Agenda

- Overview of Dyslexia Handbook
- Special Education Considerations
- Frequently Asked Questions
Overview

- Definitions & Characteristics of Dyslexia
- Screening
- Procedures for Evaluation & Identification of Students with Dyslexia
- Critical, Evidence-Based Components of Dyslexia Instruction
- Dysgraphia
- Appendices
  - *The Dyslexia Handbook—2018 Update: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders*
Definitions & Characteristics
Definition of Dyslexia

The 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.
Primary Characteristics of Dyslexia

- Reading words in isolation
- Decoding unfamiliar words
- Spelling
- Oral reading fluency

Primary Difficulties
Primary Characteristics of Dyslexia

- Reading words in isolation
- Decoding unfamiliar words
- Spelling
- Oral reading fluency

Primary Difficulties
Underlying Difficulties

Phonological Awareness:
Segmenting, blending, and manipulating sounds in words

Phonological Memory:
Holding information about sounds in working memory

Rapid Naming:
Rapidly recalling the names of letters, numbers, shapes, and colors

Letter/Sound Knowledge:
Learning the names of letters and sounds
Consequences

Secondary Difficulties

- Reading Experiences
- Vocabulary
- Reading Comprehension
- Written Language
Screening
Screening

- Defined as a universal measure administered to all students by qualified personnel to determine which students are at risk for dyslexia or reading difficulties and/or a related disorder.
- Screening does not diagnose but identifies predictive variables (think red flags).
- “It is essential to screen students for dyslexia and related disorders early in their academic careers” (p. 8).
- Screening is not a formal evaluation.

Texas Education Code §38.003

- Requires that all students in kindergarten & grade 1 be screened for dyslexia & related disorders.
- Requires that all students beyond first grade be screened or tested as appropriate.
  - Appropriate timeline: By the end of Kindergarten & by January 31 of first grade.
Texas Education Code, §28.006, Reading Diagnosis

- Requires each school district to administer to students in kindergarten, first grade, and second grade a reading instrument to diagnose student reading development and comprehension.
- Also requires school districts to administer a reading instrument at the beginning of seventh grade to students who did not demonstrate reading proficiency on the grade 6 state reading assessment.

Commissioner’s List of Reading Instruments

- As the Commissioner's List of Reading Instruments is updated, it will include instruments that meet the requirements of both early reading diagnosis (TEC §28.006) and dyslexia screening (TEC §38.003)
Scheduling K/1 Dyslexia Screening

- Kindergarten: End of school year
- First Grade: No later than January 31st
Screener Criteria

Kindergarten
- Phonological Awareness
- Phonemic Awareness
- Sound-Symbol Recognition
- Letter knowledge
- Decoding Skills
- Spelling
- Listening Comprehension

First Grade
- Phonological Awareness
- Phonemic Awareness
- Sound-Symbol Recognition
- Letter knowledge
- Decoding Skills
- Spelling
- Reading Rate
- Reading Accuracy
- Listening Comprehension

Also observe student behaviors during reading tasks: lack of automaticity, difficulty sounding out words left to right, guessing, self-correcting, inability to focus on reading, avoidance behaviors
Screening Administration

- Staff administering screener should be trained on characteristics of dyslexia and reading disorders AND administration & interpretation of screener

- Staff should be Certified/Licensed in Dyslexia; or
- A classroom teacher who holds a valid certification for kindergarten and grade 1
  - Best practice: child's current classroom teacher
Procedures for Evaluation & Identification of Students with Dyslexia
Dyslexia Decision Making Process

- Team of knowledgeable persons using data
- Refer for evaluation at any time disability is suspected
- Progress monitoring/RtI/MTSS data can help determine when unsure if a disability is suspected, however RtI may not be used to DELAY/DENY evaluation
- Compliance with state & federal laws
  - Texas Education Code
  - Child Find
  - Section 504
  - IDEA
Evaluation & Identification

Components of Evaluation

- Knowledge of Student Being Assessed
- Validated evaluation instruments
- Multi-disciplinary team
- Trained personnel
- IDEA/504 & LEA evaluation procedures
- Incorporation of formal & informal data
- LPAC member (ELs)
- Knowledge of Dyslexia & related disorders
Critical, Evidence-Based Components of Dyslexia Instruction
Components

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

Delivery

- Simultaneous, multisensory
- Systematic & cumulative
- Explicit
- Diagnostic teaching to automaticity
- Synthetic
- Analytic
Highly trained personnel should deliver dyslexia instruction

- Not required to hold a specific license or certification
- Must have additional documented dyslexia training (19 TAC §74.28(c))
- Licensure available through professional organizations & Texas Dept. of Licensing & Regulation – see Figure 4.1 (p. 44)

Educators

- Who teach students with dyslexia should be trained in new research & practices related to dyslexia/CPE hours (TEC §21.054(b))

University candidates

- Must receive instruction in dyslexia (TEC §21.044(b))
Dysgraphia
Dysgraphia

- “Defined as a neurodevelopmental disorder manifested by illegible and/or inefficient handwriting due to difficulty with letter formation.
- This difficulty is the result of deficits in graphomotor function (hand movements used for writing) and/or storing and retrieving orthographic codes (letter forms) (Berninger, 2015).
- Secondary consequences may include problems with spelling and written expression. It is not solely due to lack of instruction and is not associated with other developmental or neurological conditions that involve motor impairment” (Dyslexia Handbook, 2018, p. 59)
https://tea.texas.gov/academics/dyslexia/
Dysgraphia

Characteristics:
- Variably shaped and poorly formed letters
- Excessive erasures and cross-outs
- Poor spacing between letters and words
- Letter and number reversals beyond early stages of writing
- Awkward, inconsistent pencil grip
- Inadequate, heavy, or variable pressure during handwriting
- Hand fatigue
- Slow writing and copying with legible or illegible handwriting (Andrews & Lombardino, 2014)
- Difficulty copying words and/or sentences
- Avoidance of written tasks
Evaluation

Components of Evaluation

- Knowledge of the student being assessed
- Validated evaluation instruments
- Trained personnel
- Multi-disciplinary team
- IDEA/504 & LEA evaluation procedures
- Incorporation of formal & informal data
- Knowledge of dysgraphia & related disorders
- LPAC member (ELs)
Dysgraphia Intervention Components

- Handwriting
  - Posture
  - Grip
  - Letter formation
  - Sequence
- Spelling
- Writing

Delivery of Instruction

- Simultaneous, multisensory
- Systematic & cumulative
- Explicit
- Diagnostic teaching to mastery
Appendices
Appendixes

- Appendix A: Questions & Answers
- Appendix B: Sources of Laws & Rules for Dyslexia Identification & Instruction
- Appendix C: State Laws & Rules Related to Dyslexia
- Appendix D: IDEA/Section 504 Side-by-Side (PreK-12)
- Appendix E: Contacts for Further Information
- Appendix F: Associated Terms
- Appendix G: Bibliography
- Appendix H: Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education
- Appendix I: USDE Guidance
- Appendix J: Pathway to Identification
- Appendix K: Addressing Concerns
- Appendix L: History of Dyslexia Law
Comparing SPDI and SDI

**Standard Protocol Dyslexia Instruction (SPDI)**

- Explicit, systematic, highly structured, intentional approach delivered with fidelity by a trained instructor
- Evidence-based, multisensory structured literacy instruction designed for students with dyslexia
- Delivered to a group of students with dyslexia in accordance with the way the program was designed
- Includes differentiation that does not compromise the fidelity of the program

**Specially Designed Instruction (SDI)**

- Adapting the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to address the unique needs of the child
- Must address the critical, evidence-based components, as appropriate in light of the student’s unique needs
- Delivery of instruction is based on the unique needs of the child
- More individualized or tailored program
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.
  - Obtain parental consent
  - Evaluate under Section 504 (following procedural safeguards)

- 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
  - Evaluate under IDEA (following procedural safeguards)
Dyslexia Pathways

Data Considerations

- Vision, hearing, medical screenings and reports
- Teacher observations and information
- Parent observations and information
- Achievement and learning rates when reading is not required
- Classroom and grade level data for peer comparison
- Early reading screening and state assessment results
- Classroom reading assessments and work samples
- Intervention history and progress data
- Previous or outside evaluations
- Attendance, grades, discipline reports
- Home language and language of instruction
- Dyslexia Pathways
Discussion

Questions

Is the student receiving intervention, accommodation or re-teaching in areas other than reading?

Any Issues or concerns that may exacerbate challenges learning to read?

Are the weaknesses characteristic of dyslexia?

Is there evidence of effective classroom instruction?

Is another disability suspected?

Do we anticipate a strong response to standard protocol dyslexia intervention alone?

How significant is the gap between current and expected performance?

Do we suspect a need for special education services?

Is the student receiving intervention, accommodation or re-teaching in areas other than reading?
Pathways for Identification and Instruction

Dyslexia Handbook Appendix J

Evaluate under Section 504 (following procedural safeguards)

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
Refer to or continue RTI

YES
Section 504 Eligible

Evaluate under IDEA (following procedural safeguards)

May need to assess under §504

NO

YES
Additional data needed/data indicates referral for IDEA evaluation necessary

IDEA Eligible

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?
Pathways for Identification and Instruction

Dyslexia Handbook Appendix J

**Section 504 Eligible**
- Student needs services, standard protocol dyslexia instruction, accommodations, and/or related aids specific to his/her disability.
- 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.

FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION:
- meaningful access – equal opportunity when compared to their non-disabled peers
- If student continues to struggle, referral for IDEA evaluation (FIE) should be initiated.

**IDEA Eligible**
- Student receives specially designed instruction, related services, supplementary aids and services, accommodations, or program modifications.
- 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 benefit – IEP must be reasonably calculated to provide educational benefit

For more information on IDEA and Section 504 identification, please refer to Appendix D, IDEA/Section 504 Side by Side.
Q: In order for a student who has been identified with dyslexia under Section 504 to receive special education services under the IDEA, does he/she need to receive a an FIE?

A: Yes, an FIE must be completed, and eligibility determined in accordance with 34 CFR §§300.304 through 300.311 before a student may receive special education and related services. The specific assessment components will vary on a case-by-case basis, depending on existing evaluation data and the functional and developmental needs of the student. Certainly, the information from the dyslexia evaluation should be used as part of the multiple sources of data that is included within the FIE. Additionally, the FIE will contain all the information necessary to determine the educational needs of the student, including the need for special education services.
Q: Must the evaluation of a student who is referred for a possible specific learning disability (SLD) (including students identified with dyslexia under Section 504) incorporate an assessment of cognitive processing strengths and weaknesses?

A: In order to receive special education services, a student must meet eligibility criteria under state and federal law. Eligibility criteria for an SLD does not include a requirement for testing cognitive processing strengths and weaknesses. According to commentary in the Federal Register relating to 34 CFR § 300.309(a)(2)(ii), the US Department of Education states,

The Department does not believe that an assessment of psychological or cognitive processing should be required in determining whether a child has an SLD. There is no current evidence that such assessments are necessary or sufficient for identifying SLD. Further, in many cases, these assessments have not been used to make appropriate intervention decisions. However, §300.309(a)(2)(ii) permits, but does not require, consideration of a pattern of strengths or weaknesses, or both, relative to intellectual development, if the evaluation group considers that information relevant to an identification of SLD.

Q: Will the term “dyslexia” be added as an area of SLD like “basic reading skills” or “reading fluency”?

A: Dyslexia is a condition that would likely cause the student to achieve inadequately in basic reading skills and/or reading fluency. The IDEA recognizes eight areas in which a student may qualify with an SLD: oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skills, reading fluency, reading comprehension, mathematics calculation, and mathematics problem solving. These are not specific conditions, rather they describe areas where the student does not achieve adequately.

The US Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services clarifies the term dyslexia in a "Dear Colleague" letter dated October 23, 2015 which states, "While our implementing regulations contain a list of conditions under the definition of 'specific learning disability,' which includes dyslexia, the list is not exhaustive. However, regardless of whether a child has dyslexia or any other condition explicitly included in this definition of 'specific learning disability,' or has a condition such as dyscalculia or dysgraphia not listed expressly in the definition, the LEA must conduct an evaluation in accordance with 34 C.F.R. §§300.304-300.311 to determine whether that child meets the criteria for a ‘specific learning disability’...”

Q: Why doesn’t the Dyslexia Handbook include a section on “dyscalculia”?

A: Dyscalculia is not a disorder related to dyslexia. Dyscalculia is a condition that would likely cause the student to achieve inadequately in math calculation skills.
Q: Must the local education agency (LEA) obtain a separate consent for evaluation if a dyslexia referral through Section 504 turns into a special education referral?

A: Yes. Although a parent or guardian may have signed consent for an evaluation under Section 504, the LEA must still obtain the parental consent required by the IDEA under 34 CFR §300.300 before conducting a full individual and initial evaluation (FIE) of the student.
Q: Should students in Kindergarten and first grade receiving special education or Section 504 services be screened for dyslexia using the K/1 Screener under TEC §38.003?

A: Students receiving special education or Section 504 services should be screened using the K/1 Screener unless:

- The Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) or Section 504 committee determines the screener is not appropriate; or
- the student is already identified with dyslexia.
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Thank-you for your attention today!