



# Early Childhood and School Readiness Legislative Commission Presentation

August 20, 2018

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Colorado Kids Identified with Dyslexia

COKID is a grassroots parent led advocacy group with current leadership representation from Boulder, St. Vrain, Adams 12, Littleton, and Douglas County.

We have been advocating in our own districts, speaking at school boards, sitting on dyslexia task forces and other committees.

Above all, we are parents of kids with dyslexia. We are in the process or have been through the process of trying to get our kids help. It has been a battle for us and for our kids.

COKID's mission is to ensure that all dyslexic children are identified and receive appropriate intervention and support to achieve their full potential. Children are slipping through the cracks of the existing system. We know that we can do better and that we have to do better.

**Michael Bucey**, Boulder County  
Parent Group: BVKID, Decoding Dyslexia-CO  
Other: BVSD Dyslexia Task Force

**Amy Dobronyi**, Douglas County  
Parent Group: DCKID & Dyslexia Resource Group  
Other: Colorado Special Education Advisory Committee (CSEAC)

**Lindsay Drakos**, Littleton / Centennial  
Parent Group: LittletonKID  
Decoding Dyslexia-CO  
Other: Littleton Public Schools Dyslexia Task Force

**Karin Johnson**, Littleton / Centennial  
Parent Group: LittletonKID  
Other: CDE Dyslexia Focus Group & Littleton Public Schools Dyslexia Task Force

**Laura Philpott Mitchell**, Broomfield / Adams 12  
Parent Group: A12KID  
Other: Adams 12 Five Star Schools Board of Education

**Cali Nichols**, Douglas County  
Parent Group: DCKID & Dyslexia Resource Group  
Other: Board of Rocky Mountain Branch of the International Dyslexia Association

**Barbara Zink**, Longmont  
Parent Group: SVVSD-Parents of Students with Dyslexia  
Other: SVVSD Dyslexia Task Force, CDE Dyslexia Focus Group

# Dyslexia Facts

- Dyslexia occurs in 12 – 20% of the population
- Dyslexia is genetic – with an estimated 50% rate of heritability in families
- Dyslexia is a neurobiological difference in the brain structure – children walk into kindergarten with dyslexia
- Dyslexia often co-exists with other conditions such as ADHD, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, anxiety, and depression
- Indicators include poor reading skills (decoding and fluency), writing, and spelling
- Underlying deficits include:
  - Phonemic Awareness – Ability to hear and manipulate individual phonemes.
  - Phonological Memory – Ability to hold onto speech based information in short term memory
  - Rapid Automated Naming (RAN) – Ability to retrieve words and symbols/letters quickly from long term memory



## Today's Presentation

1. What is Dyslexia?
2. Colorado Literacy & Learning Disability Statistics
3. The Current State – What Is Happening Now
4. Current Colorado Law
5. Legislative Opportunities



# International Dyslexia Association Definition of Dyslexia:

*Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological 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 growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.”*

Adopted by the IDA Board of Directors, Nov. 12, 2002. Many state education codes, including New Jersey, Ohio and Utah, have adopted this definition.



# Dyslexia Facts

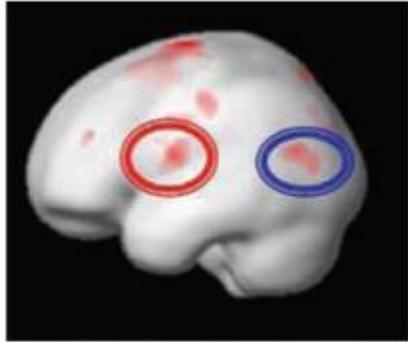
National Institute of Health results on Dyslexia, Released in 1994

- Dyslexia represents the most common and prevalent of all known learning disabilities.
- Dyslexia is the leading cause of reading failure and school dropouts in our nation.
- Reading failure is the most commonly shared characteristic of juvenile justice offenders.
- Early intervention is essential for this population.
- Dyslexia is identifiable, with 92% accuracy, at ages 5 1/2 to 6 1/2.
- Note: These research results have been independently replicated and periodically updated.

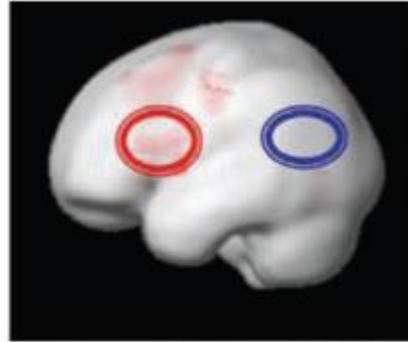


# Current Brain Imaging & what it tells us

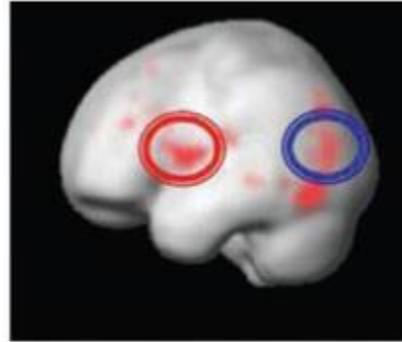
## Evidence From Functional fMRI



TYPICALLY READING CHILDREN



CHILDREN WITH DYSLEXIA  
BEFORE REMEDIATION



CHILDREN WITH DYSLEXIA  
AFTER REMEDIATION

*\*Neuroscience from presentation by Dr. Nadine Gaab, Reading and the Brain*

## TYPICAL BRAIN / DYSLEXIC BRAIN COMPARISON



TYPICAL



DYSLEXIC

- Broca's area, Inferior frontal gyrus (articulation/word analysis)
  - Parieto-temporal (word analysis)
  - Occipito-temporal (word form)
- Broca's area, Inferior frontal gyrus (articulation/word analysis)



# Colorado Learning Disability Statistics

- Almost ½ of students on an IEP have Specific Learning Disability;
- According to the International Dyslexia Association, about 85% of kids with SLD are Dyslexic

## In Colorado

2017 Total Number of Students: 910,280

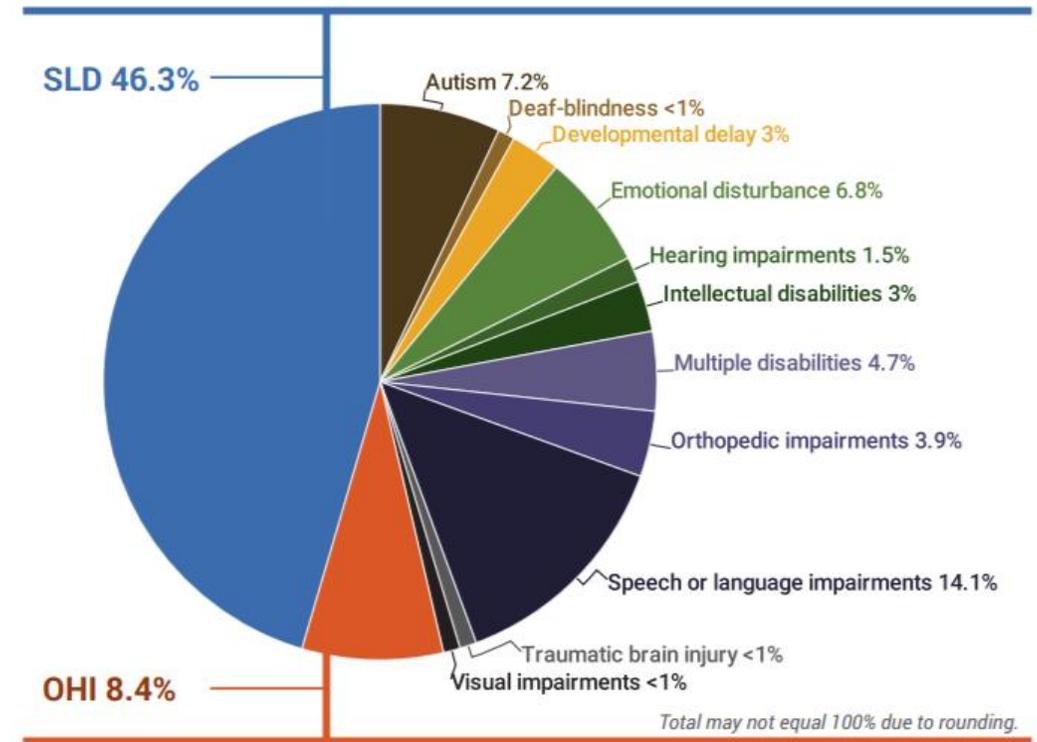
Children in Special Education: 96,154

Children in Special Education for SLD: 44,519

**Projections would indicate 85% of IEPs for SLD are Dyslexic: 37,841**

12% of Colorado K-12 that have Dyslexia: ~108,600

**Few Dyslexic children in Colorado today are receiving services with fidelity and accountability for their Dyslexia**



# Colorado Literacy Statistics

## 2018 CMAS English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics State Achievement Results

### Overall Results

Report Category	# of Valid Scores	Mean Scale Score	Standard Deviation	Performance Level					2018 % Met or Exceeded Expectations	2017 % Met or Exceeded Expectations**	% Change**	2018 Participation Rate
				% Did Not Yet Meet Expectations	% Partially Met Expectations	% Approached Expectations	% Met Expectations	% Exceeded Expectations				
<b>English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA) Overall</b>												
ELA Grade 03	63,016	739	40	17.8	18.1	23.8	36.7	3.7	40.4	40.1	0.3	97.2
ELA Grade 04	64,789	745	35	10.6	17.2	26.1	35.6	10.4	46.1	44.1	2.0	96.7
ELA Grade 05	65,359	746	34	9.9	16.1	26.7	41.9	5.5	47.4	46.3	1.1	95.9
ELA Grade 06	63,647	743	34	10.5	18.9	27.8	35.1	7.7	42.8	40.6	2.2	94.2
ELA Grade 07	60,907	744	40	14.4	15.7	23.3	31.5	15.1	46.6	44.2	2.4	92.0
ELA Grade 08	58,684	743	40	14.7	17.1	24.4	33.4	10.4	43.8	43.4	0.4	88.7

- Although there was small growth in 2018 results, 53 - 60% of Colorado 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> graders are not meeting expectations.
- 90.5 – 94% of Colorado kids with IEPs are not meeting expectations

# What Is Happening In Colorado Now

1. Educator Awareness
2. Identification
3. Teacher Training & Effective Instruction/Intervention
4. Long-term Planning & Tracking
5. Equity



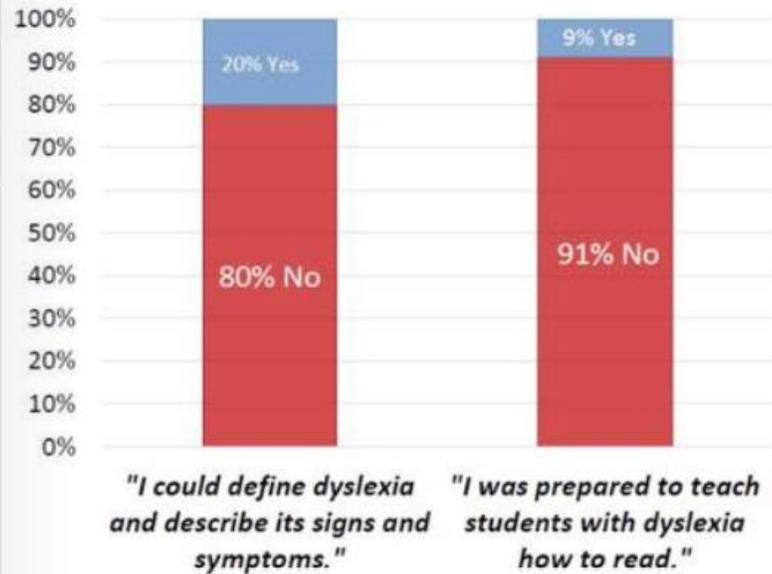
# Teacher Awareness –

## RESPONDENTS:

171 educators with bachelor degrees in Elementary Education, Early Childhood Education, Special Education or Literacy/Reading from an Iowa college or university.

Current job title: 30% Elementary teacher, 21% Special Education teacher, 20% Reading specialist, 15% AEA, 6% Administrator.

### "Upon completion of my bachelors degree..."

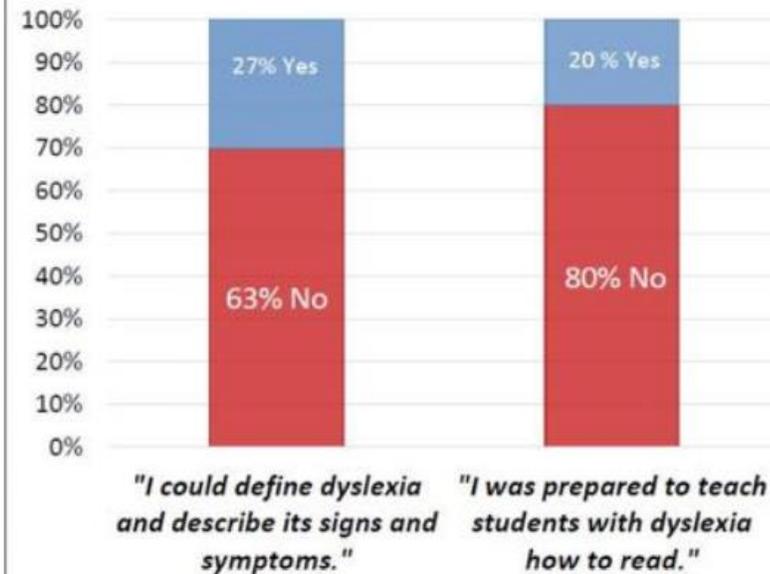


## RESPONDENTS:

91 educators with masters or doctorates in Elementary Education, Early Childhood Education, Special Education, Literacy/Reading, or Curriculum/Instruction from an Iowa college or university.

Current job title: 24% AEA, 19% Elementary teacher, 18% Reading specialist, 16% Special Education teacher, 7% Administrator.

### "Upon completion of my graduate degree..."

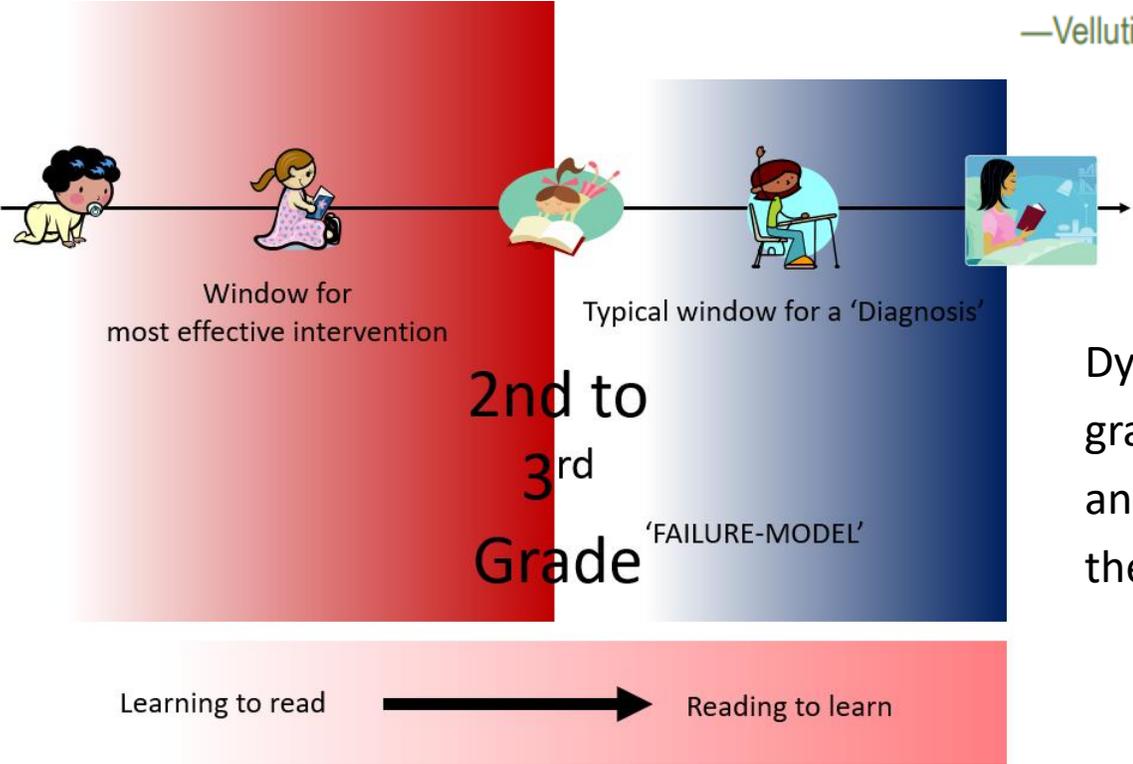


Parents rely on schools to be the experts. Because many educators and parents don't know what Dyslexia is, nor its early signs, children are missed.

# Identification

“Ninety percent of children with reading difficulties will achieve grade level in reading if they receive help by the first grade. Seventy-five percent of children whose help is delayed to age nine or later continue to struggle throughout their school careers.”

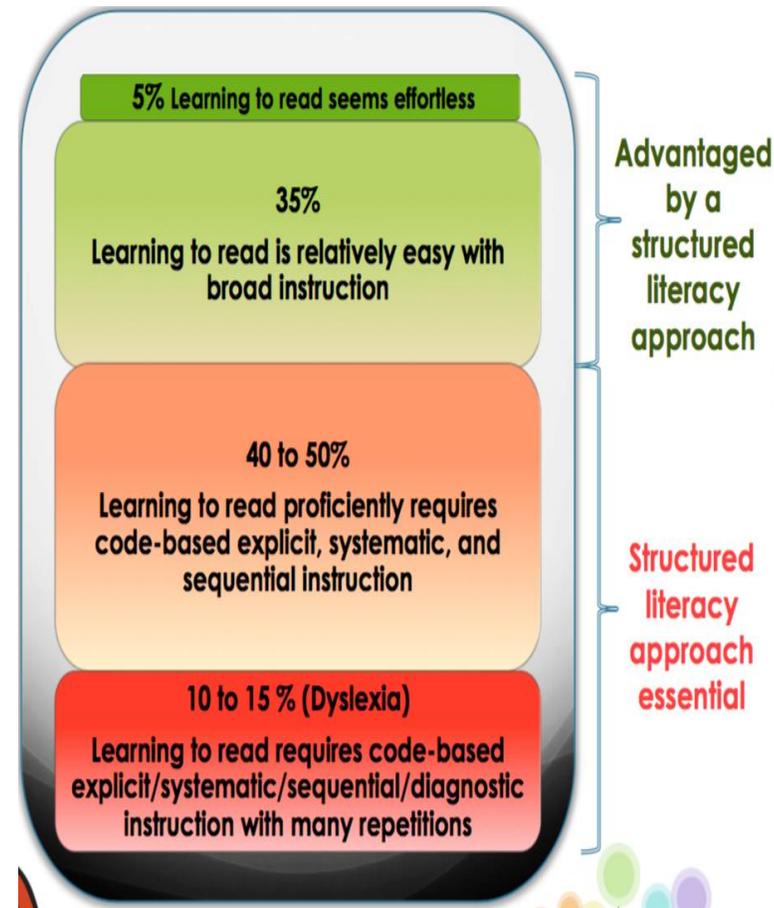
—Vellutino, Scanlon, Sipay, Small, Pratt, Chen & Denckla, 1996



Dyslexics compensate well typically until 3-5<sup>th</sup> grade - Strengths of Comprehension, Vocabulary, and other Learned Compensatory Skills masks their deficits until they “fall off a cliff”

# Teacher Training & Effective Instruction/Intervention

- A survey by Decoding Dyslexia Oregon found:
  - 55% of respondents (including classroom teachers, literacy specialists, Special Ed teachers) believe that they did not receive sufficient coursework on the fundamentals of reading acquisition.
  - 90% of respondents believe that general education teachers would benefit from additional coursework in phonemic awareness and decoding.
- The National Council on Teacher Quality released a report in August 2018 regarding teacher preparation programs and how they teach reading instruction.
  - Only 37% of teacher preparation programs in the nation appear to be teaching reading based on the recommendations of the **National Reading Panel, the National Institute of Health, and the Institute of Education Services.**
- Colorado and 34 other states do not require teachers to pass a “sufficient test of knowledge” on how to teach Reading



# Lack of a targeted Long Term Plan

- Each school is different and each district is different;
  - a child might be lucky because there is literacy specialist trained in structured literacy,
  - or might not be lucky because no one at the school knows what dyslexia is or has someone trained in an appropriate intervention
- Students with dyslexia need progress monitoring and continued support through accommodations,
  - 504, targeted intervention, and/or an IEP
- Districts do not have accountability or reporting requirements in regards to Dyslexia



# Inequity

- Children of engaged parents w/ economic means are more likely be identified and receive evidenced based intervention outside their schools
- Outside diagnosis of Dyslexia – cost is \$1,500 - \$3,000
  - The wait time at Children’s Hospital is currently 7-9 months
- Dyslexia Orton Gillingham/Structured Literacy tutoring is \$60-\$150 per hour.
  - Children typically need a minimum of 2 hours per week
  - \$480 - \$1,200 per month or \$6,240 to \$15,600 a year
- The learning curve is steep for parents: children are subjected to hours of ineffective intervention due to lack of awareness, diagnosis, and information



# Existing Colorado Laws

- HB 08-1223
  - Unfunded and unmandated law that references dyslexia using language “may make available” and “encourage”
  - Does Requires annual report on dyslexia from CDE
- READ Act
  - Requires universal screening (but not comprehensive screening) of K-3<sup>rd</sup> and intervention for kids at risk of a Significant Reading Deficiency (State Funded)
  - No state resources for kids that are below proficient but not identified as having a Significant Reading Deficiency (SRD)
  - 4<sup>th</sup> grade students and above are not addressed under the READ Act.

This assessment of the READ Act is aligned with the Fall 2017 STAND for children, COLORADO “State of Literacy in Colorado 2017” conclusions.

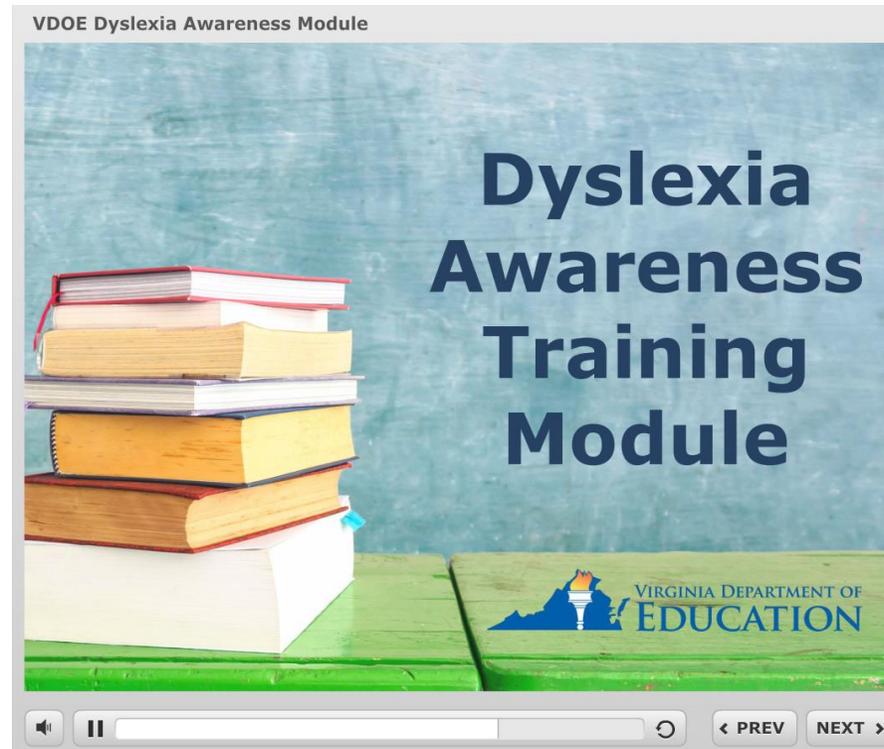


# Legislative Opportunities

1. **Definition of Dyslexia** – Define dyslexia in law using the International Dyslexia Association definition of Dyslexia

2. **Educator Awareness** – Require Dyslexia Awareness Training for new and renewed licenses to ensure:

- Basic understanding of dyslexia
- Awareness of “indicators” of dyslexia
- Purpose and utilization accommodations for dyslexic students



# Legislative Opportunities

## 3. Require Universal/Comprehensive Dyslexia Screener

- 22 states have required Dyslexia Screening
- All students K-3 should be screened, as well as any child that moves into the state regardless of age
- Screening must include **ALL** dyslexia specific weaknesses including Phonological Processing, Phonemic Awareness (Letter/sound knowledge), Rapid Automated Naming, etc.
- All students identified with specific weakness need access to targeted evidenced-based intervention



# Legislative Opportunities

## 4. Comprehensive Training and Professional Development –

- Approximately 15 states have addressed Educator Training in recent legislation
- Teacher Training Programs should align their standards with recommendations by:
  - the National Reading Panel,
  - the National Institute of Health,
  - and the Institute of Education Services
- In Service Educators should receive Professional Development in evidence based instruction and intervention

These needs are aligned with pilot studies referenced in the Jan 2018 CDE report to the General Assembly per House Bill 08-1223



# Legislative Opportunities

## 5. A Statewide Dyslexia Plan –

- 12 or more states have passed legislation requiring a plan/handbook or advisors
  - Develop a State Handbook on Dyslexia (i.e. New Jersey)
  - Develop a plan for students with dyslexia from identification through intervention and accommodations
  - Require a Dyslexia Expert/Advisor at the CDE and district level
- Fund effort to recommend additional resources and plans addressing English Language Learners
- With a sense of urgency, we should attempt to identify and remediate students in middle and high schools, possibly higher focus on our Alternative High Schools



# Legislative Opportunities

## 6. Widespread Community Awareness –

- Create a broad awareness campaign for pediatricians, libraries, Child Find, and the Colorado Preschool Program. Distribute posters and flyers defining dyslexia, outlining possible indicators, and listings of additional resources



# Dyslexia Laws Across the USA

- Parents across the county are advocating for changes in dyslexia laws
- 29 states have passed Dyslexia related laws in the last 3 years
  - According to the website [www.dyslegia.com](http://www.dyslegia.com) there are 61 more recent state laws pertaining to dyslexia than our current state law (HB 08-1223)
- Arkansas has the most comprehensive dyslexia legislation mandating:
  - early evaluation (Level I and II Screeners),
  - early intervention,
  - trained dyslexia specialists,
  - teacher awareness,
  - district reporting to the Department of Education and a published Dyslexia Resource Guide/Handbook



- Conservatively **12-20%** of Colorado's kids are Dyslexic – **108,000 kids**
- Dyslexia is a brain difference and ranges in severity
- It can be identified with 92% accuracy by 5 ½ years old
- As many as 75% in the criminal justice system have a learning disability
- Dyslexia is the most common learning disability
- Trouble reading affects all areas of learning
- Anxiety, depression, and behavior problems are prevalent in children with undiagnosed and un-remediated Dyslexia



**Understood**

