READ-AT-HOME PLAN RESOURCES

A read-at-home plan is required to be provided to parents of any K-3 student who has been identified with a substantial deficiency in reading. The Florida Department of Education has compiled resources that each school district must include in a read-at-home plan provided to the parent of a student who is identified as having a substantial reading deficiency. A read-at-home plan includes information and resources connected to the essential components of reading: oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. These resources are available in an electronic format that is accessible online, and a hardcopy of such resources must be provided by the school upon parent request. To access these resources digitally, click on each link provided below.

PARENT GUIDES FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS

The Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) Standards for English Language Arts (ELA) are literacy standards for Florida students that will shape their education and make Florida the most literate state in the nation. The B.E.S.T. Standards will pave the way for Florida students to receive a world-class education and prepare them for a successful future. Parent Guides have been developed to help families learn more about the new B.E.S.T. ELA Standards.

Parent Guides for English Language Arts Standards

SUPPORTING READING AT HOME

Learning to read begins at home through everyday interactions with children, long before they attend school. Supporting literacy development as children enter elementary school and progress through grades positively affects their reading ability. The Regional Educational Laboratory Southeast (REL-SE) provides family activities with easy-to-follow instructions to help children practice foundational reading skills at home. Foundational skills include oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Phonological awareness, alphabetic skills and language skills are the best predictors of early reading success (B.E.S.T., Appendix E, p. 206). There are short family videos for tips and support on how to use the activities to help children grow as readers. Using the family activities at home can help children develop language, link sounds to letters, blend letters and word parts to read and write the words and ultimately read for understanding.

Supporting Reading at Home

NEW WORLDS READING INITIATIVE

The New Worlds Reading Initiative gives hundreds of thousands of eligible students the chance to build personalized libraries that reflect their unique interests and backgrounds, at no cost to families or schools. Eligible students include kindergarten through fifth grade students in public and charter schools who have a substantial reading deficiency or who scored below a Level 3 on the prior year's Florida Standards Assessment in English Language Arts (FSA ELA). The University of Florida (UF) Lastinger Center has been designated by the Florida Department of Education as the administrator of the New Worlds Reading Initiative. The UF Lastinger Center is excited to partner with each school district to ensure that all eligible families are informed of the program, have the opportunity to enroll, and receive books and supporting materials each month.

New Worlds Reading Initiative

OVERVIEW OF ASSESSMENT TYPES

As students progress from kindergarten through third grade, they should be steadily developing the skills they need to become grade level readers. While students are learning to read, educators and parents can monitor students to see if they are on track to become successful readers. Florida uses four types of assessments to monitor students' progress in reading.

Overview of Assessment Types

Screening – The purpose of screening is to identify the probability of risk or success in reading achievement.

Progress Monitoring – The purpose of progress monitoring, also called interim or formative assessment, is to determine whether students are learning the skills taught and/or meeting benchmarks throughout the school year.

Diagnostic – The purpose of a diagnostic assessment is to identify a student's strengths and weaknesses for students identified at-risk on a screening assessment.

Summative – The purpose of summative, or outcome, assessment is to evaluate students' performance relative to a set of content standards generally administered at the end of the school year.

STATEWIDE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA) ASSESSMENTS

All Florida students participate in the state's assessment and accountability system. The primary goal of these assessments is to provide information about student learning in Florida, as required by Florida law (see Section 1008.22, Florida Statutes).

FLKRS: The Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS) is administered to all public school kindergarten students within the first 30 instructional days of each school year. The results of this screening provide valuable information about a child's readiness for school, help teachers develop lesson plans to meet each child's needs and offer useful information to parents. The FLKRS assessment instrument is the Star Early Literacy® assessment, which consists of 27 items that assess early language, literacy and number skills.

FSA: The Florida Standards Assessment in English Language Arts (FSA ELA) is administered to all public school students in 3rd – 10th grade. The FSA ELA measures literacy achievement and learning gains. Scores are categorized into five achievement levels to describe student performance, which is provided on student reports so that students, parents and educators may interpret student results in a meaningful way.

FSAA: The Florida Standards Alternate Assessment (FSAA) is designed for 3rd – 10th grade students whose participation in the general statewide assessment program is not appropriate, even with accommodations. The FSAA is based on the Florida Standards Access Points (FS-APs), which are academic expectations written specifically for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

SUPPORTS FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parental involvement is extremely important for supporting the education of all students, including students with disabilities. For students who have difficulty learning, the Florida Department of Education provides a variety of supports to assist parents in being involved in the educational decision-making process.

Parent Information

Dispute Resolution Systems

EVALUATING AND IDENTIFYING A STUDENT FOR EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION

When a parent, teacher or caregiver suspects a student may have a disability, there are important steps that are necessary to know and take. A diagnosis of a medical condition alone is not sufficient to establish eligibility for exceptional student education. Consistent with Title 34, Section 300.306 of the Code of Federal Regulations, the Individual Educational Plan (IEP) team must consider multiple sources of data and information to determine not only if the student is a student with a disability, but also that the student requires special education and related services. If a parent submits documentation from a licensed professional under chapter 490 which demonstrates that a K-3 student has been diagnosed with dyslexia, evidence-based interventions must be provided based on the student's specific areas of difficulty as identified by the licensed professional (see Section 1008.25(5), Florida Statutes). The Bureau of Exceptional Student Education (BESE) has many resources to guide parents, teachers and caregivers through the process of evaluating and identifying a student who is suspected of being a student with a disability requiring exceptional student education.

Evaluations for Special Education Services: Information for Parents

What is Exceptional Student Education for Children with Disabilities?

Bureau of Exceptional Student Education (BESE) Resource & Information Center

CHARACTERISTICS OF SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY

Specific Learning Disability (SLD) is a term that describes an Exceptional Student Education (ESE) eligibility category, which refers to learning disorders that can affect a student's ability to read, write, listen, speak, reason and do math.

Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)

Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students with Specific Learning Disabilities

DID YOU KNOW?

Reading at or above grade level by the end of third grade sets students on a path to learn, graduate and succeed.

LEARNING DISABILITY	TYPICAL CHARACTERISTICS
Dyslexia: A learning disability affecting primarily reading	• Difficulty in learning to read, write, spell and do arithmetic • Difficulty with learning letters and their sounds • Difficulty in following oral and written instructions • Cramped or illegible handwriting • Difficulty reading quickly enough to comprehend and persisting with longer texts • Easily distracted, difficulty in retaining information • Confusion in sequence of letters and symbols • Delayed spoken language • Confusion about directions in space and time, right and left, north and south, yesterday and tomorrow • More than average test taking anxiety
Dysgraphia: A learning disability affecting primarily writing	• Variably shaped and poorly formed letters, excessive erasures and cross-outs in writing • Poor spacing between letters and words • Letter and number reversals beyond early stages of writing • Awkward, inconsistent pencil grip • Heavy pressure and hand fatigue • Slow to write and copy with legible or illegible handwriting
Dyscalculia: A learning disability affecting primarily mathematics	• Difficulty counting backwards • Extreme difficulty in performing simple calculations, difficulty with mental arithmetic skills • A poor sense of numbers and estimation • Difficulty in understanding place value • Addition is often the default operation • High levels of mathematical anxiety
Developmental Aphasia: A learning disability affecting primarily language and communication	• Poor comprehension skills • Difficulty in forming words and sentences, speaking and word recall • Trouble understanding speech • Difficulty in reading and writing • Leaving out words like 'the,' 'of' and 'was' from speech • Speaking only in short phrases that are produced with great effort • Putting words together in the wrong order