Each local educational agency and public school academy in Michigan is required to publicly post the process used to determine the existence of a Specific Learning Disability (SLD).

Consistent with this requirement, **Coopersville Area Public Schools** reports the following:

For grades kindergarten through 5th grade, in the area of Basic Reading, Coopersville Area Public Schools is beginning the implementation of a **Response to Scientific, Research-Based Intervention** process for literacy intervention.

For determination of a SLD, a **Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses (PSW)** process is used for students in kindergarten through 12th grade for the skill area of Basic Reading. This process is also used across all other areas of SLD, kindergarten through 12th grade, which includes: Oral Expression, Listening Comprehension, Written Expression, Reading Comprehension, Reading Fluency, Math Calculation, and Math Problem Solving.

It is noted that regardless of the process used, all schools must follow all of the regulatory requirements in the IDEA, the MARSE, and Michigan laws, policies and procedures for special education.

What is a SLD?

A Specific Learning Disability is "a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia that adversely affects a student's educational performance. A SLD does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities; mental retardation; emotional disturbance; or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage." (34 CFR §300.8(c)(10)).

What is Response to Scientific, Research-Based Intervention Process?

Response to Scientific, Research-Based Intervention is a process to determine if a student has a SLD. This process involves the collection of data to determine the following:

- The student does not achieve adequately for the student's age or to meet State approved grade-level standards in one or more of the areas identified at 34 CFR §300.309(a)(1)(i) when provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the student's age or State-approved grade-level standards.
- The student does not make sufficient progress to meet age or State-approved grade-level standards in one or more of the areas identified at 34 CFR §300.309(a)(1)(i) when using a process based on the student's response to scientific, research-based intervention.

What is a PSW Process?

Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses is a process that is used to determine if a student has a SLD. This process involves the collection of data to determine the following:

- The student does not achieve adequately for the student's age or to meet State approved grade-level standards in one or more of the areas identified at 34 CFR §300.309(a)(1)(i) when provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the student's age or State-approved grade-level standards.
- The student exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement, or both, relative to age, State-approved grade-level standards, or intellectual development, that is determined by the Multi-disciplinary Evaluation Team (MET) to be relevant to the identification of a SLD, using appropriate assessments, consistent with the IDEA Evaluation Procedures and Additional Requirements for Evaluations and Reevaluations.

Source: Michigan Department of Education Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (2010). *Michigan criteria for determining the existence of a specific learning disability*. Lansing, MI: Author.