Dyslexia Advisory Council Minutes from February 22, 2021

On Monday, February 22, 2021 the Dyslexia Advisory Council convened via digital platform to discuss the following topics ([see agenda](#)):

- Supporting Multilingual/English Learners
- Specific Learning Disability (SLD) Discrepancy Phase Out Plan Update
- Rapid Automatized Naming
- Decision Tree and Family History

Council Background

Expectations of Council Members:

Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 6162 requires that Washington maintains an advisory council for the purposes of providing policy guidance with respect to early screening of dyslexia and related services for students with dyslexia. Such an advisory panel shall consist of members appointed by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI); and be comprised of individuals involved with issues surrounding dyslexia.

Expectations of Statute:

Starting in 2021-2022

- Students in grades K-2 will be screened for indications of or areas of weakness associated with dyslexia*
- School districts will use a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) in grades K-2
- Communicate and collaborate with parents and families about student reading progress, screening results, and potential literacy interventions
- Dyslexia Advisory Council Outcomes for School Year 2019-2020

Supporting Multilingual/English Learners:

Council members were joined by Patty Finnegan, Assistant Director of Dual Language to learn about the Dual Language Framework and supporting multilingual/English Learners with English Language Development. Council members discussed at length the difference between English Language Development and English Language Arts and Literacy Instruction:

English Language Development:

English language development (ELD) means instruction designed specifically for English

language learners to develop their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in English. Students upon entry to the K-12 school system begin by developing English through English language pre-literacy skills braided with their home language existing pre-literacy skills (talking with family members, listening to caregivers and responding to questions, story time through oral storytelling and reading, make believe, and opportunity for drawing and painting).

English Language Arts and Literacy Instruction:

Instruction begins with students who have had exposure to the English language in their home, community, and had the opportunity to develop some pre-literacy skills from birth through entry into the K-12 school system.

Council Vote

1. *The DAC endorses the recommendations of the Dual Language Steering and Bilingual Education Advisory Committees to use the WIDA English Language Development assessments & proficiency levels to determine when an English learner will be administered the literacy screener in English.*

   - *Additional Guidance from the Dyslexia Advisory Council: A student who has received English Language Development instruction since kindergarten and has not meet the threshold recommendations of the Dual Language Advisory and Bilingual Steering Committees by late spring of 2nd grade -- the student may be administered the literacy screener associated with the Early Screening of Dyslexia statute before the conclusion of 2nd grade.*

SLD Discrepancy Phase Out Plan Update:

Council member Liz Stewart, OSPI Special Education Program Supervisor, provided an update on the Phasing Out Severe Discrepancy for Identification of Specific Learning Disability (SLD). The presentation outlined the multi-phase, multi-year plan for phasing out the discrepancy model in Washington. Phase I included the formation of a cadre of stakeholders charged with developing and submitting recommendations for SLD evaluations and policy changes to the OSPI – Special Education Division. Phase II included documenting recommendations and garnering feedback from stakeholder groups. Phases I and II are complete. During Phase III, draft recommendations were submitted to additional external stakeholders for feedback, which OSPI will continue to do in all phases. Additional revisions were made based on external feedback. The final report will be submitted to OSPI Special Education Division in spring 2021, and Phase III will be complete.

Phase IV of the phaseout plan begins in spring 202I and includes a review of special education policy related to SLD evaluations and formation of a SLD Handbook revision workgroup. Phase V of the phaseout plan begins fall 2022 and includes the formation of an additional workgroup (i.e., principals, teachers, superintendents, parents, intra/inter-agency partners) to guide implementation, identify professional development needs, and assist with development of implementation materials. The Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 392-172A will be amended during Phases IV-V, following Washington rule amendment processes.

Phase VI of the phaseout plan is anticipated to begin spring 2023 with statewide implementation of new SLD evaluation policies. The SLD Handbook will be finalized. It is anticipated that the discrepancy method will be phased out statewide by 2028.

Rapid Automatized Naming:

The council reviewed the expectations of the Early Screening of Dyslexia statute and reviewed the intent of the [Rapid Automatized Naming Assessment](#) (RAN).

> ***Council Vote***
> 1. *The DAC recommends that school districts administer the RAN twice during a student's K-2 Experience:*
>   - *Kindergarten-Late Winter*
>   - *1st Grade-Late Winter*
>
> 2. *The DAC recommends that school districts use all 4 criteria as the Washington standard for the RAN:*
>   - *Letters*
>   - *Numbers*
>   - *Colors*
>   - *Familiar objects*

Decision Tree and Family History:

Council members reviewed the drafts of "Decision Tree Guidance" and "A Conversation: A Family History." Members provided feedback and suggestions to strengthen the resources. *To ensure the resources are updated to reflect the council feedback, the council vote was deferred to the March 26th Check In.*