

Summary of Research Recommendations for Dyslexia Screening

*Samantha Durrance, Policy Analyst
Southern Regional Education Board*

Early screening for characteristics of dyslexia enables schools to identify students who need specialized interventions and provide support before the students fall too far behind in reading. Noted researchers [Shaywitz, Morris and Shaywitz](#) are among those who have stressed the importance of early identification for bolstering children’s weak literacy skills and preventing struggles later on. Studies indicate that early intervention focusing on phonemic awareness, phonics, and text meaning can reduce the proportion of students considered “at risk” for later reading difficulties to below 5 percent. While providing interventions after second grade still benefits students, the results tend to be less positive than when interventions are provided in the earliest grades.

The International Dyslexia Association, or IDA, recommends that screening tools be used beginning in kindergarten to identify children who are at risk of reading difficulties. [Suggested instruments](#) include the Predictive Assessment of Reading (PAR), DIBELS, the Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI), and AIMSweb assessments. The IDA further details that screening for the following skills can identify children who need targeted intervention:

Kindergarten and beginning of first grade: language skills, phonological awareness, memory, and rapid naming

Late first grade: word reading (accuracy and fluency), decoding (“word attack”; nonsense word decoding), and spelling

Generally: phonological processing, oral language skills, automaticity (rapid automatic naming), reading comprehension, and vocabulary knowledge

After conducting a review of research on dyslexia and dyslexia policies in Kentucky and other states, the [Kentucky Dyslexia Task Force](#) recommended that all K-2 students in Kentucky be screened for characteristics of dyslexia. This recommendation echoes discussion of the importance of early screening by dyslexia task forces and advisory councils in other states, including [Maryland](#), [South Carolina](#) and [Tennessee](#).

As of the current 2017-18 school year, eight SREB states require screenings that can identify characteristics of dyslexia in the early grades. The following tables describe specific requirements in SREB states where these screenings are mandatory.

Dyslexia Screening Requirements in SREB States

State	Grades	Students	Frequency	Screening Tools	References
Alabama	K - 12 (part of Rtl process)	Students who score below a benchmark on a universal reading screening	Not specified	<p>K: Letter naming, letter sounds, phoneme segmentation, and nonsense word fluency</p> <p>1st - 12th: word reading accuracy, spelling, nonsense word decoding, and sight word efficiency</p>	<p>State BOE Rules Ch. 290-3-1 Supplement 98-4</p> <p>Alabama Dyslexia Resource Guide</p>
Arkansas	K - 12	<p>K - 2: All students</p> <p>3rd and up: Students who have difficulties, as noted by a teacher</p>	Not specified	<p>Must use DIBELS or equivalent; must include at least:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Phonological and phonemic awareness; - Sound symbol recognition; - Alphabet knowledge; - Decoding skills; - Rapid naming skills; and - Encoding skills. 	<p>Act 1294 (2013) and AR Admin. Code § 6-41-603</p> <p>Arkansas Dyslexia Resource Guide</p>
Louisiana	K - 3	All students	Once per year in K - 3; must be administered during the first 30 days of school	<p>Districts choose one tool for each grade level screening from approved options:</p> <p>K: DIBELS Next First Sound Fluency, Fountas & Pinnell Initial Sounds, STEEP Initial Sound Fluency, or STEP First Sounds</p> <p>1st: DIBELS Next Nonsense Word Fluency-CLS, FAST (Formative Reading Assessment System for Teachers), Fountas & Pinnell Phonograms, STEEP Nonsense Word Fluency, or STEP Reading Record</p> <p>2nd: AIMSweb Oral Reading Fluency, DIBELS Next Oral Reading Fluency (passage only), FAST (Formative Reading Assessment System for Teachers), Fountas & Pinnell Oral Reading Rate, STEEP Oral Reading Fluency, or STEP Reading Rate/Fluency</p> <p>3rd: AIMSweb Comprehension, DIBELS Next Retell (passage 1 only), FAST, Fountas & Pinnell Comprehension, STAR Reading, STEEP Advanced Literacy, STEP Comprehension, or SRI/HMH RI</p>	<p>Louisiana Bulletin 1903</p> <p>K-3 Literacy Assessment Guidance</p>

Note: Only states requiring screening are listed.

Dyslexia Screening Requirements in SREB States

State	Grades	Students	Frequency	Screening Tools	References
Mississippi	K and 1	All students	<p>K: during the second semester of school</p> <p>1st: during the first semester of school</p>	<p>Must assess phonological and phonemic awareness, sound symbol recognition, alphabet knowledge, decoding skills, encoding skills, and rapid naming</p> <p>2017-18 state-approved screeners: Mississippi Dyslexia Therapy Association Dyslexia Screener for Kindergarten and First Grade; Lexercise Mississippi Dyslexia Screener</p>	<p>MS Approved List of Dyslexia Screeners</p> <p>Lexercise dyslexia screener created for MS</p>
North Carolina	K - 3 (part of state formative assessment process)	All students	<p>At beginning, middle, and end of year (within days 1-25, 80-105, and 150-180)</p>	<p>Must address oral language, phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.</p> <p>State currently provides access to mClass Reading 3D diagnostic assessments for all schools; Reading 3D uses DIBELS Next and Text Reading Comprehension assessments</p>	<p>North Carolina Statutes § 115C-83.6</p> <p>NC Read to Achieve guide, pp. 14-17</p> <p>NC Read to Achieve support site - Reading 3D FAQs</p> <p>mClass Reading 3D site</p>
Tennessee	K - 12 (part of Rtl process)	Any students who score below benchmarks on a skills-based universal reading screening	In K - 5, universal screening required three times per year (fall, winter, spring)	<p>For universal screening, state recommends:</p> <p>K and 1st: letter and sound identification, segmentation, and blending</p> <p>1st and up: word reading accuracy/decoding within text, oral reading fluency</p> <p>2nd and up: curriculum-based measures of writing measuring correct word sequences and spelling</p> <p>Additional screening for students not meeting benchmarks on universal literacy screening must include phonological and phonemic awareness, sound symbol recognition, alphabet knowledge, decoding skills, rapid naming, and encoding skills. Suggested (not required) screening vendors: AIMSweb, EasyCBM, DIBELS</p>	<p>TN Code § 49-1-229</p> <p>TN Dyslexia Resource Guide</p> <p>TN RTI Framework</p>

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Dyslexia Screening Requirements in SREB States

State	Grades	Students	Frequency	Screening Tools	References
Texas	K - 2 (as required reading assessment)	All students	Not specified	<p>K: must assess phonological/phonemic awareness and phonics/word recognition; 10 approved options available for 2014-18 (see Commissioner's list)</p> <p>1st: must assess phonological/phonemic awareness, phonics/word recognition, and text comprehension; 12 approved options available for 2014-18</p> <p>2nd: must assess phonics/word recognition and text comprehension; 12 approved options available for 2014-18</p>	<p>2014-18 Commissioner's List of Reading Instruments</p> <p>Texas Education Code §28.006</p> <p>Texas Dyslexia Handbook</p>
Virginia	K - 3	<p>K - 1: All students</p> <p>2nd: Certain students</p> <p>3rd: Certain students</p>	<p>K: all students in fall and spring</p> <p>1st: all students in spring; new VA students and students in summer intervention also screened in fall</p> <p>2nd: new VA students and students in summer intervention screened in fall; all students without a high fall benchmark score screened in spring</p> <p>3rd: new VA students and students in summer intervention screened in fall</p>	<p>Must include phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension.</p> <p>All schools are provided with University of Virginia-developed PALS screening tools at no charge.</p> <p>PALS-K assesses: rhyme awareness, beginning sound awareness, alphabet knowledge, letter sounds, spelling, concept of word, and word recognition</p> <p>PALS 1-3 (PALS Plus) screening level assesses: spelling, word recognition, and letter sounds (required in fall of 1st grade only).</p> <p>Additional skills assessed by PALS Plus for students not meeting benchmarks at the screening level: oral reading accuracy, oral reading fluency and rate, oral reading comprehension, alphabet recognition, letter sounds, concept of word, sound-to-letter correspondence, and blending.</p>	<p>PALS and Reading First document</p> <p>PALS instrument Technical Reference documents</p> <p>Virginia Specific Learning Disability Supplementary Guide: Dyslexia: Frequently Asked Questions</p> <p>Early Intervention Reading Initiative assessment schedule</p>

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