



OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DYSLEXIA DATA SUMMARY

2023-2024

Prepared to meet the requirements
of 70 O.S. § 1210.520

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Introduction

This legislative report provides a comprehensive overview of the dyslexia screening initiative implemented in Oklahoma schools during the 2023-2024 school year. As mandated by 70 O.S. § 1210.520, the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) has prepared this report to present the outcomes of screening designated student populations for characteristics of dyslexia. The findings aim to inform policymakers, educators, and stakeholders while guiding future strategies to enhance literacy outcomes for all students in Oklahoma.

What Is Dyslexia?

Dyslexia is a learning difference that affects a person's ability to read, spell, and write. It is not related to intelligence or motivation but stems from the way the brain processes language. Individuals with dyslexia often have difficulty recognizing the sounds that letters and words make, which makes it harder to decode words and read fluently.

Dyslexia is one of the most common learning differences, affecting 10-20% of the population to varying degrees. It often runs in families, meaning that a child with dyslexia may have a parent or sibling who shares similar challenges. Signs of dyslexia can vary but may include difficulty learning letter sounds, blending sounds to form words, or remembering common sight words.

Understanding dyslexia and identifying it early is the first step in ensuring that students who experience it receive the tools and resources they need to succeed.



Background

Beginning with the 2021-2022 academic year, Oklahoma school districts were required to screen kindergarten through third-grade students for the risk of characteristics of dyslexia if they did not meet the grade-level target on an approved universal screener under the Reading Sufficiency Act (RSA). For the 2023-2024 academic year, this requirement remains in effect, with screenings conducted at the beginning of the school year for students in first through third grade and at the middle of the year for kindergarten students.

This initiative extends the RSA's broader mission to support all students in becoming proficient readers. Dyslexia represents one form of reading difficulty; however, instructional approaches effective for students with dyslexia have been shown to benefit all students. By equipping educators with evidence-based strategies, this initiative promotes improved literacy outcomes across Oklahoma.

Objective: Importance of Early Identification

The dyslexia screening initiative aims to identify, at an early stage, students at risk for dyslexia or those struggling with foundational word recognition skills. Research consistently shows that early identification is critical for addressing reading difficulties effectively. Targeted, evidence-based interventions at this stage significantly enhance literacy outcomes and reduce the long-term impact of dyslexia on a student's education.

For students without dyslexia who struggle due to a lack of effective instruction, early interventions help close gaps in foundational literacy skills. By addressing these gaps promptly, educators can ensure that all students build a strong foundation for future academic success.

Legislative Framework

The statutory foundation for the dyslexia screening initiative is established in 70 O.S. § 1210.520. This statute defines the screening process, identifies the targeted student population, and specifies data collection and reporting requirements.



Data Collection and Analysis

Oklahoma school districts reported the results of dyslexia screening as part of the requirements for the Reading Sufficiency Act (RSA). Interventions implemented by the schools were identified in the Annual District Reading Plan, while all other relevant data was submitted through the RSA Survey at the end of the academic year.

The Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) collected data from all public schools serving students in kindergarten through third grade. This report provides a detailed breakdown of the screening tools utilized, student outcomes, and a summary of intervention programs employed by districts. The analysis of this data is intended to inform future policy decisions and enhance the effectiveness of dyslexia screening efforts across the state.

Process Used to Evaluate Student Progress

At the beginning of the academic year, all students in grades 1-3 who do not meet the grade-level target on the universal screener required under the Reading Sufficiency Act (RSA) must be administered a screener for the risk of dyslexia. Similarly, kindergarten students who do not meet the middle-of-year grade-level target must also be screened for dyslexia risk. Depending on the assessment tool adopted by the district, this screening may involve an additional subtest within the same assessment suite, a separate assessment, or the use of existing data from the universal screener.

Screening assessments, including those for dyslexia characteristics, are designed to be administered and interpreted by general educators. Teachers administering these assessments must be trained to understand the administration process and the organization of data. However, specialized training or credentials beyond this are not required. To maximize the effectiveness of instruction and interventions, it is recommended that screening assessments be conducted by the certificated classroom teacher of record.



Site administrators are responsible for ensuring that all educators administering the screening assessments receive professional learning tailored to the district's selected screening tools. This training, provided by the assessment publisher or the district, must align with the publisher's recommendations. It is also the responsibility of districts and building administrators to establish a professional learning schedule for onboarding new educators and staff, ensuring continuity in the training process.

It is important to note that not all students identified as at-risk for reading difficulties or characteristics of dyslexia will require special education services. Open and frequent communication among all educators working with a student is essential to provide a cohesive and systemic educational experience.

Screening for the risk of dyslexia may be requested by a student's parent or guardian, teacher, counselor, speech-language pathologist, or school psychologist. Since these assessments are mandated for all students, parental consent is not required for their administration.

Tools Used to Evaluate Student Progress

The Oklahoma State Board of Education has approved nine assessments for screening students for characteristics of dyslexia. For the current academic year, two assessments—Exact Path and i-Ready Diagnostic—were newly added to the approved list. Individual districts selected the assessment that best aligns with the needs of their schools. As part of the Reading Sufficiency Act (RSA) Survey, districts reported the specific assessments they use for screening purposes.

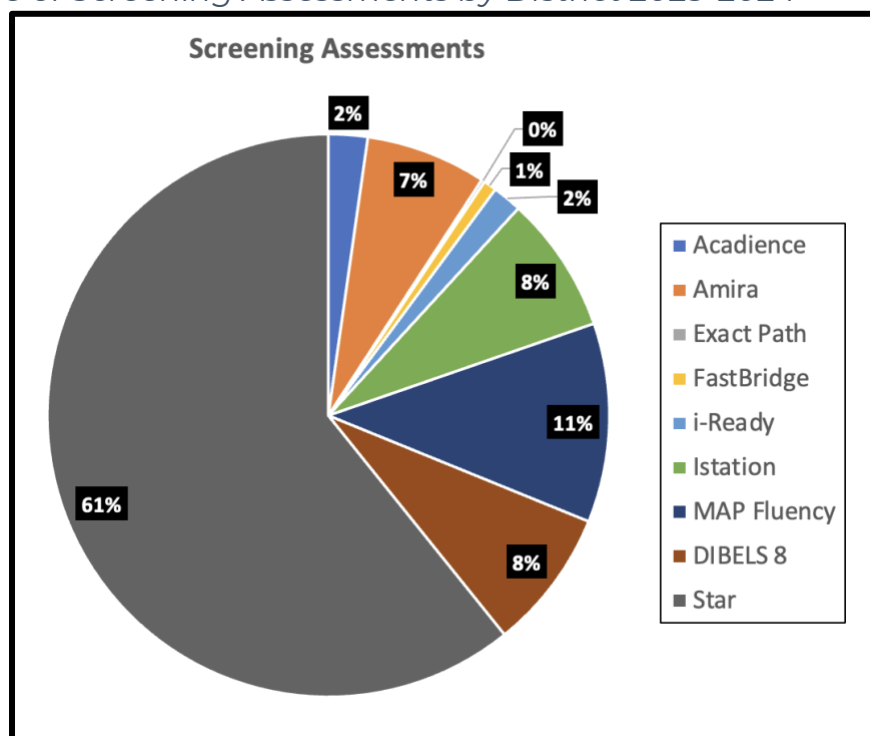
The overall number and percentage of districts using each assessment remain consistent with the previous year. However, notable changes were observed for two assessments. The use of mCLASS DIBELS 8th Edition increased significantly, from 2.8% in the 2022-2023 academic year to 8.1% in 2023-2024. Conversely, the use of the Star Early Learning Suite declined from 67.6% in 2022-2023 to 60.8% in 2023-2024.



Table 1. Use of Screening Assessments by District 2023-2024

Approved Assessments for Dyslexia	Districts using Assessment	
	Number	Percent
Acadience with PAST Assessment	12	2.3%
Amira	37	6.9%
Exact Path	1	0.2%
FastBridge with PAST Assessment	4	0.8%
i-Ready Diagnostic	9	1.7%
Istation with PAST Assessment	42	7.9%
MAP Reading Fluency	61	11.4%
mCLASS DIBELS 8 th Edition with PAST Assessment	43	8.1%
Star Early Learning Suite	324	60.8%

Figure 1. Use of Screening Assessments by District 2023-2024





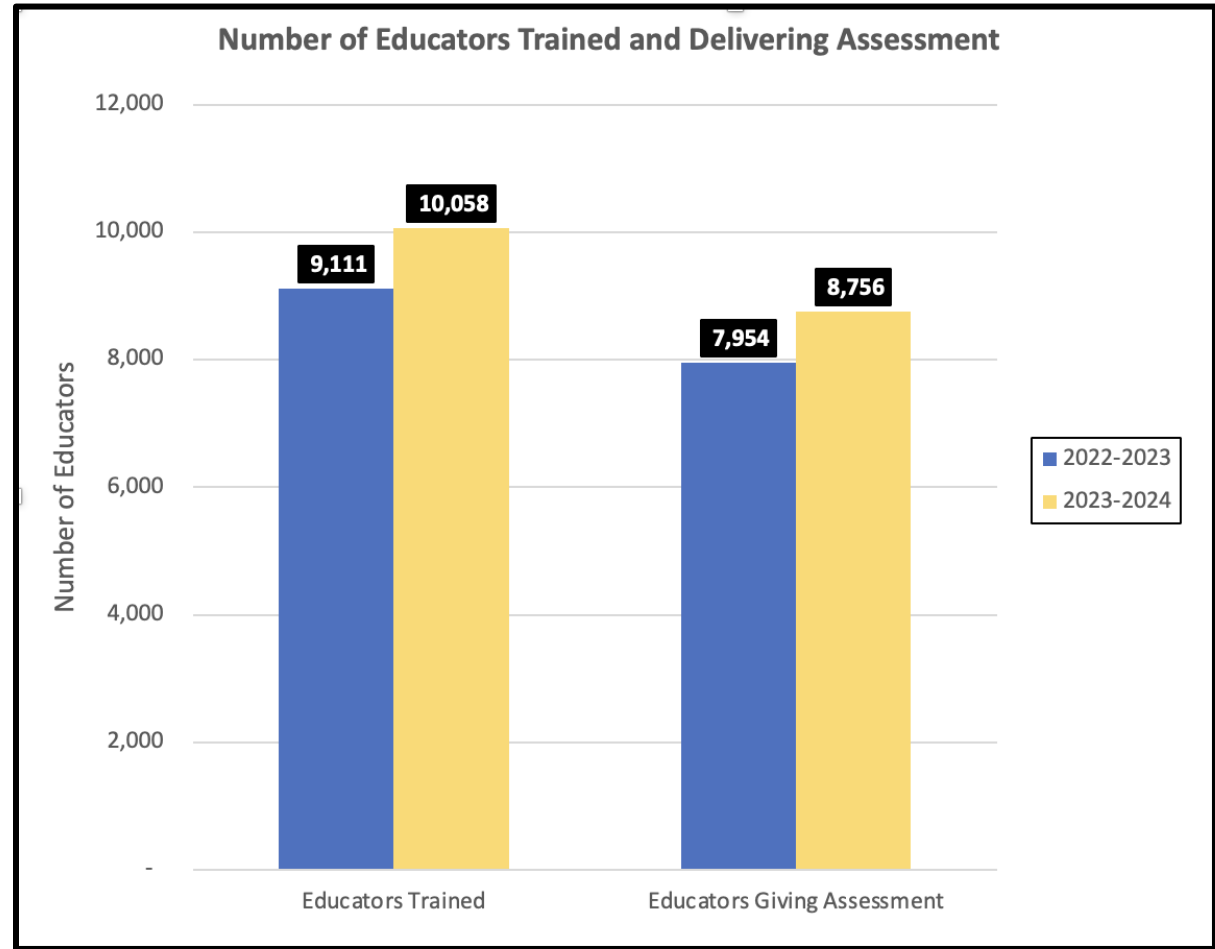
Educator Training

Districts are responsible for ensuring that educators are adequately trained to administer dyslexia screening assessments with fidelity, thereby ensuring the accuracy and reliability of results. As part of their reporting requirements, districts provided data on the number of school personnel or licensed professionals trained to administer the assessments and the number of personnel designated to administer the approved dyslexia screening tools.

Table 2. Number of Educators Trained & Administered Assessment 2023-2024

Training and Administration of Assessment	
Number of educators trained to administer assessment	10,058
Number of educators used to administer assessment	8,756

Figure 2. History of Educator Training & Administration of Assessment





Students Screening Results

Students in kindergarten through third grade who did not meet the grade-level target on the universal screening assessment are required to be screened for characteristics of dyslexia. During the 2023-2024 school year, **196,432 students** in kindergarten through third grade participated in the universal screening mandated under the Reading Sufficiency Act (RSA).

Of these, districts reported that **102,096 students** were screened for characteristics of dyslexia, representing **52%** of the total student population in these grades.

Table 3. Students Screened for Dyslexia 2023-2024

Students Screened for Dyslexia	# students total	# students screened	% of total
Kindergarten	47,261	21,082	44.6%
First Grade	49,624	27,453	55.3%
Second Grade	49,817	28,027	56.3%
Third Grade	49,730	25,534	51.3%
Total	196,432	102,096	52.0%

Districts reported that **36,986 students** who underwent dyslexia screening demonstrated characteristics indicating a risk for dyslexia. This represents **36.2%** of the students in kindergarten through third grade who were screened for dyslexia.

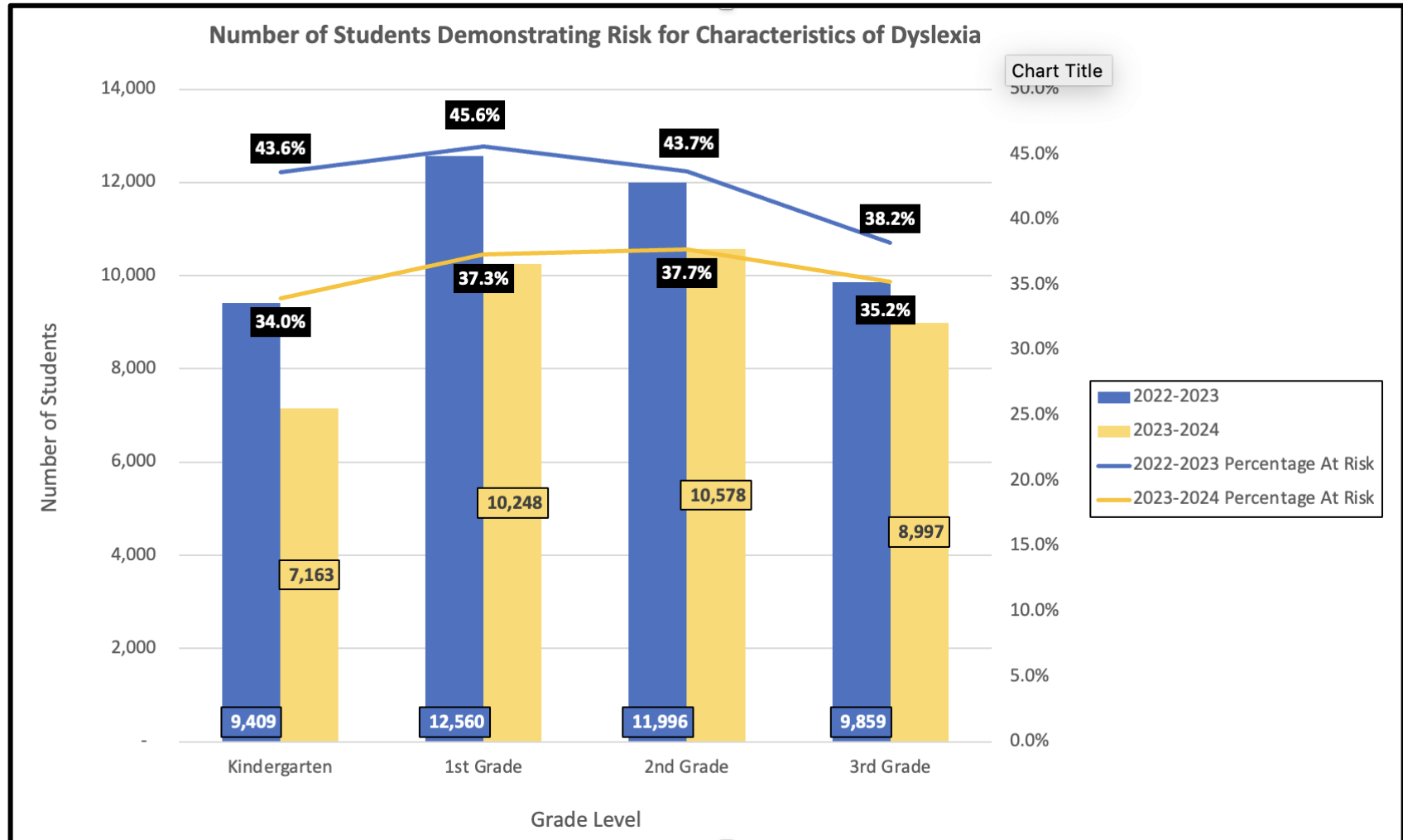
Table 4. Students Demonstrating Risk for Dyslexia 2023-2024

Students Demonstrating Risk for Characteristics of Dyslexia	# students screened	# students at-risk	% of total
Kindergarten	21,082	7,163	34.0%
First Grade	27,453	10,248	37.3%
Second Grade	28,027	10,578	37.7%
Third Grade	25,534	8,997	35.2%
Total	102,096	36,986	36.2%

When considering the total population of 196,432 students in these grades, the data indicates that **18.8% of all students** in Oklahoma demonstrated characteristics associated with a risk for dyslexia.



Figure 3. History of Students Demonstrating for Characteristics of Dyslexia





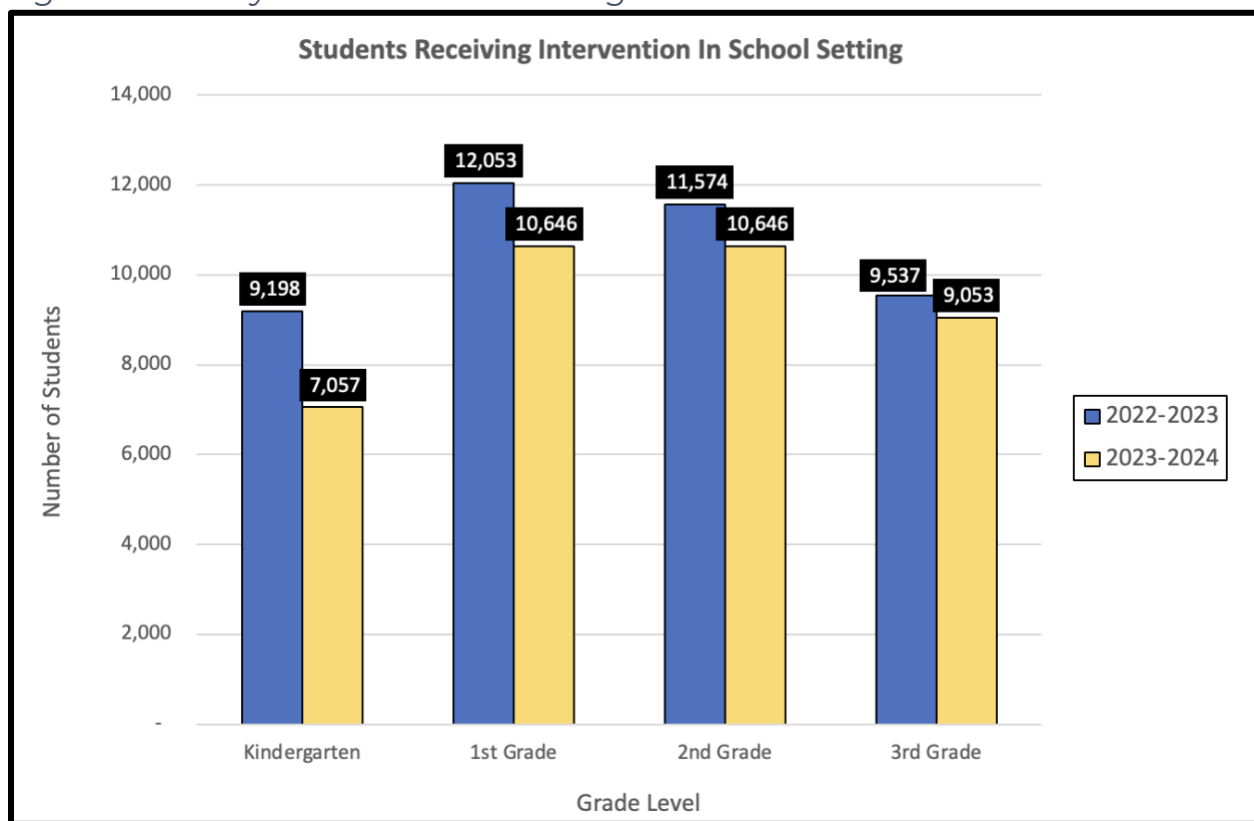
Interventions Provided

Under the Reading Sufficiency Act, districts provide supplemental instruction to students who demonstrate risk of reading difficulty, including those who demonstrate risk of characteristics of dyslexia. Districts reported the number of students in kindergarten through third grade who participated in interventions within the school setting.

Table 5. Students Receiving Intervention in School 2023-2024

Students Receiving Intervention Support In the School Setting	# students at-risk	# received intervention	% received intervention
Kindergarten	7,163	7,057	98.5%
First Grade	10,248	10,646	103.9%
Second Grade	10,578	10,646	100.6%
Third Grade	8,997	9,053	100.6%
Total	36,986	37,402	101.1%

Figure 4. History of Students Receiving Interventions in School



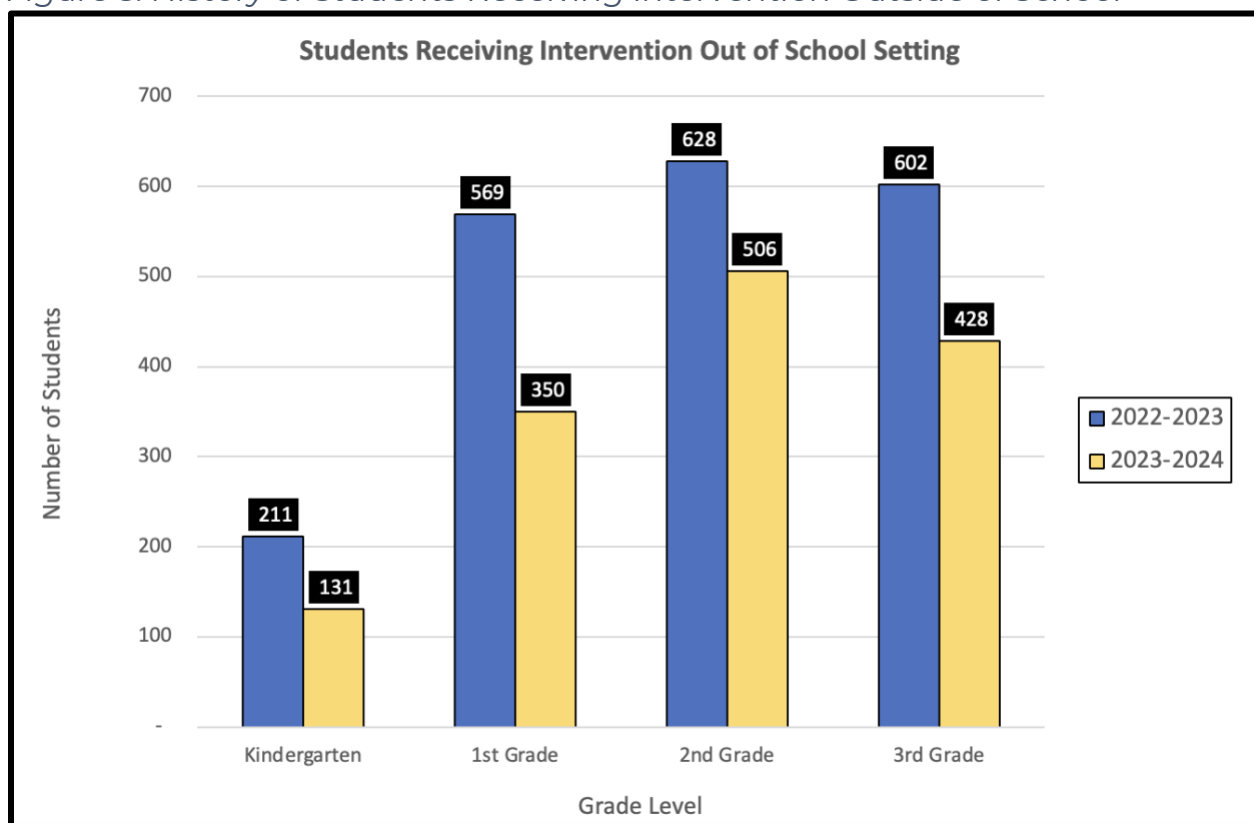


Districts reported the number of students in kindergarten through third grade who participated in interventions outside the school setting. The number of students reported reflects instructional supports provided outside of the regular school day, either by the school or by private vendors. The numbers reported below reflect those services that districts were aware of students receiving.

Table 6. Students Receiving Intervention Outside of School 2023-2024

Students Receiving Intervention Support Outside the School Setting	# students at-risk	# received intervention	% received intervention
Kindergarten	9,409	211	2.2%
First Grade	12,560	569	4.5%
Second Grade	11,996	628	5.2%
Third Grade	9,859	602	6.1%
Total	43,824	2,010	4.6%

Figure 5. History of Students Receiving Intervention Outside of School





Programs Used by Schools for Intervention

As part of the Annual District Reading Plan, Oklahoma school districts reported utilizing nearly **1,400 different intervention programs** to support students with reading difficulties, including those exhibiting characteristics of dyslexia. The majority of districts indicated that multiple intervention programs were available to their students. The intervention program most frequently reported by districts (12.1%) was the intervention component embedded in their adopted comprehensive core curriculum, which includes programs such as *Wonders*, *Journeys*, *Into Reading*, and *Savvas MyView*. All other intervention programs were reported by fewer than 5% of districts.

Significant variation exists in the effectiveness of the programs currently in use. While some programs align with evidence-based practices, others have been shown to be ineffective for students struggling to read. In many districts, effective and ineffective programs are used concurrently, potentially providing conflicting instructional messages to students.

As school personnel gain a deeper understanding of effective reading instruction, shifts are becoming evident in the programs being adopted. Training provided by the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) has emphasized the practices outlined in the Institute for Educational Sciences (IES) Practice Guides. These guides promote evidence-based strategies and build on the findings of the National Reading Panel, supporting a transition toward more effective interventions for students with reading difficulties.



Conclusion

This legislative report serves as a tool for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders, providing a comprehensive assessment of the dyslexia screening initiative in Oklahoma schools for the 2023-2024 academic year.

Key findings include:

- A total of **52%** of students in kindergarten through third grade received additional screening for characteristics of dyslexia, comparable to the 51.7% screened last year. Among those screened, **36.2%** were identified as at-risk, reflecting a **6.6% decrease** from the previous year's rate of 42.8%. This equates to **18.8%** of the total student population in these grades, a **reduction of 3.3%** compared to 22.1% last year.
- Risk for characteristics of dyslexia is determined by the dyslexia screening assessment. **All students** who were determined to be at-risk through the screening results received school-based interventions. Further, some schools identified students who might show risk indicators other than the screening results, such as classroom performance, to receive additional support. As a result, it was reported that **37,402** (101%) students received literacy interventions in school.
- A significant number of districts use intervention programs that are not aligned with current research, highlighting the ongoing need for professional development. The OSDE is identifying schools utilizing non-evidence-based programs, particularly those schools with lower student outcomes, to provide them with support. These schools are prioritized to receive support from the **HEROES Literacy Instructional Team** and the **Comprehensive Literacy School Development grant**. Additionally, educators and administrators from these schools are invited to participate in the **Oklahoma Science of Reading Academies** to enhance their understanding of effective reading instruction.

These findings reinforce the importance of early identification, targeted intervention, and evidence-based practices in improving literacy outcomes for all students. By addressing gaps and building on current successes, Oklahoma can continue to enhance educational opportunities for students with dyslexia and ensure that every child develops strong literacy skills.