

Dyslexia Professional Development Guidance

This guidance document assists with the interpretation of [NDCC 15.1-32-26](#) subsection 3.f, which states that “school districts shall provide professional development on dyslexia characteristics and interventions related to phonological and phonemic awareness, sound and symbol relationships, alphabet knowledge, rapid naming skills, and encoding and decoding skills, to **appropriate kindergarten through grade three personnel of the school district and special education unit.**”

Through funding provided by the ND legislation, NDDPI is working to provide training opportunities to meet needs at each level. Information will be published on the [NDDPI Dyslexia webpage](#) as it becomes available.

The following chart is to assist in identifying **appropriate K-3 educators** and discuss beneficial professional learning opportunities for their roles.

Levels of Learning	Who Should be Trained & Why?	What Training is Appropriate?
Level I: Awareness	All educators working with students benefit from understanding the impact dyslexia has on a student and recognizing signs of dyslexia. A basic understanding of support strategies can help students minimize frustration, embarrassment, and failure throughout their day.	Half to full-day professional learning workshops or virtual asynchronous options can provide staff with an overview to recognize the characteristics of dyslexia. Sensitivity activities can help educators experience what a student with dyslexia experiences. Educators should learn strategies to support students with dyslexia in various contexts.
Level II: Assessment and Intervention Pathway Development	Educators with reading instruction assignments in the classroom, special education, and intervention roles must understand how reading develops and what breaks down when a student is not learning to read. Collectively, reading instructors within a system should learn to work together to support all students by providing strong core instruction, appropriate assessments, and intervention responses to meet the individual needs of struggling students.	High-quality, long-term, and job-embedded professional development is the most effective in training educators to support students with reading difficulties. Educators must learn how to teach reading explicitly and systematically and work as a system to develop pathways to address reading deficits. Pathway development includes the identification of student needs, selection of intervention materials, service delivery logistics, and monitoring student and system effectiveness.
Level III: Dyslexia Specialist Certification	A reading specialist, interventionist, or special education instructor working with students who are not progressing satisfactorily must understand how to provide intensive, multi-modal approaches to support students with debilitating dyslexia characteristics.	College dyslexia intervention coursework and professionally recognized methods such as Orton-Gillingham training are appropriate for this purpose. North Dakota offers a dyslexia credential for individuals completing this level of study.