

PC READS ADVOCATE PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

ABOUT OUR ADVOCATE PROGRAM

One of the most meaningful services PC READS offers is family advocacy. Our Certified Dyslexia Advocates have assisted over 200 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.

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 additional Advocates.

TRAINING AND WORK EXPECTATIONS

Upon completion of training through The Dyslexia Training Institute, newly Certified Dyslexia Advocates will begin providing professional advocate services to families as employees of PC READS. Advocates will also share their expertise during meetings, special events and Dyslexia Awareness Presentations. PC READS will cover the costs of training and provides stipends for ongoing professional development.

(1) Application Period (Present – January 2022)

Link to application: <http://parkcityreads.org/advocate-program/>

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis through the January 21, 2022 due date. Up to 2 individuals will be selected to participate. Selected participants are required to commit to the Advocate Program for two years. Any Advocate who does not fulfill this commitment will be asked to reimburse PC READS for their training costs.

TRAINING COSTS (Covered by PC READS)

<u>Description</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Prerequisite: What is Dyslexia? An In-Depth Look (if chosen)	\$225.00
Dyslexia Advocate Certificate Program	\$950.00
Textbooks: including all required by The Dyslexia Training Institute and supplemental books identified by PC READS (estimated cost)	\$115.00

(2) Initial Training (January - April 2022)

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 January 31, 2022 through April 1, 2022. Participants chosen by PC READS are expected to submit an application to DTI within a week of receiving your acceptance notification from PC READS. 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 January 10, 2022 – February 4, 2022) or to "test out" through a DTI exam. PC READS will provide the prerequisite text to all selected participants.

(3) Certified Dyslexia Advocate Work (April 2022 – December 2023)

New Certified Dyslexia Advocates will begin individually working with families in April 2022. Advocates will be assigned specific families and be responsible for completing intake forms, planning meetings, keeping detailed records, taking phone calls and checking in for updates. Every family in our Advocate Program is proactively contacted at the beginning of each school year to inquire about changes needed on IEPs and/or 504 Plans. Each family is also contacted at the end of the school year for feedback and to plan for the upcoming year.

As a DTI Certificate Program graduate and Manager of the PC READS Advocate Program, Molly Dillon holds monthly Advocate Program meetings, during which all advocates share information and collaborate on cases. Advocacy work is not consistent, as each family has different needs. Advocates will be required to complete a Letter of Agreement outlining the employment agreement.

(4) Continued Professional Development

In addition to monthly Advocate Committee meetings, advocates are encouraged to attend all PC READS meetings and special events, which include local and national speakers. Advocates are also provided with a stipend for professional development.