

Dyslexia Program Awareness



for Educators and Parents
Peaster Independent School District

Dyslexia Defined: Texas Education Code

Texas Education Code (TEC) §38.003 defines dyslexia and related disorders in the following way:

“Dyslexia” means 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.

TEC §38.003(d)(1)-(2) (1995)

<http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.38.htm#38.003>

Dyslexia Defined: International Dyslexia Association

The International Dyslexia Association defines “dyslexia” in the following way: Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

Adopted by the International Dyslexia Association Board of Directors, November 12, 2002

Reading/Spelling Characteristics of Dyslexia

Students with dyslexia have primary deficits in phonological processing. This includes phonological awareness, phonemic awareness and manipulation, single-word reading, reading fluency, and spelling.

These deficits are unexpected for the student's age and educational level, and are not primarily the result of language differences.

-The Dyslexia Handbook, 2021 Update, Texas Education Agency

Students with dyslexia often become frustrated when reading, impacting reading fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, spelling, and overall self confidence.

Dyslexia Screening

Texas Education Code (TEC) §38.003, Screening and Treatment for Dyslexia, requires that all kindergarten and first-grade public school students be screened for dyslexia and related disorders. Additionally, the law requires that all students beyond first grade be screened or tested as appropriate.

Skills addressed on the kindergarten screener: phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, sound-symbol recognition, letter knowledge, decoding skills, spelling, listening comprehension

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Why is screening important?

Early identification is essential. Screening for skill development in the early grades is important because early phonemic awareness is predictive of later reading success. Deficits in phonemic awareness and phonological processing have significant connections to struggling readers.

- As a student ages, duration of intervention increases for making progress and improving in reading skills and related skills. Reading problems identified in grade 3 and beyond require considerable intervention.
- For 90%-95% of poor readers, prevention and early intervention programs combining instruction in phoneme awareness, phonics, fluency development, and reading comprehension strategies-provided by well trained, linguistically informed teachers-can increase reading skills to average reading levels or above.
- Year by year widening gap between students with dyslexia and average readers can be short circuited when foundation reading accuracy and fluency develops.
- 70% of students who do not learn to read by age 9 will never catch up to typically developing peers.

-Multisensory Teaching of Basic Language Skills, Birsh and Carreker, 2018

When is screening done?

Kindergarten students are screened at the end of kindergarten.

Grade 1 screening must conclude no later than January 31 of each year. The timing of the first grade screening is designed to ensure that students are appropriately screened, and if necessary, evaluated further so that reading difficulties can be addressed in a timely manner.

What happens with the screening data?

If the screener shows the student MAY be at risk for reading difficulties, a qualified team will collect and review quantitative and qualitative data on the student. Parents/guardians must be notified if the student is at risk for dyslexia.

If the analysis of the data shows the student exhibits characteristics of dyslexia or other specific learning disabilities, the school would seek parental/guardian consent for a Full Individual Initial Evaluation (FIIE).

If parental/guardian consent is received, the school will conduct the FIIE within 45 school days, while continuing to provide grade level, evidence based core reading instruction and providing appropriate tiered interventions. Following the completion of the evaluation, the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee (including parent(s)/guardian(s)) will meet to review the results of the FIIE and determine if the student meets eligibility of a student with dyslexia or other specific learning disability.

Evaluations of students suspected of having a disability should not be delayed or denied because of implementation of the RTI process.

IDEA eligibility

If the ARD committee determines the student has an IDEA eligible condition, such as dyslexia, the ARD committee will then determine if the student requires special education because of the eligible condition. If the student requires special education, the ARD committee will develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for the student to receive specially designed instruction. If it is determined the student does not require special education, the student is eligible for Section 504. The Section 504 committee will develop a Section 504 plan for the student to provide services including standard protocol dyslexia instruction and accommodations.

Common Risk Factors Associated with Dyslexia: Preschool

- Delay in learning to talk
- Difficulty with rhyming
- Difficulty pronouncing words (e.g., “pusgetti” for “spaghetti,” “mawn lower” for “lawnmower”)
- Poor auditory memory for nursery rhymes and chants
- Difficulty adding new vocabulary words • Inability to recall the right word (word retrieval)
- Trouble learning and naming letters and numbers and remembering the letters in his/ her name
- Aversion to print (e.g., doesn’t enjoy following along if a book is read aloud)

-The Texas Dyslexia Handbook, 2021

Common Risk Factors Associated with Dyslexia: Kindergarten and First Grade

- Difficulty breaking words into smaller parts, or syllables (e.g., “baseball” can be pulled apart into “base” “ball” or “napkin” can be pulled apart into “nap” “kin”)
- Difficulty identifying and manipulating sounds in syllables (e.g., “man” sounded out as /m//ă//n/)
- Difficulty remembering the names of letters and recalling their corresponding sounds
- Difficulty decoding single words (reading single words in isolation)
- Difficulty spelling words the way they sound (phonetically) or remembering letter sequences in very common words seen often in print (e.g., “sed” for “said”)

-The Texas Dyslexia Handbook, 2021

Common Risk Factors Associated with Dyslexia: Second Grade and Third Grade

- Difficulty recognizing common sight words (e.g., “to,” “said,” “been”)
- Difficulty decoding single words
- Difficulty recalling the correct sounds for letters and letter patterns in reading
- Difficulty connecting speech sounds with appropriate letter or letter combinations and omitting letters in words for spelling (e.g., “after” spelled “eftr”)
- Difficulty reading fluently (e.g., reading is slow, inaccurate, and/or without expression)
- Difficulty decoding unfamiliar words in sentences using knowledge of phonics
- Reliance on picture clues, story theme, or guessing at words
- Difficulty with written expression

Common Risk Factors Associated with Dyslexia: Fourth Grade Through Sixth Grade

- Difficulty reading aloud (e.g., fear of reading aloud in front of classmates)
- Avoidance of reading (particularly for pleasure)
- Difficulty reading fluently (e.g., reading is slow, inaccurate, and/or without expression)
- Difficulty decoding unfamiliar words in sentences using knowledge of phonics
- Acquisition of less vocabulary due to reduced independent reading
- Use of less complicated words in writing that are easier to spell than more appropriate words (e.g., “big” instead of “enormous”)
- Reliance on listening rather than reading for comprehension

-The Texas Dyslexia Handbook, 2021

Common Risk Factors Associated with Dyslexia: Middle School and High School

- Difficulty with the volume of reading and written work
- Frustration with the amount of time required and energy expended for reading
- Difficulty reading fluently (e.g., reading is slow, inaccurate, and/or without expression)
- Difficulty decoding unfamiliar words in sentences using knowledge of phonics
- Difficulty with written assignments
- Tendency to avoid reading (particularly for pleasure)
- Difficulty learning a foreign language

When to assess for dyslexia?

A student may be assessed for dyslexia when data leads to suspicion of dyslexia or a related disorder. A referral for assessment can be initiated through Special Education. A full, individual evaluation (FIE) would be conducted, and then the ARD committee would meet to determine eligibility.

Dyslexia is a neurobiological, language based disability that persists over time and interferes with an individual's learning. It is critical that identification and intervention occur as early as possible.

Dyslexia Instruction

Dyslexia is a language based disability requiring specific instruction. Districts must provide an evidence-based reading program for students with dyslexia and related disorders that incorporates the following critical, evidence-based components:

- Phonological awareness: breaking words into sounds
- Sound-symbol association: sounds mapped to specific letters
- Syllabication: learning the 6 syllable types
- Orthography: spelling patterns and rules
- Morphology: studying morphemes and combining to form words
- Syntax: grammar, mechanics of language
- Reading comprehension: constructing meaning from reading based on ability to read accurately, fluently, using appropriate strategies, utilizing background knowledge, listening comprehension and vocabulary
- Reading fluency: reading with sufficient accuracy, speed, and prosody

Delivery of Dyslexia Instruction

Texas Dyslexia Handbook states:

It is critical that the way in which the content is delivered be consistent with research based practices. Effective intervention for students with dyslexia include all of the following:

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

Because effective intervention requires highly structured and systematic delivery, it is critical that those who provide intervention for students with dyslexia be trained in the program used and that the program is implemented with fidelity.

Accommodations

Accommodations are changes to materials, actions, or techniques, including the use of technology, that enable students with disabilities to participate meaningfully in grade-level or course instruction.

Decisions regarding accommodations are determined by the 504/ARD committee. Accommodations are based on the individual needs of the student, and when appropriate, student input is encouraged to determine what accommodations are beneficial and useful.

Resources

[International Dyslexia Association](#)

[The Academic Language Therapy Association](#)

[Bookshare](#)

[Learning Ally](#)

[Texas Dyslexia Handbook](#)