

## **Guidance Document on Medical Diagnosis as Compared to School Special Education Eligibility of a Specific Learning Disability with Characteristics of Dyslexia**

The Indiana Department of Education is providing guidance to clarify the difference between a special educational eligibility for a specific learning disability with the characteristics of dyslexia, and a medical diagnosis of dyslexia.

A medical diagnosis is NOT required for a student to qualify for a special education eligibility. Dyslexia is NOT a special education eligibility category. A student with data to indicate the characteristics of dyslexia may qualify for the special education eligibility category of a specific learning disability (SLD) with the characteristics of dyslexia. A student may be found eligible if the student's case conference committee (CCC) determines that the student's disability adversely affects the student's educational performance and as a result thereof the student requires special education and related services.

A student's special education eligibility is determined by the student's CCC. This eligibility decision is NOT made by any single individual, but by a committee that includes the student's parent or legal guardian.

For a student to qualify for a school special education eligibility they are NOT required to have an outside medical provider or outside psychologist provide a medical diagnosis of dyslexia. School staff may find that the outside diagnosis provides helpful information and data that compliments the schools' data.

Students in grades kindergarten, first, and second will be universally screened each academic year. Student in grades three through twelve may be screened if a teacher notices a significant deficit in one of the six subsets.

Students who fall below benchmark on the universal screener will then receive a level I screener (with parent permission) to gain additional data so the school shall provide a targeted intervention to address a student's deficit area(s). At any point during this process parents or school staff may request a special education evaluation of the student.

Please consider this information when evaluating a student's data and deciding on the best way to help the student.