



ARKANSAS DIVISION of YOUTH SERVICES

District Support Plan

2022-23 School Year

Background

Between 80-90% of students remanded to the custody of DYS struggle to read and are several grade levels behind where they should be in terms of their academic performance. We currently use the Woodcock Johnson-IV and/or the WRAT5 as screeners then administer the CTOPP to determine which students need further testing and interventions that will improve both their reading and comprehension.

All groups of students benefit from these efforts, including ESL, Special Education, 504, males, females, low socio-economic, highly mobile, Specific Learning Disability, etc. We strive to provide all DYS students with equal opportunities to strengthen their reading skills, recognize words, and comprehend the meanings of what they have read. We know if our students can do these things, the chances of them experiencing success in many aspects of their lives will increase greatly.

Screening

Within thirty (30) calendar days, excluding holidays, of being committed to the Division of Youth Services (DYS), a youth shall have his/her reading proficiency level assessed and a dyslexia screening shall be delivered with fidelity, as defined in Ark. Code Ann. 6-41-602. If a juvenile fails the dyslexia screener, a Winsor Learning / Sondag Reading Intervention Program assessment will be administered to determine the most appropriate placement for services.

Services

The Arkansas Division of Youth Services will continue to help struggling readers. If a reading assessment or the dyslexia assessment indicates that a youth is reading below the level of proficiency required to be a high-functioning reader, the youth shall be provided evidenced-based reading interventions via Winsor Learning / Sondag Reading Intervention Program, as per the Arkansas Department of Education's compilation of appropriate intervention programs.

An intervention plan provided for a youth who is reading below the level of proficiency shall be administered with fidelity by a teacher who has been trained in Winsor Learning / Sondag Reading Intervention Program. The teacher must have demonstrated proficient knowledge and skills to teach reading consistent with best practices as required under the Right to Read Act, Ark. Code Ann. 6-17-429.

Juveniles currently committed to DYS shall be:

- Provided with information that explains what dyslexia is in common and easy-to-understand language,
- Offered and encouraged to submit to dyslexia screening,
- Provided with dyslexia interventions with fidelity, as defined in Ark. Code Ann. 6-41-602, in the same manner as required for newly committed juveniles.

We have provided teachers with dyslexia training and purchased small group kits. We will continue to expand training to include more teachers and will purchase more intervention kits for classrooms as needed. Resources have been purchased from Winsor Learning, which primarily includes intervention kits for teachers, as well as supplies and materials for students.

Veteran teachers have completed the Science of Reading training; however, there are very few veteran/trained teachers. DYS facilities are under the management of "Rite of Passage" and ROP continues to experience a shortage of qualified staff. ROP administrators are working diligently to recruit and retain new staff members. Newly hired teachers will need to start the training after being hired by ROP.

Progress monitoring takes place every 90 days. The average length of stay is six months. Pre and post tests are given to determine the growth students make while they are with us. The two assessments we depend on most for pre- and post-results are Edmentum Exact Path Diagnostics and the Winsor Learning Reading Placement assessments in reading and spelling. The Woodcock Johnson IV, the WRAT5, and the CTOPP are used to identify youth who might benefit by being placed in a critical reading class. Monitoring is done by DYS central office administrators on staff in the education department.

The DYS student population differs from a regular school. Students typically stay 6-9 months, some shorter, and some longer. We have found that the best system is to evaluate each student and determine their growth during the time they are with us. In terms of this district support plan, we will be evaluating reading progress and growth. We can look at the percentage of students (collectively) who showed positive gains while they were with us.