Mission: Empowering students to be life-long learners and productive citizens through the use of a comprehensive curriculum with high expectations in a safe 21st Century learning environment.

Vision: A community in continuous pursuit of educational excellence for all.

Aitkin Public Schools
Plan to Address Dyslexia and Convergence Insufficiency Disorder

Aitkin Public Schools are committed to providing a quality educational experience for all students. We have systems in place to ensure successes for all of the students in our district in achieving reading proficiency by Grade 3. It is important to recognize that some learners may find it difficult to acquire skills that help them become proficient readers and writers. In 2017 legislation was passed that states…

Each school district shall identify before the end of kindergarten, grade 1 and grade 2 students who are not reading at grade level before the end of the current school year and shall identify students in grade 3 or higher who demonstrate a reading difficulty to a classroom teacher. Reading assessments in English and in the predominant languages of the district students where practicable must identify and evaluate students' areas of academic need related to literacy. The district also must monitor the progress and provide reading instruction appropriate to the specific needs of English learners. The district must use a locally adopted, developmentally appropriate, and culturally responsive assessment and annually report summary assessment results to the commissioner by July 1.

The district must also report efforts to screen and identify students with dyslexia and convergence insufficiency disorder. A student under this subdivision must receive alternative instruction. Schools, must communicate (at least annually) with parents of each student who is not reading at or above grade level. This information should consist of the student's reading proficiency as measured by the locally adopted assessment, reading-related services currently being provided to the student and the student's progress and strategies for parents to use at home in helping their students succeed in becoming grade level proficient.

Appendix A: [Potential Indicators of Dyslexia, Minnesota Department of Education Navigating the School System When a Child is Struggling With Reading or Dyslexia](#)

Universal Screening

Current best practice in Aitkin Public Schools District 1 includes universal screening of all students beginning in kindergarten. Universal screening takes place in the fall, winter, and spring of each year and is completed for the purpose of identifying students who may be at risk for reading difficulties and not mastering the specific skills which correlate with broader reading achievement. The universal screening tool is specific to the grade level in which it is administered and delivered by trained teachers.

Students identified as being "at risk" should be placed into an appropriate evidenced-based intervention which matches their area of need within the designated WIN time. Students who exhibit indicators of dyslexia may benefit from an intervention that is multisensory, systematic, and cumulative with direct and explicit instruction in phonemic awareness. It is critical that instruction includes an analysis of phonics and time for intensive practice.

There is no one assessment specific to identifying dyslexia. A combination of subtests will indicate the presence of dyslexia. Any student that does not demonstrate timely response to the intervention may be referred may be referred for a more comprehensive educational evaluation. The TAT process will be followed in order to provide the best resources possible.

Screening and Evaluation Process

There is no one assessment specific to identifying dyslexia. A combination of subtests may indicate the presence of dyslexia and should include expressive oral language, expressive written language, receptive oral language, receptive written language, intellectual functioning, cognitive processing, and educational history. Assessment is designed to address the following three areas:

    1. Diagnosis – to determine if the student's strengths and weaknesses fit the definition of dyslexia
    2. Intervention planning – to determine appropriate instructional supports
    3. Documentation – to document educational history and support of necessary accommodations and modifications

The following areas should be addressed in an educational evaluation of dyslexia. (International Dyslexia Association, 2017)

▪ Phonological Awareness – an individual's awareness of and access to the sounds structure of his/her oral language
▪ Phonological or Language-Based Memory – ability to recall sounds, syllables, words
▪ Rapid Automatic Naming – speed of naming objects, colors, digits, or letters
▪ Receptive Vocabulary – understanding of words heard
▪ Phonics Skills – understanding of the symbol (letter) to the sound(s) relationship, either individually or in combination with other letters
▪ Decoding – ability to use symbol-sound associations to identify (read – pronounce) words
    o Real Words
    o Nonsense Words
▪ Oral Reading Fluency – ability to read accurately, at a story-telling pace – to facilitate/support comprehension
    o Single words
    o Sentences and paragraphs
▪ Spelling
▪ Writing
    o Sentence level
    o Paragraph level

Any student that does not demonstrate timely response to the intervention may be referred to begin the TAT process and a more comprehensive educational evaluation through Section 504 or special education may be necessary.

Appendix B: Problem Solving FlowChart
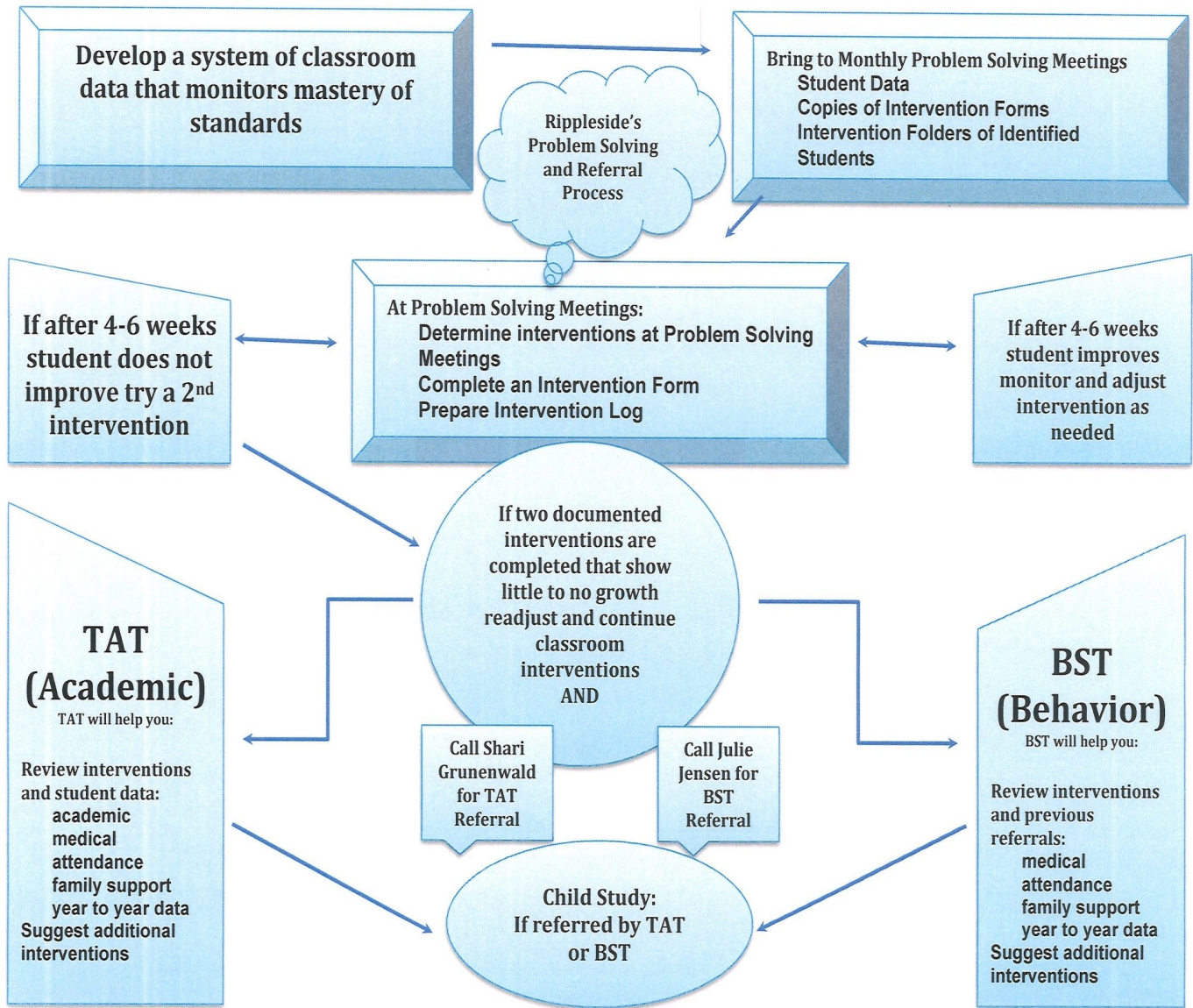
Appendix C: ISD 1 Assessment Systems
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_SL5uk9XdHHRJo8rD7ZUDzDu_PQ8l-SOWoqanJ8pLgc/edit
Appendix D: Testing and Evaluation https://app.box.com/s/43120w87h73lf16623erio4eifbhl66t

Team Meeting (TAT Process)

Any students that does not demonstrate timely response to the intervention may be referred may be referred for a more comprehensive educational evaluation. The TAT process will be followed in order to provide the best resources possible.

Appendix E: TAT referral process

<u>TAT Referral Process</u>
<u>2020-2021</u>

Team Members: Andy Dokken, Karla Skwira, Renee Voller, Kelly Sharkey, Ashley Keur, Shanen Weimer, Brita Williams, and Shari Grunenwald

Meeting Dates: Thursdays 3:03-3:30

Meeting Place: SPED Conference room

<u>Process</u>

2 documented interventions discussed at Grade Level Meetings must be tried before a TAT referral can be made

Parents of the referred student **must** be contacted by the referring teacher about the academic concern before a TAT referral can be made

The referring teacher will provide the Problem Solving form and 2 documented interventions to Shari Grunenwald to begin the TAT process

Andy Dokken and Shari Grunenwald will review the Problem Solving form and documented interventions

TAT Case Manager will:

~gather all the student's data and fill out data sheet

~provide the TAT checklist to the referring teacher

~schedule and conduct the initial interview with the referring teacher

~schedule the TAT meeting and arrange for referring teacher to be present

~make the necessary copies for each member of the team a few days prior to the TAT meeting

The referring teacher and Case Manager will brief the TAT team on the student and the interventions tried

The TAT team will brainstorm ideas from the teacher's goals for the referred student

From the brainstorming session, an action plan will be created for the teacher to put in place

The Case Manager will follow up with the teacher after 4 weeks to analyze the data and evaluate the interventions suggested by the TAT team

The Case Manager will follow up with the TAT team

If needed, the TAT team may meet again on the same student

If needed, a CST referral will be made by the TAT team and presented by Shari at the next Child Study Team meeting

Dyslexia is a reading disability that is neurological in origin. According to research, one in five students in classrooms are affected to some degree by dyslexia. It is important to distinguish that dyslexia is neurologically based, and therefore the problems that are associated with dyslexia revolve around language, and not related to cognitive skills or intelligence. These students in the classroom may appear to be lazy, bored, disorganized and unable to complete work. They may have difficulty with decoding, single word reading, reading fluency, and are typically poor spellers. Although these indicators do not always mean the student is dyslexic, the list if a good place to start when attempting to identify specific areas of need for the

student. Further information on working with students identified as dyslexic can be found on the International Dyslexia Association website. https://dyslexiaida.org/

Appendix F: Dyslexia Warning Signs

Characteristics of Dyslexia Checklist

Student Name: _____ Grade:_____ Date: _____
Parent Contact: _____Phone number:_____
Teacher/Screener:_____ School:_____

Preschool	Elementary School	Middle-High School+
❑ Delayed speech ❑ Mixing up sounds and and syllables in long words ❑ Constant confusion of left and right ❑ Late establishment of dominant hand ❑ Difficulty learning to tie shoes ❑ Trouble memorizing their address, phone number, or the alphabet ❑ Difficulty with words that rhyme ❑ A close relative with dyslexia	❑ Previous symptoms ❑ Non-automatic handwriting ❑ Letter, number reversal past the end of 1st grade ❑ Difficulty learning cursive ❑ Reading not fluent ❑ Words don't represent letters (ex. puppy - dog) ❑ Difficulty with spelling ❑ Can't remember sight words ❑ Difficulty telling time on clock with hands ❑ Trouble memorizing math facts ❑ Difficulty finding the right word when speaking ❑ Extremely messy ❑ Dreads school	❑ All previous symptoms ❑ Limited vocabulary ❑ Poor written expression ❑ Difficulty learning foreign language ❑ Difficulty reading printed music ❑ Poor grades in many classes ❑ Spending excessive time on homework ❑ Higher dropout rate

*If a student has 3 or more of these signs, consider further screening for dyslexia

Individual/Group	Expectations and Responsibilities
<u>Classroom Teachers</u> K-6 Renee Voller	<u>Core Instruction</u> ● See document (K-6 Reading Effort Expectations) ● Goal of 120 minutes in reading and writing <u>WIN time Instruction</u> ● Focus in math or reading ● 30 minutes ● Documented interventions for concerned students (need 2 documented interventions to refer to TAT and BST). ● Licensed staff should be working with the lowest students ● LLI and Americorps can be used as a documented intervention Summary of WIN: ● WIN stands for What I Need. This is a 30 minute set aside time focused on providing interventions or academic support for those in need and also providing enrichments for students who benefit from further challenge. This time allows students to have uninterrupted core instruction in reading while getting an additional double dose in an area of need or challenge. Grade levels will revisit groupings approximately every 4-8 weeks. <u>Focus of guided reading and questions</u> ● Renee will be conducting 3 mini peer coaching cycles. ● Renee will be discussing these mini goals with each of you. ● One of these mini goals will be considered for the peer review process. ● Renee will field all guided reading instruction questions ● Meet with Mr. Dokken each Friday morning to answer questions

<u>LLI Teachers</u>
Kelly Sharkey
	<u>Focus of LLI:</u>
	● General education students in reading
	● 1st grade (highest priority)
	● 2nd grade and Kindergarten
	● 3rd grade
	● Data used
	  ○ BAS assessments
	  ○ FAST assessments

Americorps Teacher Raina Muller	Focus of Americorps Reading: ● 3rd grade (highest priority) ● 2nd and 1st ● Data used ○ Fast assessments
Mya Newton	● 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grades ○ Fast assessments ● 2nd and 3rd grades (highest priority)
Sandra Blunt	

<u>Win Time Para Support</u>
Jody Slinger
Tracie Becker
	<u>Interventions</u>
	● Use Press Intervention System to support WIN time
	   ○ Kindergarten - TBD
	   ○ 1st grade - TBD
	   ○ 2nd-6th - Press is optimal

Convergence Insufficiency

Convergence insufficiency occurs when your eyes don't work together while you're trying to focus on a nearby object. When you read or look at a close object, your eyes need to turn inward together (converge) to focus. This gives you binocular vision, enabling you to see a single image. Convergence insufficiency can cause difficulty with reading. Difficulties with reading and concentrating can adversely affect a child's learning. Convergence insufficiency typically isn't detected in routine eye exams or school based vision screenings. A child with the condition may be evaluated for learning disabilities because of his or her reading troubles. (Mayo Clinic)

The following list is a list of cues to observe if you suspect that the child's eyes are not working together. If you sense there is eye strain, it is recommended to seek out medical attention from an ophthalmologist or an optometrist.

Physical Cues of Vision Difficulties
- Loses place when reading
- Blurred or double vision
- Headaches or dizziness
- Difficulty copying from board
- Report letters move, jump, swim, or appear to float on the page
- Frequent letter reversals

- Omits small words when reading
- Avoids near point work
- Transpositions of numbers (ex. 21 for 12)
- Squints or rubs eyes when reading
- Lose place when reading aloud

Convergence Insufficiency Exercises and Activities

Treatments for convergence insufficiency are usually effective. Teachers can be made aware of these signs and symptoms and begin logging information on the student. It is recommended that the teacher bring the student to the TAT team for further conversation. If it is determined to take a closer look, the team will decide if a screening is necessary. Consulting an occupational therapist is a great way to seek help in the school setting. The O.T. assigned to the building will be able to provide guidance in helping with the exercises and can work with the teacher in learning activities that help to strengthen the eye muscles and can be done in the classroom setting.

Appendix G: Convergence Insufficiency (CI) Fact Sheet
https://education.mn.gov/MDE/Search/index.htm?query=convergence+insufficiency&searchbutton=Search&v%3Asources=mn-mde-live&qp=mn-mde-live

Appendix H: Aitkin's Read Well By Third Grade Plan
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1okmUAF8tcZ1qW9ZCEzExx14Z-hKi0jabDIEN3jDsnMM/edit