



Promoting literacy through research, education and advocacy

Legislative Goals of the Oregon Branch of the International Dyslexia Association on behalf of dyslexia and related learning disabilities

ORBIDA Position Statement adopted by vote of the Board of Directors on 02/18/2015

The Oregon Branch of the International Dyslexia Association supports legislation that includes the following components:

Recognition of the IDA Definition of Dyslexia:

Any dyslexia or literacy-related law should recognize dyslexia as a specific, lifelong learning disability that requires specialized educational services across all grade levels. The following is the official IDA definition of dyslexia that should be included within any relevant legislation:

“Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin. It is 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 that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede the growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.”

Early Screening and Identification:

Any legislative solution to dyslexia or related reading disabilities should include provisions for the early identification, screening and assessment of students at the earliest stage possible. This includes the intervention and collaboration of regular and special education personnel, with an emphasis on preschool through 2nd grade levels. Frequent monitoring of the effectiveness of intervention should be a mandatory component of any law so as not to delay the referral of a student to special education. To identify individuals with dyslexia, effective alternatives to the aptitude achievement discrepancy formula should also be included in any relevant legislation. Other approaches, such as “response to intervention” should be investigated and validated.

Access to Trained Dyslexia Professionals:

A central legislative component of IDA’s mission is the adequate preparation and professional development of education personnel, particularly for those who work with students with dyslexia and related learning disabilities. This includes:

- Pre-service preparation in higher education programs
- Standards for accreditation and licensure of teaching and other professionals
- In-service professional development

Any plan for professional development should address the relevant knowledge base, training processes and contexts that are the most effective. Further, all new general and special education teachers should be afforded a continuum of support reflective of the demands of their positions. IDA’s Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading outline the specialized knowledge and skills necessary for teachers and other professionals who work with students with language-based learning disabilities. The IDA Standards can be found at: <http://eida.org/knowledge-and-practices/>

Evidence-based Instruction:

A commitment to intensive, long-term remediation must be made for students who do not respond to reading instruction in a regular education setting. Regardless of the services or programs available within a specific educational setting, students should have access to a full continuum of services, including remediation, across grade levels. An individualized education plan (IEP) must address the unique needs of each child. Legislative solutions to dyslexia and related reading disabilities should stress the need for all students to have access to evidence-based instruction in reading coursework. The components of effective instruction are outlined in the IDA Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading at: <http://eida.org/knowledge-and-practices/>