

# West Rusk CCISD

## District Dyslexia Plan



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## **I. Definition of Dyslexia**

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>

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 Students identified as having dyslexia typically experience primary difficulties in phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness and manipulation, single-word reading, reading fluency, and spelling. Consequences may include difficulties in reading comprehension and/or written expression. These difficulties in phonological awareness are unexpected for the student’s age and educational level and are not primarily the result of language difference factors. Additionally, there is often a family history of similar difficulties.

## **II. Evaluation Updates / Screening Updates**

The sections on evaluation for dyslexia and dysgraphia have moved to a single pathway for identification under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This change means that anytime the LEA suspects that the student has dyslexia or a related disorder and may need dyslexia intervention services, the LEA must seek parental consent for a Full Individual Initial Evaluation (FIIE) under the IDEA. LEAs are reminded that the process of seeking informed parental consent under the IDEA must include proper prior written notice and be accompanied by the notice of procedural safeguards. It is critical that parents and guardians are informed of the procedural protections and rights afforded to them and their child under the IDEA. Using a single pathway for identification of dyslexia and related disorders ensures that LEAs fulfill their child find obligations under the IDEA. LEAs who are not already conducting an FIIE under the IDEA when dyslexia or dysgraphia is suspected, need to prepare their local system for this change. Evaluation staff members may need support such as a plan for absorbing additional evaluations, training (as needed) on identification of dyslexia and dysgraphia within an FIIE, and communication systems to ensure strong collaboration with individuals with expertise in dyslexia and related disorders.

LEAs are required, per Texas Education Code (TEC), §38.003, to conduct universal dyslexia screening of students in kindergarten and first grade.

- ★ 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. The Dyslexia Handbook describes the screening criteria for this requirement. The updates to the Dyslexia Handbook include a reduction in the number of skills that must be included on the instrument used by LEAs to screen for dyslexia.
- ★ The updated criteria for English and Spanish screening instruments are as follows: Kindergarten First Grade Letter Sound Knowledge or Letter Naming Fluency Word Reading Accuracy or Fluency Phonological Awareness Phonological Awareness The current list of approved reading instruments

that meet the requirements of TEC, §28.006, (Early Reading Diagnosis) include elements that meet the requirements for the dyslexia screening under TEC, §38.003. These tools are available at no cost to LEAs. LEAs may wish to begin planning now to ensure that the dyslexia screening instruments they plan to administer will meet the above criteria. Again, choosing one of the free tools available to all LEAs will meet the requirements.

### **Procedures Required by State and Federal Law Prior to Formal Assessment:**

In accordance with TEC §28.006, West Rusk CCISD administers early reading instruments in kindergarten, first, and second grades to determine students' reading development and comprehension. If, on the basis of the reading instrument results, students are determined to be at risk for dyslexia and other reading difficulties, the students' parents/guardians are notified. In addition, an accelerated (intensive) reading program (as per NCLB legislation) that appropriately addresses students' reading difficulties and enables them to "catch up" with their typically performing peers is implemented. Should students continue to struggle with reading, writing, and spelling during the intensive reading instruction, then West Rusk CCISD will initiate procedures to recommend these students for assessment for dyslexia. The information from the early reading instruments will be one source of information in deciding whether or not to recommend a student for assessment for dyslexia. Other sources may include, but are not limited to: performance on state mandated test(s), a student's grades/performance in reading and written spelling, and teachers' observations of the characteristics of dyslexia.

### **III. Referral Process**

At any time that a student continues to struggle with one or more components of reading, West Rusk CCISD will collect additional information about the student.

### **Data Gathering:**

Information will be used to evaluate the student's academic progress and determine what actions are needed to ensure the student's

improved academic performance. This information **should** include data that demonstrates the student was provided appropriate instruction and data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals (progress monitoring), reflecting formal assessment of student progress during instruction. Additional information to be considered includes the results from some or all of the following:

- Vision screening
- Hearing screening
- Teacher reports of classroom concerns
- Basal reading series assessment
- Accommodations provided by classroom teachers
- Academic progress reports (report cards)
- Gifted/Talented assessments
- Samples of school work
- Parent conferences
- Testing for limited English proficiency (all years available)
- Speech and language screening through a referral process (English and native language, if possible)
- The K-2 reading instrument as required in TEC §28.006 (English and native language, if possible)
- Universal screening for all grade levels available (English and native language, if possible)
- State student assessment program as described in TEC §39.002

Data that support the student received conventional (appropriate) instruction and that the difficulties are not primarily the result of sociocultural factors which include language differences, irregular attendance, or lack of experiential background.

Among the actions that West Rusk CCISD has available for the student is a recommendation that the student be assessed for dyslexia. West Rusk CCISD recommends assessment for dyslexia if the student demonstrates the following:

- Poor performance in one or more areas of reading and/or the related area of spelling that is unexpected for the student's age/grade, and
- Characteristics of dyslexia

### **Primary Reading/Spelling Characteristics of Dyslexia:**

- Difficulty reading real words in isolation
- Difficulty accurately decoding nonsense words
- Slow, inaccurate, or labored oral reading (lack of reading fluency)
- Difficulty with learning to spell

The reading/spelling characteristics are the result of difficulty with the following:

- The development of phonological awareness, including segmenting, blending, and manipulating sounds in words
- Learning the names of letters and their associated sounds
- Phonological memory (holding information about sounds and words in memory)
- Rapid naming of familiar objects, colors, or letters of the alphabet

Secondary consequences of dyslexia may include the following:

- Variable difficulty with aspects of reading comprehension
- Variable difficulty with aspects of written composition
- A limited amount of time spent in reading activities

If a student continues to struggle with reading, has participated in an accelerated reading program, has been monitored for reading progress on a regular basis, has good attendance and exhibits the characteristics of dyslexia, a referral is initiated through IDEA for a full evaluation.

Child Find is a provision in the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a federal law that requires the state to have policies and procedures in place to ensure that every student in the state who needs special education and related services is located, identified, and evaluated. The purpose of the IDEA is to ensure that students with disabilities are offered a free and appropriate public education (20 U.S.C. §1400(d); 34 C.F.R. §300.1). Because a student suspected of having dyslexia may be a student with a disability under the IDEA, the Child Find mandate includes these students. Therefore, when referring and evaluating students suspected of having dyslexia,

LEAs must follow procedures for conducting a full individual and initial evaluation (FIIE) under the IDEA.

#### **IV. Assessment of Dyslexia**

Students enrolling in West Rusk CCISD shall 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 parents' or guardians' input. Additionally, the appropriate time for assessing is early in a student's school career (19 TAC §74.28), the earlier the better. While earlier is better, students will be recommended for assessment for dyslexia even if the reading difficulties appear later in a student's school career.

The procedures followed for assessment include:

1. Notify parents or guardians of a proposal to assess the student for dyslexia as outlined in IDEA.
2. Inform parents or guardians of their rights under IDEA
3. Obtain parent or guardian permission to assess the student for dyslexia. Procedural safeguards under IDEA must be followed. For more information on procedural safeguards, see [TEA's Parent Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process \(Parent's Guide\) and the Notice of Procedural Safeguards](#).
4. Assess student, being sure that individuals/professionals who administer assessments have training in the evaluation of students for dyslexia and related disorders (19 TAC §74.28)

Tests, assessments, and other evaluation materials will:

- Be validated for the specific purpose for which the tests, assessments, and other evaluation materials are used
- Include material tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely materials that are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient
- Be selected and administered so as 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 or achievement level, or whatever other factor the test



- purports to measure, rather than reflecting the student's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills
- Be 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 assessments, results of informal reading inventories, classroom observations)
  - Be administered by trained personnel and in conformance with the instructions provided by the producer of the evaluation materials

### **Domains to Assess**

West Rusk CCISD administers measures that are related to the student's educational needs. Depending upon the student's age and stage of reading development, the following are the areas related to reading that should be assessed:

#### **Academic Skills**

- Letter knowledge (name and associated sound)
- Reading real and nonsense words in isolation (decoding)
- Reading fluency (both rate and accuracy should be measured)
- Reading comprehension
- Written spelling

#### **Cognitive processes that underlie the reading difficulties**

- **Phonological/phonemic awareness** (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 and letter combinations, learn the alphabetic principle, use the sounds of the letters and letter combinations to decode words and to accurately spell.)

- **Rapid naming** (Difficulties in rapid naming may or may not be weak, but if deficient, will impact a student's ability to automatically name letters and read words and to read connected text at an appropriate rate.)

Based on the student's academic difficulties and characteristics, additional areas that may be assessed include the following:

- Vocabulary
- Listening comprehension
- Oral expression
- Written expression
- Handwriting
- Orthographic processing
- Mathematical reasoning
- Intelligence

**English Language Learners :This refers to students served in Bilingual and ESL programs as well as students designated Limited English Proficient (LEP) whose parents have denied services.**

Much diversity exists among English Language Learners (ELLs). The identification and service delivery process for dyslexia must be in step with the student's linguistic environment and educational background. Involvement of the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) in the decision making process is recommended.

Additional data to be gathered when assessing English Language Learners:

- Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) documentation which includes the following:
  - o Home language survey
  - o Assessment related to identification for limited English proficiency (oral language proficiency tests and norm-referenced tests)
  - o State student assessment data results when available
  - o Texas English Language Proficiency system (TELPAS) information (Reading Proficiency Test in English (RPTE))
  - o Type of language programming provided and language of instruction
  - o Linguistic environment and second-language acquisition development
  - o Previous schooling in and outside of the United States

Additional assessment when assessing English Language Learners:

- Comprehensive oral language proficiency testing should be completed in English and the student's native language whenever possible.
- If the student has received academic instruction in his/her native language, as well as English, then the "Domains to Assess" need to be completed in both languages to the appropriate extent.

**Interpretation:**

Test results of English Language Learners (ELL) will be interpreted in light of the student's: language development (in both English and the student's native language [when possible] ), educational history, linguistic background, socio economic issues, and any other pertinent factors that affect learning.

**V. Identification of Students with Dyslexia**

The ARD Committee determines whether the student has dyslexia.

The members must be knowledgeable about:

- The student being assessed
- The reading process
- Dyslexia and related disorders
- Dyslexia instruction
- District or charter school, state, and federal guidelines for assessment
- The assessments used
- The meaning of the collected data

The ARD committee determines the identification of dyslexia after reviewing all accumulated data including the following areas:

- The observations of the teacher, district or charter school staff, and/or parent/guardian
- Data gathered from the classroom (including student work and the results of classroom measures) and information found in the student's cumulative folder (including the developmental and academic history of the student)
- Data-based documentation of student progress during instruction/intervention
- The results of administered assessments

- Language Assessment Proficiency Committee (LPAC) documentation, when applicable
- All other accumulated data regarding the development of the student's learning and his/her educational needs

**ARD Committee Decision Points for Dyslexia Identification:**

**A.** The pattern of weaknesses in a student with dyslexia will reflect one or more difficulties with low performance for the student's age and educational level in the following academic skills:

- Reading real words in isolation
- Decoding nonsense words
- Reading fluency (both rate and accuracy)
- Written spelling (an isolated difficulty in spelling would not be sufficient to identify dyslexia)

**B.** Based on the data, if the committee determines weaknesses are indicated in the listed academic skills, then the committee will look next at the underlying cognitive processes for the difficulties seen in the student's word reading and written spelling. These academic difficulties in reading and written spelling will typically be the result of a deficit in phonological or phonemic awareness.

The student may also demonstrate difficulties in other areas of cognitive processing, including one or more of the following:

- Rapid naming
- Orthographic processing

If the student exhibits reading and written spelling difficulties and currently has appropriate phonological/phonemic processing, it is important to examine the student's history to determine if there is evidence of previous difficulty with phonological/phonemic awareness.

**NOTE:** Because previous effective instruction in phonological/phonemic awareness may remediate phonological awareness skills in isolation, average phonological awareness scores alone do not rule out dyslexia. Ongoing phonological processing deficits can be exhibited in word reading and/or written spelling.

**C.** If the ARD committee determines the student exhibits weaknesses in reading and written spelling that are the result of a deficit in phonological/phonemic awareness, the committee will then examine the student’s data to determine whether these difficulties are unexpected for the student in relation to the student’s other cognitive abilities (the ability to learn in the absence of print) and **unexpected** in relation to the provision of effective classroom instruction.

Many students with dyslexia will have difficulty with the secondary characteristics of dyslexia, including reading comprehension and written composition.

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**Pathway to the Identification and Provision of Instruction for Students with Dyslexia:**

**A.** Universal Screening for reading and dyslexia is administered to all students in kindergarten and first grade as required by TEC §28.006 and §38.003(a).

**B.** If a student is at risk for reading difficulties or the student is suspected of having dyslexia or any other specific learning disability, collect and review quantitative and qualitative data on the student. See Figures 2.3 and 2.4 in Dyslexia Handbook for more information.

**C.** If the analysis shows that the student exhibits characteristics of dyslexia or other specific learning disabilities, seek parental consent for a Full Individual and Initial Evaluation (FIE), while continuing to provide grade level, evidence-based core reading instruction (Tier 1) and providing appropriate tiered interventions.

**D.** For students suspected of having dyslexia, if the parent does not give consent for an FIE, seek parental consent for a Section 504 evaluation, while continuing to provide grade level, evidence based core reading instruction (Tier 1) and providing appropriate tiered interventions.

**E.** If the parent gives consent for an FIE, conduct the FIE within 45 school days (subject to limited exceptions) of the date of receipt of parent consent, while continuing to provide grade level, evidence-based core reading instruction (Tier 1) and providing appropriate tiered interventions. The ARD committee (including the parent) must meet to review the results of the FIE.

F. If the parent gives consent for a FIE evaluation, conduct an evaluation under IDEA while continuing to provide grade level, evidence-based core reading instruction (Tier 1) and providing appropriate tiered interventions.

G. If a student has an IDEA eligible condition such as dyslexia or a related disorder, the ARD committee determines if a need for special education services exists.

H. If the student's dyslexia or related disorder substantially limits one or more of life's major activities such as learning, reading, writing, or spelling, the student is eligible for Section 504, the 504 committee (parent participation is recommended) develops a Section 504 plan for the student to provide services including standard protocol dyslexia instruction, accommodations, and/or related aids specific to the student's disability.

I. If the student requires special education because of the identified IDEA eligible condition, the student is eligible for special education. The ARD committee develops the IEP for the student to receive specially designed instruction which can include any appropriate special education and related services, and general education programs and services, including standard protocol dyslexia instruction. While an IEP is individualized to the student, the IEP should address critical, evidence-based components of dyslexia instruction such as phonological awareness, sound-symbol association, syllabication, orthography, morphology, syntax, reading comprehension, and reading fluency. The determination of eligibility and the development of an IEP, if the student is eligible, must be done within 30 days (subject to limited exceptions) from the date that the written FIE evaluation report is completed. Obtain parental consent for special education services.

J. If the parent declines, the LEA must still provide all general education services including any protections available under Section 504.

### **Reevaluation for Dyslexia / Identification and Accommodations:**

Dyslexia is a lifelong condition. However, with proper help, many people with dyslexia can learn to read and write well. Early identification and treatment is the key to helping individuals with dyslexia achieve in school and in life. —The International Dyslexia Association

There are many initiatives, programs, evaluations, and data available for use in identification, placement, and program planning for students, including ELs, who struggle with dyslexia. Evaluation and ongoing progress monitoring are key components that must be considered by trained personnel. A 2014 U.S. Department of Justice technical assistance documents summarized regulations regarding testing accommodations for individuals with disabilities as follows:

*The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) ensures that individuals with disabilities have the opportunity to fairly compete for and pursue such opportunities by requiring testing entities to offer exams in a manner accessible to persons with disabilities. When needed testing accommodations are provided, test-takers can demonstrate their true aptitude.*

## **VI. Instruction for Students with Dyslexia**

Once it has been determined that a student has dyslexia, West Rusk CCISD shall provide an appropriate instructional program for the student as required in TEC §38.003:

*In accordance with the program approved by the State Board of Education, the board of trustees of each school district shall provide for the treatment of any student determined to have dyslexia or a related disorder.*

The following procedures must be followed:

- Instructional decisions for a student with dyslexia are made by a team that is knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation information, and instructional components and approaches for students with dyslexia.

- West Rusk CCISD shall purchase or develop a reading program for students with dyslexia and related disorders that is aligned with the descriptors found in this handbook. The descriptors include the components of phonemic awareness, graphophonemic knowledge, language structure, linguistic patterns, and processes. Instructional approaches include explicit, individualized, and multi-sensory instruction (19 TAC §74.28). The components of instruction and instructional approaches are described in the next section of this handbook.

- West Rusk CCISD must provide each identified student access at his/her campus to an instructional program that meets the requirements in 19 TAC §74.28(c) and to the services of a teacher trained in dyslexia and related disorders. The school district may, with the approval of each student's parents or guardians, offer additional services at a centralized location. Such centralized services shall not preclude each student from receiving services at his or her campus (19 TAC §74.28).

- Parents/guardians of dyslexia students must be informed of all services and options available to the student under that federal statute.

- Teachers who provide the appropriate instruction for students with dyslexia must be trained in instructional strategies that utilize individualized, intensive, multisensory, phonetic methods and a variety of writing and spelling components specified in the next section of this handbook (19 TAC §74.28).

- Teachers who provide the appropriate instruction for students with dyslexia must be trained in the professional development activities specified by West Rusk CCISD, and/or campus planning and decision making committee which shall include the instructional strategies indicated above (19 TAC §74.28).

West Rusk CCISD shall provide a parent education program for the parents/guardians of students with dyslexia and related disorders.

The program should include the following:

- Characteristics of dyslexia and related disorders
- Information on assessment and diagnosis of dyslexia
- Information on effective strategies for teaching students with dyslexia
- Awareness of information on classroom modifications and especially of modifications allowed on standardized testing (19 TAC §74.28)

## **Components of Instruction**



The instructional program should be offered in a small group arrangement (e.g., 1:3 – 1:6) and include reading, writing, and spelling as appropriate. The major instructional strategies should utilize individualized, intensive, and multisensory methods as appropriate.

**Components of instruction, as appropriate for the reading needs of the student, include the following:**

- Phonemic awareness instruction that enables students to detect, segment, blend, and manipulate sounds in spoken language
- Graphophonemic knowledge (phonics) instruction that takes advantage of the letter-sound plan in which words that carry meaning are made of sounds, and sounds are written with letters in the right order (Students with this understanding can blend sounds associated with letters into words and can separate words into component sounds for spelling and writing.)
- Language structure instruction that encompasses morphology (the study of meaningful units of language such as prefixes, suffixes, and roots), semantics (ways that language conveys meaning), syntax (sentence structure), and pragmatics (how to use language in a particular context)
- Linguistic instruction directed toward proficiency and fluency with the patterns of language so that words and sentences are the carriers of meaning
- Strategy-oriented instruction in the strategies students use for decoding, encoding, word recognition, fluency, and comprehension that students need to become independent readers

**Instructional approaches, as appropriate to meet the instructional needs of the student, include the following:**

- Explicit, direct instruction that is systematic (structured), sequential, and cumulative (Instruction is organized and presented in a way that follows a logical, sequential plan, fits the nature of language [alphabetic principle] with no assumption of prior skills or language knowledge, and maximizes student engagement. This instruction proceeds at a rate commensurate with students' needs, ability levels, and demonstration of progress.)

- Individualized instruction that meets the specific learning needs of each individual student in a small group setting
- A reading curriculum that matches each student’s individual ability level and contains all of the Components of Instruction mandated in 19 TAC §74.28
  - Meaning-based instruction that is directed toward purposeful reading and writing, with an emphasis on comprehension and composition
  - Multisensory instruction that incorporates the simultaneous use of two or more sensory pathways (auditory, visual, kinesthetic, tactile) during teacher presentations and student practice

Teachers of students with dyslexia shall be prepared to utilize these techniques and strategies. They may also serve as trainers and consultants in the area of dyslexia and related disorders to regular, remedial, and special education teachers.

## **VII. Student Monitoring and Dyslexia Program Exit Criteria (Optional)**

Upon successful completion of West Rusk CCISDs program(s), as measured by program mastery checks (assessments) completed at regular intervals, students will be exited from the district dyslexia program(s). Additional criteria for exit may include but is not limited to: grades from progress reports or report cards, state assessment data, benchmarks, progress monitoring data, teacher and/or parent observations/checklists, and individual dyslexia program requirements.

Students that have completed the West Rusk CCISD dyslexia program will receive regular monitoring during the first year, and longer if deemed necessary.

Monitoring may include, but is not limited to the collection/evaluation of:

- Progress reports
- Report cards
- State assessment data
- Teacher reports/checklists
- Parent reports/checklists
- Counselor reports

- Other program reports
- Additional assessment data

Students qualifying for dyslexia services that are identified as §504 or special education will follow monitoring/re-evaluation requirements outlined in federal law.

No one factor is sufficient to warrant exiting a student from direct dyslexia services. Dismissal is determined by the §504 committee, or ARD committee. The committee considers the following factors when recommending exiting or reduction of dyslexic services:

- Completion of the district dyslexia program
- The reevaluation and/or post-testing of student shows student growth to be closer to grade level proficiency standards
- The student demonstrates self-monitoring/self-correction behaviors as evidenced through informal observation by teacher and/or dyslexia teacher
- The student passed the reading portion of the state assessment;
- Committee recommendation
- Parents request in writing that the student exit the program

If a student has shown substantial progress and the §504 committee determines the student is ready to be dismissed completely from the program, the committee may recommend monitoring services instead of direct services. When a child is exited from the dyslexia program, a dismissal form will be completed and placed in the child's cumulative folder.