

# Decoding Dyslexia MD

## Policy Goals 2017



### The Reading Achievement Gap in Maryland

Individuals with **dyslexia** often have trouble with reading, writing, spelling and sometimes math. These difficulties are not related to intellectual ability or a lack of education. Individuals with dyslexia often need diagnostic, specialized instruction delivered by an educator with knowledge and practice in the foundations of reading.

#### Characteristics of Effective Instruction

A reading approach or program that includes explicit, systematic, cumulative, intensive and multisensory instruction that integrates listening, speaking, reading, and writing through evidence-based methodology would be considered Structured Literacy based (Berninger & Wolf, 2009; Birsh, 2011; Henry, 2010; Davis, N., et al, 2010; Kerins, Winkler, Sweeney & Carran, 2006; Mather & Wendling, 2012; Yoncheva, Wise, & McCandliss, 2015).

**Structured Literacy** has 6 major elements:

phonology/phonological awareness, sound-symbol association, syllable instruction, morphology, syntax and semantics. These elements must be taught in a multisensory, systematic, cumulative, direct, and diagnostic manner. (MSDE Technical Assistance Bulletin; Dyslexia Task Force Findings)

#### Maryland Policy Goals

1. Require **institutions of higher education to train teacher candidates** on dyslexia, a structured literacy framework for reading instruction and universal screening/identification of dyslexia.
2. Require school districts to provide **professional learning** to teachers on dyslexia, appropriate evidence-based interventions for dyslexia and screening/identification of dyslexia.
3. **Require universal early screening in Kindergarten** to **IDENTIFY** students who struggle with reading disorders like dyslexia.
4. Require school districts to **provide effective instruction** based on the structured literacy framework to **EDUCATE** students with dyslexia and reading difficulties.

5. Ensure access to appropriate accommodations including assistive technologies to **SUPPORT** students with dyslexia.
6. Define “dyslexia” in the state education code so that teachers and administrators can **Identify, Educate and Support** students with dyslexia. **UPDATE:** *Dyslexia is defined in the MSDE Technical Assistance Bulletin on SLD, Focus on Dyslexia, issued November 2016.*

#### Resources & Research

**National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) 2015, MD:** <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/states/>

**Knowledge & Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading**  
<http://eida.org/knowledge-and-practices/>

**National Reading Panel Studies**  
<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/pubs/nrp/Pages/report.aspx>

**Teaching Reading is Rocket Science, American Federation of Teachers/Louisa Moats**  
[http://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/reading\\_rocketscience\\_2004.pdf](http://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/reading_rocketscience_2004.pdf)

**What Doesn't Work**  
<http://www.spelfabet.com.au/2015/03/dr-louisa-moats-we-need-to-be-outraged/>

**The Department of Education Dyslexia Guidance**  
<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdcltrs/guidance-on-dyslexia-10-2015.pdf>

**NEW! MSDE Dyslexia Technical Assistance Bulletin**  
[http://www.decodingdyslexiamd.org/uploads/1/7/7/2/17722255/dyslexia\\_tab\\_final\\_2016.pdf](http://www.decodingdyslexiamd.org/uploads/1/7/7/2/17722255/dyslexia_tab_final_2016.pdf)

**NEW!** The Final Report of the Dyslexia Task Force, December 2016:  
[http://www.decodingdyslexiamd.org/uploads/1/7/7/2/17722255/task\\_force\\_report\\_final.pdf](http://www.decodingdyslexiamd.org/uploads/1/7/7/2/17722255/task_force_report_final.pdf)

#### About Decoding Dyslexia MD

**Decoding Dyslexia Maryland** includes families, educators and related professionals concerned about the lack of access to effective instruction for dyslexia in Maryland public schools.