



## ARKANSAS DIVISION of YOUTH SERVICES

### **District Support Plan**

2023-24 School Year

#### **Background**

Over one-third 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 skills and comprehension levels.

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. All DYS students benefit from these efforts, including special education, 504, low socio-economic, highly mobile, Specific Learning Disability, etc. 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 screening, a Winsor Learning / Sonday Reading Intervention Program assessment will be administered to determine the most appropriate placement for services.

#### **Services**

The Arkansas Division of Youth Services consistently provides tools and support 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 / Sonday 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 / Sonday 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.

All students 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. DYS facilities are under the management of "Rite of Passage or ROP" 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 participate in Science of Reading training after being hired by ROP.

The DYS student population differs from a typical public school. Students typically are enrolled and average of six to nine months. Student progress monitoring occurs every 90 days and is conducted by agency administrators that include education staff. Pre and post tests are given to determine the growth students make while they are with us. In terms of this district support plan, we will be evaluating reading progress and growth.

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.