Dyslexia Screening
Gina Cush
Supervisor of Special Services

PALS
Phonological Awareness
Literacy Screening
Dyslexia Screening

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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.”
WWRSD Screening for Dyslexia Policy

In accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:40-5.1 et seq., the Board of Education shall ensure each student enrolled in the school district who has exhibited one or more potential indicators of dyslexia or other reading disabilities is screened for dyslexia and other reading disabilities using a screening instrument selected pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:40-5.2. This screening shall be administered no later than the student’s completion of the first semester of the second grade.
What is Phonological Awareness?

• Phonological Awareness is the awareness of all the sounds of language
• Ability to listen to, recognize, and manipulate the sounds of spoken language
• Students with strong phonological awareness skills are shown to have later success in reading and spelling
• Weak phonological skills are a major cause for reading difficulties
• These skills assist students in future decoding and blending words as they are reading
• Examples of phonological awareness skills include:
  - identifying words that rhyme, recognizing words that begin or end with the same sound, oral segmenting-ability to take spoken words and break it into individual parts, oral blending- ability to take a series of sounds and blend them together to form spoken words, manipulating sounds in words by adding, deleting, or substituting, understanding that words are composed of letters that have corresponding sounds
PALS Training Objectives

• Provide an overview of the purpose and use of PALS
• Describe the PALS-K and PALS 1-3 instruments
• Explain PALS online scoring process
• Exhibit resources on PALS website https://pals.virginia.edu
• Demonstrate how PALS data will be used as a diagnostic tool to provide teachers with explicit information to help guide their literacy instruction
PALS - Overview

- Developed with support from the Virginia Department of Education, PALS has been implemented state-wide throughout Virginia and has been adopted by districts in more than 30 other states over the past 15 years.
- PALS is a research-based instrument with strong technical adequacy that can be used for screening, diagnosis, and progress monitoring.
- The manner in which reading skills are measured by PALS provides instructionally relevant data.
- Using the PALS Online Score Entry and Reporting System allows teachers to organize and target instruction, along with providing a wide array of instructional resources.
- PALS provides assessment instruments with good evidence of validity that can be used reliably to screen students for difficulty in beginning reading.
- PALS assesses the four literacy skills that have been deemed most predictive of children's reading achievement including: phonological awareness, alphabetical knowledge, concept of word, and grapheme-phoneme correspondence.
PALS - Purpose

• Screening tool for measuring the fundamental components of literacy
• Identifies students who perform below grade-level expectations in several important literacy fundamentals and thus are at risk of reading difficulties and in need of additional early intervention
• Assesses what students already know about the English writing system and what they need to learn to become readers
• Indicates children’s literacy strengths and those areas that may require direct instruction or intervention
• Designed to measure young children’s knowledge of important literacy fundamentals and can be used as a diagnostic tool to provide teachers with explicit information to guide their teaching
• PALS addresses many of the components of reading instruction from the National Reading Panel
PALS Screening Tools

- Consists of three screening instruments
  - PALS-PreK, PALS-K, and PALS 1-3
- Measures young children’s knowledge of important literacy fundamentals, including:
  - phonological awareness;
  - alphabet knowledge;
  - spelling;
  - concept of word;
  - word recognition in isolation
The following PALS-K tasks are untimed and developmentally appropriate for Kindergarten students:

- **Section I: Phonological Awareness**
  - Rhyme Awareness
  - Beginning Sound Awareness

- **Section II: Alphabet Knowledge**
  - Lower-Case Alphabet Recognition

- **Section III: Letter-Sound Knowledge**
  - Letter Sounds
  - Spelling

- **Section IV: Concept of Word**

- **Section V: Word Recognition in Isolation**
The following PALS 1-3 tasks are untimed except for the Oral Reading in Context task (in order to calculate oral reading rate)

- **Entry Level: Word Knowledge**
  - Spelling Inventory
  - Word Recognition in Isolation
  - Letter Sounds (first grade only)

- **Level A: Oral Reading in Context**
  - Accuracy
  - Fluency
  - Oral Reading Rate
  - Comprehension

- **Level B: Alphabetics**
  - Alphabet Recognition
  - Letter Sounds
  - Concept of Word

- **Level C: Phonemic Awareness**
  - Blending
  - Sound-to-Letter
PALS 1-3

PALS Marketplace :: Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) - PALS Plus Assessment
Online Scoring

PALS provides you with the assessment pieces that help you solve the instructional puzzle...

...including an online system for score entry, reports, and progress monitoring.

http://pals.virginia.edu/
PALS Activities

[Image of PALS activities chart]

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

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LITERACY SKILLS

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PALS activities are organized by skill. If you have an activity to share, please contact the PALS Office.

[Link: https://pals.virginia.edu/tools-activities.html]
What’s Next?

• Teachers are encouraged to use the phonological and literacy resources from the PALS website
  https://pals.virginia.edu/tools-activities.html

• Angela Robinson and Rachel Reboiro will provide support and assistance to teachers in planning and implementing literacy interventions