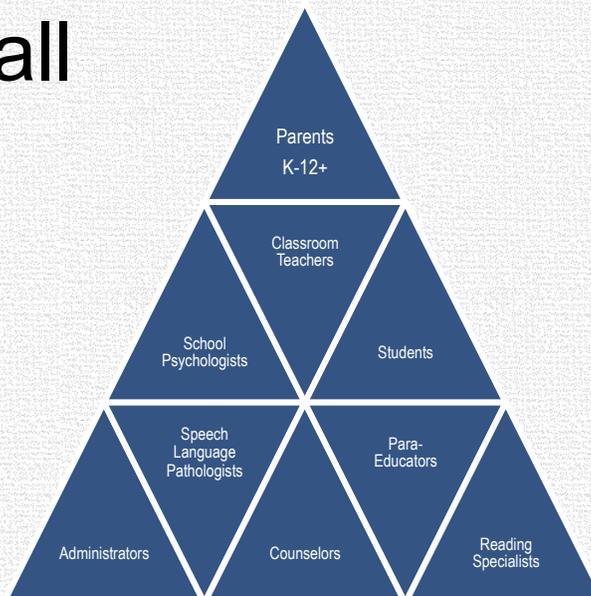


# The State of Dyslexia in Maryland

Karleen Spitulnik  
State Leader, Decoding Dyslexia Maryland  
k.spitulnik@verzion.net



## Roll Call



## About Me

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Parent of 7<sup>th</sup> grade son with dyslexia

One of the state leaders of Decoding Dyslexia Maryland

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Parent member of Special Education State Advisory Committee – representing Decoding Dyslexia and high incidence disabilities

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Maryland Education Coalition – board member

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## Agenda for Today.....

- Decoding Dyslexia: what we do in Maryland
- Dyslexia – what it is?
- Early Screening
- MSDE Technical Assistance Bulletin On SLD:  
*Focus on Dyslexia, Dysgraphia & Dyscalculia*



## Decoding Dyslexia Maryland

- Grassroots movement of parents, teachers, professionals, dyslexic adults
- There are Decoding Dyslexia chapters in all 50 states



- Our Mission:
  - Raise dyslexia awareness
  - Empower families
  - Inform policy makers on best practices to identify, educate and support students with dyslexia



## Decoding Dyslexia MD – Local Chapters

1. Anne Arundel
2. Baltimore City
3. Baltimore County
4. Carroll
5. Cecil
6. Charles
7. Eastern Shore Region
8. Frederick
9. Harford
10. Howard: Stacey Brocker, Julie Pistorio
11. Montgomery
12. Prince Georges
13. St. Mary's and Calvert
14. Western Maryland Region
15. DDMD Educators FB Group



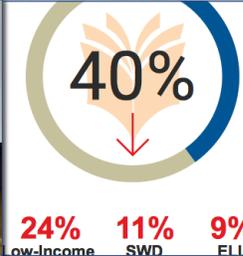
## Communication – Collaboration – Results



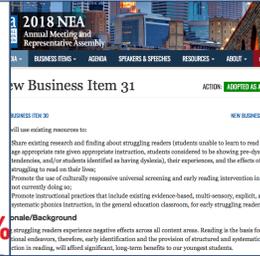
Helping Parents and Students



Advocating in county school systems  
General education & Special education



State-level policy



National policy



## Why we do this?



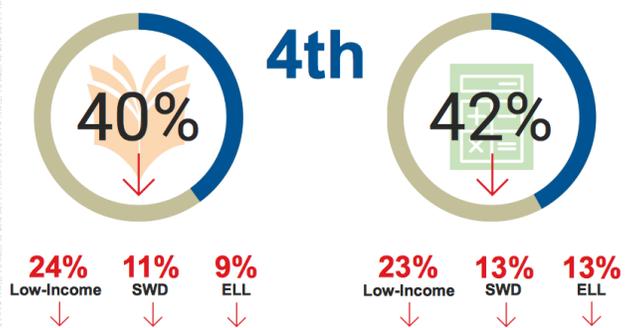
# Literacy – in Maryland



## National Assessment of Educational Progress

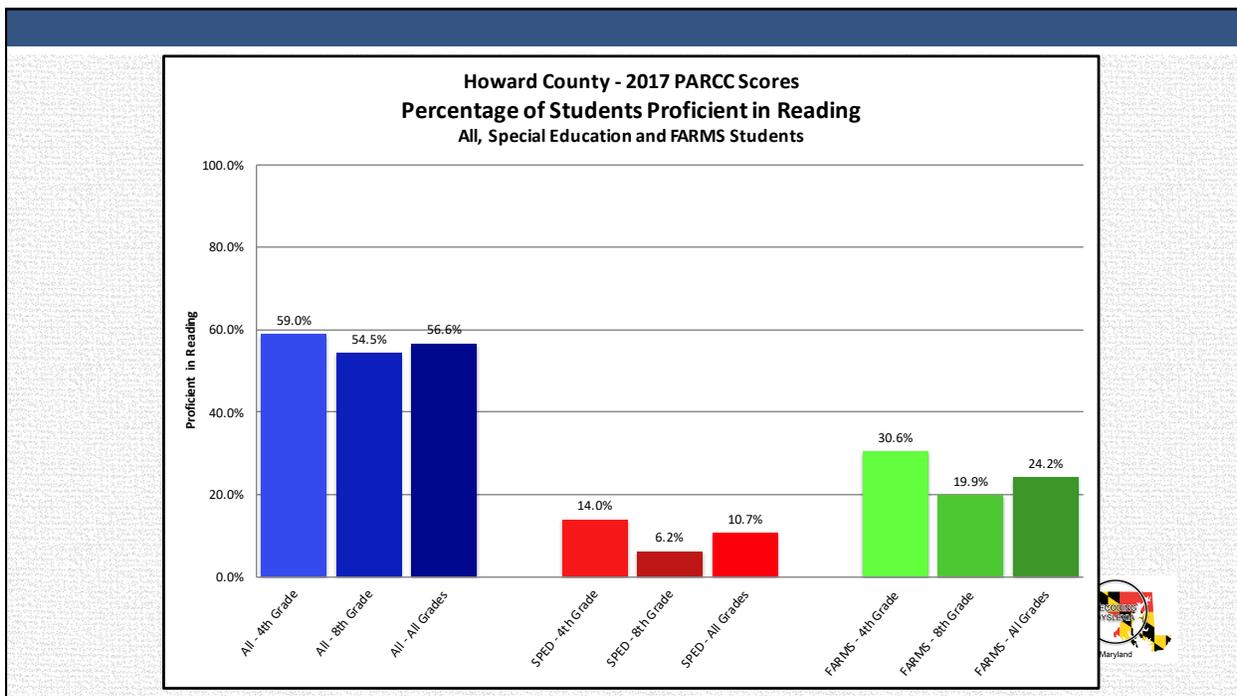
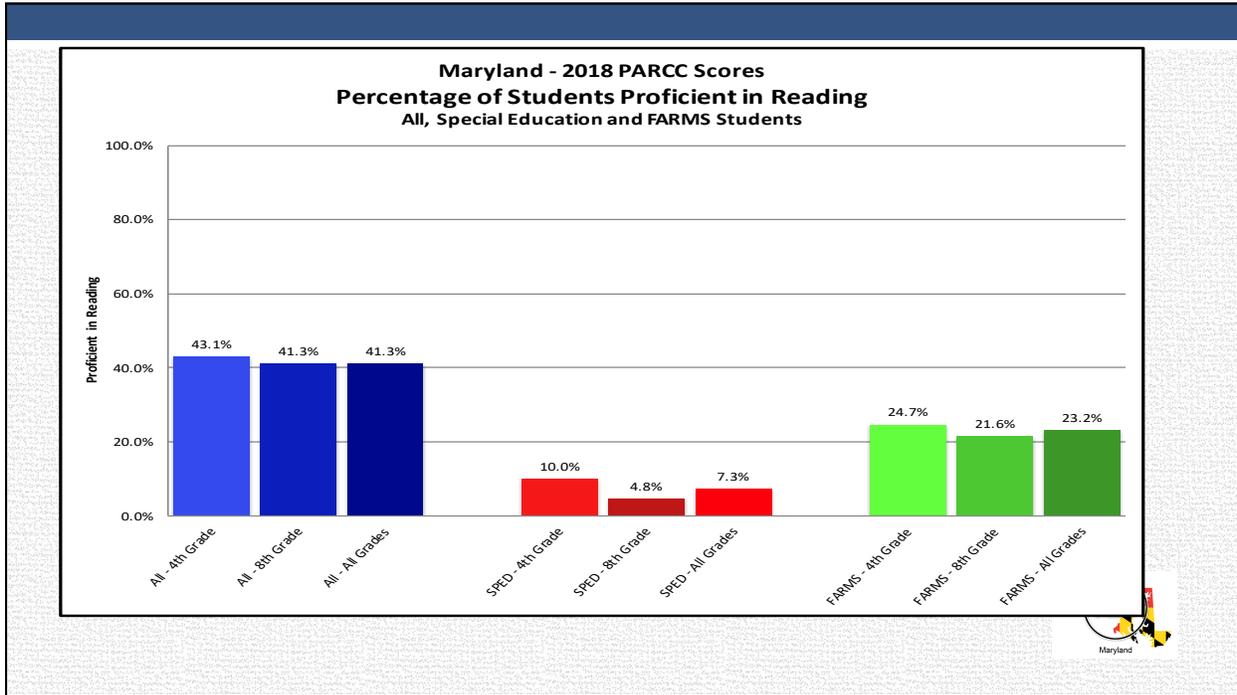
### NAEP Reading & Math

Percentage of students scoring at or above Proficient



Source: SREB 2018 Maryland State Progress Report





## What is 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 International Dyslexia Association Board of Directors, Nov. 12, 2002.



## Specific Learning Disability

### Dyslexia? SLD?

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act  
SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY

- Oral expression
- Listening comprehension
- Written expression
- Basic reading skills
- Reading fluency skills
- Reading comprehension
- Mathematics calculation
- Mathematics problem solving

**Note: Sec. 300.8(c)(10)** Specific learning disability means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, **dyslexia**, and developmental aphasia.



Source: IDEA Regulations, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs



## Neurobiological in Origin

- Dyslexia is present at birth
- It is often genetic
- Causes are differences in brain activation and function
- Affects the language system in the brain

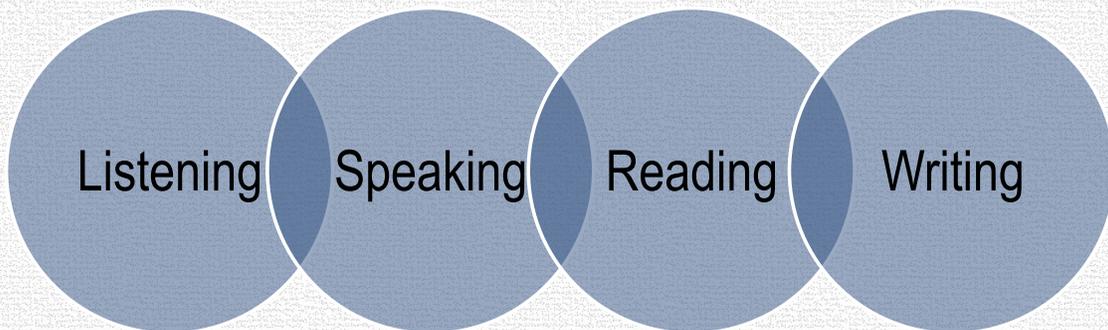
*"Dyslexia is a complex problem that has its roots in the very basic brain systems that allow man to understand and express language"*

Sally Shaywitz

*Overcoming Dyslexia*, page 5



## Literacy / Language



We get MEANING from what we hear and read

We give MEANING through speaking and writing



## Phonological Component of Language

- Phoneme → individual sounds of a language  
→ smallest unit of sound in spoken words

## Phonemic Awareness

Ability to recognize and manipulate individual phonemes (sounds) in spoken words



## Why is Phonemic Awareness important?

- “A child must develop phonemic awareness if he/she is to become a reader.” Sally Shaywitz, *Overcoming Dyslexia*
- “The lack of phonemic awareness is the most powerful determinant of the likelihood of failure to learn to read. Phonemic awareness is more highly related to learning to read than tests of general intelligence, reading readiness, and listening comprehension.” NIH Researchers



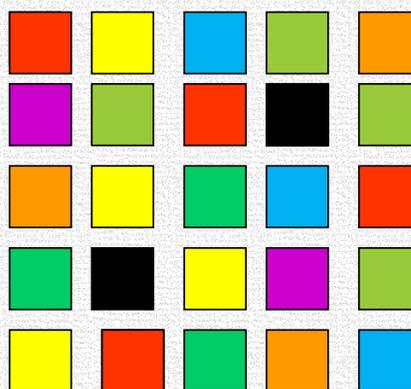
## Dyslexic Students are like Snowflakes – Each Student is Unique

- Dyslexia varies in severity
- Dyslexia varies in complexity
- Compelling research states that students with dyslexia often have deficits in:
  - Phonemic awareness skills
  - Rapid automatic naming skills



## Rapid Automated Naming

- Naming speed is a measurement of students' ability to quickly retrieve the name of a symbol. Some examples of naming speed assessments including naming colors, letters or objects. ([www.craftingmindsgroup.com](http://www.craftingmindsgroup.com))
- Rapid Automated Naming test (RAN) is a **strong predictor** of early reading ability and that people who have poor performances on these tasks are expected to have difficulty reading fluently (Katzir et al., 2006; Wolf and Bowers, 1999).



## Signs of Dyslexia – what a parent sees

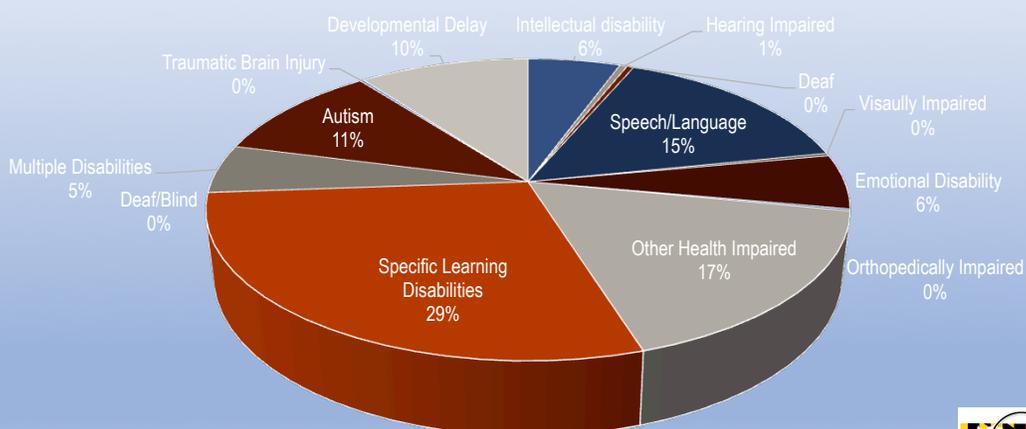
- Mixing up sounds and syllables in long words
- Trouble memorizing phone number, address or alphabet
- Can't create words that rhyme
- Slow choppy inaccurate reading
- Guesses at words based on shape or content
- Terrible speller
- When speaking has difficulty finding the right word
- Uses lots of “whatyamacallits” and “thingys”
- Dreads going to school – lots of stomach aches, headaches

Source: Warning Signs of Dyslexia  
Bright Solutions for Dyslexia



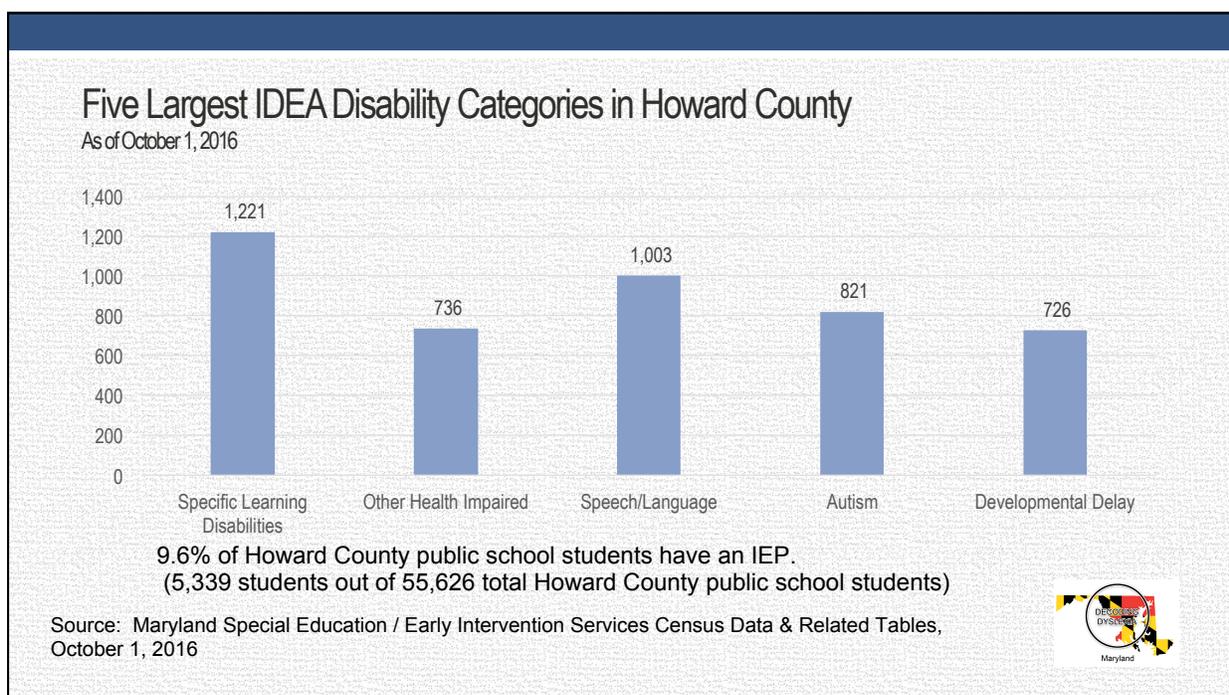
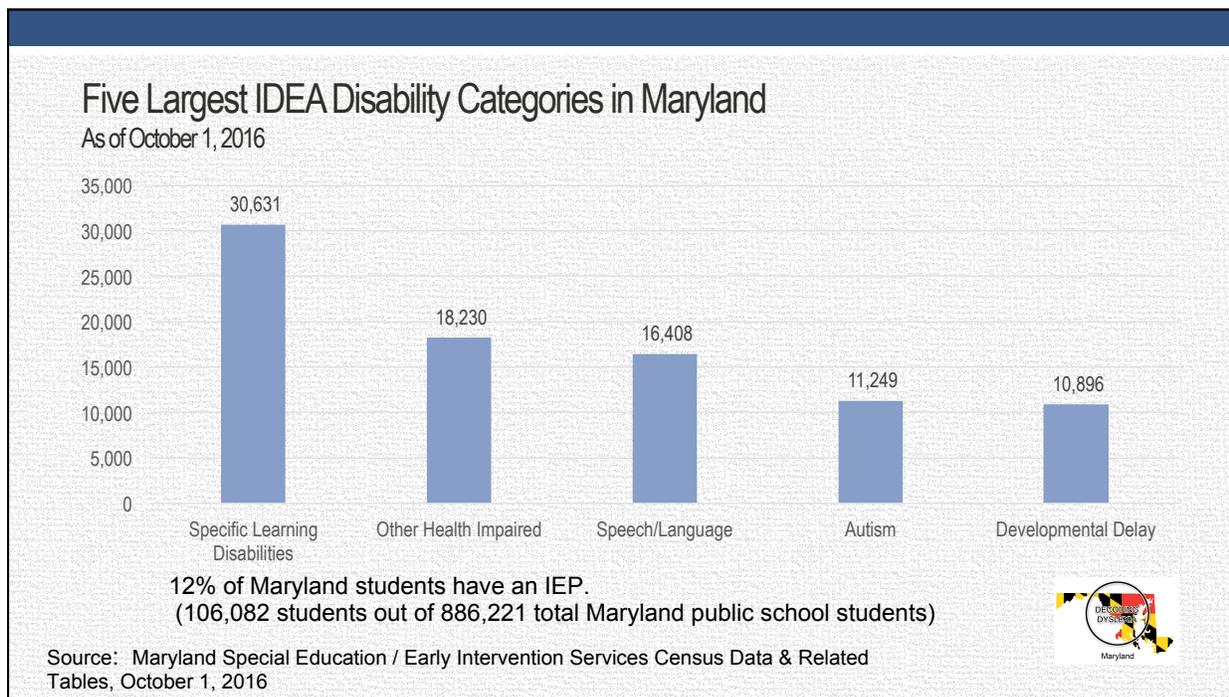
## Maryland Students with IEPs – by Disability

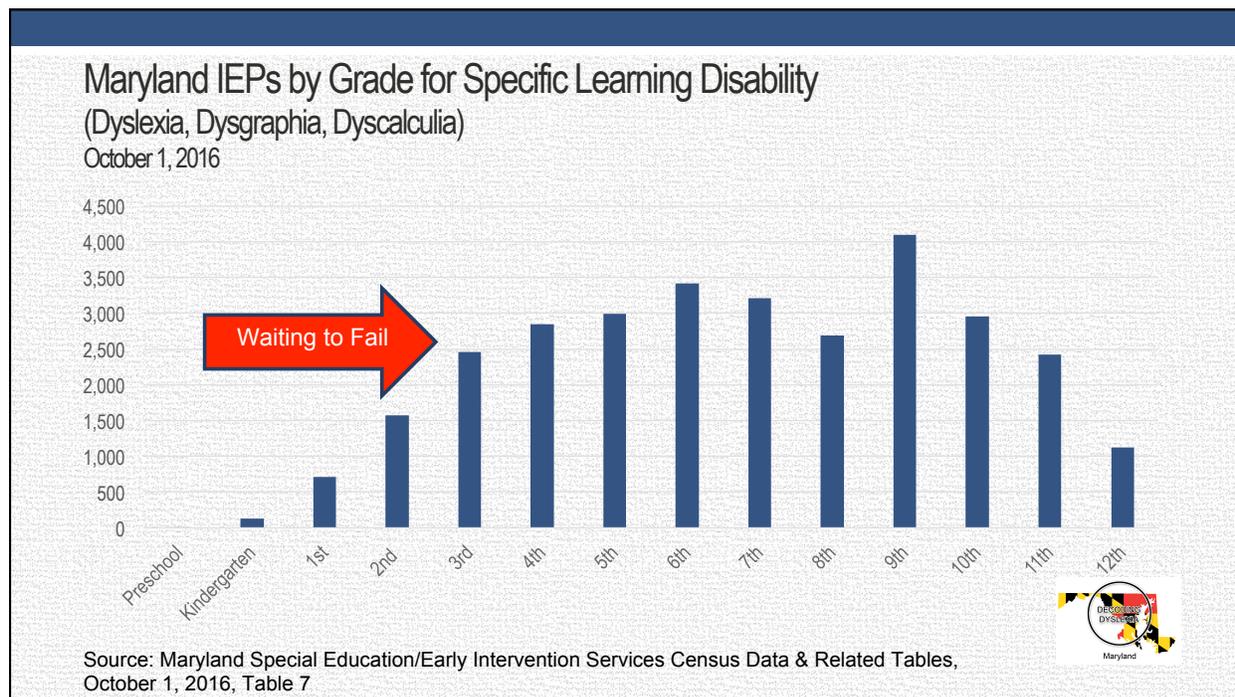
October 1, 2016



Source: Maryland Special Education / Early Intervention Services Census  
Data & Related Tables, October 1, 2016







## Catch them Before they Fall

- "90% of children with reading difficulties will achieve grade level in reading if they receive help in the 1st grade. 75% of children whose help is delayed to age 9 or later continue to struggle throughout their school career." (Vellutino, Scanton, Sipay, Small, Pratt, Chen & Denckla, 1996)
- In 4<sup>th</sup> grade, students need 2 hours of instructional time to make the same gains as made in 30 minutes of instructional time in Kindergarten (Torgeson, 2004, 2007)

## Catch Them Before They Fall

- Students who receive effective intervention **after 3<sup>rd</sup> grade** improve reading accuracy, but lag behind peers in reading fluency (Pressley, Gaskins & Fingeret, 2006; Torgeson et al., 2003)
- If strong interventions are provided to at risk students as early as kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade, the overall percentage of students who continue to struggle **can be reduced to under 5%** (FCRR Technical Report #8, <http://www.fcrr.org>)



**“95%** of all children can be taught to read at a level constrained only by their reasoning and listening comprehension abilities.”

(Fletcher & Lyon, 1998)



## House Bill 910 – Education – Students with Reading Difficulties – Screenings and Interventions

House Bill 910 did not pass in 2018. (Although every legislator voted yes to at least one version of the bill.)

Bill required:

- Schools to screen every student in Pre-K through Grade 1 for risk of reading difficulties
- Schools to provide targeted interventions for students who are found to be at risk for reading difficulty;
- Progress monitoring to ensure students are making adequate progress with the targeted intervention
- Parental notification about screening and their child's performance



## What is a Reading Screener

- Instrument(s) that looks at skills that are highly predictive of later reading success – these are foundational skills -- namely phonemic awareness skills, and rapid naming skills
- Is quick to administer (15-20 minutes)
- Is developmentally appropriate
- Is norm-referenced or utilizes criterion-based scores
- Each county school system will select a screener(s) that fits the legislative criteria



# Dyslexia in Maryland Public Schools

A Guide to the MSDE Technical Assistance Bulletin On SLD:  
*Focus on Dyslexia, Dysgraphia & Dyscalculia*



Decoding Dyslexia Maryland 2018

## Origins of the Dyslexia TAB

DECODING  
DYSLEXIA  
*Persistence*

- 2012: Dyslexia was not recognized as a specific learning disability in the US



US DEPT. OF ED  
GUIDANCE on  
Dyslexia  
*Collaboration*

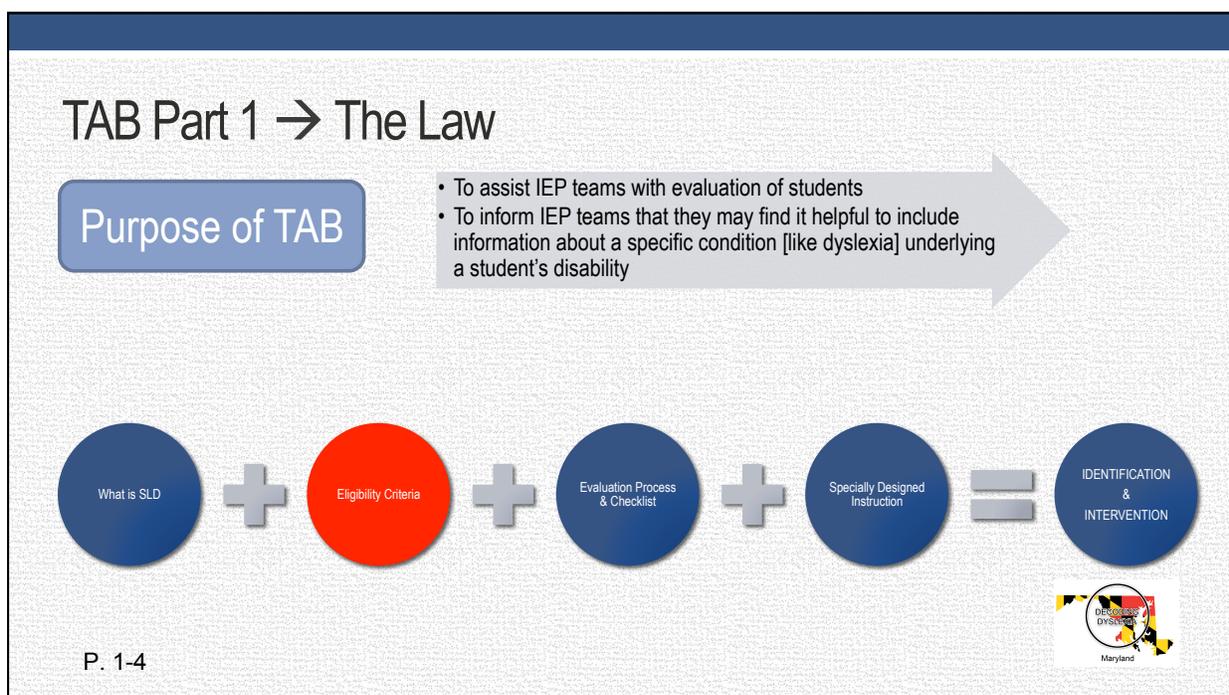
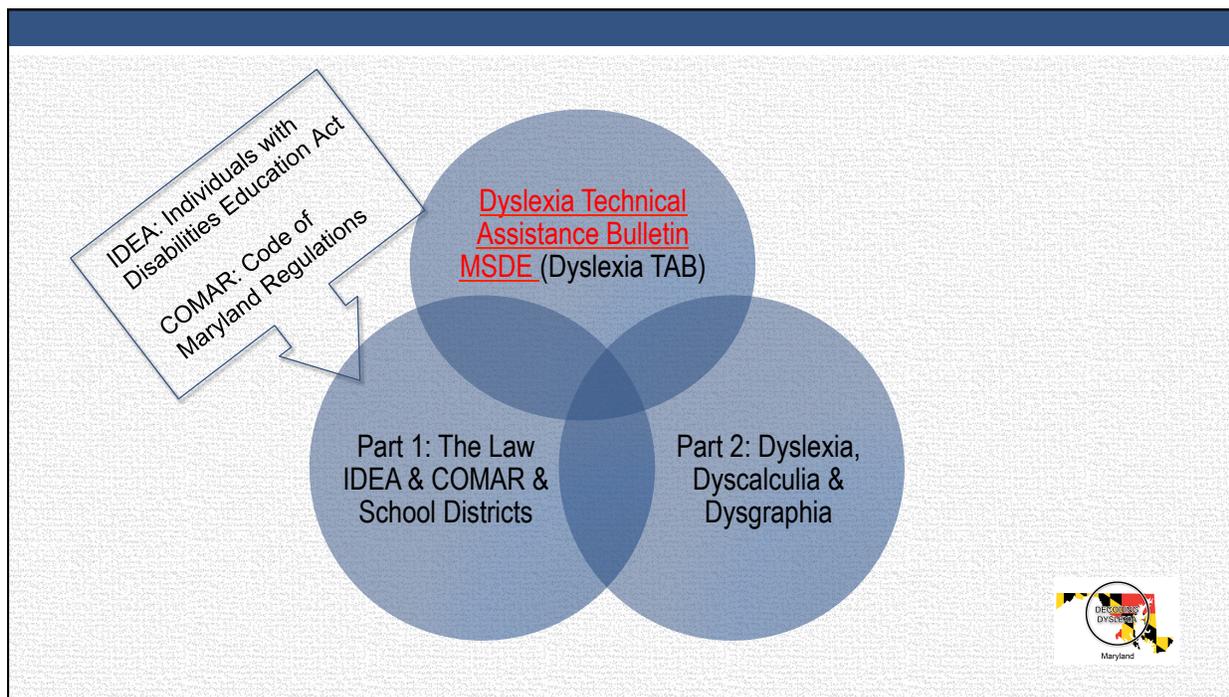
- OCTOBER 2015



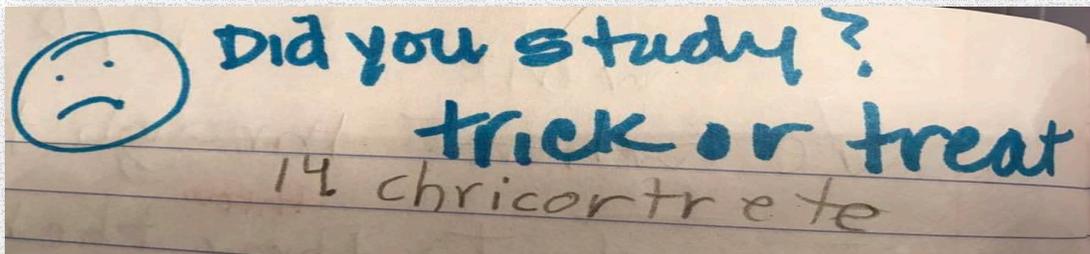
MARYLAND  
Dyslexia TAB

- NOVEMBER 2016





## Part 2: Focus on Dyslexia, Dysgraphia & Dyscalculia



P. 4-12



## Components

- |                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Introduction    | 5. Characteristics |
| 2. Definitions     | 6. Instruction     |
| 3. Identification  | 7. Summary         |
| 4. IEP Development | 8. References      |



## Introduction: Teams can #saydyslexia

There is nothing in Maryland **law, policy, procedures or practice** that prohibits the use of the terms **dyslexia, dyscalculia and dysgraphia** by Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams as it relates to:



p. 5, para. 1

## Introduction: Dyslexia, Dysgraphia & Dyscalculia Can Inform Instruction

**Remember:** 

The IEP Team may find it helpful to include information about the **specific condition** underlying the student's disability for the purpose of **instructional planning** and appropriate **IEP implementation**.

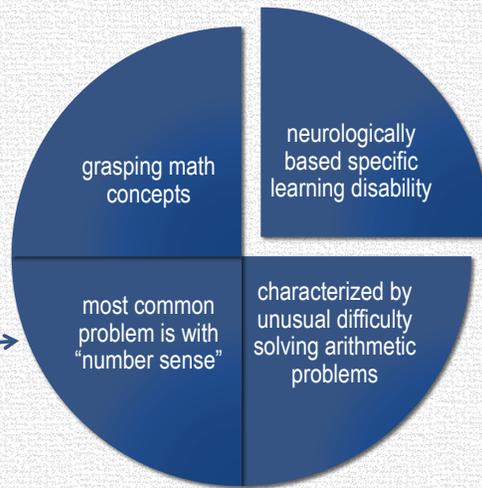
**Dyslexia TAB, p. 5**



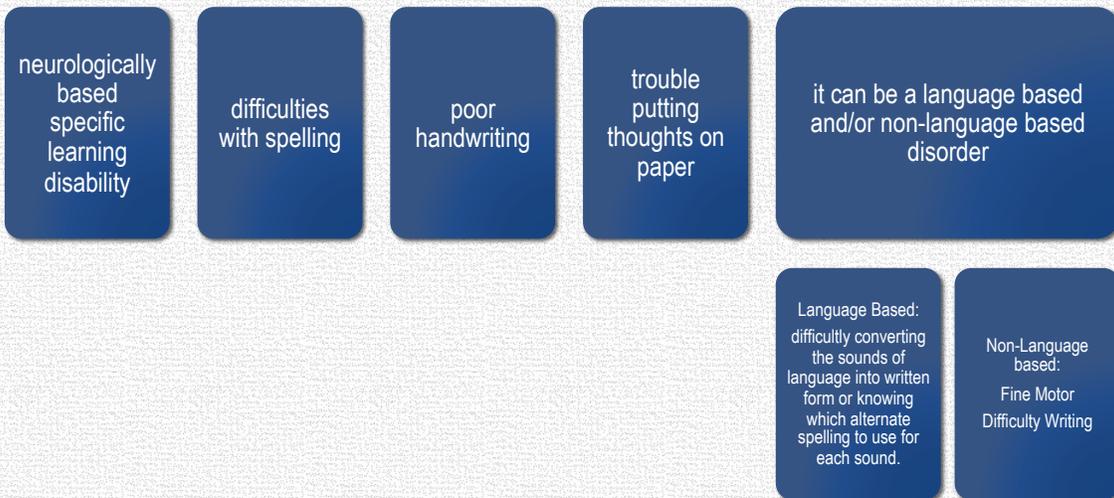
# Dyscalculia

p.5

Number sense "is an intuitive understanding of how numbers work and how to compare and estimate quantities. Students may know *what* to do in math class, but not understand *why* they are doing it because the logic behind the calculation is missing." p. 5



# Dysgraphia p.5



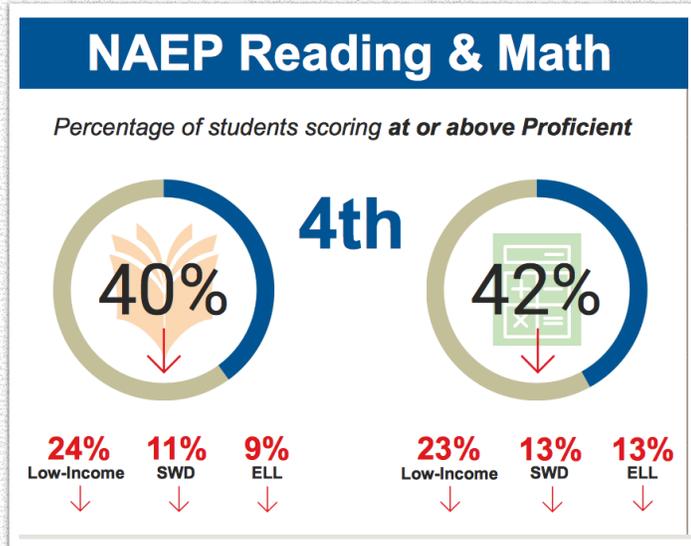
## Identification: Do Maryland Schools Screen for Dyslexia?

p. 6 (1)

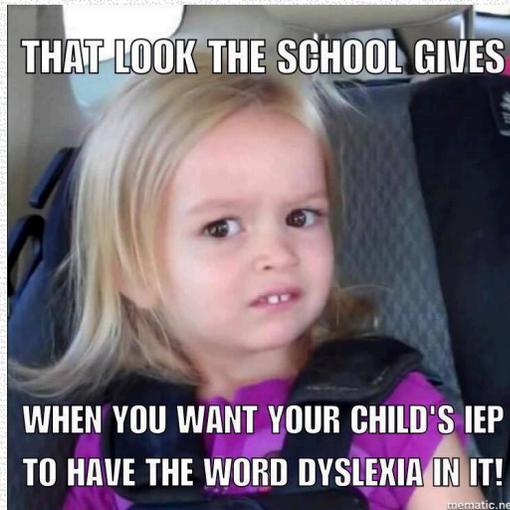
No. The use of universal screeners for dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia is not required in Maryland BUT is a best practice.

MSDE, SMCPS, the National Center on Improving Literacy and DDMD are partnering on a reading screening pilot program this school year.

The Ready to Read Act of 2019 will be pre-filed in late Fall.



## Identification: Who Can “Diagnose” Dyslexia?



## IDENTIFY Who Can Diagnose Dyslexia?

p.6 (2)

School Psychologist

Speech Language Pathologist

Reading Teacher

Outside Source (can diagnose)

```
graph LR; A[School Psychologist] --> D[Good News!]; B[Speech Language Pathologist] --> D; C[Reading Teacher] --> D; E[Outside Source (can diagnose)] --> D;
```



## Identification Terminology is Important

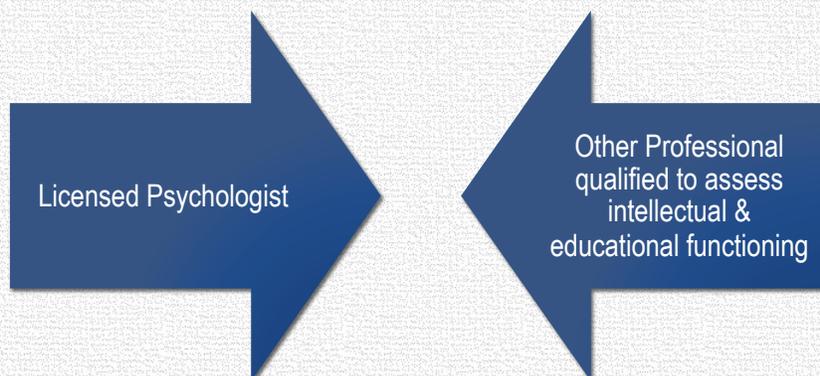
p. 6(2)

- The qualified person will interpret the results for the IEP team and may identify that certain data is **consistent for someone presenting with**  
**Dyslexia, Dysgraphia and/or Dyscalculia**



## Identification: Requirements for Outside Personnel

p. 6(2)



**Determination of SLD eligibility rests with the IEP team**



## Does identification of dyslexia automatically qualify a student for services?

p. 6(3)

**NO**

The Bad News



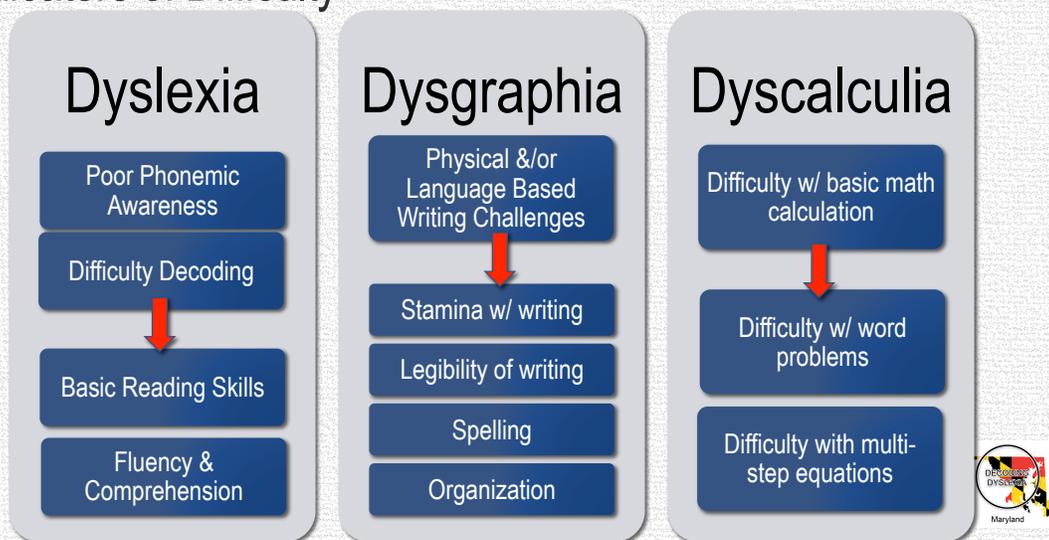
## Add Dyslexia to the IEP to Inform Instruction

p. 7(4)

IEP Sections	Purpose
Eligibility Determination for SLD	Documenting how [dyslexia] relates to the eligibility determination can be helpful to planning specially designed instruction to address the academic difficulties in reading, writing and math.
Present Levels of Academic Achievement & Functional Performance (PLAAFP)	Data-based, student specific information describing strengths/needs resulting [from dyslexia] and how it affects the student's involvement and progress in the gen ed curriculum.
Meeting Notes	Even if a particular condition has not been identified by the IEP team, or by an outside source, discussion of dyslexia, dyscalculia, or dysgraphia may be included in the meeting notes and should reflect parent concerns.

### Indicators of Difficulty

P. 7(1) INSTRUCTION



## Dyslexia

p. 7(1)

### General Difficulties:

- Phonological Processing
- Alphabetic Principles
- Decoding
- Articulation
- Written Expression
- Spelling

## Specific Difficulties

- Word Recall – difficulty finding the right word
- Reading and Math Fact Fluency
- Rhyming
- Differentiating between words that begin with the same sound
- Pronunciation
- Rapid letter naming
- Using non-specific words like “stuff” or “thing”
- Family History of spoken or written language problems



## Dyscalculia

p. 8 (1)

## Difficulties

- Recalling basic math facts
- Time management
- Poor sense of direction
- Understanding graphs or charts
- Understanding math concepts such as > or <
- Identifying math symbols
- Making change
- Learning to Count



## Dysgraphia

p. 8(1)

### General Problems:

- Spelling
- Handwriting
- Putting thoughts on paper
- Organizing writing on the page
- Body awareness, feedback in hands
- Poor endurance for writing

### Specific Difficulties

- Writing letters slowly
- Wiggling around; not able to get comfortable to write or draw
- Spelling the same word differently
- Filling paper w/ erasures & cross-outs
- Using vague words or repeating same words in sentences
- Misusing or omitting punctuation



## How do I know if dyslexia, dysgraphia and/or dyscalculia **requires specially designed instruction**?

p. 8(2)

Does Response to Intervention prevent a parent from asking for a full assessment?

NO

All Students →

Students not achieving **“adequately”** may require more intensive, specially designed instruction (an IEP).

Frequent, ongoing, consistent progress monitoring to ensure students are responding **adequately** to the instruction provided

Classroom Instruction: An “integrated tiered system of supports” that uses evidence-based practices & interventions matched to identified areas of need”

## Determining Specially Designed Instruction

p. 9(2) \*Not a complete list of skills & assessments

Conditions	Assessment & Observation
Dyslexia	Phonemic Awareness Phonics Decoding Rapid Automatized Naming and Rapid Automatized Spelling – assesses letter naming and letter sound associations in K & Grade 1
Dyscalculia	Ability to recognize numbers and symbols Connect numbers to real life situations Identify and sort patterns
Dysgraphia	Memory retrieval of letters and sounds Pen/Pencil grip Handwriting posture Visual spacing



## Endrew F. & Instruction

“The educational program must be appropriately ambitious in light of **his circumstances**” and that “every child should have the chance to meet **challenging objectives**. The IDEA demands more. It requires an educational program reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of the child’s circumstances.

CHIEF JUSTICE JOHN G. ROBERTS  
ENDREW F., COURT OPINION, SCOTUS

Also see: **Improving Outcomes for Students with Disabilities  
CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT  
Maryland State Department of Education, Technical Assistance Bulletin**



## How to Use the TAB to Change Your School District

- **Presentations & Meetings (see You Tube)**
  - Superintendent
  - General Education Staff
  - Supervisor for Instruction
  - Special Education Directors/Supervisors
  - State Legislative Delegation
  - Board of County Commissioners and/or Council
- **School Board Presentations**
  - 5-6 people provide 3 minute presentations, including students
  - Individual Meetings w/ Board Members
- **Dyslexia Workgroup or Coalition**
  - SECAC
  - Partnership w/ general education, special education, parents, and educators
- **Join Your Local DDMD Chapter – FREE!**
- **Membership Organizations**
  - Join the International Dyslexia Association Chapter (DCIDA)
  - Attend the annual conference
  - Join the PTA & help establish a Special Education PTA or explore acting as the [special education PTA liaison in your district](#)
- **Workshops on Dyslexia & the TAB**
  - DDMD St. Mary's Meetings
  - Parent's Place of Maryland
  - **SECACs**: request a presentation from the district to the SECAC on dyslexia



**Thank You!**  
**Decoding Dyslexia MD**  
**DecodingDyslexiaMD@gmail.com**

