

1 AN ACT relating to dyslexia and response-to-interventions that improve student
2 learning.

3 WHEREAS, frequent formative assessment enables teachers to better identify
4 students who are not reading on grade level, provide additional interventions and support,
5 and monitor their progress toward meeting grade-level goals; and

6 WHEREAS, assessment and evidence-based screening assist teachers to adjust
7 instruction to better meet students' individual needs with appropriate interventions; and

8 WHEREAS, effective intervention is essential for struggling readers; and

9 WHEREAS, helping struggling readers reach grade-level expectations is not as
10 simple as providing more of the same type of instruction; and

11 WHEREAS, these students need high-quality interventions that are evidence-based
12 and designed specifically for struggling readers; and

13 WHEREAS, dyslexia is a barrier to learning to read; and

14 WHEREAS, researchers estimate that dyslexia affects at least one in ten people,
15 although the true rate could be as high as one in five; and

16 WHEREAS, schools should be prepared to offer additional support and appropriate
17 interventions for children with dyslexia to be successful; and

18 WHEREAS, teachers need to be able to recognize characteristics of dyslexia and
19 use structured, multisensory approaches to teach and assist students to develop language
20 and reading skills; and

21 WHEREAS, an investment in appropriate and effective interventions can provide
22 significant return on investment to schools and to society over the course of a child's
23 lifetime;

24 NOW, THEREFORE,

25 ***Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:***

26 ➔SECTION 1. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 158 IS CREATED TO
27 READ AS FOLLOWS:

1 (1) As used in this section:

2 (a) "Dyslexia" means a specific learning disability that is neurological in
3 origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate or fluent word
4 recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties
5 typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language
6 that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the
7 provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may
8 include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading
9 experience that can impede the growth of vocabulary and background
10 knowledge;

11 (b) "Phonemic awareness" means the ability to recognize that a spoken word
12 consists of a sequence of individual sounds and the ability to manipulate
13 individual sounds in speaking; and

14 (c) "Evidence-based" has the same meaning as in 20 U.S.C. sec. 7801(21).

15 (2) By January 1, 2019, the Department of Education shall make available a dyslexia
16 toolkit that includes guidance, technical assistance, and training to assist all local
17 school districts in the implementation of evidence-based practices for instructing
18 students identified with or displaying characteristics of dyslexia.

19 (3) The dyslexia toolkit shall include but not be limited to the following guidance for
20 local districts targeting students in kindergarten through grade three (3) who
21 have been identified with or displaying characteristics of dyslexia:

22 (a) Evidence-based practices designed specifically for students with dyslexia;

23 (b) Characteristics of targeted instruction for dyslexia;

24 (c) Guidance on developing instructional plans for students with dyslexia;

25 (d) Best practices toward meaning-centered reading and writing;

26 (e) Structured multisensory and literacy approaches to teaching language and
27 reading skills; and

1 (f) Suggested professional development activities.

2 (4) The department shall collaborate with the Education Professional Standards
3 Board, Council on Postsecondary Education, and other groups as necessary to
4 improve and update professional development opportunities for teachers
5 specifically related to dyslexia. Professional development opportunities may focus
6 on:

7 (a) Development and ongoing implementation of training and coaching for
8 teachers;

9 (b) Identifying high quality trainers to provide support to local districts utilizing
10 a coaching model to develop building level dyslexia experts;

11 (c) Developing awareness training modules for all instructional staff to include
12 information about characteristics of dyslexia; and

13 (d) Evidence-based interventions, structured multisensory and literacy
14 approaches to teach language and reading skills, and accommodations for
15 dyslexia and other specific learning disabilities.

16 (5) By June 30, 2019, each local board of education shall develop and have in place
17 a policy addressing the implementation of a program for the identification of and
18 strategies for assisting students in kindergarten through grade three (3) with
19 dyslexia.

20 (6) The local board policies shall include but not be limited to:

21 (a) The definition and characteristics of dyslexia;

22 (b) A process for identifying students who are displaying characteristics of
23 dyslexia;

24 (c) A process for the utilization of evaluation tools to accurately identify
25 students who are displaying characteristics of dyslexia. Any qualified
26 dyslexia evaluation tool utilized by a local district shall address but not be
27 limited to the following components:

- 1 1. Phonological awareness and phonemic awareness;
- 2 2. Sound symbol recognition;
- 3 3. Alphabet knowledge;
- 4 4. Decoding skills;
- 5 5. Encoding skills; and
- 6 6. Rapid naming;
- 7 (d) A process for how evaluation tools are administered and evaluated by
- 8 trained district personnel or licensed professionals;
- 9 (e) A process for outreach to parents of students identified with or displaying
- 10 the characteristics of dyslexia with information and resource materials and
- 11 how dyslexia may be addressed in the student's educational setting;
- 12 (f) Identification of evidence-based interventions, structured multisensory and
- 13 literacy approaches to teach language and reading skills, and
- 14 accommodations that schools may utilize to provide services to students
- 15 identified as having dyslexia; and
- 16 (g) A process for monitoring a student's progress after the positive
- 17 identification, including assessments to ascertain whether the intervention
- 18 services improve the student's language processing and reading skills.
- 19 (7) By June 30 of each year, local school districts shall provide the department the
- 20 following data for the current school year:
- 21 (a) The number of students in kindergarten through grade three (3) that were
- 22 identified as displaying characteristics of dyslexia;
- 23 (b) The number of students in paragraph (a) of this subsection that were
- 24 identified through the response-to-intervention process;
- 25 (c) The number of students in kindergarten through grade three (3) that were
- 26 evaluated for dyslexia;
- 27 (d) The number of students in kindergarten through grade three (3) that were

- 1 identified with dyslexia;
- 2 (e) The dyslexia evaluation tools used to identify students;
- 3 (f) The number of students in kindergarten through grade three (3) that were
4 participating in interventions within the school setting;
- 5 (g) The process or tools used to evaluate student progress; and
- 6 (h) The number of trained district personnel or licensed professionals used to
7 administer the dyslexia evaluation tools.
- 8 (8) (a) The department shall establish a study project to gather information on
9 early screening and intervention services for children with characteristics of
10 dyslexia. The commissioner of education shall select three (3) school
11 districts to participate in the study project, one (1) of which shall be located
12 in an urban setting, one (1) of which shall be located in a suburban setting,
13 and one (1) of which shall be located in a rural setting.
- 14 (b) The department shall establish guidelines and procedures for the study
15 project.
- 16 (c) The study project shall operate for three (3) full school years, beginning
17 with the school year that begins at least three (3) months after the effective
18 date of this Act.
- 19 (d) The goal of the study project shall be to evaluate the effectiveness of early
20 reading assistance programs for children with characteristics of dyslexia.
- 21 (e) The commissioner may consult with recognized organizations that
22 specialize in structured literacy programs for the treatment of dyslexia in
23 establishing and operating the study project.
- 24 (f) The department shall submit a final report outlining the findings of the
25 study to the Interim Joint Committee on Education and the Interim Joint
26 Committee on Health and Welfare and Family Services by November 1
27 after the final academic year of the study project.

1 (9) The provisions of this section are subject to available funds.

2 ➔SECTION 2. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 164 IS CREATED TO
3 READ AS FOLLOWS:

4 By the 2019-2020 academic year, postsecondary institutions offering teacher
5 preparation programs for elementary and secondary regular education shall, subject to
6 available funds, include instruction on:

7 (1) The definition and characteristics of dyslexia;

8 (2) Processes for identifying dyslexia;

9 (3) Evidence-based interventions and accommodations for dyslexia and other
10 disorders defined in KRS 158.305 and related literacy and learning challenges;
11 and

12 (4) Core elements of a response-to-intervention framework addressing reading,
13 writing, mathematics, and behavior, including:

14 (a) Universal screening;

15 (b) Scientific, research-based interventions;

16 (c) Progress monitoring of the effectiveness of interventions on student
17 performance;

18 (d) Data-based decision-making procedures related to:

19 1. Determining intervention effectiveness on student performance; and

20 2. Determining the need to continue, alter, or discontinue interventions
21 or conduct further evaluation of student needs; and

22 (e) Application and implementation of response-to-intervention and dyslexia
23 instructional practices in the classroom setting.

24 ➔Section 3. This Act shall be known and may be cited as the Ready to Read Act.