PA 146 Legislative Overview

Kim St. Martin, Ph.D.

June 2025

mimtsstac.org

K-12 Literacy/Dyslexia Law

- Bipartisan laws, Public Act 146 **and** Public Act 147 of 2024, were signed by Governor Whitmer on October 10, 2024, with the goal of improving reading outcomes for K-12 learners, impacting in-service and pre-service teachers.
- Frequently referred to as the K-12 Literacy/Dyslexia Law
  - The law is not focused on diagnosing learners with dyslexia.

PA 146 Components

MiMTSS
Technical Assistance Center

PA 146 Components

- PA 146 includes Read by Grade Three (revised the 1280f statute)
- Some of the 1280f (Read by Grade 3) changes:
  - Individual Reading Improvement Plans (IRIPs) span K-3
  - Developing 4th grade IRIPs is NOT included in PA 146; however, MDE is examining the language for K-12 to further clarify IRIP requirements beyond 3rd grade.
  - PA 146 requires a level of IRIP information to be reported to ISDs (student information is de-identified) and then aggregated and sent to MDE.
  - Diagnostic assessments are no longer referenced; however, MDE
  - The term “district-identified coaches” is infused into the language

PA 146 Components: Assessment Requirements

- K-3rd grade
- Reliable and valid screening and progress monitoring assessment measures for:
  - Phonemic awareness
  - Letter-sound correspondences
  - Single-word reading
  - Nonsense word reading
  - ***Rapid automized naming***
  - Oral passage reading fluency
  - Comprehension assessment (retelling, cloze reading procedure)

Rapid Automized Naming

- A **Rapid Automized Naming (RAN) assessment** measure is used to identify dyslexia characteristics.
  - RAN measures cognitive processing speed by asking students to name known colors, objects, letters, or words.
  - The assessment is timed.
  - Teachers should not be asked to teach students how to improve their RAN screening assessment data.

MDE Dyslexia Handbook

PA 146 Components: 4-12 Assessment Requirements

- Only adolescents who demonstrate any of the following need a screening assessment to confirm dyslexia consequences:
  - Escape or avoidance behaviors when asked to engage in reading or writing activities.
  - Effortful or laborious reading.
  - Reading comprehension difficulties caused by inaccurate or inefficient word reading.
  - Significant spelling or encoding (writing) difficulties not caused by fine or visual motor difficulties.
  - Low performance on approved English language arts standards.
  - Low performance on approved standardized literacy assessments.
  - Reading deficiency

PA 146 Components: 4-12 Assessment Requirements (cont.)

- 4-12th grade students who demonstrate any of the indicators listed on the previous slide must be screened using a reliable and valid screening assessment from MDE's approved list
- The screening assessment data confirms the need for Tier 2 reading intervention support.
- If screening assessment data confirm the need for Tier 2 reading intervention support, students will need access to reading intervention and will be screened at least three times per year.

Dyslexia Definition and Characteristics

Dyslexia Definition

- Dyslexia" means both of the following:
  - (i) A specific learning disorder that is ***neurobiological*** in origin and characterized by **difficulties with *accurate or fluent word recognition*** and by ***poor spelling and decoding*** abilities that 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.
  - (ii) A specific learning disorder that may include secondary consequences, such as problems in reading comprehension and a reduced reading experience that can impede the growth of vocabulary and lead to social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties.

PA 146

Dyslexia Characteristics

Sample of dyslexia characteristics from Table 1, from the MDE Dyslexia Handbook on pg. 15

- K-3:
  - Confuses letters whose sounds are similar
  - Repeatedly misspells words that include letter-sound combinations that have been taught.
  - Finds handwriting to be difficult (e.g., pencil grip, letter formation)
  - Avoids reading-related activities
  - Difficulty finding the correct word when speaking

Dyslexia Characteristics (cont.)

- 4th - 12th grade:
  - Demonstrates significant difficulties when trying to read and spell multisyllabic words
  - Finds it challenging to understand new information from text due to underlying decoding and word recognition issues
  - Limited vocabulary
  - Lacks written expression skills compared to grade-level peers
  - Avoids reading and writing activities at school and at home

MTSS to Support Learners

- The law outlines the features of Tier 1, class-wide reading instruction (consistent with a portion of the language that was in the Read by Grade law).
- There is new language that outlines Tier 1, curriculum resources, and instructional methods to teach decoding and word recognition using a **"code-emphasis instructional approach."**
- Tiers 2 and 3 outline the methods to intensify literacy intervention instruction.
- Students in K-3 who need intervention support must have their intervention support documented in the Individual Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP).
- The term Individual Reading Intervention Plan is also used in PA 146 and MDE will be clarifying how to interpret the language.

MiMTSS
Technical Assistance Center

Defining Code-Emphasis Instructional Approach

- “Code emphasis means direct, explicit instruction on the code system of written English at the sound, syllable, morpheme, and word level so pupils develop automaticity in accurate sound-symbol associations used for word recognition and for developing a robust sight-word vocabulary"

Science of Reading Definition

- Science of Reading is:
  - A large body of ***scientifically-based research*** across disciplines about reading and issues related to reading and writing
  - Research conducted over the last ***50 years*** across the world.
  - Research that includes findings from ***studies in learning to read in multiple languages***
  - The Science of Reading means there is substantial ***evidence to inform how proficient reading and writing develop, why some have difficulty, and how we can most effectively assess and teach to improve outcomes.***

(The Reading League [TRL, 2022])

The Science of Reading is **NOT**

- Not an ideology or philosophy
- Not a fad, trend, new idea, or pendulum swing
- Not a political agenda
- Not a one-size-fits-all approach
- Not a program of instruction
- Not a single, specific component of instruction, such as phonics

Instructional Methods and Curriculum Resources Must Not Include:

Sec. 23c (iii): The instructional methods and curriculum resources described in this subparagraph must not include instructional methods or curriculum resources that minimize the importance of primarily using letter-sound information to decode or recognize unknown words, including, but not limited to, any of the following, unless such instructional methods and curriculum resources are being used to confirm the meaning of unknown words after decoding has been attempted:

A. Prompting pupils to guess unknown words using pictures and illustrations.
B. Skipping over an unknown word or words to use the meaning of the passage to recognize the unknown word or words.
C. Identifying only the first sound of an unknown word and then being prompted to guess the word using the word's initial sound and the meaning of the text surrounding the word.
D. Memorizing a word in its written form.
E. Using predictable text and leveled text to provide initial word recognition instruction and practice in reading new learned letter-sound correspondences.

MDE Responsibilities

As a result of this law, MDE is required to:

- Provide a coaching model, including expanding a coaching model to grades 4-12
- Update a list of assessments by January 1, 2026
- Publish a list of evidence-based Tier 1 reading curricula and materials by January 1, 2026
- Develop Technical Assistance (TA)
  - Selection/use of assessments (universal screener and progress monitoring assessments)
  - Structured literacy
  - Evidence-based instructional method and curriculum materials
  - Understanding dyslexia

Questions?

MiMTSS
Technical Assistance Center

Resources

- MDE K-12 Literacy and Dyslexia Laws
- Section 35m and 35n
- K-12 Literacy/Dyslexia Research Network
- Keynote from 2025 Dyslexia Summit: Building a New Brain City: Connecting Neuroscience & Educational Practices for Students with Reading

Thank YOU!

Kim St. Martin, Ph.D.

Director, MiMTSS TA Center

MiMTSS
Technical Assistance Center