IF the school district is telling parents that Dyslexia cannot be placed on the student's IEP even with a formal diagnosis…here’s what you need to know!

That’s incorrect. According to the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**, dyslexia is specifically listed as an example of a **Specific Learning Disability (SLD)** that qualifies a student for an **Individualized Education Program (IEP)** if it significantly affects their ability to learn. A formal diagnosis of dyslexia should not prevent it from being included in an IEP.

**Key Points to Know:**

1. **Dyslexia Is Recognized Under IDEA** – The law explicitly states that schools **must not refuse to use the term "dyslexia"** in evaluations, eligibility determinations, or IEPs.
2. **IEP Goals Should Address Dyslexia** – If a child has dyslexia and needs special education services, the IEP should include interventions tailored to their needs, such as structured literacy programs (e.g., Orton-Gillingham or Wilson Reading).
3. **Districts Cannot Use Blanket Policies** – The U.S. Department of Education has clarified that school districts **cannot have policies prohibiting dyslexia from being included in an IEP**.
4. **Parent Advocacy Is Key** – Parents have the right to request that the IEP team explicitly acknowledge dyslexia and provide appropriate accommodations and interventions.

**What You Can Do:**

* **Request a Written Explanation** – Ask the school to provide the specific policy or legal basis for their claim in writing.
* **Refer to IDEA and State Laws** – Mention that dyslexia is included under "Specific Learning Disability" and cannot be ignored.
* **Request an IEP Meeting** – Advocate for specific, evidence-based reading interventions.
* **File a Complaint if Necessary** – If the school refuses to comply, you can file a complaint with the state Department of Education or request mediation.

Here's a formal letter you can send to the school district to challenge their stance on excluding dyslexia from your child's IEP. You can personalize it based on your situation.

**[Your Name]**
[Your Address]
[City, State, ZIP Code]
[Your Email]
[Your Phone Number]
[Date]

**[School Principal or Special Education Director's Name]**
[School Name]
[School Address]
[City, State, ZIP Code]

**Subject: Request for Clarification and Inclusion of Dyslexia in IEP**

Dear [School Principal/Special Education Director's Name],

I am writing to formally express my concerns regarding the district’s position that dyslexia cannot be included in my child’s [IEP/Individualized Education Program], despite a formal diagnosis. My child, [Child’s Name], is a student in [Grade] at [School Name] and has been formally diagnosed with dyslexia.

Under the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**, dyslexia is explicitly recognized as a **Specific Learning Disability (SLD)** and qualifies as a condition that may require special education services. The U.S. Department of Education has also issued guidance stating that schools **must not refuse to use the term "dyslexia"** when evaluating, determining eligibility, or developing an IEP.

Given my child’s diagnosis, I request that dyslexia be explicitly acknowledged in [his/her/their] IEP and that appropriate, research-based interventions—such as structured literacy instruction—be provided. Blanket district policies that prohibit the use of the term “dyslexia” in an IEP do not align with federal law or best educational practices.

I kindly request a written response outlining the legal basis for the district’s claim that dyslexia cannot be included in an IEP. Additionally, I am requesting an **IEP meeting** to discuss appropriate services and interventions for my child. Please let me know your earliest availability for this meeting.

I appreciate your time and cooperation in ensuring that my child receives the support necessary for [his/her/their] educational success. I look forward to your response by [reasonable deadline, e.g., 10 business days].

Sincerely,
**[Your Name]**
[Your Contact Information]