

# PC READS ADVOCATE PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

## ABOUT OUR ADVOCATE PROGRAM

One of the most meaningful services PC READS offers is family advocacy. Our two Certified Dyslexia Advocates have assisted over 50 families and continue to assist many of these families on an ongoing basis. This work includes developing action plans to ensure children receive the support needed to become successful students and confident individuals. Our redesigned Advocate Program will ensure accurate records of the families we assist. Our intake forms and tracking procedures will collect data, including the number of students assisted and the hours Advocates work.

Providing this personalized assistance requires a depth of knowledge about dyslexia, special education laws, interventions, accommodations and test interpretation. Assisting families often includes reviewing both school and private assessments, explaining school procedures and services, and reviewing and revising IEP goals and 504 accommodation plans. Such advocacy work is invaluable to local families and truly a unique service PC READS offers.

Our success in broadening dyslexia awareness is rapidly increasing the number of families and educators seeking our knowledge and assistance. Dyslexia is the most common learning disability and affects reading, writing and spelling with various degrees of severity. In fact, upwards of 80% of struggling readers are likely dyslexic. The National Institutes of Health estimate that as much as 20% of our population may be living with dyslexia. With 4,700 students enrolled in the Park City School District, at any time, there may be over 900 dyslexic students. To ensure that we are able to continue offering this service, and meet the needs of families in our community, we are recruiting and training new Advocates.

## TRAINING AND WORK EXPECTATIONS

Upon completion of training through The Dyslexia Training Institute, Certified Dyslexia Advocates will begin providing professional advocate services to families during the 2017-2018 school year. Advocates will also share their expertise during our monthly meetings. PC READS will cover the costs of training and work stipends.

### ***(1) Application Period (Present – September 2017)***

Link to application: <https://goo.gl/forms/HMrtLPtJnGwGbILt2>

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis through the September 10<sup>th</sup> due date. Up to 3 individuals will be selected to participate. Selected participants are required to commit to the Advocate Program for two school calendar years (Fall 2017 – Spring 2019). Any Advocate who does not fulfill this commitment will be asked to reimburse PC READS for their training costs.

### ***(2) Training (October – December 2017)***

**Dyslexia Advocate Certificate Program:** Chosen applicants will enroll in The Dyslexia Training Institute's ("DTI") online Dyslexia Advocate Certificate Program. This course is offered from October 9, 2017 – December 15, 2017. Participants chosen by PC READS are expected to submit an application to DTI within a week of receiving your acceptance notification from PC READS. Upon completion of the Certificate Program, Advocates will receive a \$250 stipend. Full information about this graduate

level course can be found here: <http://www.dyslexiatraininginstitute.org/certification.html>. Below is the course description:

*This program is designed to teach participants about the Individuals with Disabilities and Education Act (IDEA), FAPE, IEPs, 504's, appropriate accommodations, letter-writing, how to request and receive appropriate services and interventions, dispute processes and resolution, as they all relate to a student with dyslexia. Upon completion participants will have the information they need to effectively work with families and school districts to ensure the laws are respected and that children are receiving the services they need.*

Applicants are also required to either complete the 4-week prerequisite course, *What is Dyslexia? An In-depth Look* (offered August 7th - September 1<sup>st</sup>) or to “test out” through a DTI exam. PC READS will provide the prerequisite text to all selected participants.

**Mentoring:** As a DTI Certificate Program graduate, Elissa Aten will mentor new Advocates and include them in family meetings during Fall 2017 for “hands-on” training.

### **(3) Certified Dyslexia Advocate Work (January 2018 – June 2019)**

New Certified Dyslexia Advocates will begin individually working with families in January 2018. Advocates will be assigned specific families and be responsible for completing intake forms, planning meetings, taking phone calls and checking in for updates. Every family in our Advocate Program will be proactively contacted at the beginning of each school year to inquire about changes needed on IEPs and/or 504 Plans. Each family will also be contacted at the end of the school year for feedback and to plan for the upcoming year. Elissa Aten will be available as an advisor to new Advocates.

**Stipends:** Advocacy work is not consistent, as each family has different needs. Advocates will be required to track their hours in 15 minute increments and we expect this information to be useful as we continue to develop this program. While hourly payment may be possible in the future, we are beginning our Advocate Program with set stipends. Advocates will receive a \$750 stipend for work during each of the following periods: January - June 2018, July - December 2018 and January - June 2019.

### **TRAINING COSTS (Covered by PC READS)**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Prerequisite: What is Dyslexia? An In-Depth Look (if chosen)	\$199.00
<i>Overcoming Dyslexia: A New and Complete Science-Based Program for Reading Problems at Any Level</i> , Sally Shaywitz, M.D.	\$18.00
Dyslexia Advocate Certificate Program	\$850.00
Text: <i>Dyslexia Advocate! How to Advocate for a Child with Dyslexia within the Public Education System</i> , Kelli-Sandman Hurley, Ed.D.	\$22.95
Text: <i>Wrightslaw: Special Education Law, 2 Edition</i> , Peter W.D. Wright and Pamela Darr Wright	\$29.95