



Jack R. Smith, Ph.D.
Interim State Superintendent of Schools

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January 21, 2016

Ms. Laura Schultz
Ms. Lisa Blottenberger
Decoding Dyslexia Maryland

Dear Ms. Schultz and Ms. Blottenberger:

I am writing in response to your correspondence regarding the “Dear Colleague” letter on Dyslexia from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSERS) in October 2015. This letter was directed to State and Local Education Agencies regarding dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia in both general education and special education settings.

The letter from OSERS has been reviewed in detail by leadership at the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and was delivered to each local school system and public agency in preparation for a discussion with Statewide leadership at our Professional Learning Institute on December 9, 2015. The Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services (DSE/EIS) has been engaged in substantive regional work with local leaders in general and special education, classroom teachers, and service providers. Our efforts define high-quality, functional, routines-based IFSPs and standards-based IEPs and the optimum conditions for the delivery of specially designed instruction to narrow the achievement gap for children/students with disabilities. We anticipate that the direction provided in the OSERS “Dear Colleague” letter will provide a clear focus to our conversations to include dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia in both general education and special education settings.

I understand that you are meeting with the Assistant State Superintendent’s DSE/EIS Advisory Council this month. I value your support and experience on behalf of the students and families served by Decoding Dyslexia Maryland.

I thank you in advance for your involvement in supporting these discussions.

Sincerely,

Jack R. Smith, Ph.D.
Interim State Superintendent of Schools

c: Henry R. Johnson
Marcella E. Franczkowski