

## **2023-34 Percy Priest Elementary PTO General Meeting Minutes, February 13, 2024.**

A regular meeting of the PPE PTO was held in the school library on February 13, 2024.

Dr. Young opened the meeting by introducing Terri McConnell, a valuable resource to our school and an expert on the science of reading! She did a presentation for the staff, and everyone agreed that parents need to hear this too! Terri is a full time reading interventionist, working with kids identified as highest needs(Tier 3).

Libba Alden thanked all for attending and Terri for presenting.

Terri started her presentation with the introduction of an Anticipation Guide (T/F questionnaire, attached) related to dyslexia and reading struggles.

What is Dyslexia?

- Dyslexia is a learning disorder characterized by difficulty reading. It is not related to vision, intelligence, or hearing. The disorder occurs in the brain, specifically it is an overreliance on one area of the brain and not using the other area.
- Two areas of concern:
  - o Language comprehension -- usually only an issue for some English learners.
  - o Word recognition -- usually the area of issue for most kids.

How do we screen for dyslexia?

- Fast Bridge testing and classroom reporting. Words per minute is the best screener (CBM reading). They are looking for lack of automaticity: Is it automatic or is the child having to work too hard?
- Our reading interventionists don't diagnose students with dyslexia, but they treat the symptoms and intervene with the same strategy for all struggling readers. Dyslexia is on a continuum; not "you have it or you don't." So for all kids who show signs of a lack of automaticity/needing help, they try to intervene early. We try to be proactive so that kids can get caught up as quickly as possible.
- Our screeners do look for some specific issues, and there is a separate notification for kids who may flag those issues.
- Progress is data-based – reports are sent home regularly to track progress.

How do we address dyslexia characteristics?

- In MNPS, it is broken down into Tiers 1, 2, and 3, and students receive intervention during tiger time. It is a structured literary program. SPIRE Scope and Sequence

Potential Co-Occurring Challenges

- ADHD, Dysgraphia, dyscalculia, executing function problems, social emotional difficulties (working through frustrations is challenging)

What are ways to support a child's reading?

- Play games with your younger child
- Read aloud at a level higher than he or she can decode independently
- Talk to your child (5 volley exchange)
- Practice spelling words one syllable at a time, calling attention to the vowel pattern. Every syllable must have a vowel pattern!

- Break the syllables onto index cards, use different color
  - Orthographic mapping
- Turn on close captioning
- Encourage your child to create a picture or movie in his mind as he reads.
- Re-read books/passages (especially for fluency issues)
- Scooping text into meaningful phrases

Parent questions:

- Recommended resources:
  - Science of Reading: The Podcast by Amplify
  - Melissa and Lori Love Literacy podcast by Great Minds
  - Sold a story documentary by apm reports (13 episodes)
  - Dyslexia and the brain: What does current research tell us? Reading Rockets Article
- Vanderbilt Peabody is opening a dyslexia school in August.

Erin Kaiser  
Secretary, PPE PTO Executive Board