




STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner of Education 

DATE: July 15, 2016

SUBJECT: Public Act 15-97: An Act Concerning Students with Dyslexia

Public Act 15-97 amended Section 10-14t of the Connecticut General Statutes which required the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to develop or approve reading assessments for use by local and regional boards of education for the school year commencing July 1, 2016, and each school year thereafter, to identify students in kindergarten to grade three, inclusive, who are below proficiency in reading, provided any reading assessments developed or approved by the department include frequent screening and progress monitoring of students. Further, the Public Act added that such assessments shall assist in identifying, in whole or in part, students at risk for dyslexia, as defined in Section 10-14t. This act, built upon existing statute which required the development or approval of reading assessment by 2014. In July of 2014, the State Board of Education (SBE) approved a *Menu of Researched-based Grades K-3 Universal Screening Reading Assessments*.

After cross-agency collaboration among staff with responsibilities in Scientific Research-Based Intervention (SRBI), reading/dyslexia, literacy and math, and consultation with experts in the field of dyslexia research, identification and intervention, a review of the existing *Approved Menu of Research-based Grades K-3 Universal Screening Reading Assessments* (July 2014) as approved by the SBE was completed. Additionally, a comparison was conducted of the K-3 Reading Assessments with *Connecticut's Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) Dyslexia Assessment Resource Guide* (CSDE 2016-Draft), which identifies research-based reading-related abilities and assessment tools appropriate for screening and evaluating key reading component skills. These activities supported the decision to recommend the use of the *Approved Menu of Researched-based Grades K-3 Universal Screening Reading Assessments* as the reading assessment/screening to "assist in identifying in whole or in part, students at risk for Dyslexia or other reading-related learning disabilities."

Therefore, effective September 2016, the assessments and tools within the *Menu of Researched-based Grades K-3 Universal Screening Reading Assessments* will be used as the screening/reading assessments to screen for students at risk of SLD/dyslexia. Guidance will be provided to assist the field in understanding the role of universal reading assessments, such as the CSDE *Menu of Research-based Grades K-3 Universal Screening Reading Assessments*, in the identification process for students with reading difficulties or with possible SLD/Dyslexia. Also, guidance will be provided in how to use the results of the screening tools to inform regular reading instruction, SRBI interventions, the comprehensive evaluation of a student with possible SLD/Dyslexia, and the specialized instruction necessary to assist students with SLD/Dyslexia to close the reading gap.

If there are further questions, please contact Dr. Patricia Anderson at patricia.anderson@ct.gov or 860-713-6923.

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