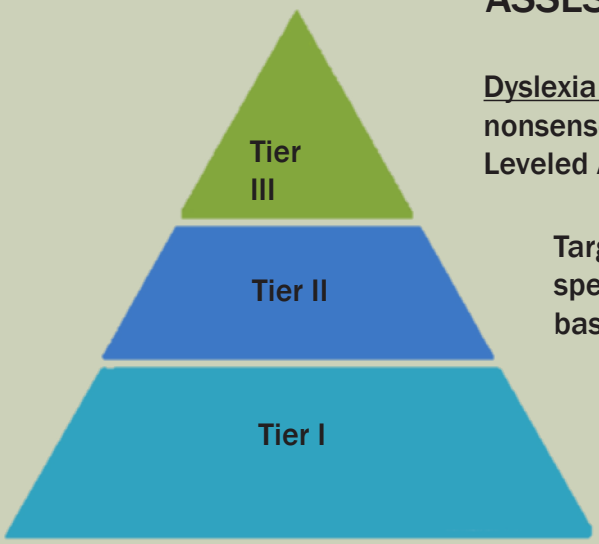
- Phonemic awareness and the teaching of phonics
- Decoding and word studies, including the learning of a sight vocabulary
- Language development, to include vocabulary development
- The explicit teaching of comprehension strategies
- Meaningful writing experiences
- The development of fluent reading by reading and rereading familiar texts
- A wide-range of reading materials
- Opportunities for both guided and independent reading

SCHOOL WIDE READING STRATEGIES

- Approved curriculum that addresses all areas of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension and vocabulary.
- An aligned reading hour in K – 8th grade. All reading was during a 60 minute period in the morning so students could move "one up or one down" so that teachers were not charged with teaching a wide variety of levels in their rooms.
- Consistent professional development on the approved reading curriculum and on strategies in teaching reading. This included understanding and awareness of dyslexia.
- Title 1 program with a reading specialist and research-based best practice reading interventions – Tier II intervention.
- Dyslexia program that provided assessment, tutoring, and advocacy for students. Tier II & III intervention.

SCHOOL WIDE READING SUPPORTS

- Strengths-based approach where all students have ability to shine.
- Technology (1:1 computing for most grade levels, 24/7 for 6th through 12th)
- A 20-minute leveled guided reading time at the middle school using engaging curriculum resources.
- Monthly activities focused on reading in school and in the community – Lit Expo, Read In's, Dr. Suess Day.
- Recess and other breaks were considered essential to quality learning as was PE. These were not taken away to provide more reading instruction or to "discipline" for slow reading.
- Professional development time for teachers built into weekly schedule. Time was used for professional learning, data examination, and collaborative planning.



ASSESSMENT

Dyslexia Screening: CTOPP, GORT-4, nonsense word test, Slingerland Leveled Assessments, sight word test

Targeted assessment based on specific deficit skills, classroom based.

- K-6 DIBELS, AIMS, MAPS
- SORT-R (Slosson Oral Reading)
- Curriculum-based classroom assessment

All students are assessed in the first 6 weeks of school. Support from Title I program, program aides, and parent volunteers. District standards for acceptable assessment results are in place.

Dyslexia
Descriptive Matrix

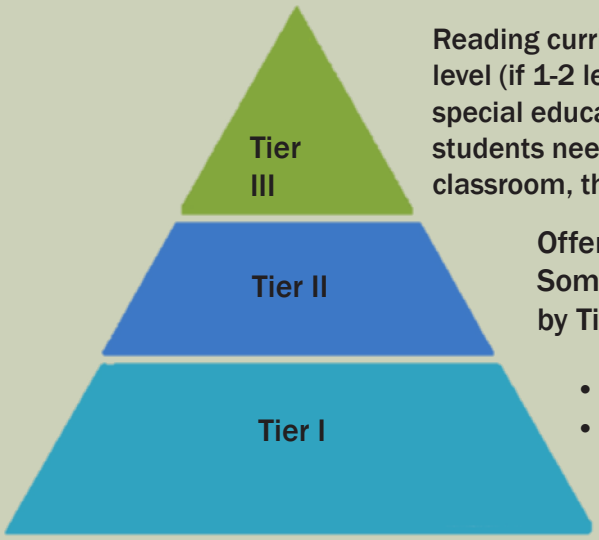
Name

ssion

Point value of Symptoms indicated (list of 20 classic symptoms of dyslexia)

CMB Draft 2/8/09

INSTRUCTION



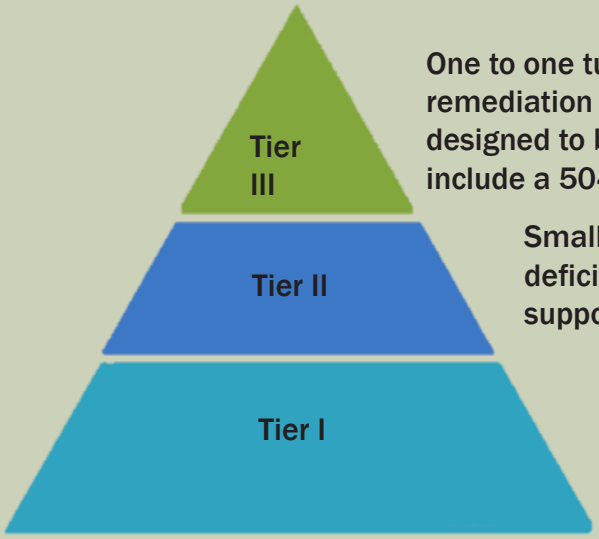
Reading curriculum at students' appropriate reading level (if 1-2 levels below). Offered in small groups in special education room, reading or STRIVE room. If students needs can be accommodated in regular classroom, they remain. May include 504 or IEP.

Offered via groupings in regular classroom. Some pull out/step in instruction completed by Title I or reading specialist.

- School wide curriculum implementation.
- Supplemental instruction in fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and phonics as needed. Classroom teacher support.

K-5 and 6-8 reading curriculums were selected for alignment with Alaska State Standards as well as for quality "coverage" of skills indicated by the Science of Reading.

INTERVENTION



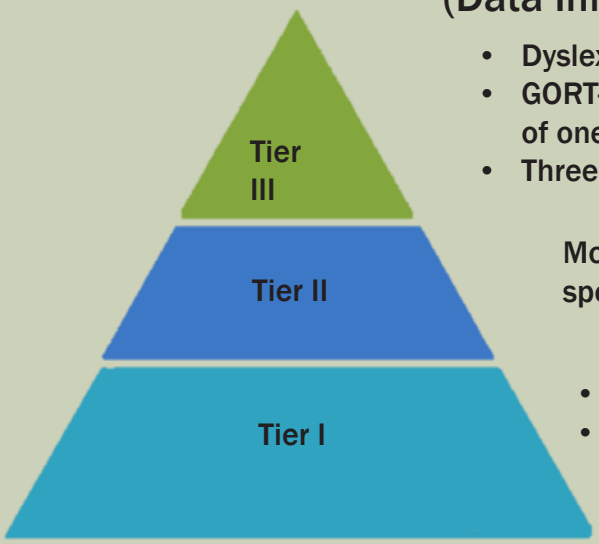
One to one tutoring with individual trained in dyslexia remediation methods using specific curriculum designed to be multi-sensory and sequential. May include a 504 or IEP.

Small group instruction for specific areas of deficit. Title I supports, reading specialist supports.

Large group interventions based on needs of students in class overall.

Initial interventions are based on assessments, then progress monitoring determines if further intervention is needed. Students move from Tier II to Tier III as appropriate.

PROGRESS MONITORING
(Data Informed Decision Making)



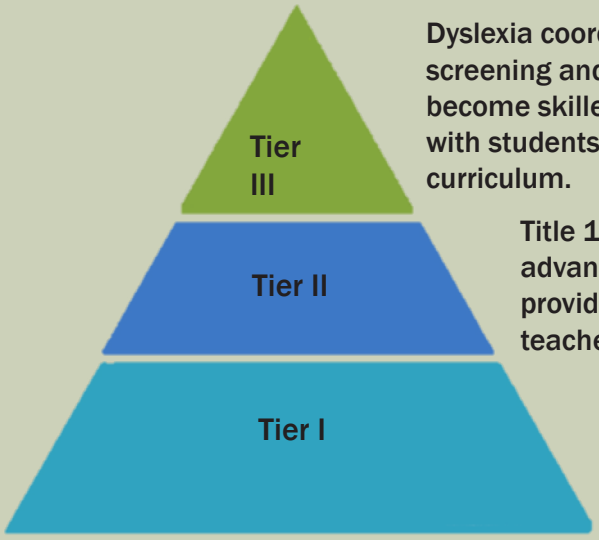
- Dyslexia curriculum Progress
- GORT-4 after every (approx.) 30 sessions of one-to-one tutoring/instruction
- Three times yearly DIBELS, MAPS, AIMS

Monthly using assessment aligned to specific area of challenge.

- Three times yearly DIBELS, MAPS, AIMS
- Classroom data reflecting phonemic awareness, capacity with phonics, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary

Monitoring progress and collecting data on all students is essential to understanding if instruction is effective for each student. A variety of assessment processes may be used to help inform systemic improvement.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Dyslexia coordinators are trained in dyslexia screening and accommodations. They also become skilled tutors. Tutors are trained to work with students using dyslexia remediation curriculum.

Title 1 and Reading Specialist engage in advanced learning about reading in order to provide additional training for classroom teachers.

Teachers trained on reading instruction, Alaska State Standards and the district adopted curriculum. Professional learning about dyslexia accommodations in the classroom.

Professional development that includes the elements of the Science of Reading should be addressed consistently with teachers. Helping teachers to understand how to recognize dyslexia and thereby support students with dyslexia is also essential.

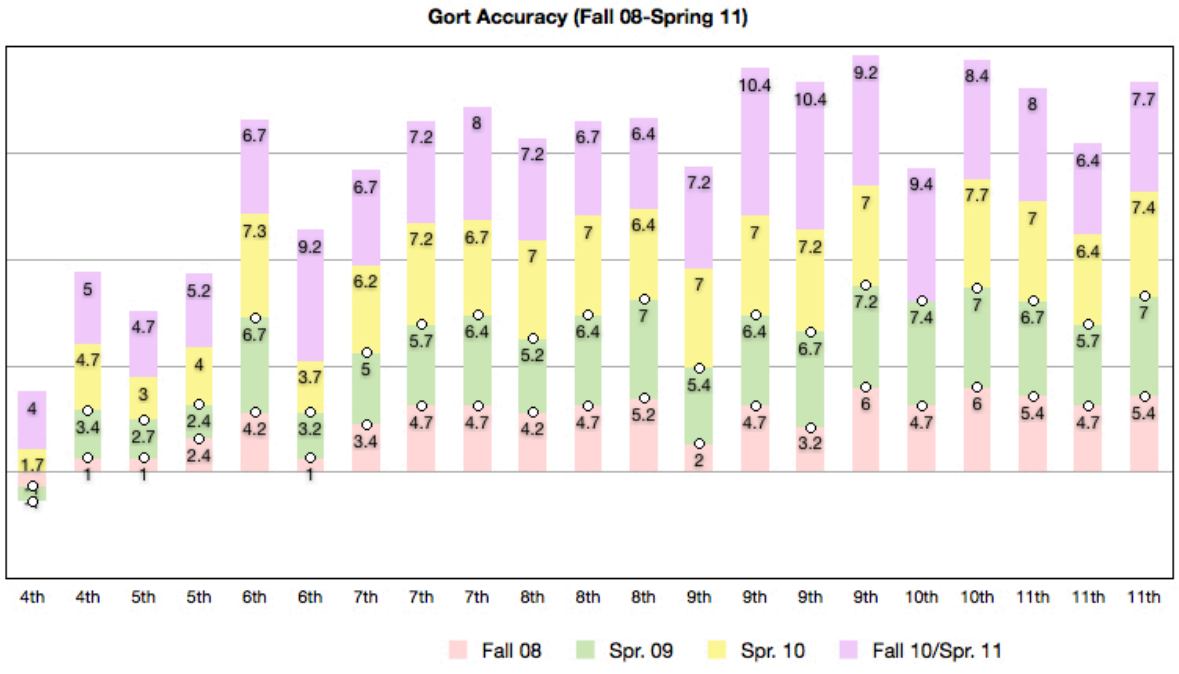
OUTCOMES OF THE SYSTEM

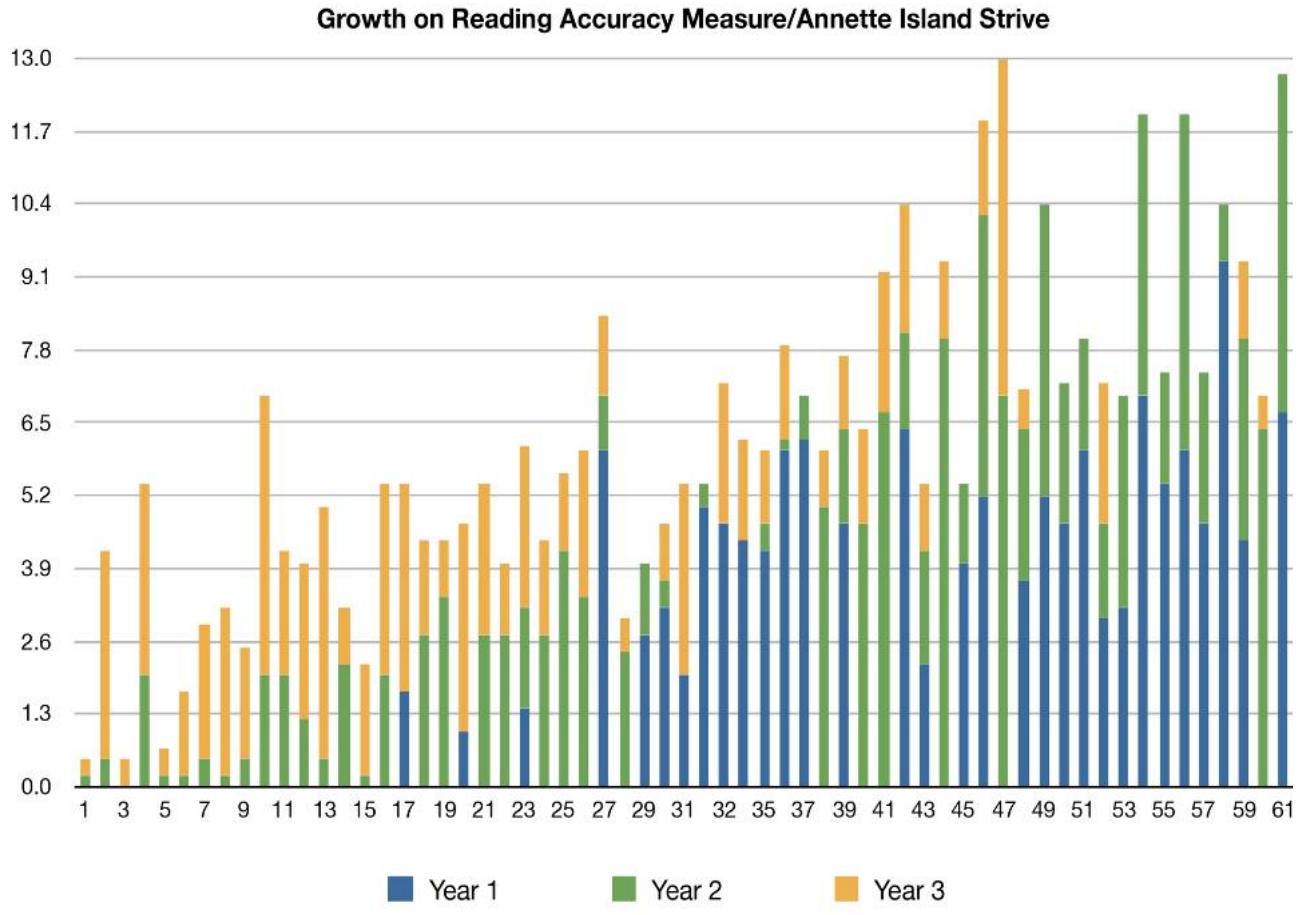
TIER II & III Gains

STUDENTS SERVED BY DYSLEXIA PROGRAM

- GRANT 1 – 2006 TO 2008 (Craig, Klawock, Hydaburg, Annette)
- GRANT 2 – 2009 TO 2011 (Craig, Klawock, Hydaburg, Annette)
- GRANT 3 – 2012 TO 2014 (Craig, Klawock, Hydaburg, Annette)
- GRANT 4 – 2015 TO 2017 (Craig, Klawock)

- Currently Craig City School District is operating the dyslexia program with general funds.
- Annette Island School District operated on general funds from 2015 to 2017.
- Hydaburg is now reconstituting their dyslexia program from their general fund.
- **Of the enrolled students in 2014 at the end of the consortium grants, of 777 students in the four districts, 307 had been served by the dyslexia program. That is 39.5% of students.**





MY SON'S STORY

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Alaska Legislative Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia

AGENDA
Wednesday, October 31, 2018
Anchorage LIO Denali Conference Room
Internet Stream: http://akleg.gov/index.php#tab5

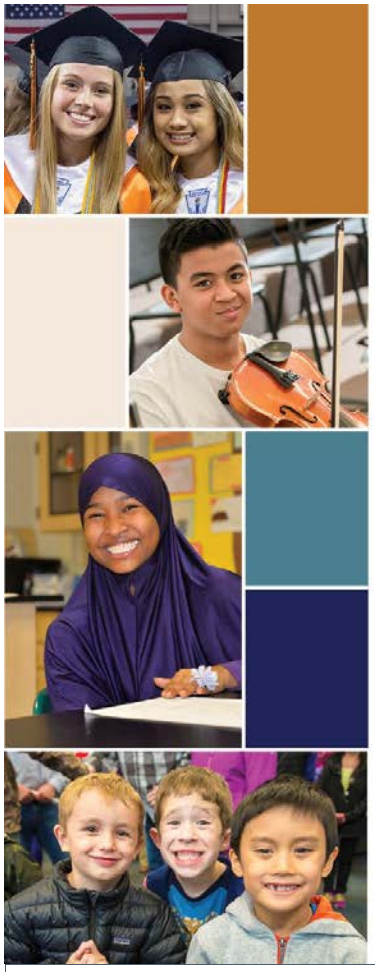
1:00 p.m.	Call to Order
	Opening/Introductions
1:10 p.m	Dianne Orr, Director, K-12 Teaching & Learning, Anchorage School District
	"Large District and Urban Reading Outcomes"
1:30 p.m.	Stephanie Cornwell, NWABSD
	"Smaller and More Rural District Reading Outcomes"
1:50 p.m.	Q & A with Dianne Orr & Stephanie Cornwell
2:10 p.m.	Break
2:20 p.m.	Department of Education & Early Development
	"Reviewing Assessment Data".
3:20 p.m.	Q&A with the Department of Education & Early Development
3:50 p.m.	General Discussion and Wrap up

HOMEWORK

Watch 30 minutes of video from Alaska Education Challenge Kickoff. Begin at the 60 minute mark:
https://vimeo.com/214584259

Watch Wisconsin Reading Task Force Video from their July 9, 2018 Meeting (75 min). Begin a 23:00 minutes:

http://www.wiseye.org/Video-Archive/Event-Detail/evhdid/12533.



Large District and Urban Reading Outcomes

Dianne Orr, Director, K-12 Teaching & Learning

Dr. Deena Bishop, Superintendent

Anchorage School District

October 31, 2018

Anchorage School District

- 48,089 Students (May 2017)
- Minority student groups comprise more than 50% of student population
  - African American: **5%** with 2,380 students
  - Alaska Native/American Indian: **9%** with 3,815 Alaska Native students and 265 American Indian students
  - Asian: **11%** with 5,059 students
  - Two or More Races: **16%** with 7,369 students
  - Hispanic: **12%** with 5,374 students
  - Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: **7%** with 3,077 students
  - Caucasian: **41%** with 19,366 students

Anchorage School District

- Diversity of language
- **80%** of ASD families speak English at home
- Remaining **20%** represented by more than **100** languages
  - Five most prevalent languages
    - Spanish: 1394
    - Samoan: 1238
    - Hmong: 1008
    - Filipino: 811
    - Yupik: 300

Anchorage School District

Variables that Impact Instruction	Number	Percent
Child in Transition, Homeless	1,099	2%
Economically Disadvantaged	24,565	53%
English Language Learners	7,190	15%
Gifted and Talented	3,800	8%
Migrant	2,976	6%
Students With Disabilities	7,014	15%
Title VII/Indian Education	6,944	15%

Literacy Need

- 2012 ASD adopted Common Core State Standards (CCSS)
  - Increased rigor of teaching standards
  - Data demonstrated that teaching practices did not universally change
- Last English Language Arts (ELA) material adoption was in 2005 and not aligned with CCSS
- Transient rate of approximately 30%
  - Student learning was impacted by the inconsistency of instruction across District

Literacy Assessments

- **AIMSweb Reading Curriculum Based Measures** (2nd grade) in Spring 2018: **59.86%** of students are Proficient
- **MAP** (Measures of Academic Performance) in Fall 2018 : **51.58%** of students rank above the 50th Percentile in English Language Arts (ELA)
- **PEAKS** (2018): **45.55%** of students are Proficient or Advanced in ELA
- **PEAKS Accountability Report** (2018): **3rd Grade Reading Level**
  - District range among schools is **6% to 80%** proficiency
  - **46** out of **69** schools have a rate of **50% or lower** proficiency
  - **One** school out of **69** reached **80%** proficiency

PEAKS
PERFORMANCE EVALUATION FOR ALASKA'S SCHOOLS

Learning Plan: Tiered Instruction

TIER 3 Intensive	TIER 2 Strategic/Targeted	TIER 1 Universal	TIER 1+ Enrichment/ Acceleration

- Multi-Tiered System of Support/Response to Instruction (MTSS/RTI) infrastructure
- Tiered instruction varies to meet student needs
  - Tier 1 & 1+: Robust classroom instruction – core instruction
  - Tier 2: Instructional support targeting needs in addition to core instruction
  - Tier 3: Instructional support – often replacement core instruction
- Data driven
- Instructional methodologies vary between tiers
- Curriculum varies to better support student learning

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)

4th Grade Class

Grade	Test Date	RIT (+/- Std Err)	Percentile (+/- Std Err)	Lexile® Range
4	09/29/17	141-**145**-149	1-1-1	BR
4	09/29/17	163-**166**-169	1-**2**-4	BR
4	09/19/17	170-**173**-176	4-**6**-9	15-165L
4	09/19/17	174-**177**-180	7-**10**-14	87-237L
4	09/15/17	175-**178**-181	7-**11**-16	105-255L
4	09/19/17	186-**189**-192	23-**30**-37	303-453L
4	09/19/17	187-**190**-193	25-**32**-40	321-471L
4	09/19/17	189-**192**-195	29-**37**-45	357-507L
4	09/19/17	189-**192**-195	29-**37**-45	357-507L
4	09/19/17	191-**194**-197	33-**42**-50	393-543L
4	09/19/17	191-**194**-198	33-**42**-51	393-543L
4	09/19/17	193-**196**-199	38-**47**-55	429-579L
4	09/19/17	193-**196**-199	38-**47**-55	429-579L
4	09/19/17	194-**197**-200	41-**49**-58	447-597L
4	09/19/17	195-**198**-201	43-**52**-60	465-615L
4	09/19/17	197-**200**-203	48-**57**-65	501-651L
4	09/19/17	198-**201**-204	51-**59**-67	519-669L
4	09/19/17	202-**205**-208	61-**69**-76	591-741L
4	09/29/17	208-**211**-214	74-**81**-86	699-849L
4	09/19/17	217-**220**-224	89-**93**-95	861-1011L

Tier 3 Need:
Replacement Core

Tier 2 Need:
Core plus more

Tier 1 Need:
Core plus differentiation

Tier 1 Need:
Core plus acceleration

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)

8th Grade Class

Grade	Test Date	RIT (+/- Std Err)	Percentile (+/- Std Err)	Lexile® Range
8	05/03/17	176-**179**-182	1-**1**-1	123-273L
8	05/09/17	185-**188**-191	1-**2**-3	285-435L
8	05/03/17	188-**191**-194	2-**3**-5	339-489L
8	05/03/17	193-**196**-199	4-**6**-10	429-579L
8	05/04/17	193-**196**-199	4-**6**-10	429-579L
8	05/03/17	195-**198**-202	5-**8**-12	465-615L
8	05/03/17	200-**203**-206	10-**14**-20	555-705L
8	05/04/17	200-**203**-207	10-**14**-20	555-705L
8	05/03/17	202-**205**-208	12-**17**-23	591-741L
8	05/04/17	203-**206**-210	13-**19**-25	609-759L
8	05/04/17	205-**208**-212	16-**22**-30	645-795L
8	05/03/17	205-**208**-211	16-**22**-30	645-795L
8	05/03/17	208-**211**-214	22-**29**-36	699-849L
8	05/03/17	209-**212**-215	24-**31**-39	717-867L
8	05/04/17	209-**212**-216	23-**31**-39	717-867L
8	05/03/17	210-**213**-216	26-**33**-41	735-885L
8	05/03/17	211-**214**-218	28-**36**-44	753-903L
8	05/04/17	213-**216**-220	32-**40**-49	789-939L
8	05/03/17	217-**220**-223	42-**51**-59	861-1011L
8	05/04/17	221-**224**-228	52-**61**-69	933-1083L
8	05/04/17	223-**226**-230	57-**65**-73	969-1119L
8	05/03/17	225-**228**-231	62-**70**-77	1005-1155L
8	05/04/17	225-**228**-231	62-**70**-77	1005-1155L
8	05/03/17	226-**229**-232	65-**72**-79	1023-1173L
8	05/03/17	232-**235**-239	77-**84**-89	1131-1281L

Tier 3 Need:
Replacement Core

Tier 2 Need:
Core plus more

Tier 1 Need:
Core plus differentiation

Tier 1 Need:
Core plus acceleration[9]

Scheduling for Elementary Possibilities for Students

(**Conceptual Plan** to Assist in Prioritizing Time)

- 90 Minutes Reading
- 40 Minutes Language Arts
- 40 Minutes WIN
- 45 Minutes Lunch/Recess
- 50 Minutes Special (~240/5)
- 60 Minutes Math
- 30 Minutes SS/Science/SEL
- 35 Minutes Transitions/Other

Red ELA → Yellow ELA → Green ELA → Green Blue

All Students
(Planning for the Year)
Social Studies (40)
Science (40)
SEL (25)
Other (65): Handwriting Without Tears; Flex time; Keyboarding; Field trips; Art & writing; etc.

Enrichment/Acceleration
(Planning for Possibilities)
Social Studies
Science
Ignite
Reading or Writing
Art & writing
Other: Robotics, Battle of Books, Jr. Achievement, AK Resource Education

Math intervention as needed

Updated 9/7/2018

Literacy Plan: What

- Research based English Language Arts (ELA) Curriculum
- 5 elements of ELA instruction
  - Phonemic Awareness
  - Phonics
  - Fluency
  - Vocabulary
  - Comprehension
- Standards based (AK Standards/CCSS)

Literacy Plan: How

- Priority plans
  - Prioritize “must do” and pacing
  - Layer on Routine Templates for effective instruction
  - Layer on *Reading Strategy and Skill Resource* to enhance instruction (additional instructional resource)
  - Ensure deep learning with priority standards
- Explicit and systematic instruction for all grades, must include:
  - A focus on critical content, skills, and strategies
  - Concepts taught easiest to hardest
  - Clear directions and research based instructional routines
  - Modeling with sufficient practice and a gradual release of responsibility that leads to mastery learning
  - Student engagement, careful monitoring, and corrective feedback

Literacy Plan: Implementation/Practice

- Building competency in evidence based reading instruction
- Instructional coaches
  - Data mining
  - Modeling/supporting at the classroom level
  - Supporting Multi-Tiered System of Support/Response to Instruction (MTSS/RTI) infrastructure
- Consultant
  - Learning walks
  - Overview of implementation process/progress
- Training
  - Principals and instructional coaches
  - Site-based professional development

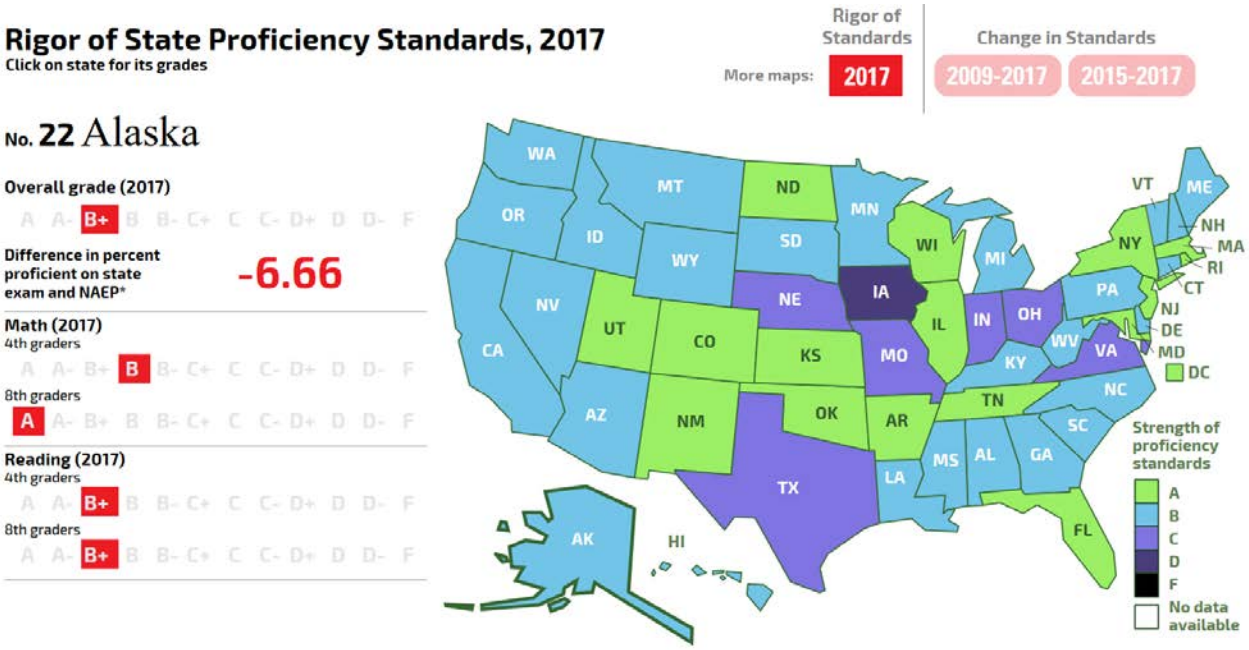
Monitoring Learning Progress

- Universal Screening – All Students
  - AIMSweb (Fall, Winter, Spring)
    - Kindergarten: Letter Naming Fluency, Letter Sound Fluency, Phoneme Segmentation Fluency, and Nonsense Word Fluency
    - 1st Grade: Nonsense Word Fluency and Reading Curriculum-Based Measurement (R-CBM)
    - 2nd Grade: R-CBM
  - MAP Growth (Fall, Winter, and Spring)
    - 3rd – 9th Grade: MAP Growth
    - 10th – 12th Grade Tiers 2 & 3
- Program Embedded Assessments – All Students
  - Formative check by classroom teacher (observations, clipboard checks, exit tickets, etc.)
- Progress Monitoring
  - Ensure catch-up growth
  - Tier 2 (bi-weekly) and Tier 3 (weekly)

ASD Roadblocks

- Historically no districtwide instructional framework
- Application of researched “what works” in classroom instructional practice
- Change: Learning a new curriculum with increased rigor
- Change: Alignment to Common Core State Standards
- Difficulty of change
- Academic freedom
- Time for professional learning

State Support: Learning Standards



* This number shows for a given state in 2017 the difference in the percentage of students who were labeled proficient on the state exam and NAEP (National Assessment for Educational Progress). A negative number indicates that more students were identified as proficient on the state exam than were identified as proficient on NAEP.

State Support

- Alaska Challenge
- Senate Bill 99 – Preschool expansion
- Senate Bill 104 – Research Based Curriculum
- Current Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia Task Force
- PEAKS Accountability Report
  - Highlights ELA
  - 3rd Grade Reading

Cost of Low Literacy

9 out of **10** high school dropouts struggled to read in third grade. *-The Annie E. Casey Foundation*

Youth who fail to complete high school by age 20 are **7** times more likely to be persistently poor. *-The Urban Institute*

2/3 of all youth in the juvenile court system could not read in fourth grade. *-U.S. Department of Justice*

3.1 Billion spent annually to improve the literacy skills of entry level workers. *-National Commission on Writing*

What is the cost of low literacy in our state?

“Paramount to Alaska is that public education will ensure a literate citizenry. The ability to read, write, and communicate is a guarantee we must provide our children. Literacy is a cornerstone of our democracy and the hope for their future.”

-Dr. Deena Bishop, Superintendent of Anchorage School District

Educating All Students for Success in Life

19

Alaska Legislative Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia

AGENDA
Monday, November 19, 2018
Anchorage LIO Denali Conference Room, 1500 W. Benson Blvd.
Internet Stream: http://akleg.gov/index.php#tab5

1:00 p.m.	Call to Order
	Opening/Introductions
1:05 p.m	Skit by Decoding Dyslexia Kids
1:10 p.m.	Nancy Duggan, Decoding Dyslexia, Massachusetts
2:10 p.m.	Break
2:25 p.m.	Q & A with Nancy Duggan
2:45 p.m.	Audie Alumbaugh, Decoding Dyslexia, Arkansas
3:45 p.m.	Break
4:00 p.m.	Q & A with Audie Alumbaugh

HOMEWORK

Please listen to the first 2 of this four part NPR series on dyslexia broadcasted in 2016.

Part 1:

https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2016/11/28/502601662/millions-have-dyslexia-few-understand-it

Part 2:

https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2016/11/29/503693391/researchers-study-what-makes-dyslexic-brains-different

Please watch this important debate that demonstrates the divide amongst reading professors in Australia, and which shows that the silos in reading instruction is a problem globally:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=snUNsYfrxjY

Attached, and on BASIS for meeting three, please read the Youman and Mather 2018 update on dyslexia laws in the USA.

Attached and on BASIS please read *By Focusing on Dyslexia, We Address the Needs of All Children*, By Rick Smith, CEO, and Jennifer Topple, Board Chair, International Dyslexia Association.

Attached, and on BASIS, please read the "Overview of State Reading Screening Requirements, Practices and Research."

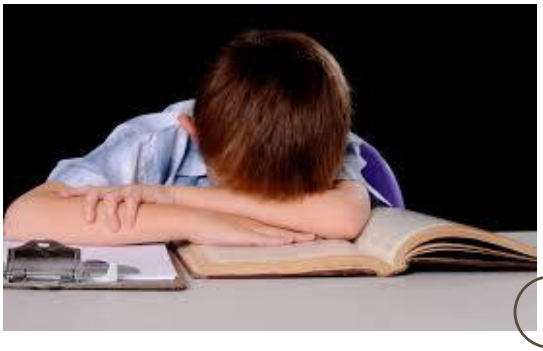
Finally, please watch the video linked below, in which Dr. Vinnie Alfonso, Dean the School of Education at Gonzaga University, speaks to the need for Universal Screening for reading that is critical to helping struggling readers, and the cost savings in our schools when it is done well:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=64eCpKc03P0&feature=youtu.be

ALASKA READS: MEANINGFUL READING IMPROVEMENT

Alaska – 30% of students are learning to Read according to the NAEP and historical Standards Based Assessments (normalized)

Alaska can do better, based on the science of reading.



2

MATHERS AND YOUMAN 2018 SUMMARY OF DYSLEXIA LAWS

- Awareness
- Pilots for Screening & Intervention
- Teacher Training
- Provision of Intervention/Accommodations
- Overall Rights
- Prescriptiveness

3

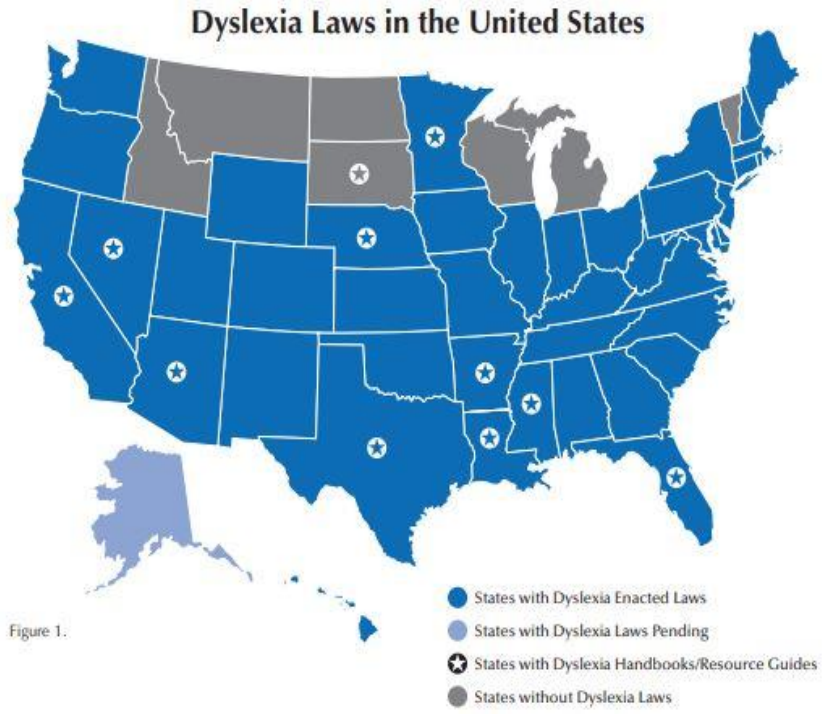


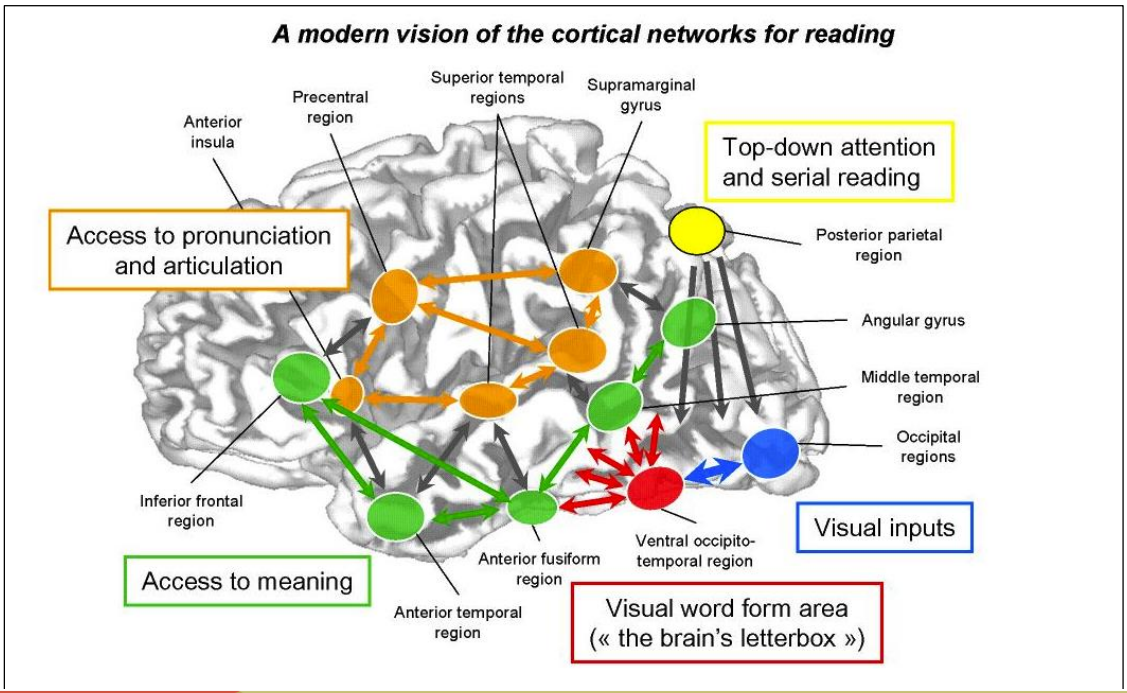
Figure 1.

In less than 10 years this issue is the number 1 issue according to the Superintendents Association. The problem is real, the response is varied.

TEACH EVERY CHILD TO READ

- Reading is Essential
- Teaching Reading is Urgent
- Teaching Reading is Complex
- Science tells us almost <u>all</u> students can be taught to read

NOT BORN TO READ – WE KNOW BETTER NOW

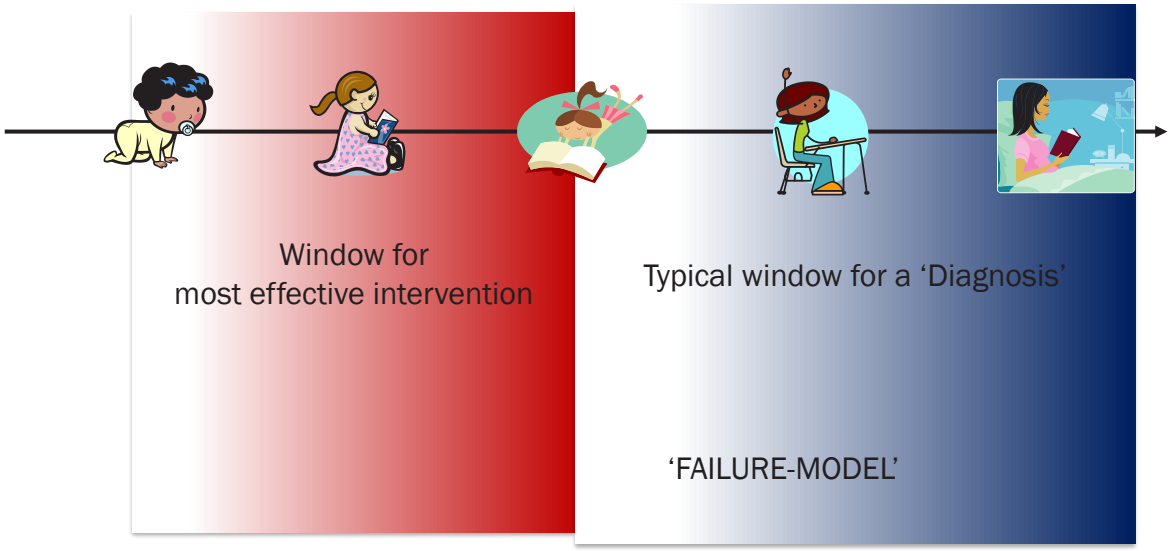


WAITING FOR DYSLEXIA: WITHOUT IDENTIFICATION ...

- Brain structure and formation does not benefit from early targeted intervention
- Specialized, effective, targeted intervention is not ensured.
- Resources, time and effort are misdirected.
- Reading failure rather than third grade proficiency.

7

THE DYSLEXIA PARADOX



Learning to read → Reading to learn

8

There is an extensive scientific knowledge base in reading.

We know more about reading development and teaching reading than any other area in education

Research suggests that 95% of students population can attain average reading skills with the implementation of intensive and systematic intervention (Torgesen, 2000)

But not if we do not teach every child to read.

Child Find Mandate in IDEA – An Obligation and Duty for the state

Identify, locate and evaluate all children with disabilities
Age birth to 21

This requirement to Identify all children exists even if child is not receiving services: Districts must have a method of determining which children with disabilities are receiving special education and related services and which children are not. (20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(3)

Covers children who attend private or public schools, highly mobile children, migrant children, homeless children, and children who are wards of the state. (20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(3))

NOTE: The mandate applies to all children who are suspected of having a disability, including children who receive passing grades and are "**advancing from grade to grade**." (34 CFR 300.111(c))

Are we identifying those that need specialized instruction before they fail ?

PHONOLOGICAL PROCESSES IMPACT SPEECH LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION (SL&C) AND THEREFORE READING.

As early as ages 4-5, screening in key phonological processing* skills can indicate a deficit that can adversely impact educational performance in reading.

These early deficits, are phonological processes that as language skills fall under the I.D.E.A. SL&C category even before reading failure. Therefore Child Find. Federal funds are provided for Child Find.

Speech or language impairment means a communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Title 34 › Subtitle B › Chapter III › Part 300 › Subpart A › Section 300.8

*Phonological Processing

- Phonemic Awareness
- Rapid automatized naming
- Phonological Memory
- Letter sound knowledge

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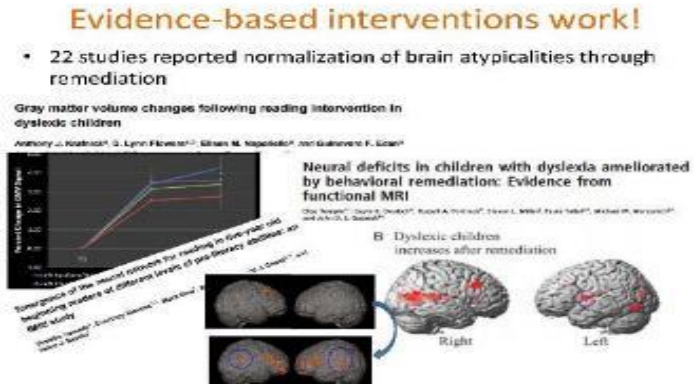
EARLY DEFICITS IN PHONOLOGICAL SKILLS CAN BE IDENTIFIED AND IMPROVED

Phonological Processing

- **Phonemic Awareness**
- **Rapid automatized naming**
- **Phonological Memory**
- **Letter sound knowledge**



12

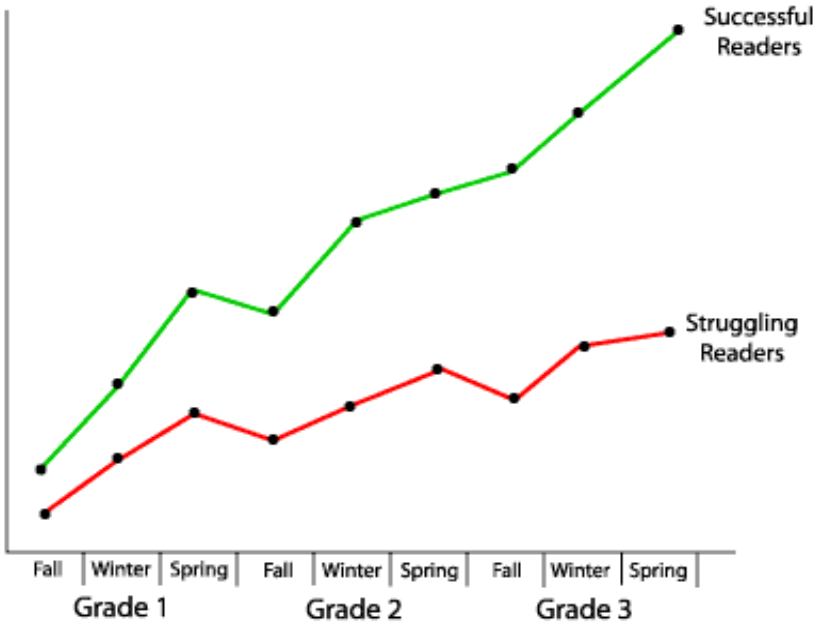
Massachusetts is FAILING to teach too many students to read.

The achievement gap begins before **3RD** grade and grows

The Matthew Effect :

Good Readers Read More

Poor Readers Read Less



13

PROVIDING INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS MORE THAN DOUBLES BETWEEN BETWEEN K AND 2ND GRADE AND AGAIN BY 5TH GRADE.

The number of students in "high incidence" IEP categories of, SLD (incl. dyslexia), Communication and Health (incl. ADD/ADHD)
Massachusetts
Increased from

20,000 (kindergarten)
40,000 (grade 2)
90,000 (grade 5)

General Education, Response to Intervention and Title 1 have failed
To teach proficient reading or ensure early identification for I.D.E.A.
For thousands of students in Massachusetts.

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ALASKA'S DATA:
PROVIDING INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS MORE THAN DOUBLES BETWEEN BETWEEN K AND 2ND GRADE AND AGAIN BY 5TH GRADE.

The number of students in "high incidence" IEP categories of, SLD (incl. dyslexia), Communication and Health (incl. ADD/ADHD) Increased from

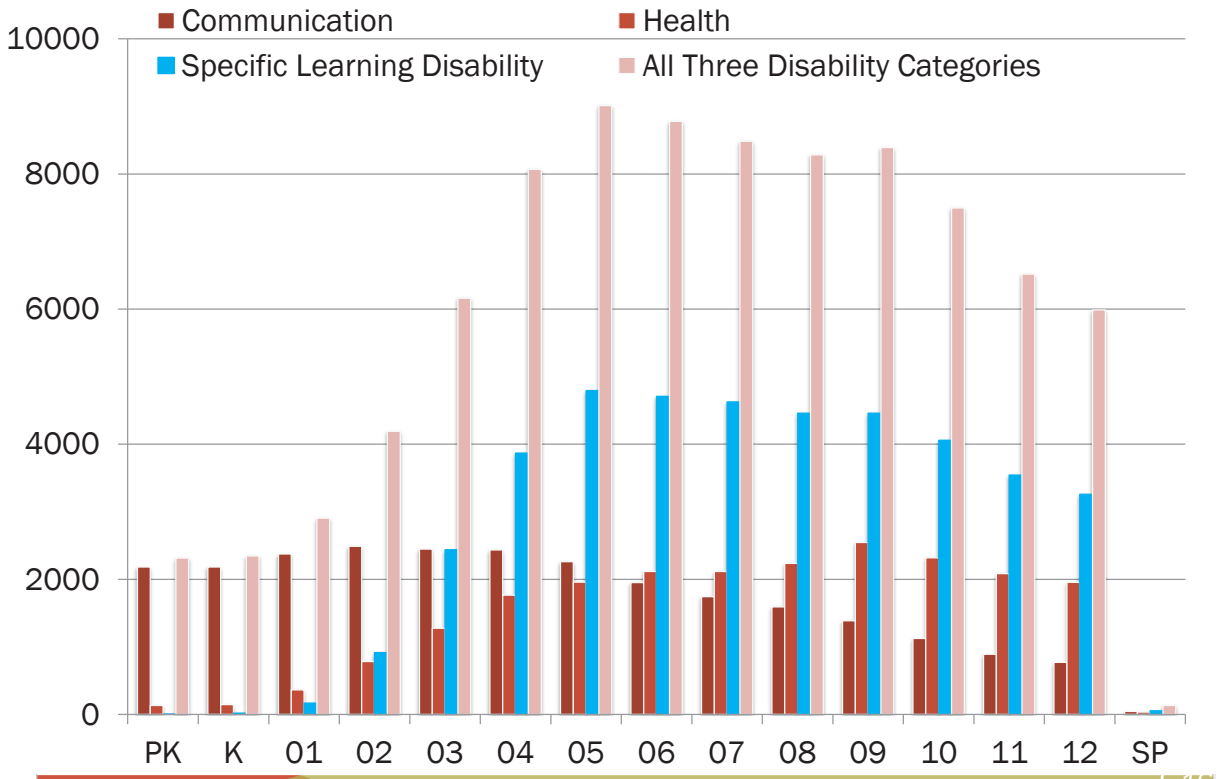
494 (kindergarten)
755 (grade 2) 36% increase
1172 (grade 5) 36% increase

General Education, Response to Intervention and Title 1 have failed To teach proficient reading or ensure early identification for I.D.E.A. For students in Alaska.

https://education.alaska.gov/sped/618data

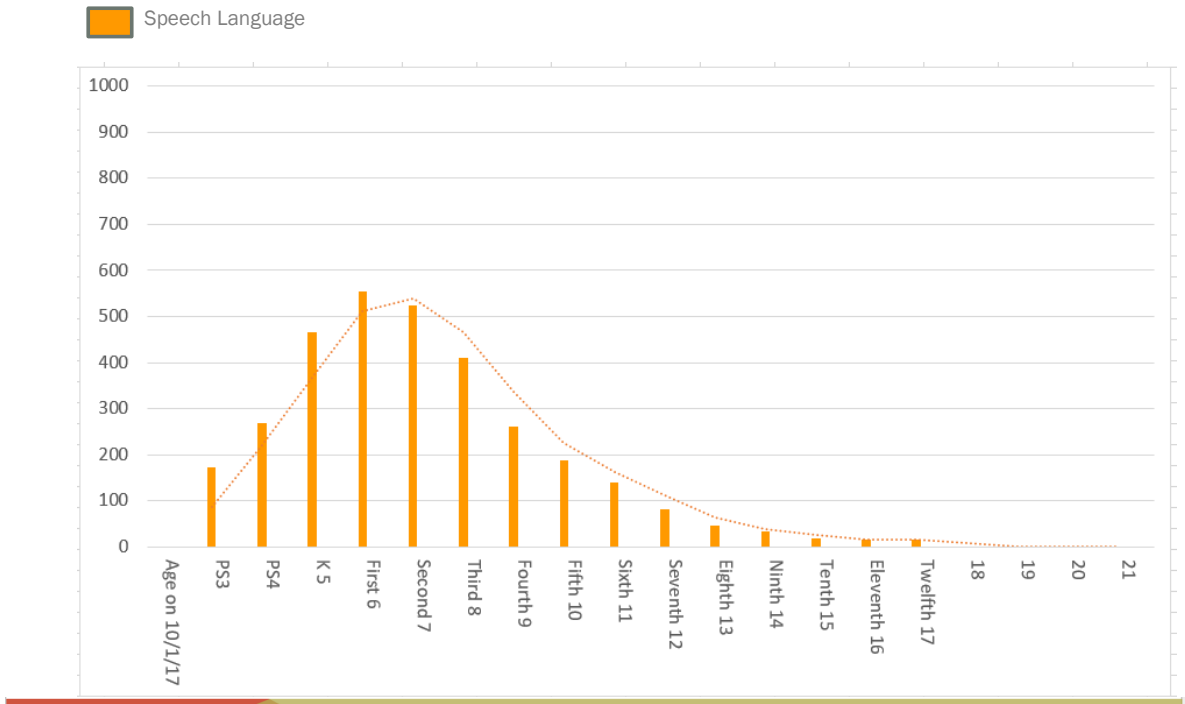
15

Most **Massachusetts** students receive an IEP after 2nd grade As typical students begin to read fluently.



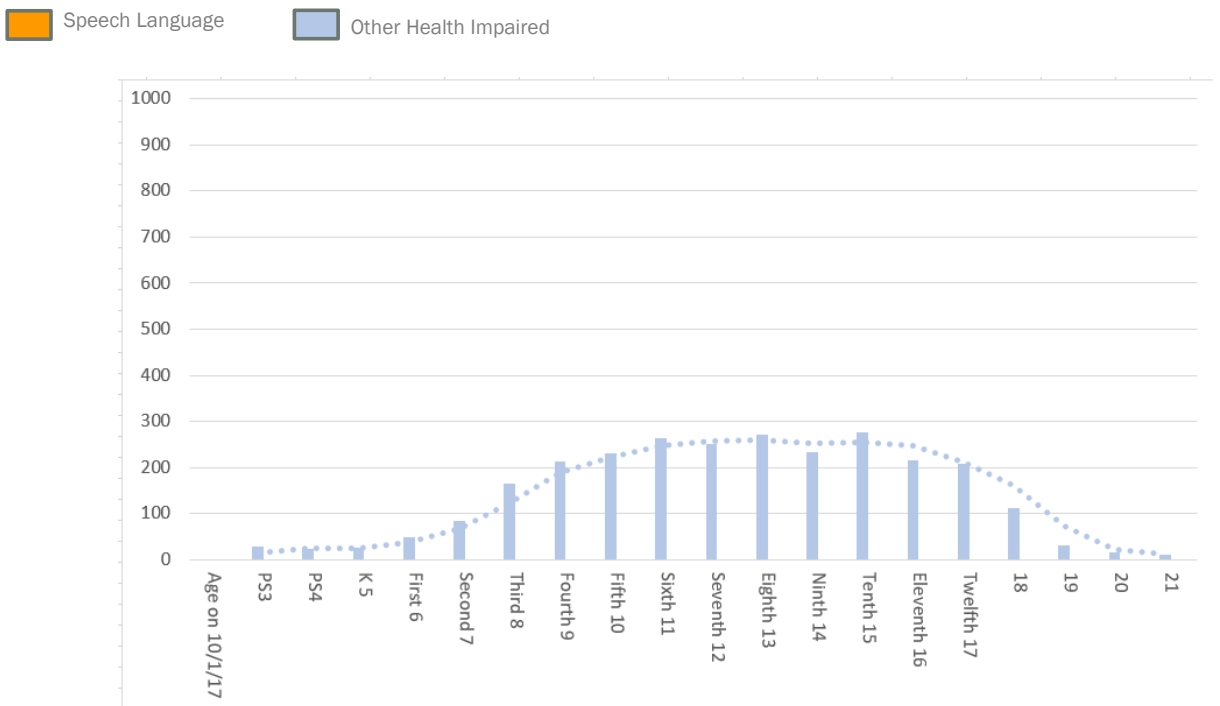
16

Alaskan Students - Eligibility Category Speech Language Impairment:
an early **screenable** core neurobiological deficit in Phonological Processing.



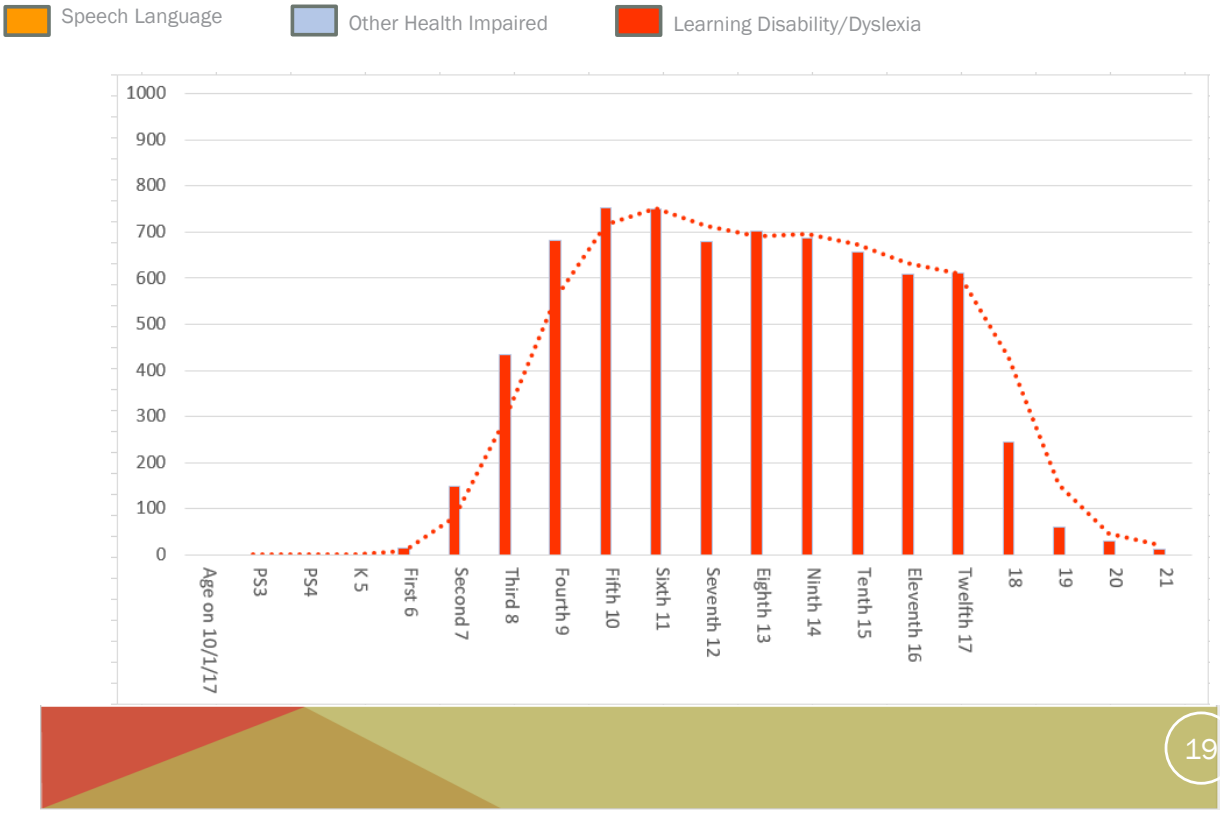
17

Alaskan Students - Eligibility Category Other Health Impaired:
an early **screenable** core neurobiological deficit in Phonological Processing.



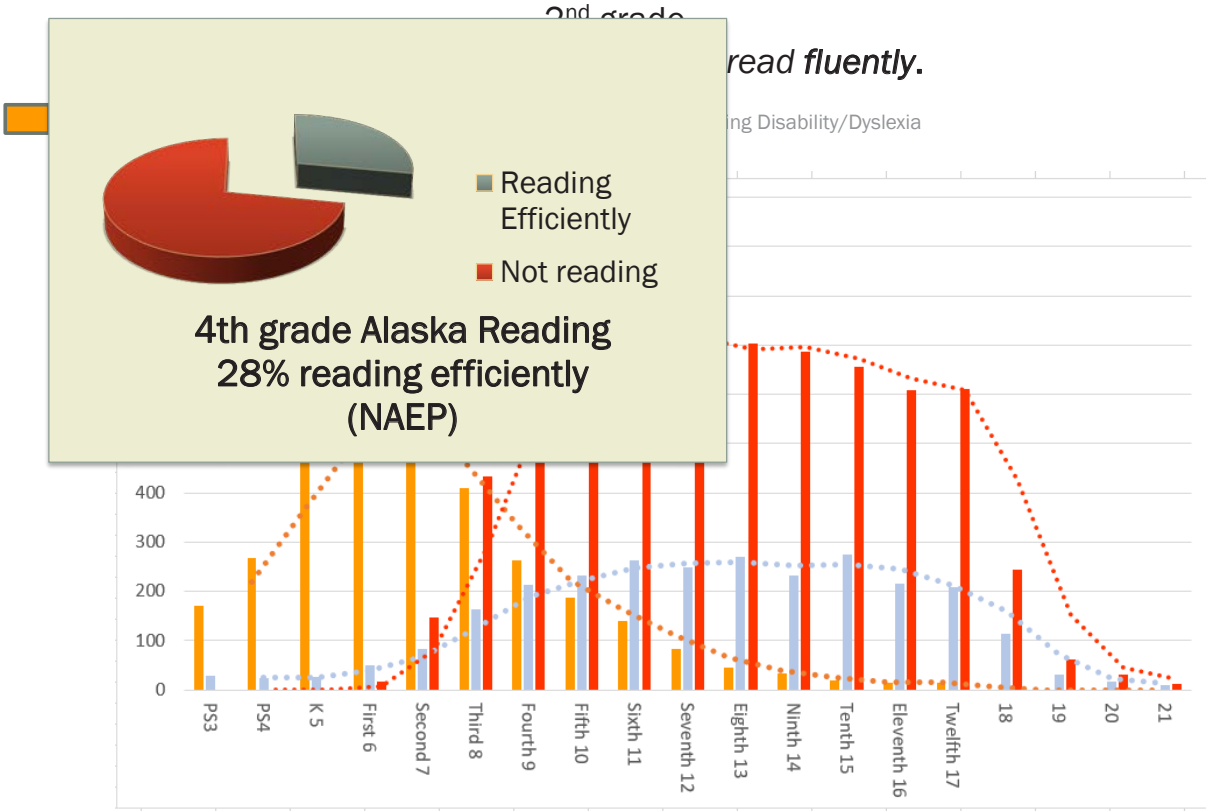
18

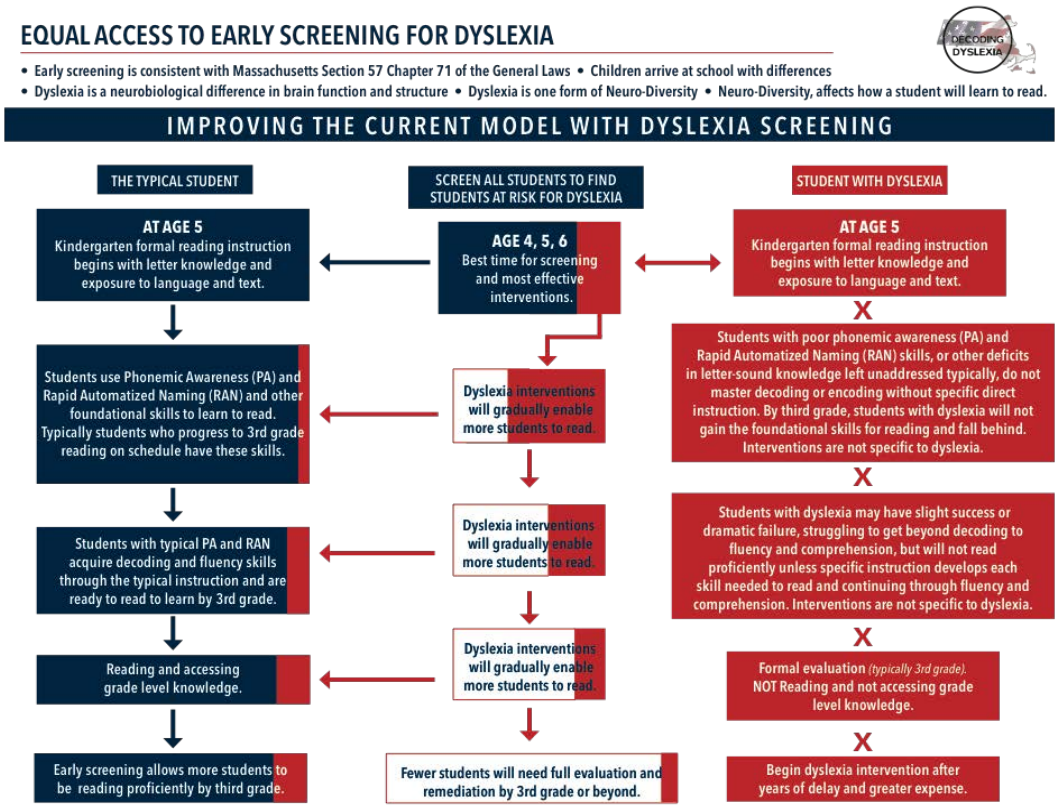
Alaskan Students - Eligibility Category Learning Disability (Dyslexia):
an early **screenable** core neurobiological deficit in Phonological Processing.



Most **Alaskan** students with a Learning Dusability/Dyslexia receive an IEP after 2nd grade

read fluently.





10 MYTHS ABOUT DYSLEXIA SCREENING

1. Signs of dyslexia can only be seen after 2-3 years of reading instruction
2. A screening is expensive and has low sensitivity and low specificity
3. The screening test will only add more testing to the kindergarten age
4. Most districts/kindergarten teacher do screening anyway.
5. All at-risk children should be referred to 'Special Education'
6. A screening will give children a diagnosis at age 4.
7. Second language learners cannot be screened for DD until they are fluent in English
8. Even if you screen early, you won't be able to intervene effectively that early anyway
9. Children will grow out of their dyslexia on their own and catch up
10. Screening can only be completed by neuropsychologists

Teaching all students to read

If we ensured Alaskan students closed the gap?

what other State of Alaska systems, HSS, DOJ, Economic would benefit?

Increase reading ..... decrease Medicaid.
Increase reading ..... decrease incarceration.
Increase reading .....decrease economic burden.

Nurses, supported MA dyslexia laws based on research showing the increasing complexity of healthcare requiring literacy.

23

Florida Center for Reading Research

BE A LEADER IN LITERACY, AND IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR ALASKAN CHILDREN.

FOLLOW THE SCIENCE

Thank you for the opportunity to come and speak to you.

We come to you at the request of your citizens who have identified a Literacy Crisis in this state.

You have the power to tackle this crisis to a complete turn around.

Arkansas

Journey to Literacy

Fredrick Douglas said

Once you learn to read you will be forever free.

And he was spot on.

Recognizing the Problem: The NAEP Report and Your Phone

Arkansas	% of 4th graders Reading At or Above Grade Level	% of 4th graders Reading Below Grade Level
2013	32%	68%
2015	31%	69%
2017	32%	68%

Not a spending issue…. But stepping over a quarter to pick up a penny issue

Per Pupil Spending

- US (average) $11,762
- New York (Highest of the United States) $22,366
- Utah (Lowest of the United States) $6,953
- Arkansas $9,846
- Alaska $17,510

- Spending more money is not the answer. Spending our money better is the answer.

Dyslexia Laws for Arkansas #1

Act 1294 of 2013

Senators Elliott and Key

- Defined Initial Screening and Assessments
- Defined Roles
- Dyslexia Awareness for all Teachers
- Defined Curriculums to Ensure Appropriate RTI
- Set a Timeline
- State Dyslexia Specialist
- Reporting

Dyslexia Laws for Arkansas #2

Act 1268 of 2015

Senator Elliott

- Redefined Roles
- Set up a Resource Guide
- Outside Evaluations

Dyslexia Laws for Arkansas #3

Act 1268 of 2017

Senator Elliott

- Clarified Screening and timeliness of intervention
- Additional Reporting
  - Program(s), number in intervention, number identified
- Standards for Accreditation
  - Probationary status

RISE ARKANSAS in 2017

READING
INITIATIVE for
STUDENT
EXCELLENCE

A movement into the Science of Reading in Arkansas.

2017 Legislative Session

- Governors press conference #RISEarkansas
- Senator Alan Clark- Science of Reading Bill for Higher Education *Act 416 of 2017*
  - This bill reworks colleges of education methods for teaching future teachers. Requires a standalone science of reading test for preservice teachers before they can get their initial certification.
- Senator Alan Clark- Grade Level Reading Reporting *Act 940 of 2017*
  - Requires every school in Arkansas to report reading level equivalent of students in k-8 twice a year to teachers and parents. Parents should look for growth… if there is no growth parents should ask why. Teachers need to be more aware of reading levels because often times problems in the classroom occur when the students can't do the work due to a literacy levels.
- Senator Joyce Elliott- The Right to Read Law *Act 1063 of 2017*
  - THE RIGHT TO READ BILL. While colleges of education are retooling so that preservice teachers learn the science of reading (see SB328 now act 416) and the Arkansas department of education is having to retrain current teachers in the science of reading we have a number of teachers who are still not familiar with the universal design of the science of reading. This bill bridges that gap. It requires reporting of colleges of ed that they are not used to, and appropriate professional development for teachers who are already in the field teaching reading.
- Senator Joyce Elliott- Dyslexia Enforcement *Act 1268 of 2017*

Alaska Legislative Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia

AGENDA
Monday, November 26, 2018
Anchorage LIO Denali Conference Room, 1500 W. Benson Blvd.
Internet Stream: http://akleg.gov/index.php#tab5

1:00 pm	Call to Order
	Opening/Introductions
1:10 p.m.	Invited testimony from parents and pediatricians
2:00 p.m.	Break
2:10 p.m.	Diane Kardash, UAF
2:50 p.m.	Q & A with Diane Kardash
3:10 p.m.	Break
3:20 p.m.	Dr. Lisa Parady and Lexie Domaradzki
4:00 p.m.	Q & A with Dr. Lisa Parady and Lexie Domaradzki
4:10 p.m	Invited testimony from teachers

HOMEWORK

Read the Fall Edition of the International Dyslexia Association's Perspectives on Language and Literacy Magazine: *The Science and Art of Implementation*

1

My Experiences:
New Teacher & University Instructor

Excerpts from Courses

Collaborations with Community & UA Colleagues

http://bit.ly/TF_26Nov18_Kardash

UAF SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Diane Kardash, Faculty
UAF School of Education
Elementary Programs
diane.kardash@alaska.edu

2

Diane Kardash

Alaska Licensed Elementary Teacher
Alaska Licensed K-12 Administrator

UAF SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Long Beach City College | USC University of Southern California | California State University Fresno | Fresno Unified School District | Fairbanks North Star Borough School District

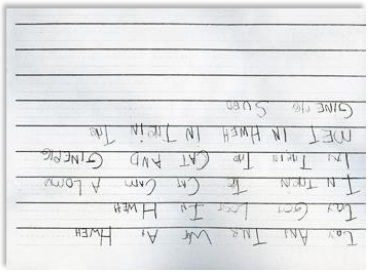
After graduating college in 1990, Diane taught in California (Grades K, 1, 6) and in Alaska (Grades K-1, 2-3, Reading).

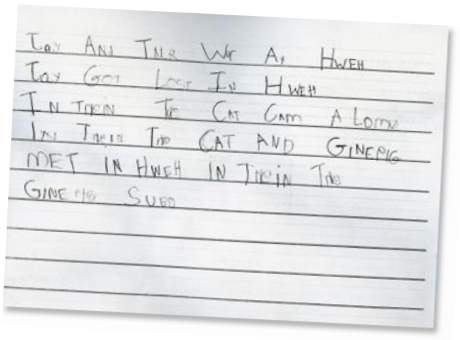
In 1998, Diane was hired at UAF to teach in the Elementary Education department teaching courses related to the following areas: Elementary and Secondary Language Arts, Media Literacy, Assessment, and Health Education.

Diane also now serves as the CAEP accreditation coordinator for the School of Education.

CAEP ACCREDITED PROVIDER
EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATOR PREPARATION ACCREDITATION

Joy of Literacy
Sharing with Families





At a parent conference, this young girl gently took her writing from her mom, and turned to the correct direction to read it to her in English and then translate to the home language … the family was from Southeast Asia.

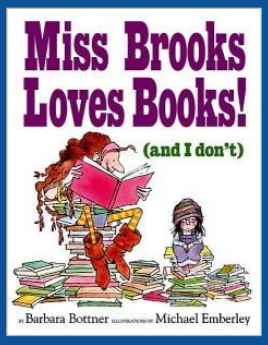
*Note: *Image of writing comes from ReadingRockets.org and is used as an example of 1st grade writing; it it not Somsant's writing.*

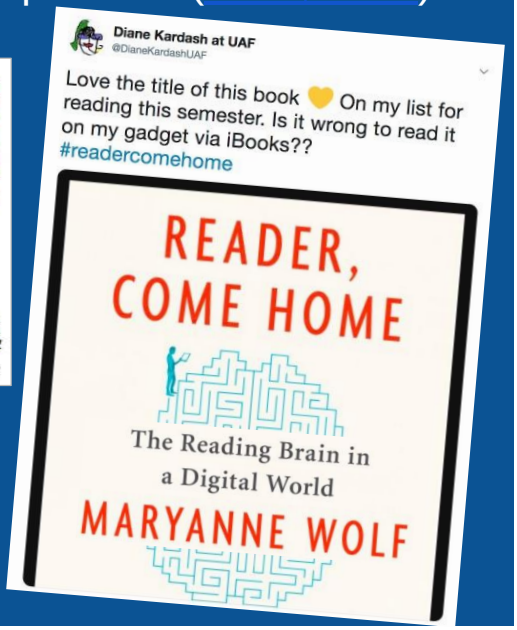
Diane Kardash

https://twitter.com/DianeKardashUAF

UAF SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
University of Alaska Fairbanks

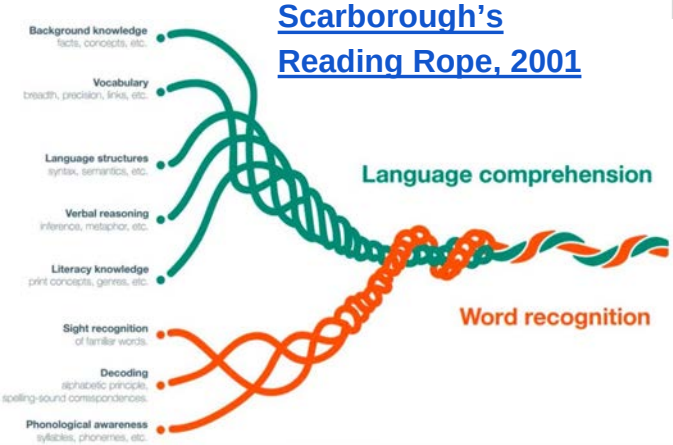
The Peter Effect in Teacher Preparation:
One cannot give what one does not possess (2004, 2014)



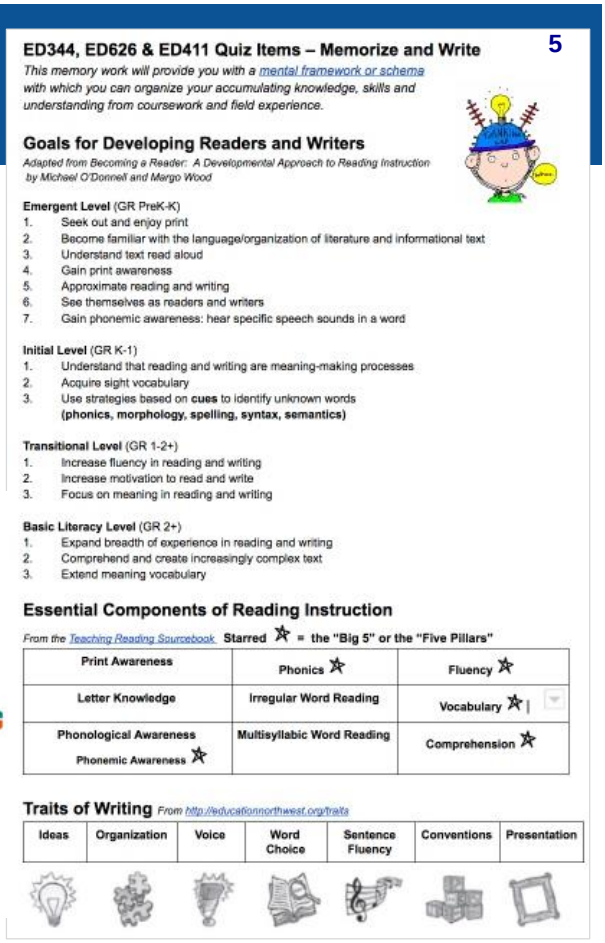


Memory Work

[ED344 ED626 ED411 Quiz Items – Memorize and Write]



[Scarborough's Reading Rope, 2001]



ED344, ED626 & ED411 Quiz Items – Memorize and Write 5

This memory work will provide you with a mental framework or schema with which you can organize your accumulating knowledge, skills and understanding from coursework and field experience.

Goals for Developing Readers and Writers

Adapted from Becoming a Reader: A Developmental Approach to Reading Instruction by Michael O'Donnell and Margo Wood

Emergent Level (GR PreK-K)
1. Seek out and enjoy print
2. Become familiar with the language/organization of literature and informational text
3. Understand text read aloud
4. Gain print awareness
5. Approximate reading and writing
6. See themselves as readers and writers
7. Gain phonemic awareness: hear specific speech sounds in a word

Initial Level (GR K-1)
1. Understand that reading and writing are meaning-making processes
2. Acquire sight vocabulary
3. Use strategies based on **cues** to identify unknown words **(phonics, morphology, spelling, syntax, semantics)**

Transitional Level (GR 1-2+)
1. Increase fluency in reading and writing
2. Increase motivation to read and write
3. Focus on meaning in reading and writing

Basic Literacy Level (GR 2+)
1. Expand breadth of experience in reading and writing
2. Comprehend and create increasingly complex text
3. Extend meaning vocabulary

Essential Components of Reading Instruction

From the Teaching Reading Sourcebook Starred ☆ = the "Big 5" or the "Five Pillars"

Print Awareness	Phonics ☆	Fluency ☆
Letter Knowledge	Irregular Word Reading	Vocabulary ☆
Phonological Awareness Phonemic Awareness ☆	Multisyllabic Word Reading	Comprehension ☆

Traits of Writing *From http://educationnorthwest.org/traits*

Ideas	Organization	Voice	Word Choice	Sentence Fluency	Conventions	Presentation

Foundations of Literacy Courses

6

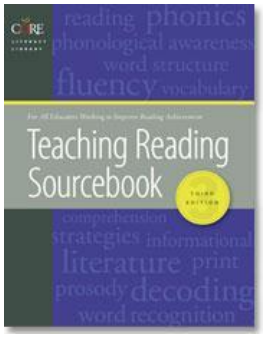
UAF UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS
School of Education

ED344 Foundations of Literacy course for Undergraduate Elementary Students

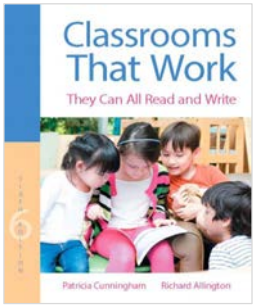
- Full semester course offered on-campus every Spring & as needed for off-campus students through distance delivery
- Recommended to be completed the semester before the year-long elementary internship

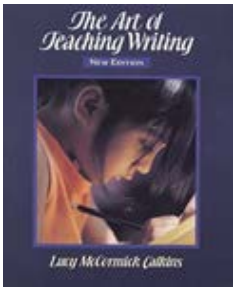
ED626 Teaching Reading, Writing, Language Arts course for Post-Bac Elementary students

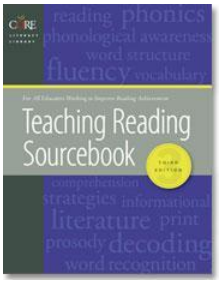
- Summer course completed just before year-long elementary Internship



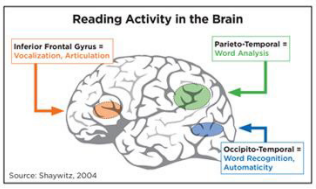
- 2nd Edition aligned with the International Dyslexia Association Knowledge & Practice Standards for the Teaching of Reading
- NCTQ Recommended Textbook for Early Reading Instruction
- Study Guide from CoreLearn







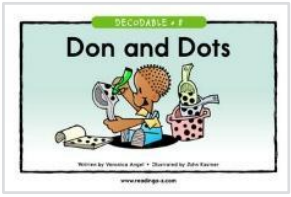
The Big Picture



"Democracy can survive and flourish only with a literate citizenry" - Thomas Jefferson

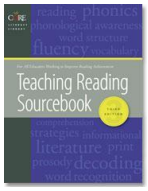
- Research-based instructional methods
  - Independent Peer Review
  - Replication of results by other researchers
  - Consensus with the research community
- Systematic and Explicit Instruction

AND



Reading, reading, reading!

Writing, writing, writing!

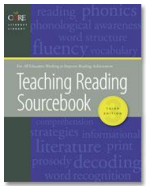


Section I: Structure of English & Phonics

Alphabetic Principle: In English, there are systematic and predictable relationships between written letters and spoken sounds.

Phonics is the connection between the 44 phonemes or sounds & the 26 letters.

Phonics = Sounds + Letters

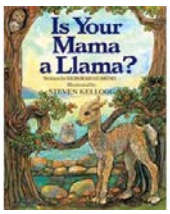


Early Literacy Section II

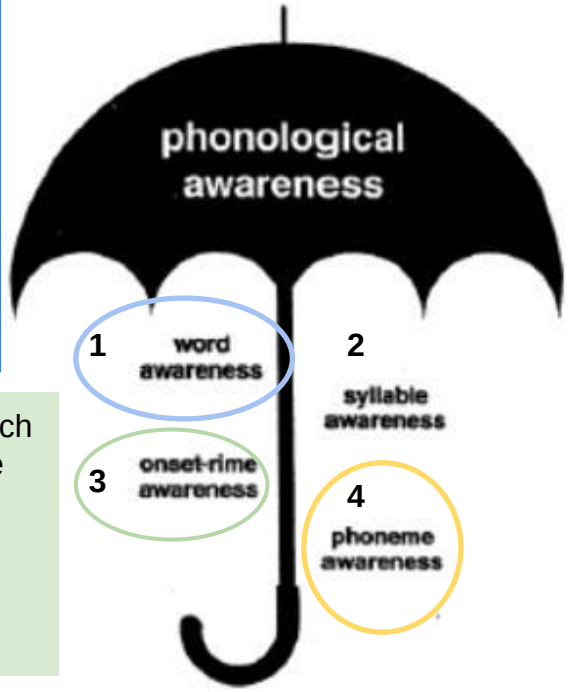
Phonological Awareness

MORE than phonemic awareness….

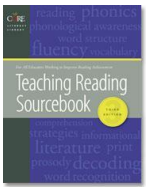
Yugtun Igat (Yup'ik Alphabet) with Jackie



Being able to match the endings of the words (the rime), you are demonstrating **phonological awareness.**



Phonemic awareness is the ability to hear the separate speech sounds in a word - what are the sounds in llama?



Decoding and Word Recognition - Section III

Phonics

NO!

"Phonics is a method of instruction..."

There are MANY different methods to teach phonics!

For our class, Phonics = Letters + Sounds

Approaches to Phonics Instruction

Synthetic Phonics
Teaches systematically the sounds and letters, how to blending sounds and letters into words, and then reading decodable books.

Analogy Phonics
Using word families (rimes or phonograms) to teach new words

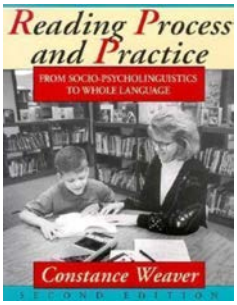
Analytic Phonics
Identifies sound in a word and then focuses on other words with the same sound.

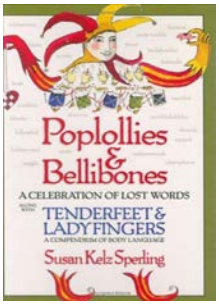
Embedded Phonics
Phonic elements are taught as they come up in reading and writing.

Reading Together

Let's read together…. volunteers?

Please open: reading_activities.pdf





11

Reading Activities

#1

Sperling, S.K. (1977). *Poplollies and Bellybones: A Celebration of Lost Words*. New York: Clarkson N. Potter.

The blonke was maily, like all the others. Unlike the other blonkes, however, it had spiss crinet completely covering its fairney clots and concealing, just below one of them, a small wam.

This particular blonke was quite drumly-lennow, in fact, and almost samded. When yerden, it did not quetch like the other blonkes, or even blore. The others blored very readily.

It was probably his bellytimber that had made the one blonke so drumly. The bellytimber was quite kexy, had a strong shawk, and was apparently venenated. There was only one thing to do with the venenated bellytimber: givel it in the flosh. This would be much better than to sparple it in the wong, since the blonkes that were not drumly could icchen in the wong but not in the flosh.

#2

(a) Weaver, Constance (1994). *Reading Process and Practice: From Sociolinguistics to Whole Language*. Second Edition. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann

-nc- -p-n - t-m- th-r- w-s - h- nds-m- y--ng w-lf n-m-d L-b-. L-b- l-v-d w-th h-s m-th-r -nd f-th-r -t th- -dg- -f th- d--p, d-rk w--ds. -v-ryd-y, L-b- w-nt t- h-nt -t th- n-rth -dg- -f th- w--ds, n--r th- l-ttl- v-ll-g- -f C-1--s.

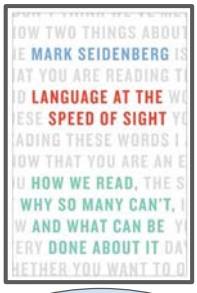
(b) ED344 Syllabus

A--e---a--e -o-i--

--u-e--- a-e e--e--e- -o a--e-- a-- --a--e- a-- -e a--i-e-- i--o--e- i- --a-- -i--u--io-- a-- --a-- --o-e---. I- -a-e o- a--e--e --u-e--s a-e -e--o--i--e -o- -e--i-- i--o--a-io- --o- o--e- --u-e---.

12

Use strategies based on cues to figure out an unknown word.



Phonics
What sounds to the letters in a word make?

Syntax
How does this word fit in the grammar of the sentence?

Semantics
What do the other words mean?

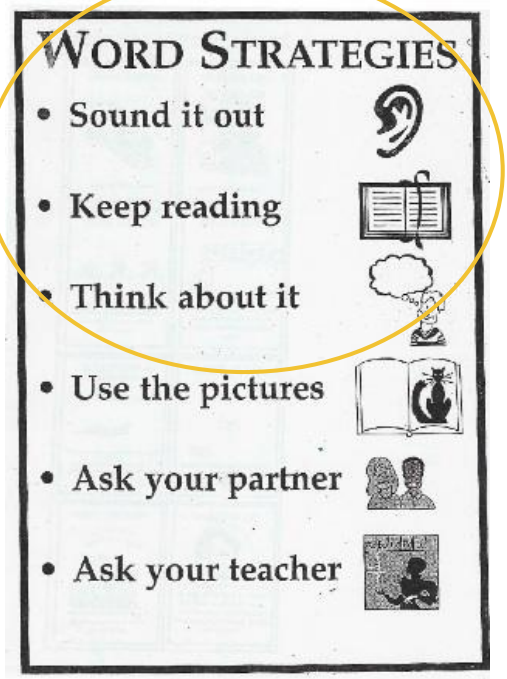
This particular blonke was quite drumly-lennow, in fact, and almost samded. When yerden, it did not quetch like the other blonkes, or even blore. The others blored very readily.

Spelling (Orthography)
Are there any familiar spelling patterns/ phonograms in this word?

Which cues can you use to explain how the blonke was different from the other blonkes?

Morphology
Are there any known morphemes in this word?

Some Strategies for Using the Cues..

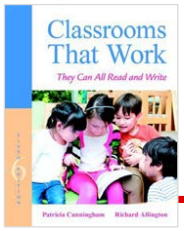


Often, the phonics cue is used first through the strategy of "sounding out."

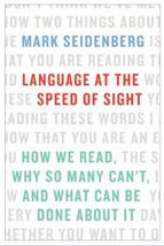
Skipping the unknown word, and continuing to read the other words sometimes helps us to figure out the unknown word through context cues (meaning/semantics or grammar/syntax).

Success for All FOUNDATION

Chart from Success For All - Reading Roots, 1999



Cues and Strategies



What do good readers do? (Strategies)

1. Recognize that a word is unfamiliar, and look at all the letters in order.
2. Search mental word bank for similar letter patterns, including phonograms, and the sounds associated with them.
    a. For "big" words, look for familiar morphemes, and chunk the word by putting letters together that usually go together in the words you know.
3. Produce a pronunciation.
4. Reread the sentence to check to see if the pronunciation makes sense. If yes, keep reading. If not, try again or try #5.
5. Skip the word and use context to figure out meaning (syntax or semantics).

Cueing Systems Readers Can Use

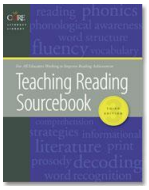
Phonics - letter and sound patterns

Spelling (Orthography) - the spelling patterns in words (phonograms, rimes)

Morphology - the morphemes in a word (roots, affixes)

Semantics - meaning of the other words and text overall

Syntax - word order or grammar of a sentence
(ELL students may not be able to use syntax well.)



Section 1: Structure of English

Key Terms

Schwa /ə/ = vowel sound in unaccented syllable.
Umber Umbrella Bird from Zoo-Phonics
All the other vowels have learned to "sing" his song. Like in sof**a,** an**i**mal, syst**e**m, gall**o**p.

- Continuous and Stop Sounds - Do you have to make Umber sound?
- Syllables
- onset
- rime (phonograms) - often taught as "word families"
- Morphemes and Affixes

Key Terms
Ways to explain to children...

Phonemic Awareness = Ability to hear separate speech sounds in a word.

= 3 sounds

Vowels = a, e, i, o, u

Long Vowels = the vowel says it's letter name like the a in name.

Short Vowels = Hard to describe – cut, cat, cot, set, sit

Consonants = Letters that are not vowels.

Digraphs = Two letters representing one sound like ph in digraph and th, ch, sh and ai, ee, oa.

Blends = Two letters that are pronounced closely together but retain their own sounds like the bl in blend.

R-controlled vowels = Vowel whose sound is strongly influenced by the r that follows like -ar in car & –er in per.

Schwa = The short u sound. All vowels can make this sound, like the a in sofa.

Phonogram = common spelling pattern or rime like the –at in cat, sat, mat, rat.

Morpheme = smallest **m**eaningful sound part in a word like the **un** and **like** in unlike.

Decoding and Word Recognition - Section III

Explicit Teaching

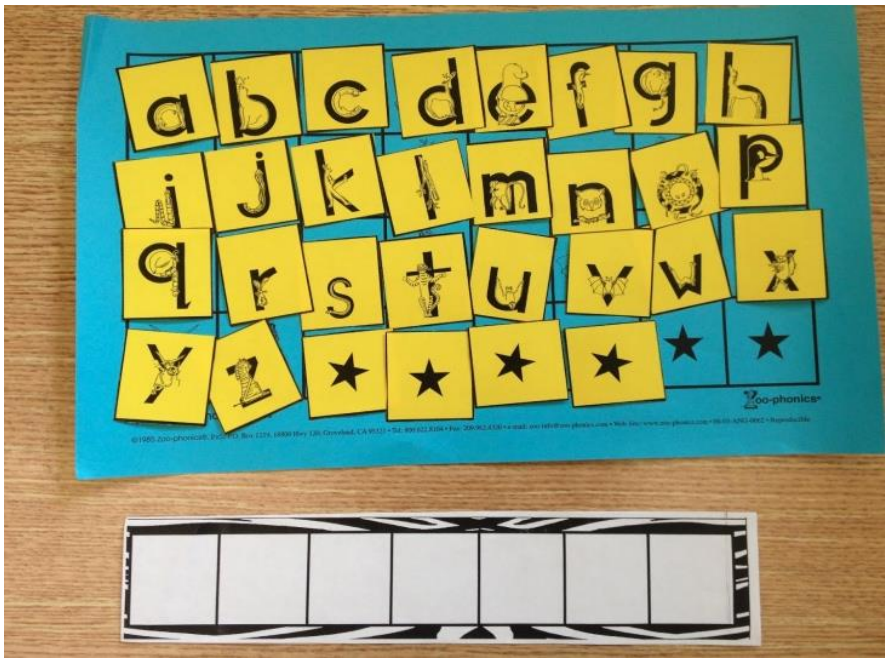
Look for this pattern as you observe in classrooms. Think about this pattern as you work with students!

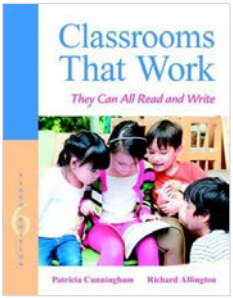
Explicit Teaching with Zoo Phonics

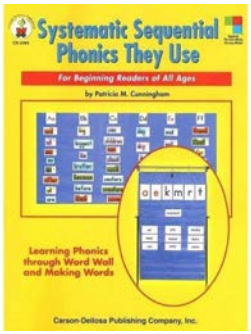
Multi-sensory phonics -
children see, hear and feel (move)

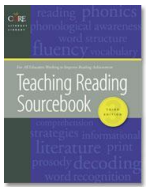
Preschool Teacher Teaching the Sounds and Signals: https://youtu.be/d4skoTANMbM

Making Words....





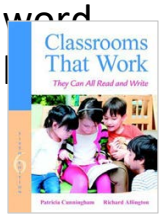


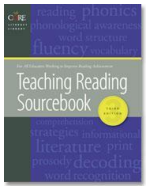


Decoding and Word Recognition - Section III

- Good Phonics Instruction
- Decoding Regular Words - 50% of words
- General Sequence for Teaching Elements
  - Beginning Consonants
  - Common Phonograms or Spelling Patterns
    (See also CW6 pg 67 - 37 high-frequency patterns = over 500 words)
  - Beginning Consonant Blends and Digraphs
  - Ending Consonant Blends and Digraphs
  - Short Vowels
  - Long Vowels
  - Multisyllabic Words

These need to be in our "mental word





Decoding and Word Recognition- Ways to sound out words...

The Blending Routines…

- Sound by Sound
- Continuous
- Whole Word
- Spelling

Look at the whole word first for familiar patterns before sounding out each letter individually!
cake rain ship chair

Don't let Umber sneak in!!

See again TRS for Stop Sounds!

Caution with the schwa!

bi - g for big NOT buh - i - g
ta - b for tab NOT tuh - a - g
ca - t for cat NOT cuh - a - t

Decoding and Word Recognition - Section III Decodable Text

Compare and contrast the book series using the links below. With your partners, choose the most useful series and identify the least useful series. Be ready to share your choices and rationale.

K12 Level 1

K12 Level 10

K12 Level 21

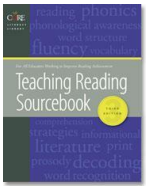
Bob Books Set 1

Bob Books Set 2

Bob Books Set 3

Reading A-Z

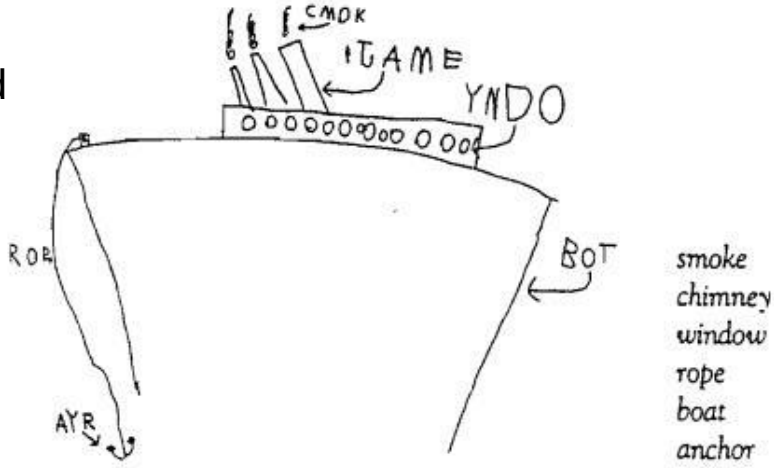
http://www.readinga-z.com/books/decodable-books/?context=phonics



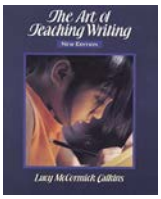
Early Literacy - Section II

Letter Knowledge

- Letter **iconicity**
- Letter shapes and **handwriting**
- Letter name and sound (Phonics)

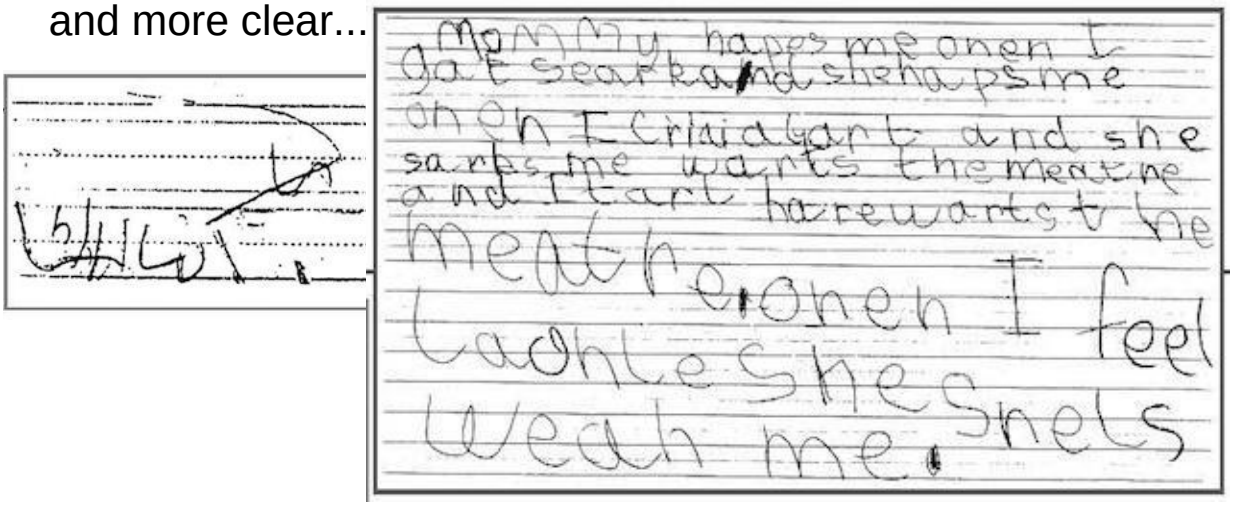


From [ATW CH 6]



Student Writing

As student gain more and more understanding about phonics, gain more sight word vocabulary, and learn handwriting, the meaning of their writing will become more and more clear...



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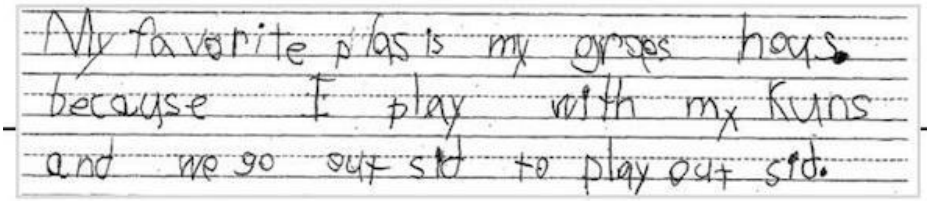

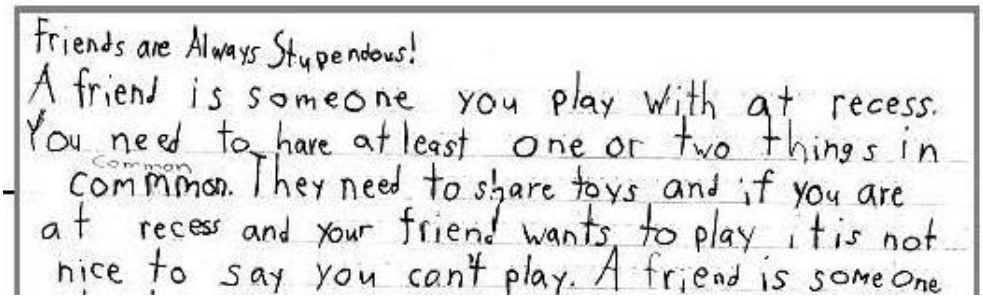

...

The Importance of Handwriting

The Importance of Teaching Handwriting

...**labored handwriting creates a drain on mental resources** needed for higher-level aspects of writing, such as attention to content, elaboration of details, and organization of ideas.

...**when handwriting is perceived as arduous and time-consuming, motivation** to write may be **greatly reduced**, leading to a lack of practice that may further compound difficulties with writing.

...**handwriting is a basic tool** used in many subjects — taking notes, taking tests, and doing classroom work and homework….

...**handwriting in the earliest grades is linked to basic reading and spelling achievement;** for example, when children learn how to form the letter *m*, they can also be learning its sound. Attention to the linkages among handwriting, reading, and spelling skills can help to reinforce early achievement across these areas.

What does this writing sample tell me about what the child knows?

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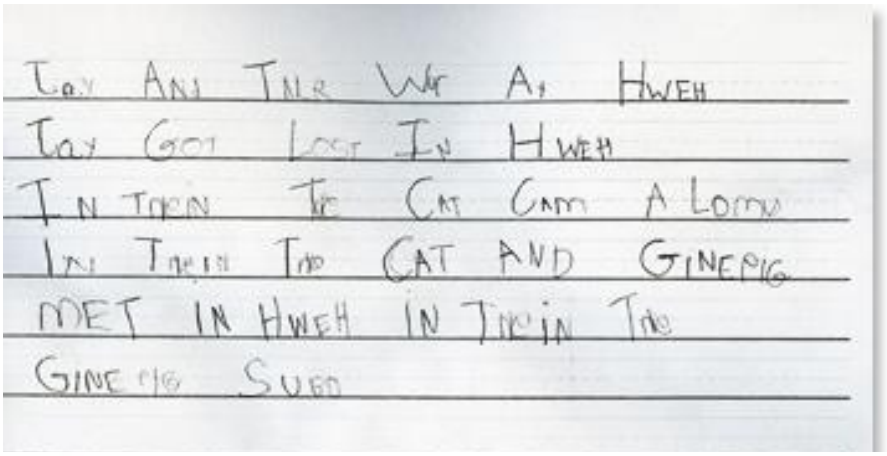


*Note: *Image of writing comes from ReadingRockets.org and is used as an example of 1st grade writing; it is not Somsant's writing.*

Transcript:

Jay and Taylor were at Hawaii. Jay got lost in Hawaii. And then the cat came along. And then the cat and guinea pig met in Hawaii. And then the guinea pig ____.

Working with the Community Reading & Dyslexia

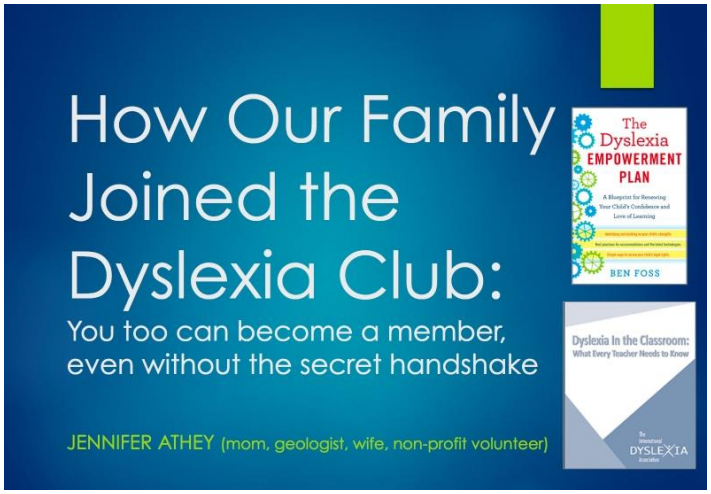
28

Fairbanks North Star Borough School District

Lower Kuskokwim School District

Literacy Council of Alaska
@literacycouncilofalaska

Boys & Girls Club of Fairbanks
@BGCfairbanks



Alaska Reading Coalition
@alaskareadingcoalition

DECODING DYSLEXIA

Decoding Dyslexia-AK

Working with Colleagues Dyslexia

29

Deb O'Connor
mdoconnor@alaska.edu

FNSBSD Special Education Department

UAF Faculty

Full semester courses offered both on-campus & off-campus students through distance delivery for undergraduate Elementary students.

- **ED 245 Child Development** course for Undergraduate Elementary Students
- **EDSE 316 Intro to Spec Ed for Elementary Teachers**

Summer Course offered on-campus for post-bac Elementary students.

- **ED 625 Exceptional Learners and Child Development: Individual and Cultural Characteristics**

Working with Colleagues Dyslexia

30

Deb O'Connor
mdoconnor@alaska.edu

FNSBSD Special Education Department

UAF Faculty

- **ED 245 Child Development**
- **EDSE 316 Intro to Spec Ed for Elementary Teachers**
- **ED 625 Exceptional Learners and Child Development: Individual and Cultural Characteristics**

Dyslexia Focus:

- ED245/ED625: Course readings regarding IDEA 2004, including the Specific Learning Disability (SLD) in the area of Reading (dyslexia) and exam includes items regarding dyslexia.
- EDSE 316/ED625, Specific Learning Disabilities are covered in depth. The classes watch How Difficult Can This Be, participate in simulations on their computers making them feel dyslexic, complete a case study that problem solves issues related to SLD, and create a Universal Design for Learning lesson plan to differentiate for students who struggle to read. UAF students are also assessed on the topic through projects, essays and multiple choice exams.

Working with Colleagues

31

Alaska College of Education: University of Alaska Teacher Education Council (TEC)

Katy Spangler, Elementary
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Cathy Coulter, Elementary
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Diane Kardash, Elementary
diane.kardash@alaska.edu

Lisa Richardson, Reading Specialist M.Ed. Program
lrichardson3@alaska.edu

Working with Colleagues Reading & Dyslexia

32

Cathy Coulter, Ph.D.

cacoulter@alaska.edu

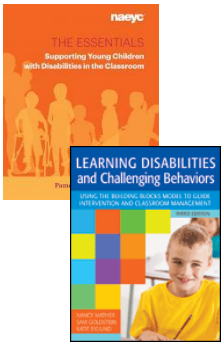
Professor of Language and Literacy

Graduate Certificate in Language Education

Elementary Education

EDEC 303 Young Children in Inclusive Settings

Students engage in assignments in which they identify evidence-based strategies and interventions to support a child with learning disabilities (including dyslexia). Students have the following assigned readings that address learning disabilities:



- Brilliante, P. (2017). Learning disabilities. In *The Essentials for Supporting Young Children with Disabilities in the Classroom*. Washington, DC: National Association of Education for Young Children.
- Two chapters from: Mather, N., Goldstein, S., & Eklund, K. (2015). Learning Disabilities and Challenging Behaviors, 3rd Edition. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing. (includes recent research on phonological dyslexia, assessment and instructional approaches)

EDEC 310 Dev. Approach to Assessment in Early Childhood

Students practice gathering assessment data and interpreting a number of assessments, of which include the Phonological Awareness Skills Screener and the HM Phonics Screener.

Working with Colleagues Reading & Dyslexia

33

Cathy Coulter, Ph.D.

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Professor of Language and Literacy

Graduate Certificate in Language Education

Elementary Education

School of Education
University of Alaska Anchorage

- **EDFN 301 Foundations of Language & Literacy Dev.**

Examines how children learn oral and written language. Integrates structure of language (including phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension in reading) and its application to the development and assessment of literacy.

- **EDEL 325 Teaching Literacy in Elementary School**

Students do a semester-long case study on a dysfluent reader, assessing phonemic awareness, grapho-phonic knowledge (for both decoding and spelling), reading fluency (rate, inflection, phrasing, attention to punctuation), writing fluency and reading comprehension levels (both literal and inferential) for both narrative fiction and expository informational texts. Students then plan and engage in weekly instructional sessions, that include both reading and writing skill and strategy foci, to address their case study student's needs.

- **EDSE 482 Inclusive Classrooms for all Children**

Students practice gathering assessment data on student proficiency in the Big 5 (phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension) and designing appropriate intervention and IEPs. Students learn to identity and address the needs of struggling readers, including those with dyslexia.

Working with Colleagues Dyslexia

34

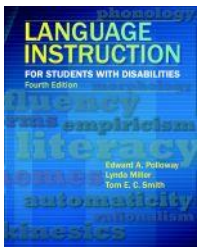
Katy Spangler

UAS Faculty Elementary
klspangler@alaska.edu

University of Alaska Southeast
Alaska College of Education

ECE 420 **Developing Literacy in the Early Years**

EDSE 483 **Language and Literacy: Assessment & Intervention**



Specific Learning Disabilities are covered in a variety of ways throughout the courses using a variety of media resources supporting language and literacy development. Candidates engage in data collection, interpretation and/or analysis of the data resulting in a responsive teaching plan which informs their language and literacy intervention.

The courses above are taken in the same semester and linked. They are geared specifically to the transition from oral language development to print literacy with a focus on working with continuous text. Candidates use assessment data on student ability in the area of phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension interpreting a number of assessments and designing appropriate interventions.

Continued Professional Learning for Teachers: UAS M.Ed. in Reading

35

Lisa Richardson
lrichardson3@alaska.edu

Reading Specialist
Graduate Program

The Reading Specialist program is affiliated with the **International Literacy Association**. A sample of the standards (ILA, 2017) addressed and enacted through this program include:

- Understand the nature of literacy and its various components;
- Develop and implement instruction focused on the foundational skills of reading and the unconstrained skills of vocabulary and comprehension;
- Develop and implement language instruction;
- Differentiate instruction to meet the needs of individual learners, including, but not limited to English learners, students with literacy learning disabilities, physical disabilities, dyslexia, emotional needs, the gifted and talented.

Continued Professional Learning for Teachers: UAS M.Ed. in Reading

36

Lisa Richardson
lrichardson3@alaska.edu

Reading Specialist
Graduate Program

EDRE 674 **Foundational Theories of Reading**

EDRE 675 **Reading and Cognition**

EDRE 680 **Reading Instruction and Assessment I**

EDRE 681 **Reading Instruction and Assessment II**

EDRE 679 **Content Area Literacy**

EDRE 678 **Literature and Reading: Supporting Readers at All Levels**

Working with Colleagues

37

UAA	UAF	UAS
Elementary Licensure Cathy Coulter cacoulter@alaska.edu EDFN 301 Foundations of Language and Literacy EDEL 325 Teaching Literacy in Elementary Schools (6 Credits) EDSE 482 Inclusive Classrooms for all Children **Early Childhood Licensure** EDEC 404 Literacy for Young Children EDEC 408 Children's Literature	**Elementary Licensure** Diane Kardash diane.kardash@alaska.edu ED 344 Foundations of Literacy ED 204 Children's Literature ED 626 Teaching Reading, Writing, Language Arts ED 411 Elementary Language Arts Methods ED 476 Assessment of Literacy	**Elementary Licensure** Katy Spangler klspangler@alaska.edu ED 302 Foundations Language & Literacy Development ED 416 Teaching Literacy in K-8 Curriculum ED 405 Children's Literature in the Alaska Context ECE 661 Literacy and Young Children ED 615 Literacy in the Intermediate & Middle School Grades ED 603 Alaska Children's Literature for Young People

Working with the Task Force

38

UNIVERSITY of ALASKA SOUTHEAST
ALASKA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

School of Education
UNIVERSITY of ALASKA ANCHORAGE

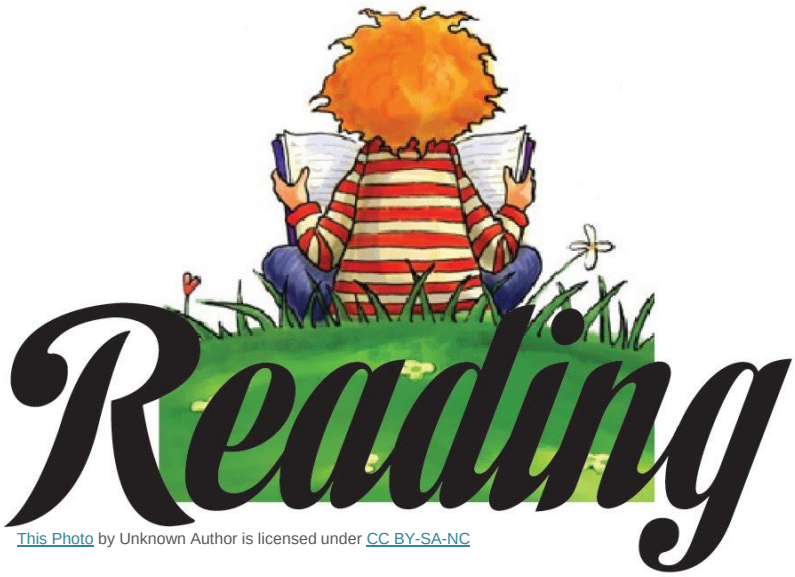
UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS
School of Education

Alaska College of Education: University of Alaska Teacher Education Council (TEC)

Katy Spangler, Elementary klspangler@alaska.edu	Cathy Coulter, Elementary cacoulter@alaska.edu	Diane Kardash, Elementary dlkardash@alaska.edu

Lisa Richardson, Reading Specialist M.Ed. Program
lrichardson3@alaska.edu

Lisa Richardson lives & works in Juneau. She is available to participate in-person with legislative working groups as needed.



Presented by:

Dr. Lisa Skiles Parady, ACSA Executive Director
and
Lexie Domaradzki, REACH Education Consulting

Friday, November 26, 2018

ALASKA COUNCIL OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

ASA Alaska Superintendents Association

AASSP Alaska's Educational Leaders

Alaska Association Elementary School Principals

Alaska Staff Development Network

RTI/Effective Instruction Conference
https://www.asdn.org

- Started in 2010 by Anchorage School District to emphasize RTI **districtwide**
- Alaska Staff Development Network (ASDN) collaborated with ASD to take the conference **statewide** in 2011
- Conducted statewide RTI conference for the past **7 years**
- **Over 1,000 teachers** participate each year (11% + of the teachers in Alaska)
- More than **30 districts** typically attend
- Two-day conference over a weekend in January in Anchorage
- First day is a deep dive into one topic, second day has 2 sectionals to explore other interest areas within RTI/MTSS
- National level presenters
- Variety of topics to support **Effective Tier 1 instruction in ELA and Math, also positive behavioral supports, SEL/trauma-informed classrooms, data driven decision-making, Tier II and III interventions**.
- **Rural and small schools RTI** process is specifically addressed at a full day pre-conference (400 teachers) to explore the model in a small school context

ALASKA COUNCIL OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

ACSA JOINT POSITION STATEMENT (Draft)

Early Childhood Education

ACSA believes equitable access to fully funded, sustainable preschool programs provides a foundation of excellent social, emotional and cognitive instruction to students. Research clearly demonstrates that early intervention and instruction is one of the best ways to increase student achievement across all demographics and create the greatest opportunity for all students to read proficiently by third grade. Should be considered as part of K-12 funding through the BSA.

Advocates for Alaska's Youth — association of ALASKA school boards

For applicable AASB resolutions in ***Where We Stand*** see the section(s): **Funding, Child Advocacy, Education Programs**

Prepare students entering school to be ready to learn.

In the increasingly complex world we live in today, students cannot afford the luxury of wasting a single day from kindergarten through graduation. Many students enter kindergarten unprepared to begin school. As a result, valuable time must be expended to bring them to a state of learning readiness. Starting school without strong learning skills places some students in a position from which they may never be able to recover. Students who remain behind classmates throughout their public school experience are likely to become graduates who are continually disadvantaged throughout their lives. AASB encourages the Legislature to invest in Alaska's future workforce by supporting and providing resources for a quality Pre-K experience for every child.

One State – 54 School Districts
Alaska's Students!

District Survey to Inform the Legislative Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia

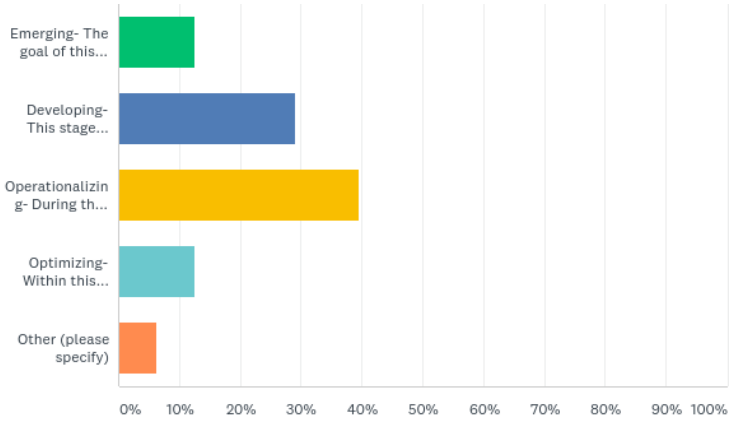
48 Total responses

ALASKA COUNCIL OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

5

Q1: To frame the conversation and temper expectations, in general, what stage is each district at in its implementation of RTI/MTSS? Select one of the Growth Stages below:

Answered: 48 Skipped: 0



6

Q1: To frame the conversation and temper expectations, in general, what stage is each district at in its implementation of RTI/MTSS? Select one of the Growth Stages below:

Answered: 48 Skipped: 0

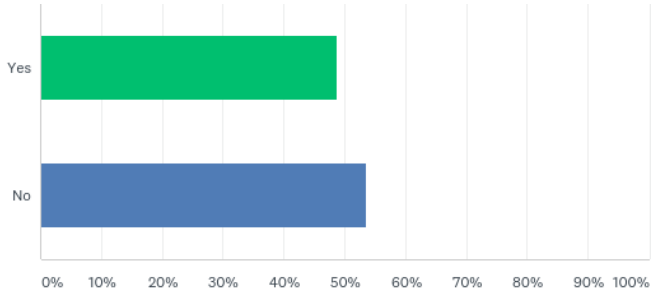
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Emerging- The goal of this stage is to build consensus and buy-in for RTI implementation.	12.50%	6
Developing- This stage involves designing the infrastructure to implement RTI.	29.17%	14
Operationalizing- During this stage, the school implements the structures that were designed during the Developing stage and works to build consistency and fidelity.	39.58%	19
Optimizing- Within this stage, the model is embedded and done with fidelity. Schools now focus on how effective the model is and make changes based on data to ensure it is effective.	12.50%	6
Other (please specify)	6.25%	3
TOTAL		48

Q2 How does your school district screen children for reading difficulties?

Q3 What interventions are used when students are identified as struggling readers?

Q4: Does your district have a robust Tier I core reading curriculum that teachers are delivering and achieving 75-80% proficiency for students in K-2?

Answered: 41 Skipped: 7



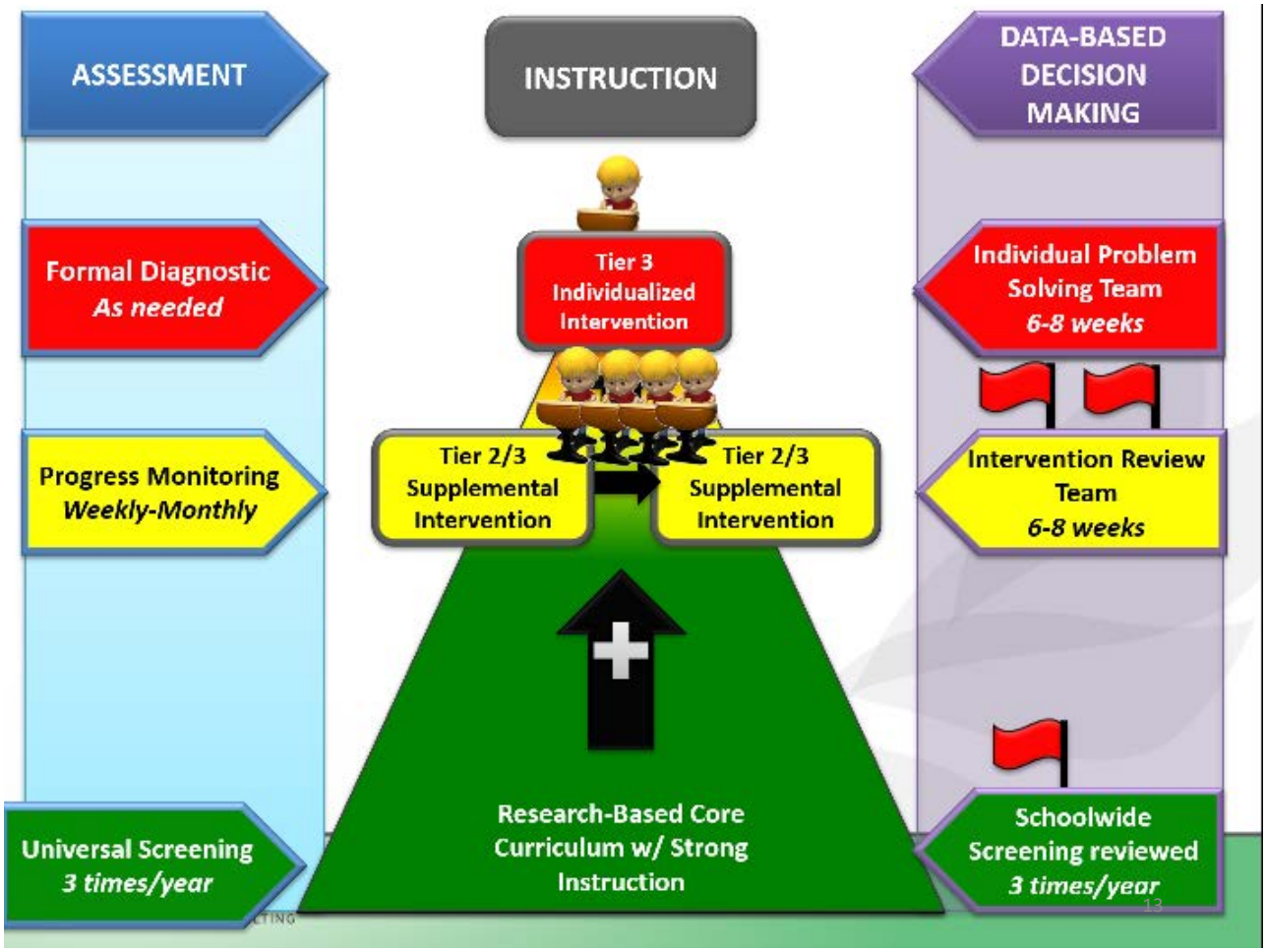
Q4: Does your district have a robust Tier I core reading curriculum that teachers are delivering and achieving 75-80% proficiency for students in K-2?

Answered: 41 Skipped: 7

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	48.78%	20
No	53.66%	22
Total Respondents: 41		

What does a state need in order to support reading proficiency by Third Grade?

- Universal Screening for all students to catch reading difficulties early
- Research Based Materials and Instructional Practices
  - Core Instruction
- Evidence Based Materials for intervention
- Professional Development for educators
- Parent/Community Awareness



Progress in Alaska

- 2005
  - Only a few districts implemented a reliable and valid universal screener
  - Only a few districts implemented research based reading materials
  - Only a few districts implemented the MTSS process system wide
  - Many districts implement intervention for struggling students

- 2018
  - Most districts implement a reliable and valid universal screener
  - Most districts implement research based reading materials
  - Most districts have begun to implement the MTSS process system wide
  - Many district have implement evidence based intervention materials

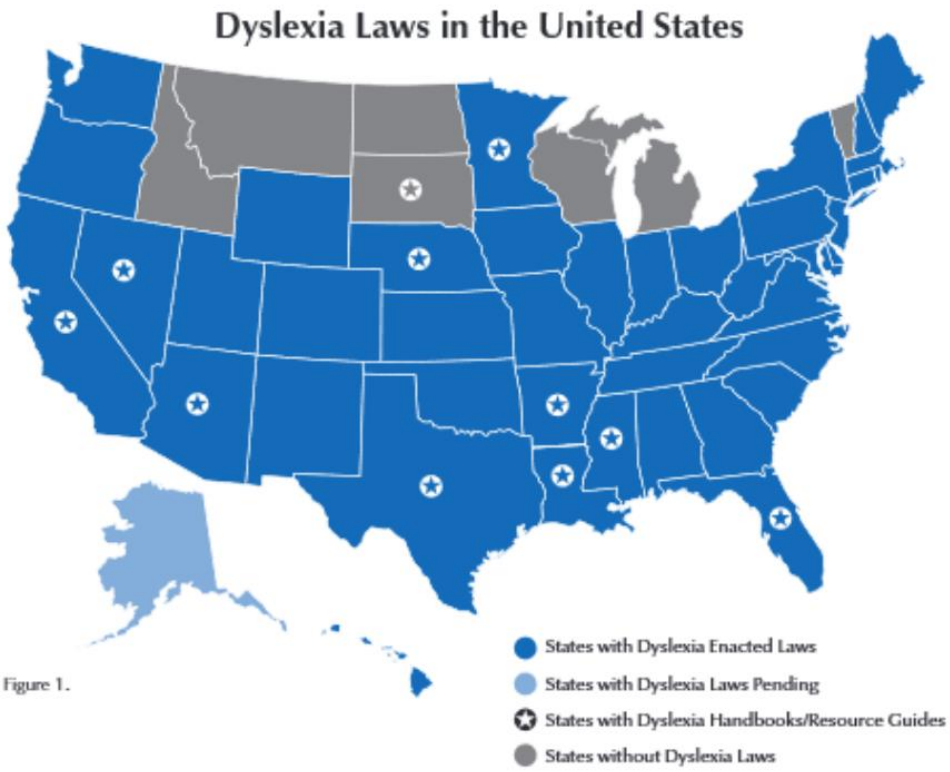


Figure 1.

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ALASKA COUNCIL OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

Thank you!
Questions?

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Contact Information

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@ACSA/ASDN

** Like us on Facebook!

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lexiedom@gmail.com
(425)346-2430

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