

August 9, 2022

Dear K-3 Parents & Guardians,

In Desert Heights Charter School, our focus is on providing the best high-quality reading instruction to all students each day. Through a process called Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), all kindergarten through third grade students are screened for reading difficulties and/or characteristics consistent with dyslexia in the fall, winter, and spring using the DIBELS, 8<sup>th</sup> ed., screener. This literacy universal screening process is a brief assessment administered to all K-3 students to inform teachers of students who are on track and students who may need more targeted intervention. This screening does *not diagnose* for reading disabilities, nor dyslexia.

Per the universal screener, students who are not on benchmark are administered a deeper diagnostic assessment. This diagnostic information provides teachers and specialists with the specific skills needed to target in intervention and those interventions are started immediately, working to close the gaps. This diagnostic assessment does not diagnose for reading disabilities, nor dyslexia. A change in intervention curriculum, group size, level of intensity, frequency, and/or duration may be needed. More intensive time, duration, and frequency in intervention may be needed and can take place with the classroom teacher or a specialist, such as a reading interventionist. This is considered intensive Tier 3 intervention. The progress of all students receiving intervention is closely and frequently checked. Parents are essential to this entire process. Following the Universal Literacy and Dyslexia Screener, and diagnostic assessments, you will be notified if your child is not at grade level.

Arizona's Move On When Reading (MOWR) legislation places great importance on this process beginning in kindergarten. This ensure all students remain on track to be reading at grade level by the end of 3rd grade. Arizona Revised Statute §15-701 states that if a student scores below the cut score on the reading portion of the 3rd grade statewide exam, he/she will not be promoted to 4th grade until the student makes sufficient progress in reading proficiency. It is understood that each child is unique, therefore exemptions have been established for students to be promoted to 4th grade. Those exemptions are available at [www.azed.gov/mowr](http://www.azed.gov/mowr).

A variety of factors, in and outside of school, can influence a child's educational path and progress. It is important for parents to share in the educational journey, through constant communication and involvement. We encourage you to continue to highlight and celebrate your child's strengths and share difficulties if they occur. Please reach out to us if you have any questions. We look forward to a successful school year.

Sincerely,

Susan Otto, M.Ed.

MOWR Coordinator, K-3

ESEA Coordinator, K-12

Liane Kilmain, M.Ed.

Assistant Principal, K-4

Katherine Miller, M.Ed.

Principal, K-12