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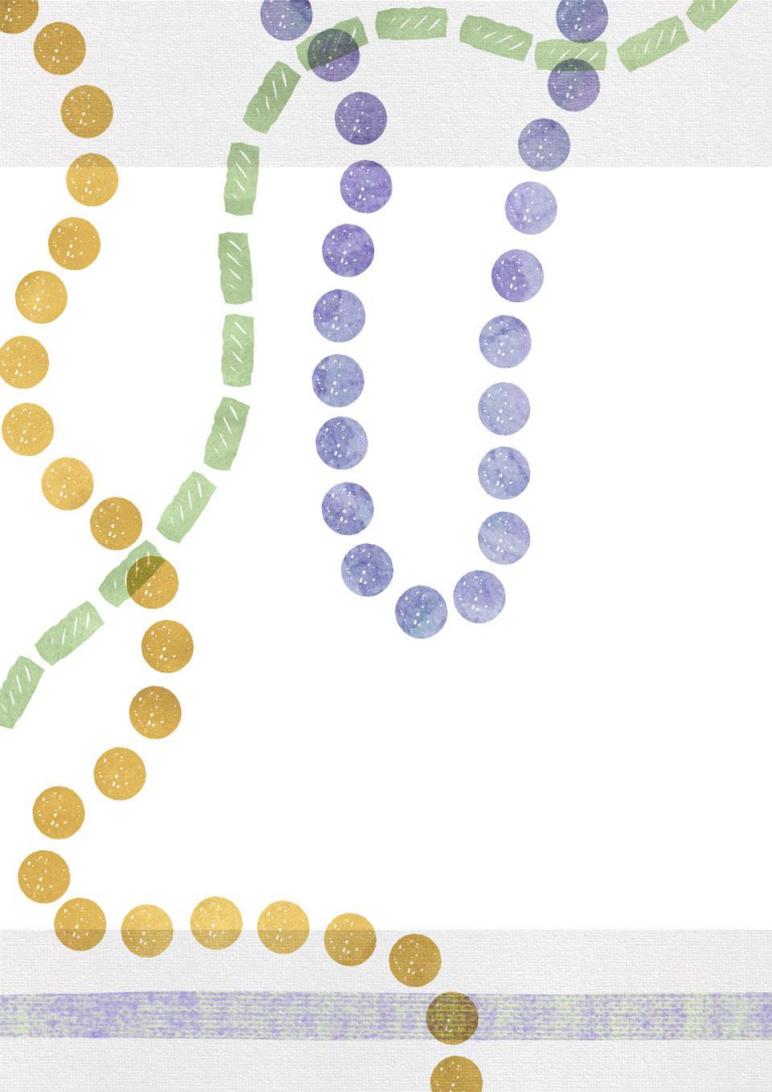# Bulletin 1903
Policy Guidance

2021

Agenda

- Background Knowledge

- Issues Addressed

- Review of Guidance
  - Required Screenings
  - Additional Screenings
  - Screening Instruments

- Application of the Policy
  - SBLC Referral Process
  - Qualifications
  - Support
  - Tracking Progress

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Background Knowledge

Louisiana's Definition of Dyslexia

● Act 206 of the 2020 Legislative Session revised Louisiana's definition of dyslexia.

● The new definition defines dyslexia as "an unexpected difficulty in reading for an individual who has the intelligence to be a much better reader, most commonly caused by a difficulty in phonological processing, which affects the ability of an individual to speak, read, and spell."

● "Phonological processing" means the appreciation of the individual sounds of spoken and written language.

Believes

Bulletin 1903 Workgroup

- The Department formed a workgroup to meet virtually to review Bulletin 1903 and propose revisions based on the updated definition of dyslexia and current research on the science of teaching reading.

- Endorsement for the revised version of Bulletin 1903 was received from the Early Literacy Commission and SEAP at their November meetings.

- The revised policy was presented to BESE for approval at their December and April meetings, and the rule was created in June 2021.

Workgroup Focus

Louisiana believes that all students, including students with dyslexia and related disorders, must have the opportunity to meet challenging objectives.

The workgroup's focus was to align Bulletin 1903 with the updated definition of dyslexia and current regulatory requirements to ensure students at-risk of dyslexia and related disorders receive the instruction and interventions needed to become stronger readers.

Overarching Themes of the Revision Process

Accessibility and Usability
The policy guidelines need to be easily accessible and readily usable for teachers and school leaders.
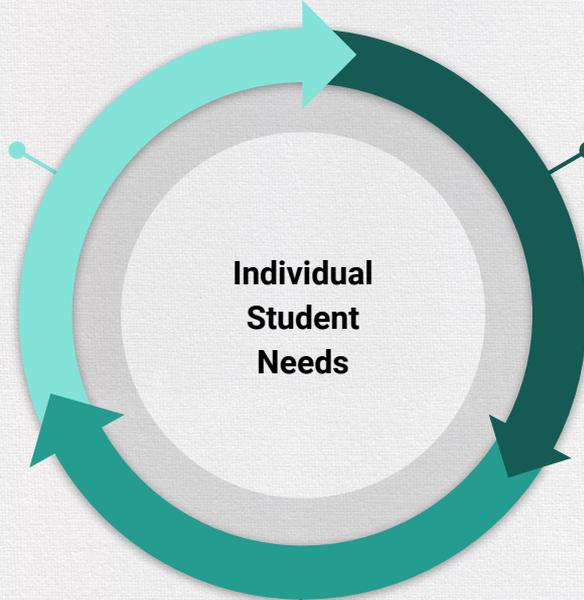
Streamlined and Focused
The policy should be formatted and organized in a sequential way with a clear focus on identifying and providing support to students who may be at risk for dyslexia.

Individual Student Needs

Gated Screening
The screening process should be progressive and use layers of data to effectively determine the support and intervention needs of students.

Major Revisions

The following revisions were made to the policy based on workgroup feedback:

- Updated the definition of dyslexia based on recent legislation
- Updated the characteristics of dyslexia to reflect current research and grade level appropriateness
- Restructured the order of information to be more chronological
- Improved the Program Criteria chapter to reflect current best practices
- Removed the "contributing factors" list
  - addressed in other areas of the policy
- Removed ADHD and social/emotional lists
  - not included in the "other related disorders" addressed in the Louisiana law for dyslexia
- Removed requirements regarding grades and minutes due to variability based on student needs

Believes

Issues Addressed by the Workgroup

Funding

- School systems should be able to:

    ○ determine the needs of their staff and students based on policy guidelines.

    ○ use screeners and data-based resources that align to the criteria outlined in the revised policy.

Timelines

- Student needs should be the driving force in determining the length of program implementation to support students with characteristics of dyslexia.

  - The level of support and duration of intervention and accommodations varies depending on the severity of a student's deficits.

  - Progress monitoring is an essential component of intervention.

References to Laws

- Current policy writing practices discourage the use of repetitive language that can be found in the laws that are being implemented throughout the policy.

- Policy users should refer to the Authority Notes for a list of the laws implemented in each section of the policy.

- Other policies, such as Bulletin 1508, outline timelines, other screening requirements, and evaluation processes for students suspected of having a disability.

- The purpose of this policy focused on implementing Louisiana's Dyslexia Law so the content within should remain streamlined to that law.

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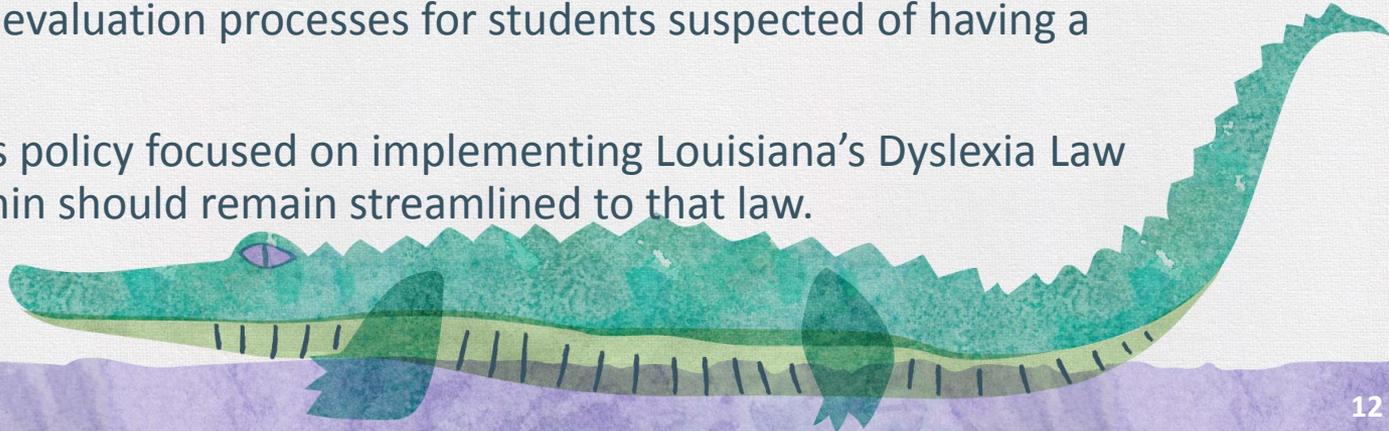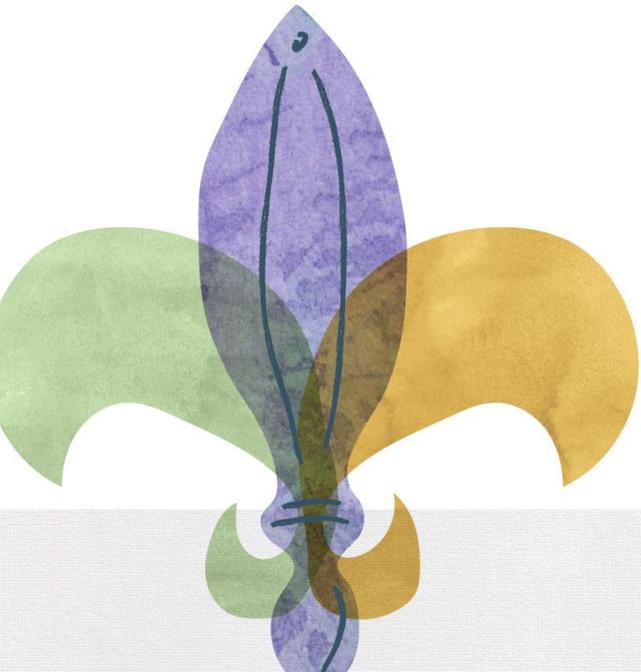
Review of Guidance

A Guide to Dyslexia in Louisiana

- The Department has updated the guidance for families, teachers, and school systems that summarizes policy and state law regarding dyslexia to reflect the changes in Bulletin 1903.

- The Guide to Dyslexia in Louisiana can be found in the Academics Library.

Believes

Required Screenings

- In accordance with Bulletin 741: *Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators* and R.S. 17:7(11), all students enrolled in kindergarten through third grade shall be administered an [early literacy screener](#) within the first 30 days of the school year.

- The revisions in Bulletin 1903 outline which screenings are required and in which areas additional screening should be conducted if students show deficits on the required screener.

Believes

Kindergarten Required Screenings

During the kindergarten school year, all students should be screened for:

- phonemic awareness

- letter naming fluency

- letter sound recognition

Believes

Kindergarten Additional Screenings

If a student shows a deficit on the required screening, additional screening should include:

- phonological awareness
  - rhyming
  - syllable manipulation
- rapid automatic naming skills
  - colors
  - objects
  - numbers

First Grade Required Screenings

During the first grade school year, all students should be screened for:

Fall Semester

- phonemic awareness

- letter naming fluency

- letter sound recognition

Spring Semester

- decoding
    - real words
    - nonsense words

- oral reading fluency
    - rate
    - accuracy

First Grade Additional Screenings

If a student shows a deficit on the required screening, additional screening should include:

Fall Semester

- phonological awareness
  - rhyming
  - syllable manipulation

- rapid automatic naming skills
  - colors
  - objects
  - numbers

Spring Semester

- phonological/phonemic awareness
  - syllable manipulation
  - phoneme segmentation
  - phoneme manipulation

- rapid automatic naming skills
  - colors
  - objects
  - numbers

- encoding skills
- oral and written language skills

Second & Third Grade Required Screenings

During the second and third grade school years, all students should be screened for:

- decoding
    - real words
    - nonsense words

- oral reading fluency
    - rate
    - accuracy

Note: Screening for second and third grade students can begin with real words and scaffold back to nonsense words if deficits are evident and further screening would be helpful in making a determination of necessary support.

Second & Third Grade Additional Screenings

If a student shows a deficit on the required screening, additional screening should include:

- phonological/phonemic awareness
  - syllable manipulation
  - phoneme segmentation
  - phoneme manipulation

- rapid automatic naming skills
  - colors
  - objects
  - numbers

- encoding skills
- oral and written language skills

Important Notes

- A student demonstrating deficits after additional screening is considered to have characteristics of dyslexia and shall be provided appropriate structured language and literacy interventions.

- Screening is not limited to students in kindergarten through third grade and may be administered at any grade level if a student exhibits impediments to a successful school experience.

Screening Instruments

- Frequent changes and updates on available additional screeners for dyslexia and related disorders led to the list being removed from the policy.

- The new guidelines for the screening process provide a set of criteria for selection of additional screening instruments.

- The Department does have a list of some approved screeners, but please note that this list is not comprehensive.

- Follow the criteria outlined in Bulletin 1903 for selecting an appropriate screening instrument.
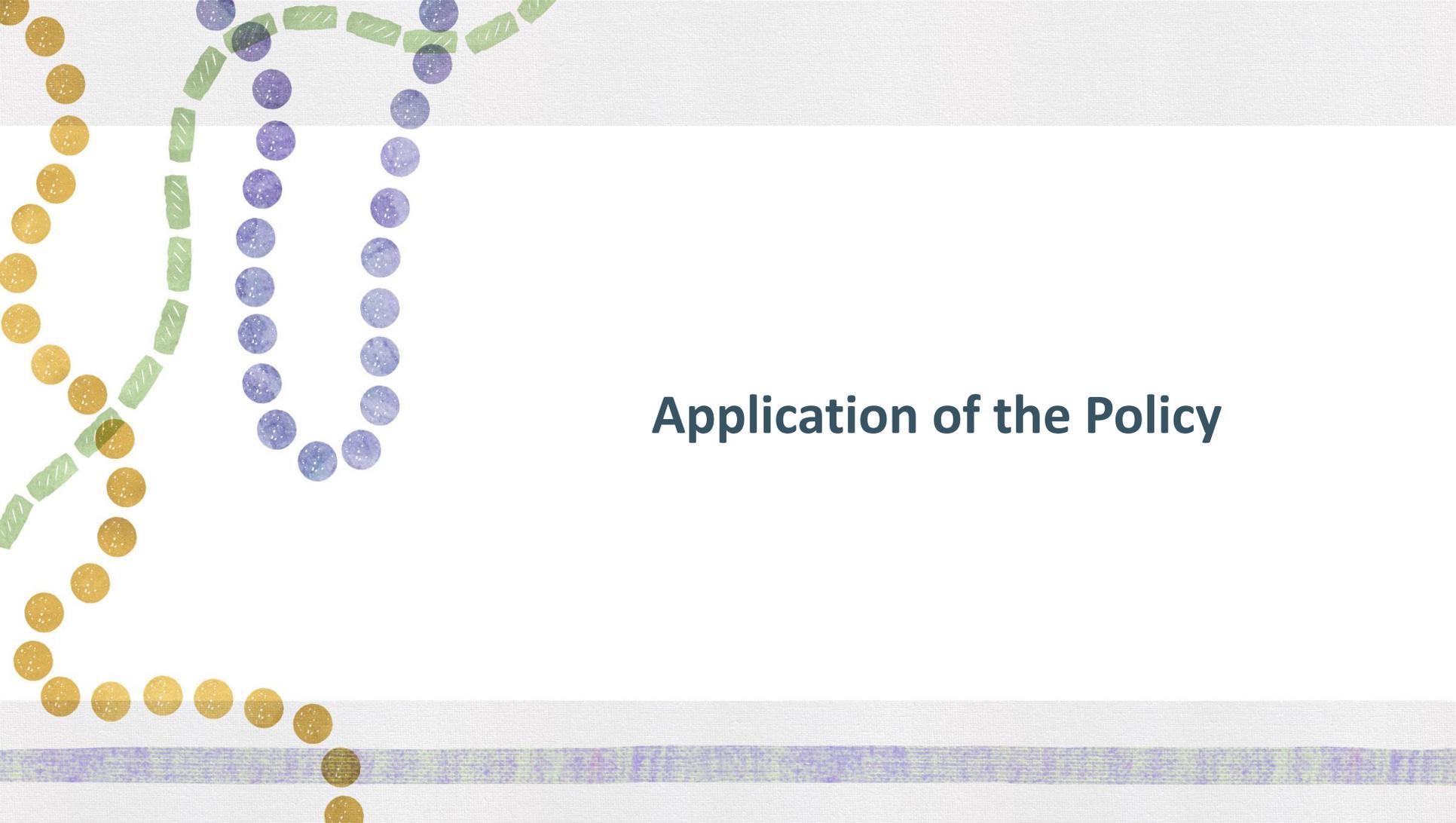
Application of the Policy

SBLC Referral Process

- **Step 1:** Student is identified as having possible characteristics of dyslexia by screening or by concerns from a parent/guardian, educator, or advocate.

- **Step 2:** Student is referred to SBLC.

- **Step 3:** SBLC collects data, including additional screening and intervention implementation data.

- **Step 4:** SBLC determines if a referral to Section 504 committee or Pupil Appraisal Team for special education evaluation is appropriate.

Believes

Qualifications

- The student consistently struggles or has difficulty attaining expected academic progress, **despite receiving instruction in a high quality curriculum with the implementation of additional instructional intervention strategies within the framework of a multi-tiered system of support**.

- A student demonstrating deficits after additional screening, as outlined in the above screening process, is considered to have characteristics of dyslexia and shall be provided appropriate structured language and literacy interventions.

Support: Multisensory Structured Language and Literacy

Multisensory structured language and literacy programs should do the following:

1. Contain **instruction** in phonological awareness, phoneme-grapheme association, phonics, syllables, linguistics, meaning, and reading fluency.

2. Integrate all aspects of **language-based instruction** including receptive, expressive, oral and written language, and handwriting.

3. Use instructional **methods** that are explicit, systematic, sequential, cumulative, individualized, diagnostic, demonstrate automaticity of performance, simultaneously multisensory, and follow the **synthetic to analytic phonics** instructional process.

4. Allow for **adequate practice** opportunities to develop **automaticity** of performance.

Believes

Tracking Progress

- Progress monitoring data should be maintained on students receiving instruction in a multisensory structured language and literacy program.

- Students' participation in multisensory structured language and literacy programming should be periodically reviewed to determine the appropriateness and effectiveness of the program for the student.

Resources
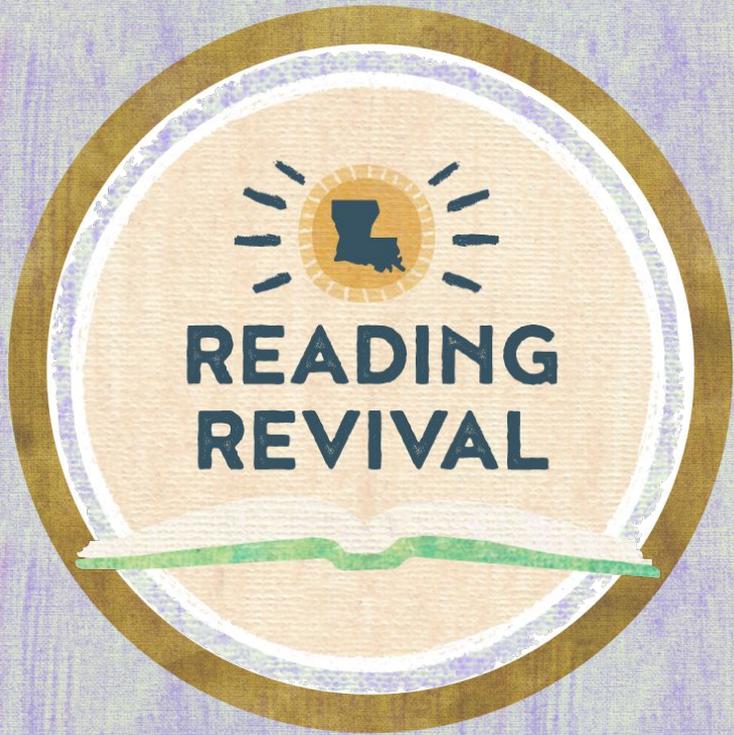
- This presentation as well as [A Guide to Dyslexia in Louisiana](#) and other resources can be found in the [Academics Library](#) under Additional Disability Related Resources - Dyslexia.

- For resources and tools specific to literacy, visit the [Literacy Library](#).

Email LouisianaLiteracy@la.gov or Lisa.Holliday@la.gov with questions.