Sharing Screening Results

With the goal of **preventing** reading difficulties, talking about screening data takes some finesse; especially with mandates that raise alarms about dyslexia and even consequences like retention. Fortunately, screening data is one of the best tools we have available. Screening will almost always over-identify student needs so that we can respond early and robustly with instruction. The following video and transcript support talking to parents and families in a way that conveys the instruction and help their student will receive. An instructional support stance will help provide reassurance to families, without minimizing or dismissing assessment results and without causing undue concern.

The video and transcript below offer a model of how you might talk about Acadience Reading screening results at the beginning of the year with a parent of a first-grade student. Other assessments, grades, and times of year could be filled in as appropriate.

Video Model

Explaining Screening Results to Parents - YouTube

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N5Z8dYvTong

Transcript:

Hi Mrs. Jones, thanks for coming in today to talk about Johnny's screening results. As you know, we screen all of our first-grade students at the beginning, middle, and end of the year. We don't want to wait to find out who might be a struggling reader at the end of first grade; we want to screen everybody at the beginning of the year on some key skills that indicate if a student might have trouble reading in the future. We don't want to get to that point in the future when we can do something about it now to prevent any future problems.

So, I sat down with Johnny and did some of the screening indicators that we use with all students. At the beginning of first grade, we used something called Phoneme Segmentation Fluency or PSF to get an indication of Johnny's ability to hear the sounds in words that we speak so on this one-minute activity I would say a word like "cat" and I ask him to say the sounds in the word [/c/ /a/ /t/].

I also screened him on something called Nonsense Word Fluency or NWF. This is an indicator of students being able to match those sounds and words to letters. It has two scores. We're looking to see that they can match sounds and letters and also that they can blend those letter sounds to be able to read words. This test uses nonwords words that aren't real words like "dif" or "lut" or "sim" so that we take out the possibility that the student can read the word because they've seen it before. That might happen if we used real words so we use words that are consonant-vowel-consonant patterns or vowel-consonant patterns so that we can test when the student comes to a string of letters are they so automatic with their letter sounds and their ability to blend letter sounds that they can read that string even if it's not a real word. This will be really helpful in the future when they start reading big words.

I also did a one-minute activity called Letter Naming Fluency. This one has a page of uppercase and lowercase letters that I put in front of Johnny and we're interested in how many he can name

in a minute. All of these activities are timed; they're one minute maximum. We're looking for not just can the student perform the skill accurately but can they do it automatically without thinking about it, because these skills are important foundations for reading comprehension in the future.

So, here's how Johnny did on the three tests that I did with him at the beginning of first grade. He had difficulty with all three of these so this is why we wanted to talk to you. It's nothing to be alarmed about right now; we call this dyslexia screening because dyslexia is a very common form of a reading disability and it's really helpful if we catch it early. We can actually prevent reading disabilities and reading difficulties like dyslexia and we can minimize the impact if students have dyslexia by catching it early and providing intervention early. That's the goal here.

Johnny had difficulty naming letters. He named just eight of them within the minute so that's something we're going to be working on. He also had difficulty saying the sounds in the words that I spoke, so that was the Phoneme Segmentation Fluency assessment. We want students to score at least 40 on this one and Johnny's score of 18 was well below the expectation, the minimum expectation for the beginning of first grade. So, this is a concern. This is something that we want to be working on with Johnny and we want to get on that as soon as possible.

He also had difficulty with Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF). I mentioned there are two scores to that one. On the Correct Letter Sounds score we want students to be at at least 27 and he had 12. So, looking at something like "dif" and being able to say the sounds /dif/ or /d/- /i/- /f/. He couldn't really match very many letter sounds. And the second part of Nonsense Word Fluency is Whole Words Read where we want the student to not have to go sound by sound to read but to be able to look at "dif" and just say /dif/. And the minimum expectation at the beginning of first grade is to do at least 1 word that way in the minute and he wasn't yet able to do any. So, this is why we have some concerns, this is why we're going to be creating a plan for Johnny.

We're going to be specifically working on his ability to build on what he can do a little bit of right now - which is identify the individual sounds in spoken words and then match those sounds to letters. So, we'll be working on letter names and sounds and we're also going to be teaching him how to write those letters so that he can not only read but also spell. Here are the things that we're going to be doing in the classroom [and then you would explain whatever those interventions are]

We are going to be monitoring his progress with this Phoneme Segmentation Fluency. We'll be tracking to make sure that he gets caught up to that minimum of 40 and we're going to set a goal for that by about the 1st of November. You can expect to hear from me in about six weeks. I'm going to let you know how he's tracking towards that goal of 40. And once he reaches that then we're going to be monitoring his progress on Nonsense Word Fluency, towards the goals that we have for the middle of the school year. If you are interested in doing some things with him at home here are some ideas about the ways you can support him and let me know if you have any questions. You'll be hearing from me in six weeks.