WEBB CISD

DYSLEXIA

HANDBOOK

DYSLEXIA PROTOCOLS

WEBB CISD ADMIMISTRATION

Students will be administered the CIRCLE, SIPPS, READING RENASSAINCE and the TPRI in order to diagnose early literacy deficiencies in the district's early childhood population. Once diagnosis has occurred and students are identified, administration will provide them with the proper educational services to meet the student's needs. Teachers will be required to administer the following protocols in order to ensure that proper services are provided to identified students.

Science has moved forward at a rapid pace so that we now possess the data to reliably define dyslexia, to know its prevalence, its cognitive basis, its symptoms and remarkably, where it lives in the brain and evidence-based interventions which can turn a sad, struggling child into not only a good reader, but one who sees herself as a student with self-esteem and a fulfilling future.

—Shaywitz, S.E. Testimony Before the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, U.S. House of Representatives, 2014

The identification and intervention process for dyslexia can be multifaceted. These processes involve both state and federal requirements that must be followed. The evaluation, identification, and provision of services for students with dyslexia are guided by both the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. **The law that applies to an individual student is determined by data and the student's individual needs.** Further information about these laws and how they apply are discussed throughout this handbook. Appendix D, IDEA/Section 504 Side-by-Side Comparison, provides a summary of these two federal laws.

In Texas and throughout the country, there is a focus on a Response to Intervention (RTI) or tiered intervention process as a vehicle for meeting the academic and behavioral needs of all students. The components of the Student Success Initiative (SSI) and other state-level programs offer additional support. Current federal legislation under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), calls for the use of benchmark assessments for early identification of struggling students before they fail. In fact, state law requires the use of early reading assessments that are built on substantial evidence of best practices. Carefully chosen, these assessments can give crucial information about a student's learning and can provide a basis for the tiered intervention model. Through the tiered intervention process, schools can document students' learning difficulties, provide

ongoing evaluation, and monitor reading achievement progress for students at risk for dyslexia or other reading difficulties.

Early intervention is further emphasized as the result of research using neuroimaging. Diehl, Frost, Mencl, and Pugh (2011) discuss the need to determine the role that deficits in phonological awareness and phonemic awareness play in reading acquisition, thus improving our methodology for early intervention. The authors note that future research will be enabled by longitudinal studies of phonology remediation using various treatments. "It will be especially important to take a multilevel analysis approach that incorporates genetics, neuroanatomy, neurochemistry, and neurocircuitry, and also to combine the strengths of the different neuroimaging techniques" (Diehl et al., 2011, p. 230). Evaluation followed by structured intervention that incorporate new scientific research must be embraced.

What is Dyslexia?

The formal definition of dyslexia is:

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurological 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 the growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

But what does that mean exactly?

Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability. Dyslexia refers to a cluster of symptoms, which result in people having difficulties with specific language skills, particularly reading. Students with dyslexia usually experience difficulties with other language skills, such as spelling, writing, and pronouncing words. Dyslexia affects individuals throughout their lives; however, its impact can change at different stages in a person's life. It is referred to as a learning disability because dyslexia can make it very difficult for a student to succeed academically in the typical instructional environment, and in its more severe forms, will qualify a student for special education, special accommodations, and/ or extra support services.

What causes dyslexia?

The exact causes of dyslexia are still not completely clear, but anatomical and brain imagery studies show differences in the way the brain of a person with dyslexia develops and functions. Moreover, most people with dyslexia have been found to have problems with identifying the separate speech sounds within a word and/or learning how letters represent those sounds, a key factor in their reading difficulties. Dyslexia is not due to either lack of intelligence or desire to learn; with appropriate teaching methods, students with dyslexia can learn successfully.

Dyslexia occurs in people of all backgrounds and intellectual levels. People with dyslexia can be very bright. They are often capable or even gifted in areas such as art, computer science, design, drama, electronics, math, mechanics, music, physics, sales, and sports. In addition, dyslexia runs in families; having a parent or sibling with dyslexia increases the probability that you will also have dyslexia. For some people, their dyslexia is identified early in their lives, but for others, their dyslexia goes unidentified until they get older.

What are the effects of dyslexia?

The impact that dyslexia has is different for each person and depends on the severity of the condition and the timeliness and effectiveness of instruction or remediation. The core difficulty involves word recognition and reading fluency, spelling, and writing. Some individuals with dyslexia manage to learn early reading and spelling tasks, especially with excellent instruction, but later experience their most debilitating problems when more complex language skills are required, such as grammar, understanding textbook material, and writing essays.

People with dyslexia can also have problems with spoken language, even after they have been exposed to excellent language models in their homes and high quality language instruction in school. They may find it difficult to express

themselves clearly, or to fully comprehend what others mean when they speak. Such language problems are often difficult to recognize, but they can lead to major problems in school, in the workplace, and in relating to other people. The effects of dyslexia reach well beyond the classroom.

What misconceptions exist regarding dyslexia?

It is equally important to understand what dyslexia isn't. There are great misconceptions and myths about dyslexia which make it that much more difficult for someone with dyslexia to receive help and generally be understood.

It is a myth that individuals with dyslexia "read backwards." Their spelling can look quite jumbled at times not because they read or see words backwards, but because students have trouble remembering letter symbols for sounds and letter patterns in words.

Dyslexia is not a disease and, therefore, there is no cure. With proper diagnosis, appropriate and timely instruction, hard work, and support from family, teachers, friends, and others, individuals who have dyslexia can succeed in school and later as adults.

Individuals with dyslexia do not have a lower level of intelligence. In fact, more often than not, the complete opposite is true.

Signs and Symptoms of Dyslexia?

It is crucial to be able to recognize the signs of symptoms of dyslexia. The earlier a child is evaluated, the sooner he or she can obtain the appropriate instruction and accommodations he or she needs to succeed in school.

General problems experienced by people with dyslexia include the following:

- o Learning to speak
- o Learning letters and their sounds
- o Organizing written and spoken language
- o Memorizing number facts
- o Reading quickly enough to comprehend
- o Keeping up with and comprehending longer reading assignments
- o Spelling
- o Learning a foreign language
- o Correctly doing math operations
- o Some specific signs for elementary aged children may include:
- o Difficulty with remembering simple sequences such as counting to 20, naming the days of the week, or reciting the alphabet
- o Difficulty understanding the rhyming of words, such as knowing that fat rhymes with cat
- o Trouble recognizing words that begin with the same sound (for example, that bird, baby", and big all start with b)
- o Pronunciation difficulties
- o Trouble easily clapping hands to the rhythm of a song
- o Difficulty with word retrieval (frequently uses words like "stuff" and "that thing" rather than specific words to name objects)
- o Trouble remembering names of places and people
- o Difficulty remembering spoken directions

It is important to note that not all students who have difficulties with these skills have dyslexia. Formal testing of reading, language, and writing skills is the only way to confirm a diagnosis of suspected dyslexia.

An individual can have more than one learning or behavioral disability. For example, in various studies as many as 30% of those diagnosed with a learning or reading difference have also been diagnosed with ADHD. Although disabilities may co-occur, one is not the cause of the other.

Social and Emotional Connection

Samuel T. Orton, M.D., was one of the first researchers to describe the emotional aspects of dyslexia. According to his research, the majority of preschoolers who were later diagnosed as having dyslexia are happy and well adjusted. Their emotional problems begin to develop when early reading instruction does not match their learning

needs. Over the years, the frustration mounts as classmates surpass the student with dyslexia in reading skills.

Stress and Anxiety by Jerome J. Schultz's informative IDA fact sheet "The Dyslexia-Stress-Anxiety Connection" is a must read for those wanting guidance on understanding the relationship between dyslexia and emotional and social difficulties, as well as the implications for academic performance and social interactions. Dr. Schultz explains his DE-STRESS model in a step-by-step guide for addressing stress, anxiety, and dyslexia.

Stress and anxiety increase when we're in situations over which we have little or no control (e.g., a car going off the road, tripping on the stairs, reading in public). All people, young and old, can experience overwhelming stress and exhibit signs of anxiety, but children, adolescents, and adults with dyslexia are particularly vulnerable. That's because many individuals do not fully understand the nature of their learning disability, and as a result, tend to blame themselves for their own difficulties. Years of self-doubt and self-recrimination may erode a person's self-esteem, making them less able to tolerate the challenges of school, work, or social interactions and more stressed and anxious.

Many individuals with dyslexia have experienced years of frustration and limited success, despite countless hours spent in special programs or working with specialists. Their progress may have been agonizingly slow and frustrating, rendering them emotionally fragile and vulnerable. Some have been subjected to excessive pressure to succeed (or excel) without the proper support or training. Others have been continuously compared to siblings, classmates, or co-workers, making them embarrassed, cautious, and defensive.

Individuals with dyslexia may have learned that being in the company of others places them at risk for making public mistakes and the inevitable negative reactions that may ensue. It makes sense, then, that many people with dyslexia have become withdrawn, sought the company of younger people, or become social isolates. (Schultz, 2013, p. 2)

This fact sheet can be found on the IDA website, www.DyslexiaIDA.org.

Self-Image

Dyslexia can also affect a person's self-image. Students with dyslexia often end up feeling "dumb" and less capable than they actually are. After experiencing a great deal of stress due to academic problems, a student may become discouraged about continuing in school.

If children succeed in school, they will develop positive feelings about themselves and believe that they can succeed in life. If children meet failure and frustration, they learn that they are inferior to others, and that their effort makes very little difference. Instead of feeling powerful and productive, they learn that their environment controls them. They feel powerless and incompetent.

Researchers have learned that when typical learners succeed, they credit their own efforts for their success. When they fail, they tell themselves to try harder. However, when learners with dyslexia succeed, they are likely to attribute their success to luck. When they fail, they simply see themselves as stupid.

Research also suggests that these feelings of inferiority develop by the age of 10. After this age, it becomes extremely difficult to help the child develop a positive self-image. This is a powerful argument for early intervention.

Depression

Depression is also a frequent complication in dyslexia. Depressed children and adolescents often have different symptoms than do depressed adults. The depressed child is unlikely to be lethargic or to talk about feeling sad. Instead he or she may become more active or misbehave to cover up the painful feelings. In the case of masked depression, the child may not seem obviously unhappy. However, both children and adults who are depressed tend to have three similar characteristics:

- They tend to have negative thoughts about themselves, that is, a negative self-image.
- They tend to view the world negatively. They are less likely to enjoy the positive experiences in life. This makes it difficult for them to have fun.

Most depressed youngsters have great trouble imagining anything positive about the future. The depressed child with dyslexia not only experiences great pain in his present experiences, but also foresees a life of continuing failure.

So how can you help?

Children are more successful when early in their lives someone has been extremely supportive and encouraging, and when they have found an area in which they can succeed. Teachers can create an incredible support system by:

- Listening to children's feelings. Anxiety, anger and depression can be daily companions for children with dyslexia. However, their language problems often make it difficult for them to express their feelings. Therefore, adults must help them learn to talk about their feelings.
- Rewarding effort, not just "the product." For students with dyslexia, grades should be less important than progress.
- When confronting unacceptable behavior, do not inadvertently discourage the child with dyslexia. Words such as "lazy" or "incorrigible" can seriously damage the child's self-image.

o Helping students set realistic goals for themselves. Many students with dyslexia set perfectionistic and unattainable goals. By helping the child set an attainable goal, teachers can change the cycle of failure.

Above all, it is critical that school personnel, parents, and outside professionals working with the child with dyslexia communicate on an on-going basis to provide the support needed, so he or she can become a happy and successful student, and eventually, a happy and successful adult.

Classroom strategies, tips and tools

Schools can implement academic accommodations and modifications to help students with dyslexia succeed. For example, a student with dyslexia can be given extra time to complete tasks, help with taking notes, and work assignments that are modified appropriately. Teachers can give taped tests or allow students with dyslexia to use alternative means of assessment. Students can benefit from listening to books on tape and using text reading and word processing computer programs.

Teaching students with dyslexia across settings is challenging. Both general education and special education teachers seek accommodations that foster the learning and management of a class of heterogeneous learners. It is important to identify accommodations that are reasonable to ask of teachers in all classroom settings. The following accommodations provide a framework for helping students with learning problems achieve in general education and special education classrooms. They are organized according to accommodations involving materials, interactive instruction, and student performance.

Accommodations Involving Materials

Students spend a large portion of the school day interacting with materials. Most instructional materials give teachers few activities or directions for teaching a large class of students who learn at different rates and in various ways. This section provides material accommodations that enhance the learning of diverse students. Frequently, paraprofessionals, volunteers, and students can help develop and implement various accommodations. Material accommodations include the following:

o Clarify or simplify written directions. Some directions are written in paragraph form and contain many units of information. These can be overwhelming to some students. The teacher can help by underlining or highlighting the significant parts of the directions. Rewriting the directions is often helpful.
o Present a small amount of work. The teacher can tear pages from workbooks and materials to present small assignments to students who are anxious about the amount of work to be done. This technique prevents students from examining an entire workbook, text, or material and becoming discouraged by the amount of work.

- Block out extraneous stimuli. If a student is easily distracted by visual stimuli on a full worksheet or page, a blank sheet of paper can be used to cover sections of the page not being worked on at the time. Also, line markers can be used to aid reading, and windows can be used to display individual math problems. Additionally, using larger font sizes and increasing spacing can help separate sections.
- Highlight essential information. If an adolescent can read a regular textbook but has difficulty finding the essential information, the teacher can mark this information with a highlight pen.
- Use a placeholder in consumable material. In consumable materials in which students progress sequentially (such as workbooks), the student can make a diagonal cut across the lower right-hand corner of the pages as they are completed. With all the completed pages cut, the student and teacher can readily locate the next page that needs to be corrected or completed.
- Provide additional practice activities. Some materials do not provide enough practice activities for students with learning problems to acquire mastery on selected skills. Teachers then must supplement the material with practice activities. Recommended practice exercises include instructional games, peer teaching activities, self-correcting materials, computer software programs, and additional worksheets.
- Provide a glossary in content areas. Students often benefit from a glossary of content-related terms.
- Develop reading guides. A reading guide helps the reader understand the main ideas and sort out the numerous details related to the main ideas. A reading guide can be developed paragraph-by-paragraph, page-by-page, or section-by-section.
- Use an audio recording device. Directions, stories, and specific lessons can be recorded. The student can replay the tape to clarify understanding of directions or concepts. Also, to improve reading skills, the student can read the printed words silently as they are presented on tape.
- Use of assistive technology. Assistive technology products such as tablets, electronic readers/dictionaries/ spellers, text to speech programs, audio books, and more can be very useful tools.

Accommodations Involving Interactive Instruction

The task of gaining students' attention and engaging them for a period of time requires many teaching and managing skills. Teaching and interactions should provide successful learning experiences for each student. Some accommodations to enhance successful interactive instructional activities are:

- Use explicit teaching procedures. Many commercial materials do not cue teachers to use explicit teaching procedures; thus, the teacher often must adapt a material to include these procedures. Teachers can include explicit teaching

steps within their lessons (i.e., present an advanced organizer, demonstrate the skill, provide guided practice, offer corrective feedback, set up independent practice, monitor practice, and review).

- o Repeat directions. Students who have difficulty following directions are often helped by asking them to repeat the directions in their own words. The student can repeat the directions to a peer when the teacher is unavailable. If directions contain several steps, break down the directions into subsets. Simplify directions by presenting only one portion at a time and by writing each portion on the chalkboard as well as stating it orally. When using written directions, be sure that students are able to read and understand the words as well as comprehend the meaning of sentences.

- o Maintain daily routines. Many students with learning problems need the structure of daily routines to know and do what is expected.

- o Provide a copy of lesson notes. The teacher can give a copy of lesson notes to students who have difficulty taking notes during presentations.

- o Provide students with a graphic organizer. An outline, chart, or blank web can be given to students to fill in during presentations. This helps students listen for key information and see the relationships among concepts and related information.

- o Use step-by-step instruction. New or difficult information can be presented in small sequential steps. This helps learners with limited prior knowledge who need explicit or part-to-whole instruction.

- o Simultaneously combine verbal and visual information. Verbal information can be provided with visual displays (e.g., on an overhead or handout).

- o Write key points or words on the chalkboard/whiteboard. Prior to a presentation, the teacher can write new vocabulary words and key points on the chalkboard/whiteboard.

- o Use balanced presentations and activities. An effort should be made to balance oral presentations with visual information and participatory activities. Also, there should be a balance between large group, small group, and individual activities.

- o Use mnemonic instruction. Mnemonic devices can be used to help students remember key information or steps in a learning strategy.

- o Emphasize daily review. Daily review of previous learning or lessons can help students connect new information with prior knowledge.

Accommodations Involving Student Performance

Students vary significantly in their ability to respond in different modes. For example, students vary in their ability to give oral presentations; participate in discussions; write letters and numbers; write paragraphs; draw objects; spell; work in noisy or cluttered settings; and read, write, or speak at a fast pace. Moreover, students vary in their ability to process information presented in visual or auditory formats. The following accommodation involving mode of reception and expression can be used to enhance students' performance:

- Change response mode. For students who have difficulty with fine motor responses (such as handwriting), the response mode can be changed to underlining, selecting from multiple choices, sorting, or marking. Students with fine motor problems can be given extra space for writing answers on worksheets or can be allowed to respond on individual chalkboards/whiteboards.
- Provide an outline of the lesson. An outline enables some students to follow the lesson successfully and make appropriate notes. Moreover, an outline helps students to see the organization of the material and ask timely questions.
- Encourage use of graphic organizers. A graphic organizer involves organizing material into a visual format. To develop a graphic organizer, the student can list the topic on the first line, collect and divide information into major headings, list all information relating to major headings on index cards, organize information into major areas, place information under appropriate subheadings, and place information into the organizer format.
- Place students close to the teacher. Students with attention problems can be seated close to the teacher, chalkboard/whiteboard, or work area and away from distracting sounds, materials, or objects.
- Encourage use of assignment books or calendars. Students can use calendars to record assignment due dates, list school related activities, record test dates, and schedule timelines for schoolwork. Students should set aside a special section in an assignment book or calendar for recording homework assignments.
- Have students turn lined paper vertically for math. Lined paper can be turned vertically to help students keep numbers in appropriate columns while computing math problems.
- Use cues to denote important items. Asterisks or bullets can denote questions or activities that count heavily in evaluation. This helps students spend time appropriately during tests or assignments.
- Design hierarchical worksheets. The teacher can design worksheets with problems arranged from easiest to hardest. Early success helps students begin to work.
- Allow use of instructional aids. Students can be provided with letter and number strips to help them write correctly. Number lines, counters, calculators, and other assistive technology can help students compute once they understand the mathematical operations.
- Display work samples. Samples of completed assignments can be displayed to help students realize expectations and plan accordingly.
- Use peer-mediated learning. The teacher can pair peers of different ability levels to review their notes, study for a test, read aloud to each other, write stories, or conduct laboratory experiments. Also, a partner can read math problems for students with reading problems to solve.
- Use flexible work times. Students who work slowly can be given additional time to complete written assignments.

- o Provide additional practice. Students require different amounts of practice to master skills or content. Many students with learning problems need additional practice to learn at a fluency level.
- o Use assignment substitutions or adjustments. Students can be allowed to complete projects instead of oral reports or vice versa. Also, tests can be given in oral or written format.

Effective reading instruction

Early identification and treatment is the key to helping individuals with dyslexia achieve in school and in life. Most people with dyslexia need help from a teacher, tutor, or therapist specially trained in a structured literacy approach. Many individuals with dyslexia need one-on-one help so that they can move forward at their own pace. In addition, students with dyslexia often need a great deal of structured practice and immediate, corrective feedback to develop automatic word recognition skills. For students with dyslexia, it is helpful if their outside academic therapists work closely with classroom teachers.

What is a Structured Literacy approach?

Structured Literacy instruction is marked by several elements:

Phonology. Phonology is the study of sound structure of spoken words and is a critical element of Structured Language instruction. Phonological awareness includes rhyming, counting words in spoken sentence, and clapping syllables in spoken words. An important aspect of phonological awareness is phonemic awareness or the ability to segment words into their component sounds, which are called phonemes. A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a given language that can be recognized as being distinct from other sounds in the language. For example, the
word cap has three phonemes (/k/, /ă/, /p/), and the word clasp has five phonemes (/k/, /l/, /ă/, /s/, /p/).

Sound-Symbol Association. Once students have developed the awareness of phonemes of spoken language, they must learn how to map the phonemes to symbols or printed letters. Sound-symbol association must be taught and mastered in two directions: visual to auditory (reading) and auditory to visual (spelling). Additionally, students must master the blending of sounds and letters into words as well as the segmenting of whole words into the individual sounds. The instruction of sound-symbol associations is often referred to as phonics. Although phonics is a component of Structured Literacy, it is embedded within a rich and deep language context.

Syllable Instruction. A syllable is a unit of oral or written language with one vowel sound. Instruction includes teaching of the six basic syllable types in the English language: closed, vowel-consonant-e, open, consonant-le, r-controlled, and vowel pair. Knowledge of syllable types is an important organizing idea. By knowing the syllable type, the reader can better

determine the sound of the vowel in the syllable. Syllable division rules heighten the reader's awareness of where a long, unfamiliar word may be divided for great accuracy in reading the word.

Morphology. A morpheme is the smallest unit of meaning in the language. The Structured Literacy curriculum includes the study of base words, roots, prefixes, and suffixes. The word instructor, for example, is contains the root struct, which means to build, the prefix in, which means in or into, and the suffix or, which means one who. An instructor is one who builds knowledge in his or her students.

Syntax. Syntax is the set of principles that dictate the sequence and function of words in a sentence in order to convey meaning. This includes grammar, sentence variation, and the mechanics of language.

Semantics. Semantics is that aspect of language concerned with meaning. The curriculum (from the beginning) must include instruction in the comprehension of written language.

Structured Literacy is distinctive in the principles that guide how critical elements are taught:

Systematic and Cumulative. Structured Literacy instruction is systematic and cumulative. Systematic means that the organization of material follows the logical order of the language. The sequence must begin with the easiest and most basic concepts and elements and progress methodically to more difficult concepts and elements. Cumulative means each step must be based on concepts previously learned.

Explicit Instruction. Structured Literacy instruction requires the deliberate teaching of all concepts with continuous student-teacher interaction. It is not assumed that students will naturally deduce these concepts on their own.

Diagnostic Teaching. The teacher must be adept at individualized instruction. That is instruction that meets a student's needs. The instruction is based on careful and continuous assessment, both informally (for example, observation) and formally (for example, with standardized measures. The content presented must be mastered to the degree of automaticity. Automaticity is critical to freeing all the student's attention and cognitive resources for comprehension and expression.

Screening, Evaluation and Diagnosis

Early identification and intervention with students who show the warning signs of dyslexia are critically important for better outcomes later on. Researchers have identified the specific skill weaknesses that predict later reading difficulties, making early testing, identification, and remediation possible. For most children, problems can be remediated with programs at the kindergarten and first-grade levels that take about 30-45 minutes per day.

Before second grade, it is more important to focus an evaluation on the precursors of reading development. Measures of language skills, phonological awareness, memory, and rapid naming are more suggestive of being at-risk for dyslexia among young children than are measures of word reading, decoding, and spelling. Therefore, measures of phonological awareness, memory, and rapid naming are typically included in Kindergarten and beginning first grade screening tests that can identify children who need targeted intervention to improve these critical skills so these children can meet grade- level benchmarks. Kindergarten students must be screened for dyslexia at the end of the school year, and first grade students must be screened no later than January 31st.

How is dyslexia diagnosed?

A comprehensive evaluation typically includes intellectual and academic achievement testing, as well as an assessment of the critical underlying language skills that are closely linked to dyslexia. These include receptive (listening) and expressive language skills, phonological skills including phonemic awareness, and also a student's ability to rapidly name letters and names. A student's ability to read lists of words in isolation, as well as words in context, should also be assessed. If a profile emerges that is characteristic of readers with dyslexia, an individualized intervention plan should be developed, which should include appropriate accommodations, such as extended time. The testing can be conducted by trained school or outside specialists.

Why is evaluation important?

An evaluation is the process of gathering information to identify the factors contributing to a student's difficulty with learning to read and spell. First, information is gathered from parents and teachers to understand development and the educational opportunities that have been provided. Then, tests are given to identify strengths and weaknesses that lead to a diagnosis and a tentative road map for intervention. Conclusions and recommendations are developed and reported.

When should a child be evaluated?

It is possible to identify potential reading problems in young children even before the problems turn into reading failure. Screenings should be used with all children in a school, beginning in kindergarten, to locate those students who are "at risk" for reading difficulty. Preventive intervention should begin immediately, even if dyslexia is suspected. How the child responds to supplementary instruction will help determine if special education services are justified and necessary. Anytime the school suspects a student has dyslexia or dysgraphia and needs services, they must ask for parent consent to conduct a Full Individual Initial Evaluation (FIIE) under IDEA.

There are numerous types of screeners; as stated above besides the teacher observation, we will be using CIRCLE from CLI, SIPPS, RENAISSANCE READER, and TPRI in order to screen and progress monitor our students.

The Referral Process for Dyslexia and Related Disorders

The determination to refer a student for an evaluation must always be made on a case-by-case basis and must be driven by data-based decisions. The referral process itself can be distilled into a basic framework as outlined below.

Data-Driven Meeting of Knowledgeable Persons

A team of persons with knowledge of the student, instructional practices, and possible service options meets to discuss data collected and the implications of that data. These individuals include, but are not limited to, the classroom teacher, administrator, dyslexia specialist, and/or interventionist. This team may also include the parents and/or a diagnostician familiar with testing and interpreting evaluation results. This team may have different names in different districts and/or campuses. For example, the team may be called a student success team, student support team, student intervention team, or even something else. This team of knowledgeable persons is not an Admission, Review, and Dismissal (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.

When the Data Does Not Lead to a Suspicion of Dyslexia or a Related Disorder

If the 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 team may decide to provide the student with additional support in the classroom or through the RTI process. However, the student is not referred for an evaluation at this time.

When the Data Lead to a Suspicion of Dyslexia or a Related Disorder

If the team suspects that the student has dyslexia or a related disorder, the team should consider the type of instruction that would best meet the student's needs.

Standard protocol dyslexia instruction includes the critical, evidence-based components of and delivery methods for dyslexia instruction addressed in detail in Chapter IV of this handbook. Components of this instruction include, among other things, phonological awareness, sound-symbol association, syllabication, orthography, morphology, syntax, reading comprehension, and reading fluency. Principles for effective delivery of content must be consistent with research-based practices, including a multisensory, systematic, cumulative, and explicit approach. Standard protocol dyslexia instruction is not specially designed instruction. Rather, it is programmatic instruction delivered to a group of students. Refer to Chapter IV for more information on standard protocol dyslexia instruction.

Specially designed instruction is defined under IDEA as "adapting . . . the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction" to a child eligible under IDEA. This instruction must address the unique needs of the child that result from the child's disability and must ensure access to the general curriculum so that the child can meet the state's educational standards (34 C.F.R §300.39(b)(3)). In some cases, the data may suggest that the unique needs of a student suspected of having dyslexia require a more individualized program than that offered through standard protocol dyslexia instruction. When this is the case, there is reason to suspect that special education services are necessary for the student.

When the Data Lead to a Suspicion of Dyslexia or a Related Disorder AND the Need for Special Education Services

If the team determines that the data lead to the suspicion of a disability and that special education services are necessary to provide specially designed instruction, the team must refer the student for an evaluation under IDEA. It is important to note that a student with dyslexia who is served through special education should also receive dyslexia instruction (as described in Chapter IV, Critical, Evidence-Based Components of Dyslexia Instruction) that is individualized to meet the student's unique needs.

When the Data Lead ONLY to Suspicion of Dyslexia or a Related Disorder

If—based on the data—the team suspects that a student has dyslexia or a related disorder but does not believe that special education is necessary to meet the student's needs, the team must refer the student for an evaluation under Section 504. If the student qualifies as a student with dyslexia, the student may receive standard protocol dyslexia instruction and accommodations under Section 504.

Dyslexia Referral Timelines

When a referral for a dyslexia evaluation is made under IDEA, Texas law establishes that a full individual and initial evaluation (FIE) must be completed within 45-school days from the time a district or charter school receives consent. Section 504, however, does not require specific timelines. Therefore, it is beneficial for districts to consider the timelines Texas has established for special education evaluations through

TEC §29.004(a). The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) looks to state timelines as a guideline when defining a "reasonable amount of time" should a complaint be filed regarding evaluation procedures.

As referenced in the 2011 letter from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to the State Directors of Special Education, states have an obligation to ensure that evaluations of children suspected of having a disability are not delayed or denied because of implementation of the RTI process (Musgrove, 2011). For more information, please visit www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdcltrs/osep11-07rtimemo.pdf.

It is important to note that **progression through RTI is not required in order to begin the identification of dyslexia.** The use of tiered intervention may be part of the identification and data collection process, but it is not required and must not delay or deny an evaluation for dyslexia, especially when parent or teacher observations reveal the common characteristics of dyslexia. A district or charter school must move straight to evaluation under either Section 504 if they suspect a student has a disability or under IDEA if they suspect a disability and a corresponding need for special education services. Tiered interventions and initiation or continuation of evaluation can occur simultaneously. The needs of the students must be the foremost priority. Frequently, a child with dyslexia may be making what appears to be progress in the general education classroom based on report card grades or minor gains on progress measures. While various interventions may prove to be helpful in understanding the curriculum, a child with dyslexia also requires intervention to address the child's specific reading disability. **If using a tiered intervention process, RTI should include dyslexia intervention once dyslexia is identified.**

Parents/guardians always have the right to request a referral for a dyslexia evaluation at any time. Once a parent request for dyslexia evaluation has been made, the school district is obligated to review the student's data history (both formal and informal data) to determine whether there is reason to suspect the student has a disability. If a disability is suspected, the student needs to be evaluated following the guidelines outlined in this chapter. IDEA and Section 504 have different requirements that must be followed if the school does not suspect a disability and determines that evaluation would *not* be warranted. Under IDEA, schools must give parents prior written notice of a refusal to evaluate, including an explanation of why the school refuses to conduct an initial evaluation, the information that was used as the basis for the decision, and a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*. Section 504 does not require prior written notice; however, best practice is to provide a parent with an explanation of the reasons an evaluation is denied. OCR recommends that districts be able to provide documentation that the denial was based on data to support there is no disability. For additional information regarding identification and procedural safeguards under IDEA and Section 504, refer to Appendix D, IDEA/Section 504 Side-by-Side Comparison.

Procedures for Evaluation

As discussed above, the identification of reading disabilities, including dyslexia, will follow one of two procedures. School districts and charter schools should make decisions based on data and the unique needs of each student. School districts and charter schools may evaluate for dyslexia through either IDEA or Section 504. If a student is suspected of having a disability and the determination is made to evaluate through IDEA, all special education procedures must be followed. Procedural processes require coordination among the teacher, campus administrators, diagnosticians, and other professionals as appropriate when factors such as a student's English language acquisition, previously identified disability, or other special needs are present. Under IDEA, the referral of a student for an evaluation should be made by a committee or team with knowledge of the child and may include other individuals as appropriate. When evaluation occurs under Section 504, it is best practice to include on the

committee or in the team making the determination the same members that IDEA requires, including the parent or guardian. The Pathways for the Identification and Provision of Instruction for Students with Dyslexia flowchart in Figure 3.8 (p. 35) illustrates the process for determining the appropriate supports needed by students with dyslexia.

As discussed in Chapter II, all public-school students are required to be screened for dyslexia while in kindergarten and grade 1. Additionally, students enrolling in public schools in Texas must be assessed for dyslexia and related disorders "at appropriate times" (TEC §38.003(a)). The appropriate time depends upon multiple factors including the student's reading performance; reading difficulties; poor response to supplemental, scientifically-based reading instruction; teachers' input; and input from parents/guardians. The appropriate time for assessing is early in a student's school career (19 TAC §74.28). Texas Education Code §28.006, Reading Diagnosis, requires assessment of reading development and comprehension for students in kindergarten, first grade, second grade, and as applicable, seventh grade. While earlier is better, students should be recommended for evaluation for dyslexia even if the reading difficulties appear later in a student's school career.

While schools must follow federal and state guidelines, they must also develop local procedures that address the needs of their student populations. Schools must recommend evaluation for dyslexia if the student demonstrates the following:

- Poor performance in one or more areas of reading and spelling that is unexpected for the student's age/grade
- Characteristics and risk factors of dyslexia indicated in Chapter I: Definitions & Characteristics of Dyslexia

Districts and charter schools must establish written procedures for assessing students for dyslexia. The first step in the evaluation process, data gathering, should be an integral part of the district's or charter school's process for any student exhibiting learning difficulties.

1. Data Gathering

Schools collect data on all students to ensure that instruction is appropriate and scientifically based. Essential components of comprehensive literacy instruction are defined in Section 2221(b) of ESSA as explicit, systematic, and intentional instruction in the following:

- Phonological awareness
- Phonic coding
- Vocabulary
- Language structure
- Reading fluency
- Reading comprehension

Any time from kindergarten through grade 12 a student continues to struggle with one or more components of reading, schools must collect additional information about the student. Schools should use previously collected as well as current information to evaluate the student's academic progress and determine what actions are needed to ensure the student's improved academic performance. The collection of various data, as indicated in Figure 3.2 below, will provide information regarding factors that may be contributing to or primary to the student's struggles with reading and spelling.

Cumulative Data

The academic history of each student will provide the school with the cumulative data needed to ensure that underachievement in a student suspected of having dyslexia is not due to lack of appropriate instruction in reading. This information should include data that demonstrate that the student was provided appropriate instruction and include data-based documentation of repeated evaluations of achievement at reasonable intervals (progress monitoring), reflecting formal evaluation of student progress during instruction. These cumulative data also include information from parents/guardians. Sources and examples of cumulative data are provided in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2. Sources and Examples of Cumulative Data
- Vision screening   - Hearing screening   - Teacher reports of classroom concerns   - Classroom reading assessments   - Accommodations or interventions provided   - Academic progress reports (report cards)   - Gifted/talented assessments   - Samples of schoolwork   - Parent conference notes   - Results of kindergarten-grade 1 universal screening as required in TEC §38.003   - K–2 reading instrument results as required in TEC §28.006 (English and native language, if possible)   • 7th-grade reading instrument results as required in TEC §28.006 • State student assessment program results as described in TEC §39.022 • Observations of instruction provided to the student • Full Individual and Initial Evaluation • Outside evaluations • Speech and language assessment • School attendance

> • Curriculum-based assessment measures • Instructional strategies provided and student's response to the instruction • Screening
>
> • Parent survey

Environmental and Socioeconomic Factors

Information regarding a child's early literacy experiences, environmental factors, and socioeconomic status must be part of the data collected throughout the data gathering process. These data supports the determination that difficulties in learning are not due to cultural factors or environmental or economic disadvantage. Studies that have examined language development and the effects of home experiences on young children indicate that home experiences and socioeconomic status have dramatic effects on cumulative vocabulary development (Hart & Risley, 1995). Having data related to these factors may help in determining whether the student's struggles with reading are due to a lack of opportunity or a reading disability, including dyslexia.

Language Proficiency

Much diversity exists among ELs. A student's language proficiency may be impacted by any of the following: native language, English exposure, parent education, socioeconomic status of the family, amount of time in the United States, experience with formal schooling, immigration status, community demographics, and ethnic heritage (Bailey, Heritage, Butler, & Walqui, 2000). ELs may be students served in bilingual and English as a second language (ESL) programs as well as students designated Limited English Proficient (LEP) whose parents have denied services. In addition to the information discussed in the previous section of this chapter, the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) maintains documentation (TAC §89.1220(g)-(i)) that is necessary to consider when identifying ELs with dyslexia. The LPAC is required to meet annually to review student placement and progress and consider instructional accommodations and interventions to address the student's linguistic needs. Since the identification and service delivery process for dyslexia must be aligned to the student's linguistic environment and educational background, involvement of the LPAC is required. Additional data sources for ELs are provided below in Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3. Additional Data Sources for English Learners
• Home Language Survey   • Assessment related to identification for limited English proficiency (oral language proficiency test and norm-referenced tests—all years available)   • Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) information for four language domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing)   • Instructional interventions provided to address language needs   • Information regarding previous schooling inside and/or outside the United States   • Type of language program model provided and language of instruction

2. Initial Evaluation Pathways

A district or charter school must make data-informed decisions that reflect the input of staff and parents for every student on an individual basis, every time. They must consider all resources and services based on student need. The district or charter school should carefully consider all the relevant student data to gauge the level of impact that a student's specific presentation of dyslexia or related disorder will have on the student's ability to access and make progress in the general curriculum. If it is suspected or known that the student may need special education because of suspected dyslexia or related disorder, the parent/guardian must be given a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards* and sign consent before the student is evaluated under IDEA. If the district or school suspects that the student may need interventions and accommodations specific to their suspected dyslexia or related disorder rather than special education services, then the student can be evaluated under Section 504.

A student's reading difficulties alone may warrant evaluation under IDEA. At times, students may display additional, potential learning challenges, such as oral language deficits, written expression difficulties (dysgraphia), or math difficulties (dyscalculia), which may further impact student learning. These challenges may also warrant an evaluation under IDEA.

Students who are currently eligible under IDEA and have an individualized education program (IEP) and who are now suspected of having dyslexia or a related disorder must undergo reevaluation under IDEA.

3. Formal Evaluation

After data gathering, the next step in the process is formal evaluation. This is not a screening; rather, it is an individualized evaluation used to gather specific data about the student. Formal evaluation includes both formal and informal data. All data will be used to determine whether the student demonstrates a pattern of evidence that indicates dyslexia. Information collected from the parents/guardians also provides valuable insight into the student's early years of language development. This history may help explain why students come to the evaluation with many different strengths and weaknesses; therefore, findings from the formal evaluation will be different for each child. Professionals conducting evaluations for the identification of dyslexia will need to look beyond scores on standardized assessments alone and examine the student's classroom reading performance, educational history, early language experiences, and, when warranted, academic potential to assist with determining reading, spelling, and writing abilities and difficulties.

Notification and Permission

When formal evaluation is recommended, the school must complete the evaluation process as outlined in IDEA or Section 504. Procedural safeguards under IDEA and Section 504 must be followed. For more information on procedural safeguards, see Appendix D, IDEA/Section 504 Side-by-Side Comparison, and TEA's Parent Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal

or .

The individual needs of the student will determine the appropriate evaluation/identification process to use. The notices and requests for consent must be provided in the native language of parents/guardians or other mode of communication used by parents/guardians unless it is clearly not feasible to do so.

Tests and Other Evaluation Materials

In compliance with IDEA and Section 504, test instruments and other evaluation materials must meet the following criteria:

- Used for the purpose for which the evaluation or measures are valid or reliable
- Include material(s) tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely material(s) that are designed to provide a single, general intelligence quotient
- Selected and administered to ensure that when a test is given to a student with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the student's aptitude, achievement level, or whatever other factor the test purports to measure rather than reflecting the student's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills
- Selected and administered in a manner that is not racially or culturally discriminatory
- Include multiple measures of a student's reading abilities such as informal assessment information (e.g., anecdotal records, district universal screenings, progress monitoring data, criterion-referenced evaluations, results of informal reading inventories, classroom observations)
- Administered by trained personnel and in conformance with the instructions provided by the producer of the evaluation materials
- Provided and administered in the student's native language or other mode of communication and in the form most likely to yield accurate information regarding what the child can do academically, developmentally, and functionally unless it is clearly not feasible to provide or administer

Additional Considerations for English Learners

A professional involved in the evaluation, interpretation of evaluation results, and identification of ELs with dyslexia must have the following training/knowledge:

- Knowledge of first and second language acquisition theory
- Knowledge of the written system of the first language: transparent (e.g., Spanish, Italian, German), syllabic (e.g., Japanese-kana), Semitic (e.g., Arabic, Hebrew), and morpho-syllabic (e.g., Chinese-Kanji)
- Knowledge of the student's literacy skills in native and second languages
- Knowledge of how to interpret results from a cross-linguistic perspective

- Knowledge of how to interpret TELPAS (Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System) results
- Knowledge of how to interpret the results of the student's oral language proficiency in two or more languages in relation to the results of the tests measuring academic achievement and cognitive processes as well as academic data gathered and economic and socioeconomic factors

Although data from previous formal testing of the student's oral language proficiency may be available, as required by TEC §29.056, additional assessment of oral language proficiency should be completed for a dyslexia evaluation due to the importance of the information for—

- consideration in relation to academic challenges,
- planning the evaluation, and
- interpreting evaluation results.

If there is not a test in the native language of the student, informal measures of evaluation such as reading a list of words and listening comprehension in the native language may be used.

Domains to Assess

Academic Skills

The school administers measures that are related to the student's educational needs. Difficulties in the areas of letter knowledge, word decoding, and fluency (rate, accuracy, and prosody) may be evident depending upon the student's age and stage of reading development. In addition, many students with dyslexia may have difficulty with reading comprehension and written composition.

Cognitive Processes

Difficulties in phonological and phonemic awareness are typically seen in students with dyslexia and impact a student's ability to learn letters and the sounds associated with letters, learn the alphabetic principle, decode words, and spell accurately. Rapid naming skills may or may not be weak, but if deficient, they are often associated with difficulties in automatically naming letters, reading words fluently, and reading connected text at an appropriate rate. Memory for letter patterns, letter sequences, and the letters in whole words (orthographic processing) may be selectively impaired or may coexist with phonological processing weaknesses. Finally, various language processes, such as morpheme and syntax awareness, memory and retrieval of verbal labels, and the ability to formulate ideas into grammatical sentences, may also be factors affecting reading (Berninger & Wolf, 2009, pp. 134–135).

Possible Additional Areas

Based on the student's academic difficulties, characteristics, and/or language acquisition, additional areas related to vocabulary, listening comprehension, oral language proficiency, written expression, and other cognitive abilities may need to be assessed. Areas for evaluation are provided below in Figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4. Areas for Evaluation

Academic Skills

- Letter knowledge (name and associated sound)
- Reading words in isolation
- Decoding unfamiliar words accurately
- Reading fluency (rate, accuracy, and prosody are assessed)
- Reading comprehension
- Spelling

Cognitive Processes

• Phonological/phonemic awareness

• Rapid naming of symbols or objects

Possible Additional Areas

• Vocabulary

- Listening comprehension
- Verbal expression
- Written expression
- Handwriting
- Memory for letter or symbol sequences (orthographic processing)
- Mathematical calculation/reasoning
- Phonological memory
- Verbal working memory
- Processing speed

Procedures for Identification

While each law has specific requirements regarding the identification of dyslexia, decisions must be made by either a Section 504 committee under Section 504 or an ARD committee under IDEA. In order to make an informed determination, each committee must include certain required members. These required members must include, but are not limited to, individuals who are knowledgeable about the following:

- Student being evaluated
- Evaluation instruments being used
- Meaning of the data being collected

For ELs, a member of the LPAC must be part of either the Section 504 or ARD committee. Additionally, committee members should have knowledge regarding—

- the reading process,
- dyslexia and related disorders,
- dyslexia instruction, and
- district or charter school, state, and federal guidelines for evaluation.

Review and Interpretation of Data and Evaluations

To appropriately **understand** evaluation data, the committee of knowledgeable persons (Section 504 or ARD committee) must **interpret** test results in light of the student's educational history, linguistic background, environmental or socioeconomic factors, and any other pertinent factors that affect learning.

The Section 504 or ARD committee must first determine if 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)

  The evaluation data collected may also include information on reading comprehension, mathematics, and written expression. Dyslexia often coexists with learning difficulties in these related areas.

Another factor to consider when interpreting test results is the student's linguistic background. The nature of the writing system of a language impacts the reading process. Thus, the identification guideposts of dyslexia in languages other than English may differ. For example, decoding in a language with a transparent written language (e.g., Spanish, German) may not be as decisive an indicator of dyslexia as reading rate. A transparent written language has a close

letter/sound correspondence (Joshi & Aaron, 2006). Students with dyslexia who have or who are being taught to read and write a transparent language may be able to decode real and nonwords adequately but demonstrate serious difficulties in reading rate with concurrent deficiencies in phonological awareness and rapid automatized naming (RAN).

Figure 3.6. Characteristics of Dyslexia in English and Spanish

English	Spanish
Early and marked difficulty with word-level reading	Phonological awareness—may be less pronounced Rapid naming
Fluency and comprehension often improve once decoding is mastered	Decoding—fewer "irregular words" in Spanish Fluency—often a key indicator
Phonological awareness Rapid naming Regular/irregular decoding	Spelling—may show fewer errors than in English, but still more than students that do not have dyslexia
Spelling	Less difficulty with word-level reading
	More difficulty with fluency and comprehension

Reading comprehension may be a weakness in both English and Spanish.

Findings support guidance in the interpretation of phonological awareness test scores.

> *There is evidence that blending skills develop sooner than analysis skills, and that students can have good blending skills and inadequate reading development. Only when both blending and analysis skills are mastered do we see benefits for reading development.*
>
> —Kilpatrick, D.A. *Essentials of Assessing, Preventing, and Overcoming Reading Difficulties*, 2015

With this in mind, when determining phonological awareness deficits, evaluation personnel should examine subtest scores, including discreet phonological awareness skills, instead of limiting interpretation to composite scores since a deficit in even one skill will limit reading progress.

Based on the above information and guidelines, should the Section 504 or ARD committee determine that the student exhibits weaknesses in reading and spelling, the committee will then examine the student's data to determine whether these difficulties are **unexpected** in relation to the student's other abilities, sociocultural factors, language difference, irregular attendance, or lack of appropriate and effective instruction. For example, the student may exhibit strengths in areas such as reading comprehension, listening comprehension, math reasoning, or verbal ability yet still have difficulty with reading and spelling. **Therefore, it is not one single indicator but a preponderance of data (both informal and formal) that provide the committee with evidence for whether these difficulties are unexpected.**

Dyslexia Identification

If the student's difficulties are unexpected in relation to other abilities, the Section 504 or ARD committee must then determine if the student has dyslexia. For ELs, an LPAC representative should be included in the Section 504 or ARD committee. The list of questions in Figure 3.7 below must be considered when making a determination regarding dyslexia.

Figure 3.7. Questions to Determine the Identification of Dyslexia
• Do the data show the following characteristics of dyslexia? o Difficulty with accurate and/or fluent word reading or Poor spelling skills or Poor decoding ability ?   • Do these difficulties (typically) result from a deficit in the phonological component of language?   (Please be mindful that average phonological scores alone do not rule out dyslexia.)   • Are these difficulties **unexpected** for the student's age in relation to the student's other cognitive abilities and provision of effective classroom instruction?

Once dyslexia has been identified, there are further eligibility questions the Section 504 or ARD committee must still consider. These considerations are discussed in greater detail below.

Review of Evaluation by Section 504 Committee

If the student has dyslexia, the Section 504 committee also determines whether the student is eligible under Section 504. A student has a disability under Section 504 if the physical or mental impairment (dyslexia) substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as the specific activity of reading (34 C.F.R.

§104.3(j)(1)). Additionally, the Section 504 committee, in determining whether a student has a disability that substantially limits the student in a major life activity (reading), must not consider

the ameliorating effects of any mitigating measures that student is using. If the Section 504 committee does not identify dyslexia, but the student has another condition or disability that substantially limits the student, eligibility for Section 504 services related to the student's other condition or disability should be considered.

Based on the student's pattern of performance over time, test evaluation results, and other relevant data (e.g., RTI and classroom data, observations, etc.) the committee will determine whether the student meets Section 504 eligibility criteria. For eligible students, the Section 504 committee will develop the student's Section 504 Plan, which must include appropriate reading instruction as appropriate to meet the individual needs of the student. Appropriate reading instruction includes the components and delivery of standard protocol dyslexia instruction identified in Chapter IV: Critical, Evidence-Based Components of Dyslexia Instruction. The Section 504 committee will also consider whether the student requires additional accommodations and/or related services for the provision of FAPE. Revision of the Section 504 Plan will occur as the student's response to instruction and use of accommodations, if any, is observed. Changes in instruction and/or accommodations must be supported by current data (e.g., classroom performance and dyslexia program monitoring).

Review of Evaluation by the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee

Within 30 calendar days of completion of the written evaluation report, the ARD committee will determine whether a student who has dyslexia is eligible under IDEA as a student with a specific learning disability
(19 TAC §89.1011(d)). A student with dyslexia has a disability under IDEA if the student meets the criteria for a specific learning disability (discussed in greater detail below) and, because of dyslexia or a related disorder, needs special education. The October 23, 2015 letter from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) (Dear Colleague: Dyslexia Guidance) states that dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia are conditions that could qualify a child as a child with a specific learning disability under IDEA. The letter further states that there is nothing in IDEA that would prohibit the use of the terms *dyslexia*, *dyscalculia*, and *dysgraphia* in IDEA evaluation, eligibility determinations, or IEP documents. For more information, please visit https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdcltrs/guidance-on-dyslexia-10-2015.pdf.

A 2018 Letter to the Administrator Addressed from the Texas Education Agency regarding the provision of services for students with dyslexia and related disorders states that anytime it is suspected that a student requires special education or related services to provide appropriate reading supports and interventions, a referral for an FIE should be initiated. The letter further states that all students who are identified with dyslexia or a related disorder *and* who require special education services because of dyslexia or a related disorder should be served under the IDEA as students with a specific learning disability. For more information, please visit https://tea.texas.gov/About_TEA/News_and_Multimedia/Correspondence/TAA_Letters/Provision_of_Servic es_for_Students_with_Dyslexia_and_Related_Disorders_-_Revised_June_6,_2018/

In IDEA, dyslexia is considered one of a variety of etiological foundations for specific learning disability (SLD). Section 34 C.F.R. §300.8(c)(10) states the following:

Specific learning disability means 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 to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.

The term *SLD* does not apply to children who have learning difficulties that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities; of intellectual disability; of emotional disturbance; or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

The IDEA evaluation requirements for eligibility in 34 C.F.R. §300.309(a)(1) specifically designate the following areas for a learning disability in reading: basic reading skills (dyslexia), reading fluency skills, and/or reading comprehension.

If a student with dyslexia is found eligible for special education, the student's IEP must include appropriate reading instruction. Appropriate reading instruction includes the components and delivery of dyslexia instruction discussed in Chapter IV: Critical, Evidence-Based Components of Dyslexia Instruction. If a student has previously met special education eligibility and is later identified with dyslexia, the ARD committee should include in the IEP goals that reflect the need for dyslexia instruction and determine the least restrictive environment for delivering the student's dyslexia intervention.

Pathways for the Identification and Provision of Instruction for Students with Dyslexia

The following flowchart illustrates a process for determining the instructional support needed by students with dyslexia. While the process may begin with an initial screening, screening is NOT required to proceed through the evaluation and identification process. **A special education evaluation should be conducted whenever it appears to be appropriate, including upon request from the parent/guardian**. Some students will not proceed through all the steps before being referred for an FIE or Section 504 evaluation. A dyslexia evaluation may be incorporated into the FIE through special education.

At any time, regardless of the process in place, a student may be recommended for dyslexia evaluation as accumulated data support a student's continued struggles with one or more of the components of reading. **Parents/guardians have the right to request a referral for a dyslexia evaluation at any time.** Districts **must** ensure that evaluations of children suspected of having a disability are not delayed or denied because of implementation of the screening or RTI processes.

Figure 3.8

Pathways for the Identification and Provision of Instruction for Students with Dyslexia

A team of knowledgeable persons reviews data and existing information and determines an initial evaluation for dyslexia or related disorder should be conducted. The team determines the appropriate pathway for evaluation.
Parent can request evaluation at any time.
(See Fig. 3.2 and Fig. 3.3, Data Gathering)

Based on data, the team suspects the student has a disability.

Based on data, the team suspects the student has a disability and a need for special education services as a result of the disability.

Obtain parental consent

Obtain parental consent

Evaluate under Section 504
(following procedural safeguards)

Evaluate under IDEA
(following procedural safeguards)

May need to assess under §504

1. Do the results of the evaluation show that the student has dyslexia or a related disorder? (Refer to Figure 3.7)

2. Does the dyslexia or related disorder substantially limit one or more of life's major activities such as learning, reading, writing, or spelling?

NO

1. Do the results of the evaluation show that the student has dyslexia or a related disorder that meets the IDEA eligibility criteria for a specific learning disability?

2. Do the results show that the student needs special education because of dyslexia or a related disorder?

NO

Refer to or continue RTI

YES

Additional data needed/data indicates referral for IDEA evaluation necessary

YES

Section 504 Eligible

IDEA Eligible

Student needs services, standard protocol dyslexia instruction, accommodations, and/or related aids specific to his/her disability.

Student receives specially designed instruction, related services, supplementary aids and services, accommodations, or program modifications.

- Section 504 Plan developed by Section 504 committee with parent participation (and student when appropriate).
- Must include staff with expertise in dyslexia.
- Refer to Ch. IV, Critical, Evidence-based Components of Dyslexia Instruction.
- Parent can revoke consent for process or placement at any time.

- IEP developed by ARD committee including parent.
- Must include staff with expertise in dyslexia.
- Refer to Ch. IV, Instruction for Critical, Evidence-based Components of Dyslexia Instruction.
- Parent can revoke consent for process or placement at any time.

FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION
meaningful access – equal opportunity when compared to their non-disabled peers

FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION
meaningful benefit – IEP must be reasonably calculated to provide educational benefit

If student continues to struggle, referral for IDEA evaluation (FIE) should be initiated.

For more information on IDEA and Section 504 identification, please refer to Appendix D, IDEA/Section 504 Side by Side.

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