NEVADA Department of Education

TOPIC: **DYSLEXIA**

Phonics Instructional Supports for Students With or At-Risk for Dyslexia

The most common features of effective programs or interventions for students with or at-risk for dyslexia are the use of explicit and systematic phonics instruction.

Explicit Instruction

Explicit instruction involves directly and unambiguously teaching students to "sound out" (segment) words using their knowledge of letter-sound correspondence and blend the sounds back together to read as a whole word.

Systemic Instruction

Systematic instruction refers to skills that are taught in a logical sequence, and skills build upon each other.

- Explicit and systematic instruction in letter sound correspondence starts with individual letter sounds and subsequently includes letter combinations and spelling patterns.
- As students learn to associate sounds with letters and letter units, immediately teach them to use this new letter or letter combination in decoding (reading) and encoding (spelling) words.
- Integrate writing instruction within reading instruction. Reading and writing skills have an interactive relationship and growth in one supports growth in the other.

Phonemic Awareness Instruction

Phonemic awareness instruction is critical:

- Phoneme segmenting and blending are the most important skills for learning to read and spell words.
- Phonemic awareness instruction is more effective when it is integrated with print (using letter tiles, letter cards, writing letters, and subsequently in decoding and encoding activities).
- Students' phonemic awareness skills develop as a result of learning to read and spell.
- Mastery of "advanced" phonemic awareness skills, such as phoneme deletion or substitution has not been shown to yield better results. The focus of instruction should be on phoneme segmenting and blending.

Vocabulary Instruction

All students can benefit from more vocabulary instruction, especially emergent bilingual students.

- Talk about word meanings (i.e., build vocabulary knowledge) and how they are used in speech as students learn to read them. Discussing what words mean or how they are used may enhance word reading skills.

Decoding Words

Decoding longer and more complex words:

- Teach decoding skills in similar ways to how students learned to sound out shorter words, but now use larger letter units.
- Teach students to identify syllables (i.e., portions containing a vowel with its surrounding letters), affixes, and roots
- Read the parts, then blend the parts together and adjust pronunciation to be correct.
- Include morpheme instruction, in which students are taught to read common morphemes and their meanings, which supports multisyllabic word reading and vocabulary knowledge.