

July 24, 2024

Parents,

As we embark on a new school year it is important for us to inform you about two significant legislative developments in Georgia that will impact your child's education, specifically focusing on characteristics of dyslexia and early literacy initiatives. These are Senate Bill 48: Characteristics of Dyslexia and HB 538: Georgia Early Literacy Act.

Senate Bill 48 addresses the identification and support of students with characteristics of dyslexia. The key provisions of SB 48 include:

- Screening and Identification: The bill mandates early screening for characteristics of dyslexia in students, ensuring early intervention and support.
- Teacher Training: It requires training for educators to recognize signs of dyslexia and implement appropriate instructional strategies to support affected students.
- Parental Notification: SB 48 emphasizes clear communication with parents regarding dyslexia evaluations and educational strategies tailored to meet each student's needs.

House Bill 538 aims to enhance early literacy outcomes among our state's youngest learners. Key components of HB 538 include:

- Literacy Programs: The bill requires high-quality teaching materials and the administration of universal reading screeners three times each year for kindergarten through third grade.
- Teacher Preparation and Professional Development: It provides training for teachers on the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy skills. All teachers in these grades in public schools will undergo this training.
- Intervention: The bill mandates reading intervention plans for students with reading difficulties and provides formative reading assessments for students in first and second grades.

This legislation underscores Georgia's dedication to equipping educators and schools with the tools necessary to support all learners and promoting literacy skills from an early age.

All parents and guardians are encouraged to review the details of SB 48 and HB 538 to understand their impact fully. Attached is an explanation of Chattooga County School System's response to the legislation. You can access more information about this on our Chattooga webpage or contact your child's administrator for print materials. The Chattooga County School System remains committed to supporting every student's academic journey.

Thank you for your attention to this and for your ongoing support of our school community.

Sincerely,

Michelle Helie

Senate Bill 48: Characteristics of Dyslexia	
State Mandate	Chattooga County School System's Response
Screening and Identification—early screening for characteristics of dyslexia	Administration of MAP Fluency Dyslexia Screener for all K-3 students each year
Teacher Training—training for educators to recognize signs of dyslexia and implement appropriate instructional strategies	Training provided in-house with academic coaches; Information and endorsements from NWGA RESA/ Development of Characteristics of Dyslexia Support Plan/ Additions and clarifications to MTSS plan
Parental Notification—clear communication with parents regarding dyslexia evaluations and educational strategies	Development and Utilization of Dyslexia Support Plan, Characteristics of Dyslexia Parent Notification, and Characteristics of Dyslexia Rubric/ Parent information materials provided in print and digitally
House Bill 538: Early Literacy Act	
State Mandate	Chattooga County School System's Response
Literacy Programs—utilization of high-quality teaching materials and the administration of universal reading screeners three times per year for kindergarten through third grade	Core curriculum (HMH Into Reading) received the highest ratings from the GA Advisory Committee; supplemental materials (Heggerty and Foundations) aligned to the science of reading; MAP Fluency Benchmarks and/or Dyslexia Screener administered in the Fall, Winter, and Spring each year to K-3 students
Professional Development—training on the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy skills for K-3 teachers	All K-5 teachers, administrators, coaches, and interventionists have completed or are enrolled in a state-approved course of study.
Intervention—reading intervention plans for students with reading difficulties and formative reading assessments for students in first and second grades	Development of Reading Support Plan Tier 2 Interventions: Heggerty, Foundations, Florida Center for Reading Research lessons, and HMH Fluency passages Tier 3: Sonday System Formative: MAP Growth for all K-12 students