

Arkansas Correctional School District Dyslexia Screening and Intervention Plan

Introduction

The Arkansas Correctional School District (ACS) recognizes that research indicates the educational level of prison inmates is significantly lower than that of the non-prison population. The average reading level of incarcerated adults is much lower and is one of the contributing factors in the lower education levels and rising incarceration rates. The intention of this plan is to assess current and future inmates so that identified reading deficiencies can be addressed through appropriate intervention services, which will have a positive effect on future educational attainment and the recidivism rate of current inmates. These goals align with the Division of Corrections' mission and vision of providing correctional services that return inmates to the community as productive people.

Goals

- 1) Provide systematic dyslexia screening
- 2) Provide appropriate intervention services for inmates who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia
- 3) Provide intervention services for inmates who read below the required proficiency level
- 4) Provide information to current inmates regarding dyslexia and dyslexia services
- 5) Establish a system that assures all ACS teachers have a Professional Development Plan that satisfies all rules and regulations relevant to Science of Reading (SoR) legislation

Action Plan

Goal 1: Systematic Dyslexia Screening

At the time of intake, all inmates will be screened and assessed to determine if markers of dyslexia exist and to measure individual reading levels. A minimum of two assessment tools will

be utilized for intake screening. Educational and medical history will also be used to assist in determination of appropriate intervention services.

ACS-placed inmates who are identified as having characteristics of dyslexia will be further assessed during the scheduled school day. Non-student inmates identified as having characteristics of dyslexia will be offered an opportunity for further assessment.

Current inmates will be provided information regarding dyslexia and dyslexia intervention services. Inmates who request screening will be provided an opportunity for screening.

Goal 2: Appropriate Intervention Services for Inmates Who Demonstrate Characteristics of Dyslexia

Utilizing a research based reading program, appropriately, trained staff will immediately start interventions with inmates placed in ACS. Based on assessment data, staff will select interventions that align with inmate needs.

After 12-15 intervention sessions a decision regarding response to intervention will be made based on the inmate's level of progression. If improvement has occurred, the current intervention services will continue. If no improvement has occurred, a diagnostic screener will be used to further assess the individual's needs and assist in determining appropriate interventions.

If the Diagnostic Screener Assessment indicates markers of dyslexia, then an evidence based intervention program will be used to provide dyslexia intervention services. Continued support for individuals will be determined based on progress monitoring of assessment data.

Non-student inmates (Current or New) who are identified as having characteristics of dyslexia and choose to receive offered services will follow the same plan. Time and space will be provided at each unit as needed.

All dyslexia interventions provided by ACS will be evidence based and consistent with science-based research specifically tailored to addressing dyslexia.

Goal 3: Provide Intervention Services for Inmates Who Read Below the Required Proficiency Level

ACS students reading below required proficiency level will receive ongoing support and intervention services intended to advance reading levels. This support will be done utilizing evidence based programs for intervention.

Non-student inmates who choose to attend available support sessions will receive ongoing support and intervention services intended to advance reading levels. This support will be done utilizing evidence based programs for intervention.

Goal 4: Provide Information to Current Inmates Regarding Dyslexia and Dyslexia Services

The process for notifying all current inmates of available dyslexia screening and intervention services is the utilization of multiple methods. These could include but are not limited to posters, television, and verbal communication.

Goal 5: Professional Development Plans Addressing SoR

Act 1063 of 2017, the Right to Read Act states: “By the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year:
A) All teachers employed in a teaching position that requires an elementary education (K-6) license or special education (K-12) license shall demonstrate proficiency in knowledge and practices of scientific reading instruction; and B) All other teachers shall demonstrate awareness in knowledge and practices of scientific reading instruction.

As required by Act 1063 of 2017, all ACS certified teachers will show awareness in the Science of Reading (SoR). Staff members will receive required professional development services which will be provided by an Arkansas River Educational Service Cooperative Literacy Specialist.

Rules Governing the Arkansas Correctional School Implementation of The Science of Reading, Dyslexia Screening, and Intervention Services

Introduction

The mission of the Division of Correction is to provide public safety by carrying out the mandates of the courts, provide a safe, humane environment for staff and inmates; provide programs to strengthen the work ethic; and provide opportunities for spiritual, mental and physical growth. The vision of the Division of Correction is to be an honorable and professional organization through ethical and innovative leadership at all levels, providing cost efficient, superior correctional services that return productive people to the community.

The Arkansas Correctional School District recognizes that research indicates the educational level of prison inmates is significantly lower than that of the non-prison population. The average reading level of incarcerated adults is much lower and is one of the contributing factors in the lower education levels and rising incarceration rates. The intention of these rules and forthcoming implementation plan is to assess current and future inmates so that identified reading deficiencies can be addressed through appropriate intervention services which will have a positive effect on future educational attainment and the recidivism rate of current inmates. These goals align with the Division of Corrections' mission and vision of providing correctional services that return inmates to the community as productive people. The Arkansas Correctional School District will develop a plan with the Division of Correction that allows inmates to voluntarily receive reading proficiency level assessments, dyslexia screening administered with fidelity and reading instruction that is consistent with the Science of Reading as provided under the Right to Read Act 6-17-420.

1.00 Purpose

1.01 The purpose of these rules is to establish guidelines for requiring:

1.01.1 newly committed inmates to undergo a reading assessment and dyslexia screening during the intake process,

1.01.2 inmates who read below the required proficiency level or demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia to be provided with appropriate intervention services,

1.01.3 current inmates receive information regarding dyslexia services, and

1.01.4 an individual who teaches at a school within the Arkansas Correctional School District demonstrate proficiency and awareness of the best practices of science-based reading instruction.

- 1.02 Further clarification and information regarding the Arkansas Correctional School District's Implementation Plan may be acquired through the Office of the Superintendent.

2.00 Authority

- 2.01 The rules are enacted pursuant to the Arkansas Correctional School District's authority codified by Act 1088 of 2018.
- 2.02 The Superintendent of the Arkansas Correctional School District shall file the proposed rule with the Legislative Council under 10-3-309 sufficiently in advance of January 1, 2020 so that the legislative council may consider the rule for approval before January 1, 2020.

3.00 Definitions

- 3.01 "Dyslexia" means a specific learning disability that is
 - 3.01.1 neurological in origin;
 - 3.01.2 characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language; and
 - 3.01.3 often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities.
- 3.02 "In-take" means the diagnostic process where inmates are given medical, mental health and academic examinations, court papers are reviewed, counselors gather information through interviews and a general orientation takes place.

4.00 Required Screening

- 4.01 Upon intake, each inmate who does not have a high school diploma or its equivalent will:
 - 4.01.1 complete a reading proficiency-level assessment and
 - 4.01.2 complete a dyslexia screening administered with fidelity

- 4.02. A minimum of two assessment tools will be utilized for screening.
- 4.03 Upon intake, non-student inmates identified as having characteristics of dyslexia will be offered an opportunity for further screening
- 4.04 Current inmates will be provided information regarding dyslexia and be offered the opportunity for screening
- 4.05 If the screener(s) used initially, show the student/inmate is at risk, or at some risk, then a Level I dyslexia screener shall be administered. The Level I dyslexia screening of the student/inmate shall be performed with fidelity and include the following components”
 - 4.05.1 Phonological and phonemic awareness;
 - 4.05.2 Sound symbol recognition;
 - 4.05.3 Alphabet knowledge;
 - 4.05.4 Decoding skills;
 - 4.05.5 Rapid naming skills; and
 - 4.05.6 Encoding skills
- 4.06 Completed screenings will be maintained in the electronic Offender Management Information System (eOMIS)

5.00 Intervention and Services

- 5.01 If the diagnostic assessment(s) indicate markers of dyslexia, new intake inmates will be provided dyslexia intervention with fidelity as defined under 6-41-602, that is evidence-based and consistent with science-based research specifically tailored to addressing dyslexia
- 5.02 Available educational and medical history will also be used to assist in determination of appropriate intervention services.

- 5.03 Continued support for individuals will be based on progress monitoring of assessment data and individualized to the needs.
- 5.04 Arkansas Correctional School District students reading below required proficiency level will receive ongoing support and intervention services intended to advance reading levels .This support will be provided utilizing evidence based programs for intervention.
- 5.05 Non-student inmates who choose to attend available support sessions will receive ongoing support and intervention services intended to advance reading levels. This support will be done utilizing evidence based programs for intervention.
- 5.06 The process for notifying all current inmates of available dyslexia screening and intervention services will utilize multiple methods. These may include, but are not limited to posters, television, and verbal communication.

6.00 Professional Awareness and Development

- 6.01 Teachers within the Arkansas Correctional School District will be provided with professional development and demonstrate an awareness of the best practices of scientific reading instruction as required under the Right to Read Act 6-17-429.