

Child Find

DYSLEXIA SERVICES

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Model operating procedures created by



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and

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DYSLEXIA SERVICES

What is Required

The District's Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that campuses are implementing procedures for identifying and providing appropriate, evidence-based instructional services to all students with dyslexia or related disorders. The District's procedures must be implemented according to the approved strategies for screening, individualized evaluation, and techniques for treating dyslexia and related services as described in *The Dyslexia Handbook: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Services 2024 Update* ("The Dyslexia Handbook"). The District must report through PEIMS the number of students enrolled in the District who are identified as having dyslexia.

Parent Notification

Parents or guardians of a student with dyslexia or a related disorder must be informed of all services and options available to the student, including general education interventions under response to intervention and multi-tiered systems of support models as well as the option for an evaluation and services under the IDEA.

The District must provide written notification to the student's parent or guardian at least five days before any evaluation or identification procedure is used with a specific student suspected of having dyslexia or a related disorder. This notice must be in English or in the parent or guardian's native language and include the following:

- A reasonable description of the evaluation procedure to be used with the student;
- Information regarding instructional interventions or strategies provided to the student prior to the evaluation;
- An estimated time frame for completion of the evaluation; and
- Contact information for the Campus Dyslexia Personnel that the parent can contact regarding dyslexia services, relevant parent training and information projects, and any other appropriate parent resources.

In addition, before an initial FIE is conducted to determine whether a student, who is suspected to have dyslexia or a related disorder, has a disability under the IDEA, the

Campus Special Education Personnel must comply with the special education procedures related to Prior Written Notice and Referral for Possible Special Education Services as well as provide the parent with all information indicated above. See [PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE] and [REFERRAL FOR POSSIBLE SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES]. Campus Special Education Personnel shall also provide the parent a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards, a copy of the Overview of Special Education for Parents form, and give the parent an opportunity to give written consent for an initial FIE. See [CONSENT FOR INITIAL EVALUATION] and [CHILD FIND DUTY].

Universal Dyslexia Screening & Identification

To comply with child find requirements, the District must screen or test all students for dyslexia and related disorders at appropriate times in accordance with The Dyslexia Handbook and state law. Specifically, the law requires that all kindergarten and first grade students be screened for dyslexia and related services. In addition, the law requires the District to administer to students in kindergarten, first grade, and second grade a reading instrument to assess student reading development and comprehension. This law also requires the District to administer a reading instrument at the beginning of seventh grade to students who did not demonstrate reading proficiency on the sixth-grade state reading STAAR.

The District must ensure that appropriately trained and qualified individuals administer and interpret the results of the selected screening instrument. This includes an individual who is certified/licensed in dyslexia or a classroom teacher who holds a valid certification for Kindergarten and grade 1. The District is required to consider prior screenings and testing before rescreening or retesting a student determined to have dyslexia during a prior screening or testing.

The District may not use early intervention strategies, such as Response to Intervention systems or other multi-tiered systems of support, to delay or deny the special education evaluation of a student suspected to have a specific learning disability, including dyslexia or a related disorder.

Dyslexia Services

The District must provide a reading program for any student with dyslexia or a related disorder that is in accordance with the descriptors and implementation requirements found in The Dyslexia Handbook. All providers of dyslexia instruction (PDI) must be trained in the instructional strategies that use individualized, multisensory, phonetic methods and a variety of writing and spelling components as described in The Dyslexia Handbook.

The District must provide each student identified as having dyslexia access to the District's dyslexia services with a provider trained in dyslexia and related disorders at the student's campus. Additional services can be offered at a centralized location if the parent or guardian agrees to the services, but centralized services must not prevent the student from receiving services at the student's campus.

Parent Education

Campus Personnel must provide parents or guardians of students suspected of having dyslexia or a related disorder a copy or a link to the electronic version of The Dyslexia Handbook as soon as the suspicion arises.

The District and/or Campus Personnel must provide to parents of students enrolled in the district information on:

- Characteristics of dyslexia and related disorders;
- Evaluation and identification of dyslexia and related disorders;
- Effective instructional strategies for teaching students with dyslexia and related disorders;
- Qualifications of and contact information for providers of dyslexia instruction at each campus or school;
- Instructional modifications and accommodations;
- The steps in the special education process, as described in the Overview of Special Education for Parents form, and
- How to request a copy and access an electronic version of the Dyslexia Handbook.

Definitions

"Dyslexia" is a disorder of constitutional origin manifested by a difficulty in learning to read, write, or spell, despite conventional instruction, adequate intelligence, and sociocultural opportunity.

"Related disorders" include disorders similar to or related to dyslexia, such as developmental auditory imperception, dysphasia, specific developmental dyslexia, developmental dysgraphia, and developmental spelling disability.

“Universal screening” is defined as a universal measure administered to all students by qualified personnel to determine which students are at risk for dyslexia or reading difficulties and/or a related disorder. Screening is not a formal evaluation.

Additional Procedures

Dyslexia Screening & Identification

Campus Personnel are responsible for ensuring that all students in kindergarten and first grade are screened for dyslexia in an appropriate and timely manner. Before screening may take place, District or Campus Administration will select a screening instrument from the Commissioner’s List of Reading Instruments list for Campus Personnel to use that addresses the following skills:

- Kindergarten – Letter Sound Knowledge or Letter Naming Fluency; Phonological Awareness
- First Grade – Word Reading Accuracy or Fluency; Phonological Awareness,

*Districts are permitted to use reading instruments other than those adopted by the commissioner for first, second, and seventh grades only when a district-level committee adopts these additional instruments. (Dyslexia Handbook, pg. 13).

Screenings for all kindergarten students should take place in the later part of the spring semester. Considerations for scheduling the kindergarten screener may include the following factors: (1) has adequate time for instruction been provided during the school year; (2) has adequate time been provided to compile data prior to the end of the school year; (3) how will the timing of the screener fit in with the timing of other required assessments; (4) has sufficient time been provided to inform parents in writing of the results of the reading instrument and whether the student is at risk for dyslexia or other reading difficulties; (5) has adequate time been provided for educators to offer appropriate interventions to the student and (6) has sufficient time been provided for decision making regarding next steps in the screening process.

Screenings for all first grade students should take place no later than the middle of the school year and must conclude by January 31 of each year. Results of the dyslexia and related disorder screenings for students in Kindergarten and Grade 1 shall be reported through the Texas Student Data System Public Education Information Management System (TSDS PEIMS).

All Campus Personnel conducting screenings must understand and be able to identify primary characteristics of dyslexia, including challenges with reading words in isolation, decoding, reading orally, and spelling. In addition, the individuals who administer the screening instrument must also document student behaviors observed during the administration of the instrument, including lack of automaticity, difficulty sounding out words left to right, guessing, self-correcting, inability to focus on reading, and avoidance behavior.

Campus Administration will verify that all Campus Personnel conducting screenings have undergone the required trainings and are properly certified to fill this role. Specifically, an individual who administers and interprets the screening instrument must, at a minimum, be an individual who is certified/licensed in dyslexia or a classroom teacher who holds a valid certification for kindergarten and Grade 1. Where possible, the student's current classroom teacher will administer the screening instrument for dyslexia and reading difficulties. Then, the teacher (or other Campus Personnel) conducting screenings will report the results of dyslexia and related disorder screenings required for each student in kindergarten and first grade through PEIMS. The results must also be provided to the parent of the student with an explanation of the scores.

Campus Personnel will continue to monitor students for common risk factors for dyslexia in second grade and beyond.

Based on the universal screener for reading and dyslexia, if a student is at low risk for reading difficulties, the campus will continue evidence-based core reading instruction and continue to monitor the student for reading difficulties in the future.

If the student is at risk for reading difficulties, Campus Personnel will gather both quantitative and qualitative information about the student. Quantitative information may include current dyslexia screening instruments, previous dyslexia screening instruments, formal and informal classroom reading assessments and/or other skill assessments, vision and hearing screening, state assessment reports, curriculum-based assessments, and attendance records. Qualitative information may include observations of student during screening, other observations of student progress, teacher observations and reports, parent/guardian input (e.g. family history, early language skills), current student work samples, academic progress reports, work samples from earlier grades, and/or accommodations and intervention history and data.

Both quantitative and qualitative information will be reviewed by a Student Support Team which should include individuals who have knowledge of the student, are appropriately trained in the administration of the screening tool, are trained to interpret the results, and recognize characteristics of dyslexia. The Student Support Team may consist of the student's classroom teacher, the counselor, a provider of dyslexia instruction, the

individual who administered the screener, a representative of LPAC, assessment personnel, the parent, and/or an administrator. The Student Support Team is not the ARD Committee or a Section 504 Committee, although many of these individuals may be on a future committee if the student is referred for an evaluation and qualifies for services and/or accommodations. The Student Support Team shall analyze the data and make a decision as to whether the student's reading difficulties are or are not consistent with characteristics of dyslexia and related disorders.

If the Student Support Team determines that the data does not give the members reason to suspect that a student has dyslexia, a related disorder or other disability, the Student Support Team may decide to provide the student with additional supports in the classroom or through the Response to Intervention process or other Campus-based intervention system. However, the student is not referred for an evaluation at this time.

If the Student Support Team suspects that the student has dyslexia or a related disorder, the Student Support Team should refer the student for an initial FIE under the IDEA, as there is a reason to suspect that special education services are necessary for the student. See [REFERRAL FOR POSSIBLE SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES].

It is important to remember that at any point in the process, a referral for a dyslexia evaluation may be made under IDEA if a disability and a corresponding need for special education services are suspected. Progression through the intervention process is not required in order to begin the identification of dyslexia. For example, Campus Personnel should refer a student for a dyslexia evaluation if regular progress monitoring reflects a difficulty with reading, decoding, and/or reading comprehension or when a student is not reaching grade-level benchmarks due to reading difficulty. In addition, parents or guardians have a right to request a referral for a dyslexia evaluation under the IDEA at any time. While the use of tiered intervention may be part of the identification and data collection process for dyslexia, Campus Personnel must ensure that evaluations of students suspected of having a disability are not delayed or denied because of implementation of tiered interventions, especially when parent or teacher observations reveal the common characteristics of dyslexia.

Referral for IDEA Evaluation

If the Student Support Team determines that dyslexia or a similar disability is suspected and there is a suspected corresponding need for special education services, the Student Support Team must refer a student for an initial evaluation under the IDEA. The Student Support Team will make decisions regarding referrals on a case-by-case basis, carefully considering all data obtained from screenings and other sources. In addition, parents or guardians may also request a referral for an initial evaluation under the IDEA. District Assessment Personnel must seek parental consent for an FIE and follow all procedural

safeguards required under the IDEA, including the provision of proper Prior Written Notice and a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards to the parent. Additionally, the District will provide the Overview of Special Education form to the parent when seeking consent for an initial evaluation. See [CHILD FIND DUTY] and [REFERRAL FOR POSSIBLE SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES] and [CONSENT FOR INITIAL EVALUATION]

Procedures for the Evaluation and Identification of Dyslexia

In accordance with the *Dyslexia Handbook: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders, 2024 Update*, when dyslexia is suspected the multidisciplinary team (MDT) must consist of all qualified professionals under IDEA as well as at least one member with specific knowledge regarding:

- the reading process,
- dyslexia and related disorders, and
- dyslexia instruction

TEC §29.0031(b) states this member must:

1. hold a licensed dyslexia therapist (LDT) license under Chapter 403, Occupations Code;
2. hold the most advanced dyslexia-related certification issued by an association recognized by the SBOE, and identified in, or substantially similar to an association identified in, the program and rules adopted under Sections 7.102 and 38.003; or
3. if a person qualified under subdivision (1) or (2) is not available, meet the applicable training requirements adopted by the SBOE pursuant to Sections 7.102 and 38.003.

This member must also sign a document describing the member's participation in the evaluation of the student.

The District will prioritize individuals who meet the credentials of items (1) and (2) when designating an individual to fill this role. Understanding the limitations of availability of the individuals who meet the credential requirements of items (1) and (2), the District will require educational diagnosticians to complete the following trainings:

- register and complete the Texas Education Agency's (TEA's) Texas Dyslexia Academies (TDAs);
- register and complete the TEA's Guidance for the Comprehensive Evaluation of a Specific Learning Disability training; and
- document that the member has training in current research and evidence-based

assessments that are used to identify the most common characteristics of dyslexia.

Additionally, the district will require Providers of Dyslexia Instruction (PDIs) to register and complete the Texas Education Agency's (TEA's) Texas Dyslexia Academies (TDAs).

When determining the presence of dyslexia. The District shall ensure that the student meets eligibility criteria as a student who exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses within ability, performance, or both. Additionally, the MDT will make a determination regarding whether a student's difficulties in the areas of reading and spelling reflect a pattern of evidence for the primary characteristics of dyslexia with unexpectedly low performance for the student's age and educational level in some or all of the following areas:

- Reading words in isolation
- Decoding unfamiliar words accurately and automatically
- Reading fluency for connected text (rate and/or accuracy and/or prosody)
- Spelling (an isolated difficulty in spelling would not be sufficient to identify dyslexia)

Provision of Dyslexia Instruction

If a student is evaluated under IDEA and the results of the evaluation show that the student has dyslexia or a related disorder, the student may be eligible for dyslexia services. If the student is determined to be eligible under the IDEA, and the ARD Committee determines the student requires specially designed instruction, the student will receive related services, supplementary aids and services, accommodations, or program modifications, as determined by his/her ARD Committee.

Dyslexia instruction is considered specially designed instruction under IDEA, the dyslexia services provided must address the following critical, evidence-based components:

- Phonological awareness
- Sound-symbol association
- Syllabication
- Orthography
- Morphology
- Syntax
- Reading comprehension
- Reading fluency

In addition to the above content, it is also critical that the way the content is delivered is consistent with research-based principles. Campus Administration and the Provider of Dyslexia Instruction (PDI) will ensure that all of the following principles of effective intervention for students with dyslexia are utilized:

- Simultaneous, multisensory
- Systematic and cumulative
- Explicit instruction
- Diagnostic teaching to automaticity
- Synthetic instruction
- Analytic instruction

If the student is determined to be eligible for dyslexia or a related disorder but does not require specially designed instruction as determined by the ARD Committee, the student is eligible for Section 504 services consisting of accommodations and/or related aids as determined by his/her Section 504 committee.

The District Administration will ensure that dyslexia instruction is provided by individuals trained to deliver such instruction. Teachers, such as reading specialists, master reading teachers, general education classroom teachers, or special education teachers, who provide dyslexia instruction for students are not required to hold a specific license or certification. Additionally, a provider of dyslexia instruction does not need to be certificated as a special educator when serving a student who also receives special education and related services if the provider is the most appropriate person to offer the dyslexia instruction. However, these educators must at a minimum have additional documented dyslexia training aligned to the requirements of The Dyslexia Handbook and must deliver the instruction with fidelity. Differentiation that does not compromise the fidelity of the program, such as adjusting the amount of information or pacing of the program, may be necessary to address students' unique needs and to promote progress among students receiving dyslexia instruction. An ARD committee must only consider deviations from the program's fidelity requirements when data collection, a student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP), and other areas of the student's IEP clearly indicate the need for more intensive or supplemental supports.

The District will maintain documentation requirements of compliance associated with Texas Student Data System (TSDS), Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), and State Performance Plan (SPP). District staff will provide training, with follow up, to ensure the documentation required is in place and compliant.

Progress Reports

The District will ensure that parents receive a report in concurrence with their child's report card reflecting their child's progress in the dyslexia program.

Can the Provider of Dyslexia Instruction assist in the FIIE process?

As part of the evaluation when dyslexia is suspected, in addition to the parent and team of qualified professionals required under IDEA, the multidisciplinary team (MDT) must include at least one member with specific knowledge regarding:

- the reading process,
- dyslexia and related disorders, and
- dyslexia instruction.

Is a screening for Dyslexia required before a referral for an FIIE?

Although TEA requires universal screenings for all students in grades K-1 as part of the early identification process, an individual screening or consultation is not required prior to parent or staff member requesting an evaluation.

Is it considered best practices with regard to least restrictive environment to assess for speech first, come back and consider dyslexia testing, and then, if needed, come back and assess for a learning disability?

No, the team must consider all of the data collected and look at the student's current learning profile in order to determine the type of evaluation the student needs to assess all areas of concern.

1. What additional evaluations must be administered for EB students?

Oral language proficiency should be evaluated. If the student has received instruction in English and Spanish, then all testing needs to be completed in both languages.

2. If a student is speech impaired (or other disability categories other than SLD and Dyslexic), does the student need an IEP

(goals/objectives) for reading?

The ARD committee should document the critical areas of need for each individual student and create an IEP based on those identified needs.

If a student is receiving special education services for a specific learning disability in reading and is also determined to have Dyslexia, does the student need an IEP (goals/objectives for reading)?

Yes. The components of reading instruction required for students with Dyslexia/SLD in Reading must be addressed in the IEP (goals/objectives):

- Phonemic awareness instruction (detect, segment, blending, manipulating sounds) Graphophonemic knowledge (phonics) – words that carry meaning are made of sounds and the sounds are written with letters in the correct order
- Language structure instruction that encompasses morphology, semantics, syntax, and pragmatics
- Linguistic Instruction – proficient and fluency with patterns of language so words and sentences carry their meanings
- Strategy-Oriented Instruction – strategies for decoding, encoding, word recognition, fluency, and comprehension

3. Can a student receive direct services from a provider of dyslexia instruction who is not a certified special education teacher?

Yes. A provider of dyslexia instruction does not have to be certified as a special educator when serving a student who also receives special education and related services if that provider is the most appropriate person to offer dyslexia instruction. Teachers should coordinate the services offered to a student. This collaboration model should include all teachers, both general education and specialized teachers, who teach reading (including reading in the content area) to ensure generalization of the methodology identified as the reading instruction. The ARD committee will need to determine the most appropriate environment for the student to receive the instruction.

4. Who collects intervention data if the child is already identified as Special Education?

If the student is already receiving special education services, the special

education service provider will hold a staffing to develop a plan for interventions and an ARD should be held to discuss the student's lack of progress in the area of reading or writing and discuss a plan for interventions. *RTI data is not required prior to conducting a Re-evaluation.* The special education services provider is responsible for gathering the data on the student's response to interventions.

Evidence of Implementation

- Cumulative Student Data
- Instructional Strategies Provided and Student Response
- Section 504 Evaluation
- FIE
- Evidence of Trainings for Campus Personnel Administering Screenings
- Certifications of Campus Personnel Administering Screenings
- Evidence of Training for Dyslexia Service Providers
- Certifications of Dyslexia Service Providers
- ARD/IEP
- Section 504 Plan
- Right to Information Provided to Parent
- Receipt From Parent of The Dyslexia Handbook
- Receipt From Parent of Procedural Safeguards Under IDEA and/or Section 504
- Approved Dyslexia Program
- Documentation of Dyslexia Services Provided to Student
- Documentation of Student Support Team Meetings
- Documentation for the state in TSDS, PEIMS, and SPP
- Referral Checklist

Resources

[The Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process: Dyslexia Services - Region 18](#)

[The Dyslexia Handbook: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders \(last updated June 2024\) - Texas Education Agency](#)

[Dyslexia and Related Disorders - Texas Education Agency](#)

[Provision of Services for Students with Dyslexia and Related Disorders - Texas Education Agency](#)

[***Dear Colleague Letter: Guidance on Dyslexia \(October 23, 2015\) - U.S. Department of Education***](#)

[***To the Administrator Addressed: Updates to Dyslexia Handbook: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders \(Dyslexia Handbook\)***](#)

[***Dyslexia PEIMS Coding Overview***](#)

CITATIONS

Board Policy EHB; 34 CFR Part 104, Subpart D; Texas Education Code 26.0081(d), 38.003, 48.009(b)(1); 19 TAC 74.28; *The Dyslexia Handbook: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders*, Texas Education Agency (last updated Oct. 2021)