LEARNER WITH A READING DISABILITY

PURPOSE

*To further understand what actions we need to take to support all learners upon reopening of schools, we can examine the specific and unique needs of diverse learners as they intersect with various reentry scenarios. Doing so build team capacity to **empathize** with student needs, develop **practical** solutions, and define the appropriate set of actions that optimize school **accessibility**. These profiles are not intended to serve every child, every time - but offer a range of prompts, ideas, and resources that support our good faith efforts to do so.*

STUDENT PROFILE

Possible disability categories: *Specific Learning Disability in Basic Reading or Reading Comprehension (SLD), Dyslexia, Language Impairment (LI)*

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS
- Need for explicit strategy instruction in phonics and/or comprehension
- Requires support to read and understand grade level text across contents
- May require support with executive functioning tasks (*planning, reflection, time management*)
- Majority of instruction takes place with peers within the context of general education
- Participates in grade-level work + assessment with accommodations

EXAMPLE IEP SERVICES
- 60min daily intensive reading intervention within small group led by special educator
- 20min weekly consult with core reading teacher

EXAMPLE ACCOMMODATIONS
- Read Aloud
- Extended Time
- Abbreviated Assignments
- Preferential Seating

TO BE SUCCESSFUL...

Students with SLD require consistent periods of **academic engaged time (AET)** and **frequent opportunities to respond (OTR)**. Responses should be met with feedback that is timely and specific. Students benefit from having **adult/peer models** and are entitled to time with their typical peers.

Other aspects of inclusive support for students with SLD include: meaningful **connection** through positive relationships with adults and peers, targeted academic **intervention** delivered by a trained individual which addresses skill gaps through research-based strategies, and **executive functioning** support with tools and training that empowers students to to self-manage in age-appropriate ways.

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For a student with a learning disability, this scenario would need to consider how to provide meaningful access to both grade level content and appropriate supports while prioritizing health and safety.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR SUPPORT	
Provision of Specialized Services	**Option: Small group or 1:1 intervention (45-60min/day)** Students move to teacher one at a time (or in small, same-class groups). Consider minimizing movement of students, smaller group sizes, and sanitation of materials **Option: Push-in Inclusion/Co-teaching Model (45-60min/day)** SPED-certified teacher per 1-3 classroom(s) who delivers intervention to students within classroom during reading core content. This may boost accessibility of Tier 1 instruction for all students, but may require increased staffing and limited grouping options given spatial constraints. **Option: Computer-Based Intervention (45min/day)** Students remain in general education classroom but receive intervention via computer. Interventions are monitored via interventionist. Zoom can be utilized for 1:1 check-ins within classroom space to minimize movement of special education teacher across classrooms.. Consider how this may impact student engagement.
Access to Core Content	Students with SLD need to be present + involved in classrooms where grade level instruction occurs. Consider how students can be grouped to leverage available supports. Increase the accessibility of core content instruction by following the principles of <u>Universal Design for Learning</u>. General education teachers should work closely with special education case managers to ensure that students are consistently receiving accommodations in all content areas as reading challenges may be present.
Progress Monitoring	Restricted movement may call for shifts in how progress monitoring probes are administered and who administers them. Consider how in-room paraprofessionals could be trained on the administration of existing probes and how results could be communicated with case managers (e.g. <u>Google forms</u>). Sessions could be video recorded for viewing, scoring, and analysis. If no paraprofessionals are available, live video conferencing could be used to connect the student and case manager. Progress monitoring materials would need to be organized and distributed to general education teachers ahead of time. It's important to consider how technology and connectivity lags may impact data not collected in person (i.e. fluency probes). Progress monitoring data should be interpreted in conjunction with natural observations.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR SUPPORT *(continued...)*	
Setting/ Environment	Students will continue to spend the majority of their school day with their grade-level or grade-band peers, receiving instruction from content specialists. However, as students will also receive specialized services, logistics that allow students access to both instructional spaces (while minimizing risk associated with movement) should be considered. The development of coordinated transitions to a different room or designated space within the classroom may be necessary. To support positive development of executive functioning skills, consider visuals for expectations and schedules, limiting distractions, and use of timers + other time cues.
Accommodations	**"Read Aloud"** Consider how technology and teaching practices can be leveraged to provide students this accommodation within limited space. Teachers or other team members can prepare audio recordings for tests and other texts intended to be read independently. In other cases, the general education teacher could integrate practices within their instruction that promote reading through the material together. **"Extended Time"** Consider how what is assigned and how it's presented can contribute to reading-related barriers. Elimination of these barriers can improve the rate and ease with which students move through content. Ask the following: *What is the purpose of this task? Is it necessary? Does this assess the intended skill or students' ability to read? Can the work be chunked? Where can text be cut without loss of meaning? How can visuals/graphics be used to show this information instead of or alongside the text? Are tasks repetitive?* Establish non-disruptive routines for when students finish tasks so that other students may continue working as they need. **"Preferential Seating"** Consider how position within the classroom can minimize distractions and maximize access to supports in the context of social distancing. Also consider how student placement within a classroom can allow for homogeneous ***and*** heterogeneous skill groupings. Where is support most available - from peers + adults? How can partners/small groups be achieved through as little movement as possible?

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KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR SUPPORT *(continued...)*	
Roles & Staffing	*Case managers* are responsible for the oversight of student *intervention*, accommodations, and progress monitoring. Physical limitations may require additional staff involvement in carrying these things out. (i.e. *paraprofessionals*) *General education teachers + special education teachers* are jointly responsible for *supporting students' executive functioning*. General education teachers should communicate expectations and provide ongoing updates of students' needs. Special education teachers can support the student with relevant tools and trainings. *At least one adult* within the school should *check-in* with the student on a daily basis. Form a positive, genuine relationship with the student. Consider when + how the student can connect with this individual.
Family & Community Engagement	Families and teachers should work together to re-examine students' needs so services and schedules can best reflect them going into the school year. Ask the family about their concerns, especially those of safety; validate and accommodate as is possible. Communicate frequently about student progress. Together, outline plans for continuation of student services should closures become necessary.
Budget Implications	Access to technology will be just as important in Scenario A as the others. Consider additional pieces of technology, accessories (i.e. headphones), and software that will be necessary to deliver services and accommodations. Consider whether online reading intervention platforms need to be purchased, needs for professional development (i.e. trainings on online intervention delivery), and/or if additional staff is necessary for supporting students within their classrooms.
ACTIONS	1. Develop a plan for assessing students' present levels of education performance. Select diagnostic tools whose results will inform practice. Focus on assessment of reading as it relates to both core content and to IEP goals. Demonstrated areas of need should drive decisions related to schedules, grouping, and intervention. 2. Develop a written plan for stakeholder collaboration. Serving students well will require a well-coordinated effort between the special education teacher, general education teacher, possible support staff, and families. When, how, and with who information will be shared needs to be clear for all involved. Document roles and responsibilities and schedule frequent check-ins to revisit the plan. 3. Take inventory of what will be needed to support students with reading disabilities in the return to school. Identify gaps in current resources. What new tools/software will be required to improve accessibility and provide accommodations? Is there a need to purchase new interventions that offer computer-based resources? Is there adequate staff to fulfill all roles? Do current staff require additional trainings?

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For a student with a learning disability, this scenario would need to consider supports and services to promote reading skill development as well as access to content knowledge through multiple means of representation.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR SUPPORT	
Provision of Specialized Services	Determine the need for instruction from a special education teacher. Consider a combination of time on a computer-based reading intervention program and 1:1 video conference time with the teacher. For example, a student may require 45 minutes of daily computer-based reading intervention program and (2) weekly 20 minute 1:1 sessions with special education teacher. Progress monitoring will determine how the special education teacher can best support access to content and standards with the general education teacher. **Related services** provided remotely may require telehealth/telemedicine platforms. Use a common scheduling template to ensure collaboration between providers and family to identify times that are best for service.
Access to Core Content	Instruction must be paced to hold students' attention. Further, work needs to be monitored and provided with consistent feedback. Teacher should develop and teach virtual classroom norms and routines. Consider assessments of learning that are designed for students to demonstrate mastery in a variety of ways. **Virtual instruction 1:1**: synchronous; during the day instruction provided by the general education teacher and/or special education teacher. Opportunity to gather immediate/in-the-moment student response, provide most personalized feedback, and lots of positive *praise*. **Virtual small group:** synchronous; during the day instruction provided by the general education teacher and/or special education teacher. Use to provide time with peers, modeling, introduction, and application of new skills/content. **Computer-based programs or task completion**: asynchronous; not-time bound. Use programs that provide students with immediate feedback, appropriate accommodations, and meaningful data on student progress. **Instructional videos**: asynchronous; not-time bound. Videos could be pre-produced (e.g. Khan Academy) or teacher produced. Use for review of skills and content, additional practice, or preview of new material. Consider how this can be an opportunity for students to engage with as many examples as they want/require and as an ongoing reference for students. Maximize accessibility.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR SUPPORT *(continued...)*

Setting/ Environment	Students will thrive when expectations are clear. Schedules of instruction should be made predictable including time for both synchronous and asynchronous instruction, digital and analog methods as well. Prioritize instructional platforms that will support remote learning via multiple means of representation, action and expression and engagement, as well as ones that integrate necessary accommodations while minimizing distractions/busy-ness. Plan for time when student has the opportunity to interact and build skills with peers who do not have IEPs. Work with families on transitioning to or creating remote learning environments that maximize student success. Use schedules and provide clear expectations about time spent on technology to support transitions between learning platforms/settings at home.
Progress Monitoring	Prioritize progress monitoring of reading skills during student 1:1 service time. Progress monitoring of reading skills may need to include symbol sound correspondence, accuracy in word reading, and oral reading fluency. Feedback from families will provide insight into student progress not captured by online platforms.
Accommodations	Online platforms can be effective for provision of accommodations. However, student instruction on use of accommodations may be necessary. Audio for printed texts can be provided using multiple means (pre-recorded, audible files, or Bookshare or Learning Ally, as appropriate). Asynchronous learning may support the provision of extended time or chunked assignments. Creating a distraction free learning environment will allow students to be as successful as possible. Consider recommendations to families about how preferential seating translates to home learning environments.
Roles & Staffing	General education and special education teacher(s) will provide instruction and support to the student. Ensure frequent and timely communication between teachers as co-taught or push-in support may translate differently with remote learning. Specialized reading instruction and intervention should be delivered by trained staff. Special Education teachers may already have training or may need professional development to support with transfer to a virtual platform that supports multisensory reading instruction. Related services, most commonly by a speech/language pathologist, will need to reinforce the skills in annual goals addressed by the Special Education teacher.

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KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR SUPPORT	
Family & Community Engagement	Families and teachers should work together to develop learning schedules that maximize the student's ability to complete work both during and outside of class time. Communicate frequently to stay updated on changes in family supports and needs, as well as checking in about student progress.
Budget Implications	Consider the caseload of special education teachers providing IEP mandated services as well as intervention. Additional funding to support reading intervention may be necessary. A review of current intervention programs and their online platforms may highlight a need for new intervention programs, technology subscriptions, or professional development.
ACTIONS	1. Communicate with families now about distance learning experiences and needs that arose during spring that may affect continued remote learning. 2. Prioritize content and skills for grade level expectations. Provide time for conversations between general education and special education teachers as part of summer professional development and ongoing staff schedules. 3. Plan for diagnostic and baseline assessment to determine areas of reading requiring targeted support/intervention. Assess current tools and programs to determine if they will meet student needs; plan for professional development using new virtual multisensory reading instruction platforms as necessary.

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For a student with a learning disability, this scenario would need to consider how reading instruction and intervention support is delivered in combination with access to the core content and skills.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR SUPPORT	
Provision of Specialized Services	Determine what special education services will be provided in person vs. remotely. This may depend on individual student needs as well as the most effective ways to deliver instruction. Consider how special education services can be provided **remotely**: *(e.g.) Student spends time in school in general education with non-disabled peers; time with special education teacher for personalized learning opportunities occurs at home virtually through a combination of computer-based intervention and 1:1 video instruction.* Consider how special education services can be prioritized in person and access to general education peers and content can be provided remotely. *(e.g.) Student receives small group or 1:1 instruction using a multisensory reading program while in school. Student accesses core content and his/her peers through remote video conferences and asynchronous learning opportunities.* *Document these decisions in individualized service plan.* Optimize hybrid schedule by alternating weeks or maintaining consecutive days. Alternating weeks could support student has access to both grade level content and skills and individualized reading instruction in person. Documentation for the provision of services will be particularly important if services alternate between in person and remote. Note: this level of variability may not be helpful or feasible for all students with learning disabilities.
Access to Core Content	Prioritize instruction or application of new knowledge that requires in person interaction for the time students are in the building. Reading skill instruction may be best suited for in person instructional time. Access to content and skills via technology (or when possible to deliver effectively via technology) should be held for remote learning. Building both reading skills and comprehension of key grade level content simultaneously will ensure that gaps are not widened. Access to technology, especially as recommended in Scenario B, may be helpful in supporting student learning.
Setting/ Environment	Consider how the hybrid school day schedule can be leveraged to best meet individual student needs. Consider recommendations from both Scenario A + Scenario B. While it is important to maintain access to least restrictive environments, it will also be necessary to meet CDC and local guidelines for health and safety.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR SUPPORT *(continued...)*

Transitions	Either differentiate between home + school settings by content or provide clear ways to maintain continuity of learning across these learning environments. Preview scheduling of assignments and expectations for student. For example, if work is completed at home or in school, use a platform such as Google classroom for consistent assignment submission expectations.
Progress Monitoring	While students are in school, *instruction* should be the priority - not progress monitoring. In instances where progress monitoring attempts have been unsuccessful virtually, allocate time in school. If progress monitoring is done in person, consider halving probe frequency to every other week.
Accommodations	Using read aloud accommodations that are provided digitally will promote student independence and transfer across across learning environments. If traditional tests are given, determine if extended time is best provided during in person instruction or if families are able to proctor assessment at home. Consider assessments that will allow students to demonstrate their understanding of skills and content in multiple ways across settings.
Roles & Staffing	Special education teacher trained to deliver multisensory reading instruction will be the primary support provided. Coordination and collaboration between special education teacher and general education teacher(s) will be paramount in adapting materials, delivering accessible instruction, and consistently providing accommodations that support student success. Coordinate related services, with all teachers working to ensure transfer of skills and prioritization of in-person time vs remote skill reinforcement.
Family & Community Engagement	Communication with families will be important to ensure safety and instructional continuity of learning between in person and remote learning. Plan for regular communication to ensure changes in student and family needs are reflected in instructional model decisions. Determine if training for families on supporting reading skill development will be necessary/appropriate.
Budget Implications	Funding for new or updated intervention programs may be required. It is recommended that intervention programs that have a hybrid model be used in order to promote continuity of learning and minimize regression in transitions.
ACTIONS	1. Communicate with families now about distance learning experiences and needs that arose during the spring that may affect participation in a hybrid model of school. 2. Assess the capability of current reading interventions to determine if they will work in a hybrid model. Ensure teachers receive professional development to deliver reading intervention and instruction.

KEY RESOURCES FOR STUDENT SUPPORT

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RESOURCES

Instruction

Listenwise Standards aligned podcasts on topics related to ELA, social studies, and science. Embedded comprehension assessments that gauge students' abilities to perform specific skills (i.e. inferencing). Allows students to practice comprehension skills beyond their current reading level.

Flocabulary Engaging vocabulary lessons designed to supplement instruction across content areas. Learners interact with material in a variety of ways. Teachers can assign lessons and track progress.

CommonLit A free collection of curriculum aligned guided readings for students in grades 3-12. Offers assignments with advanced performance tracking. Digital and print compatible texts and assessments.

Accommodations/Accessibility

Learning Ally Extensive library of narrated books. Offers leisure and educational titles. Uses text + highlighting to provide students with a multisensory reading experience. Enables teachers to track assignments and student reading habits.

Bookshare A large collection of alternative format texts that make reading accessible. Allows for reader customization of text size, speech speed, highlighting, ect. Teachers have the option to assign texts to individuals. Free for schools and individuals with disabilities.

Newsela Free leveled texts on current events and a variety of high interest topics. Passages are offered at five different lexile levels. Teachers can assign students articles, related writing prompts, and quizes.

UDL and Remote Teaching (Roots Connected) A practical discussion of how to make instruction accessible for all learners by integrating principles of Universal Design.

Click [HERE] for a list of Chrome extensions that increase accessibility.

Collaboration

Co-Teaching During Distance Learning (Understood.org) Description of six simple actions co-teachers can take to build positive, working relationships in this novel context.

Teacher Collaboration During a Global Pandemic (ASCD) Five tips for planning in the virtual setting.

Assessment

Virtual Progress Monitoring (Marshall Street) Outlines important considerations for stakeholders as they move progress monitoring practices to this new format. Offers suggestions for progress monitoring tools/resources.

We believe educators are stronger together! The Diverse Learners Cooperative is a nonprofit organization that connects teachers and leaders with professional learning, resources, and networks to propel best practice for diverse learners. We are aware that these resources alone may not be sufficient in meeting your reentry planning needs. If you're interested in receiving more targeted support, please be in touch directly.

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