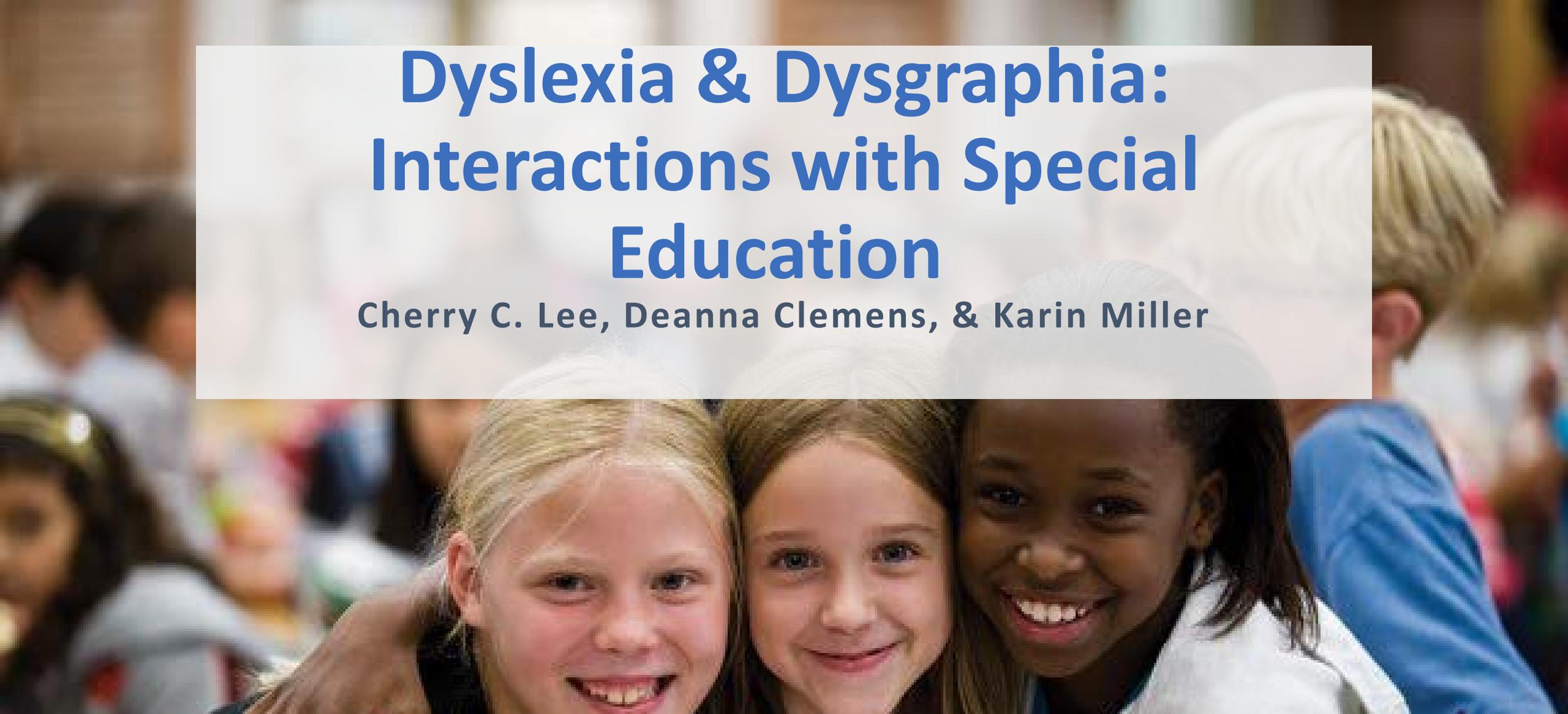




Dyslexia & Dysgraphia: Interactions with Special Education

Cherry C. Lee, Deanna Clemens, & Karin Miller



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

Dyslexia Handbook 2018

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*](#)

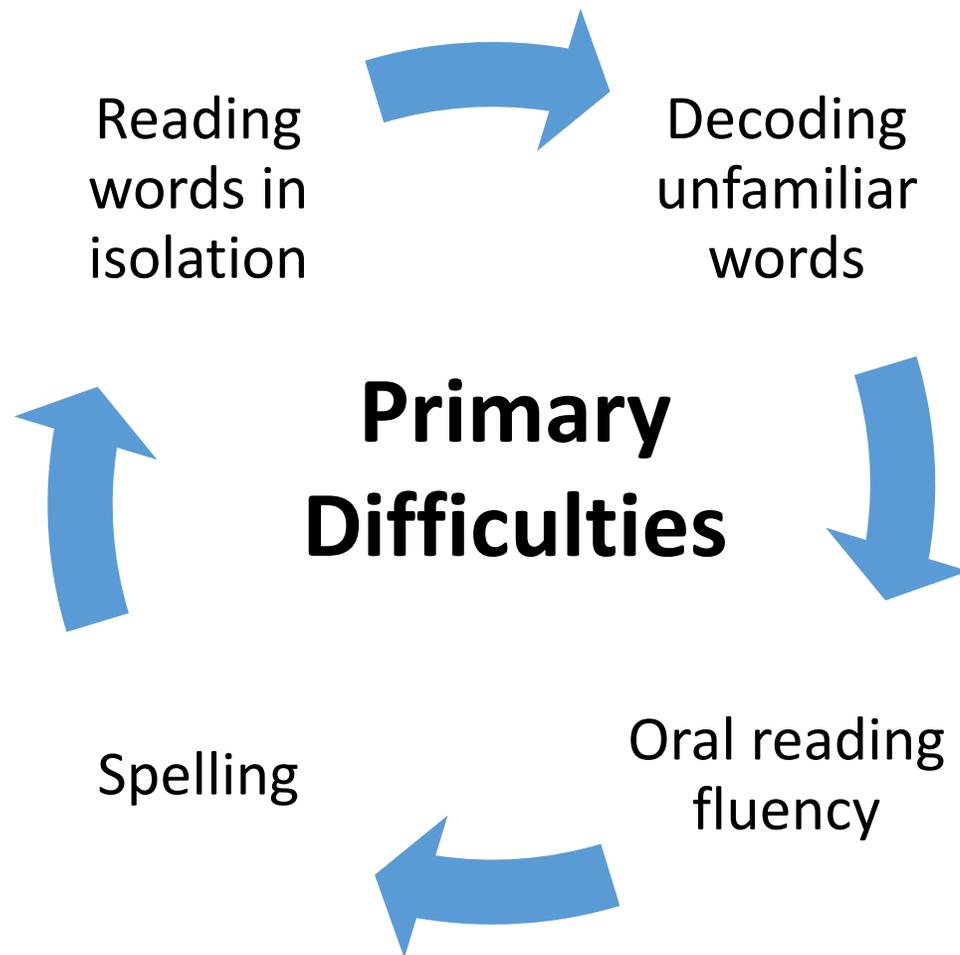
Definitions & Characteristics

Definition of Dyslexia

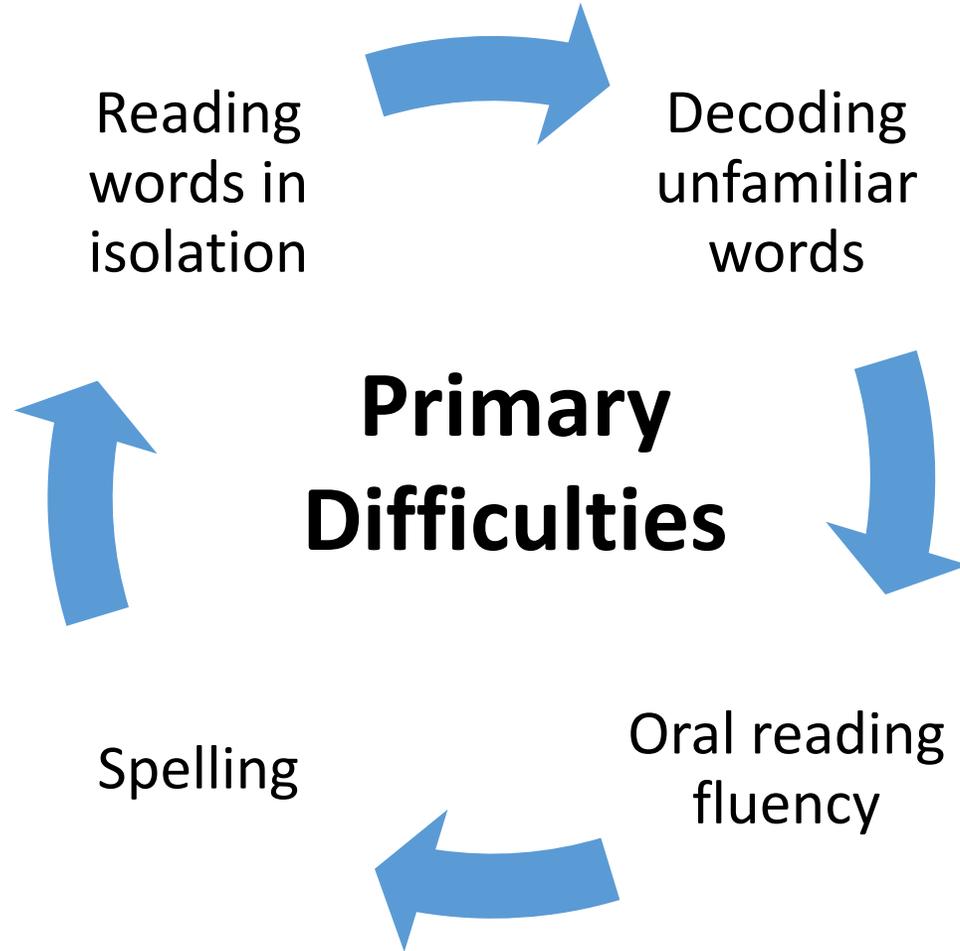
The Texas Education Code (TEC) §38.003 defines dyslexia and related disorders in the following way:

- “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



Primary Characteristics of Dyslexia



Underlying Difficulties

Phonological Awareness:

Segmenting, blending,
and manipulating sounds
in words

Phonological Memory:

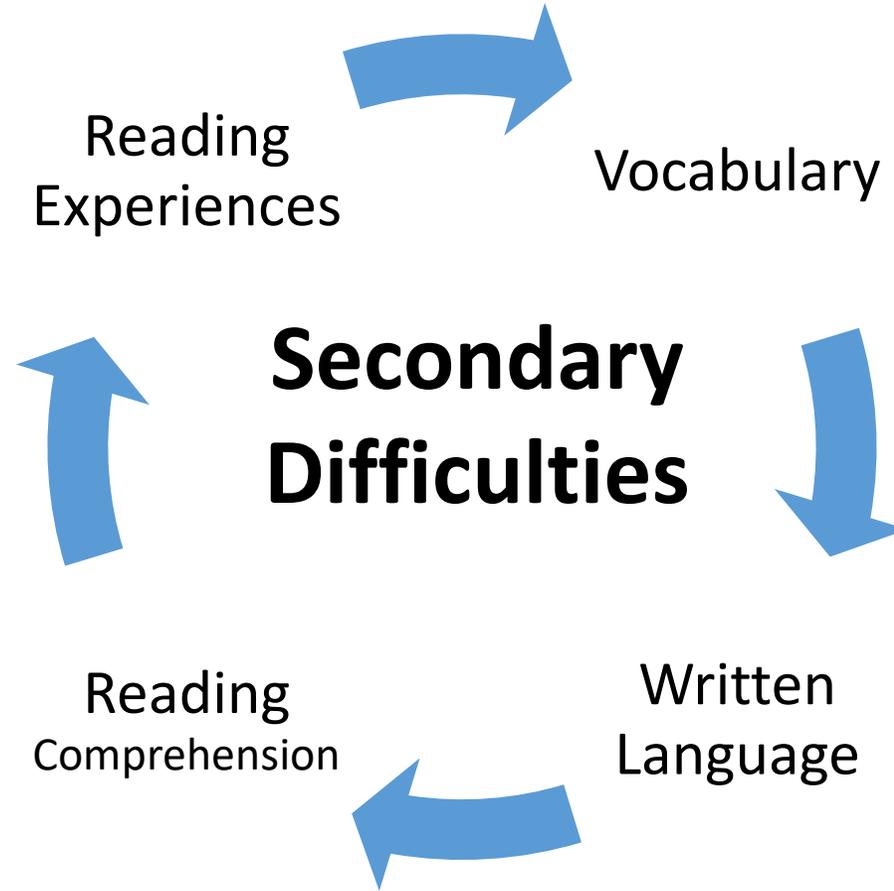
Holding information
about sounds in working
memory

Rapid Naming:

Rapidly recalling the
names of letters,
numbers, shapes, and
colors

Letter/Sound Knowledge:

Learning the names of
letters and sounds



Screening

Texas Education Code, §38.003, Screening & Treatment for Dyslexia

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

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



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



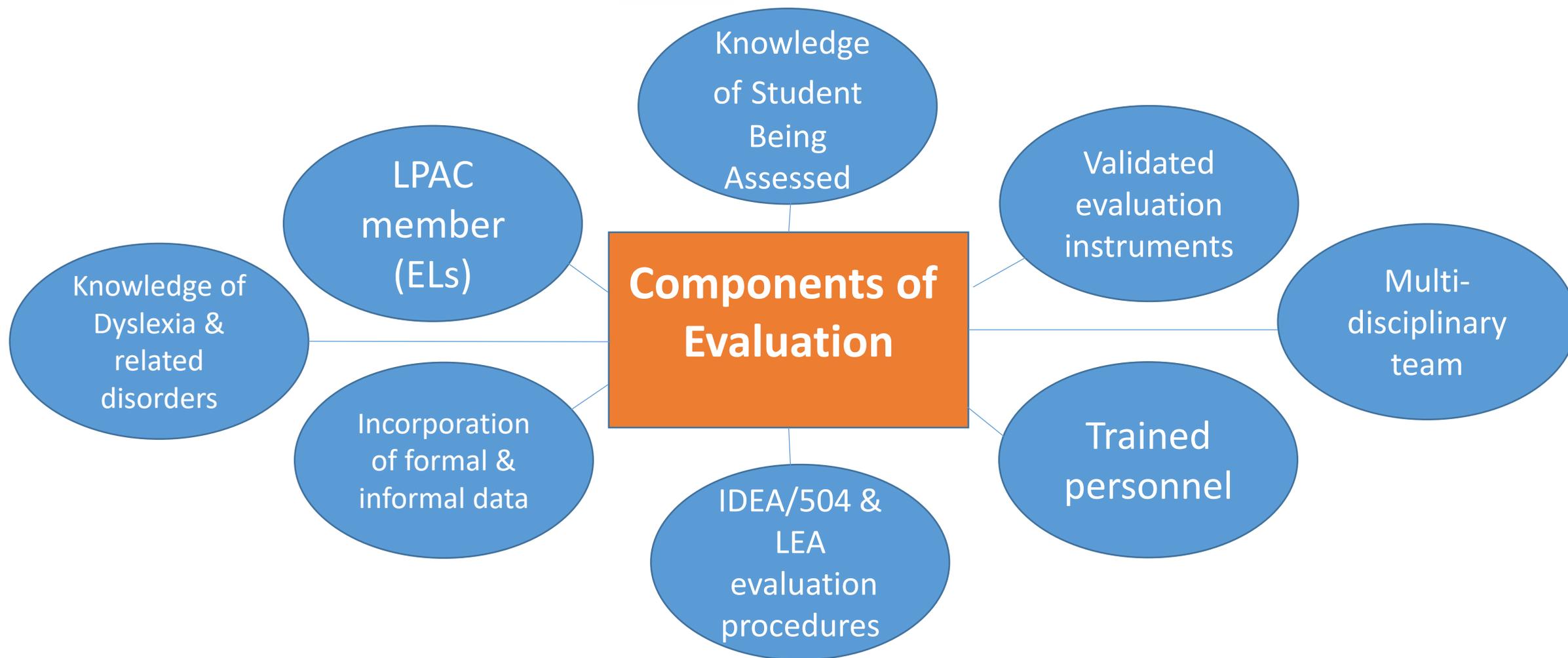
- Staff should be Certified/Licensed in Dyslexia; or
- A classroom teacher who holds a valid certification for kindergarten and grade 1
 - Best practice: child's current classroom teacher

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



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))

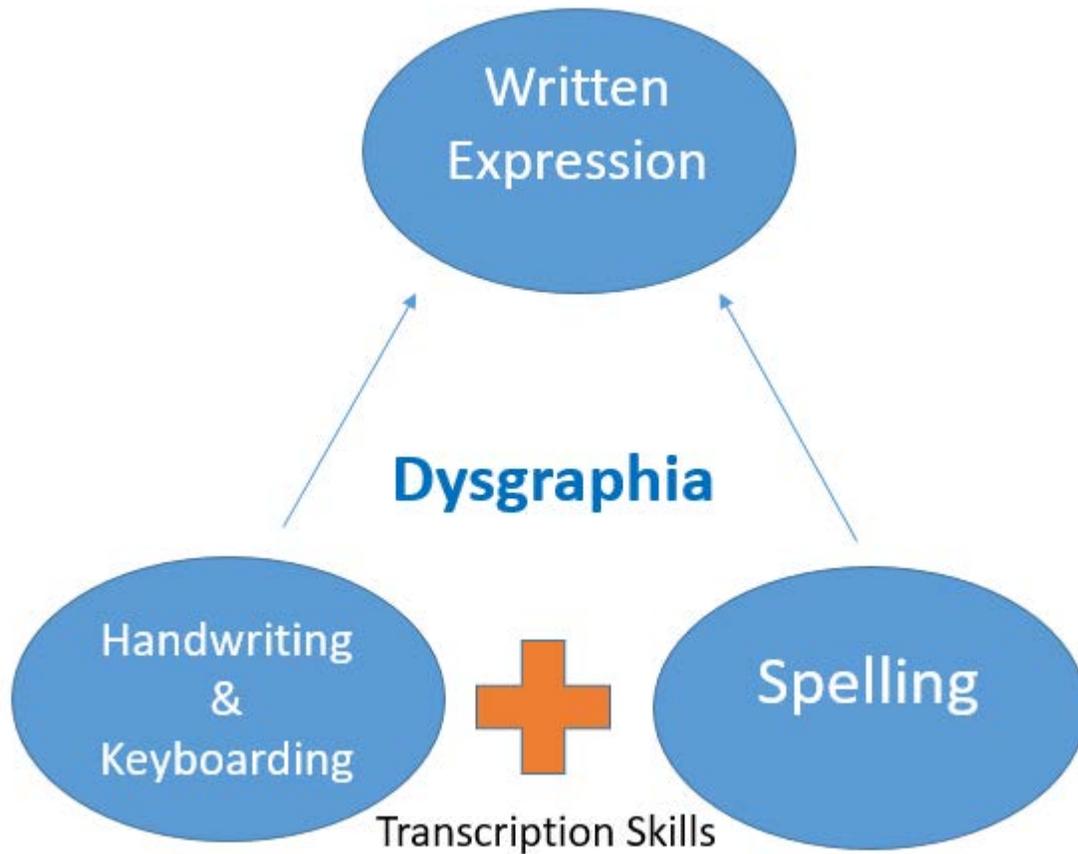
University candidates

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

Dysgraphia

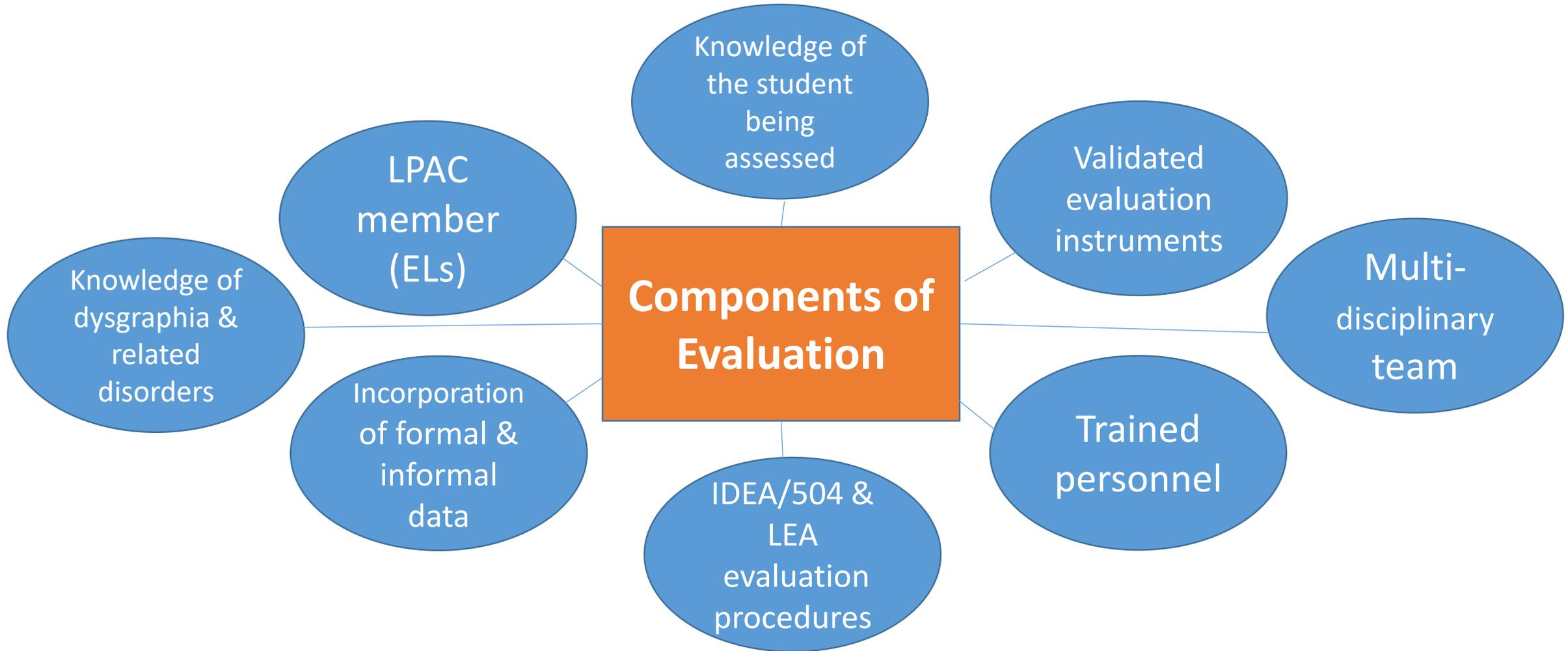
- “Defined as a neurodevelopmental disorder manifested by **illegible and/or inefficient handwriting due to difficulty with letter formation**.
- This difficulty is the result of deficits in graphomotor function (hand movements used for writing) and/or storing and retrieving orthographic codes (letter 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



Dysgraphia Intervention Components

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

Delivery of Instruction

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

Appendices

- 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



Special Education- SDI, Child Find, FAPE

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)

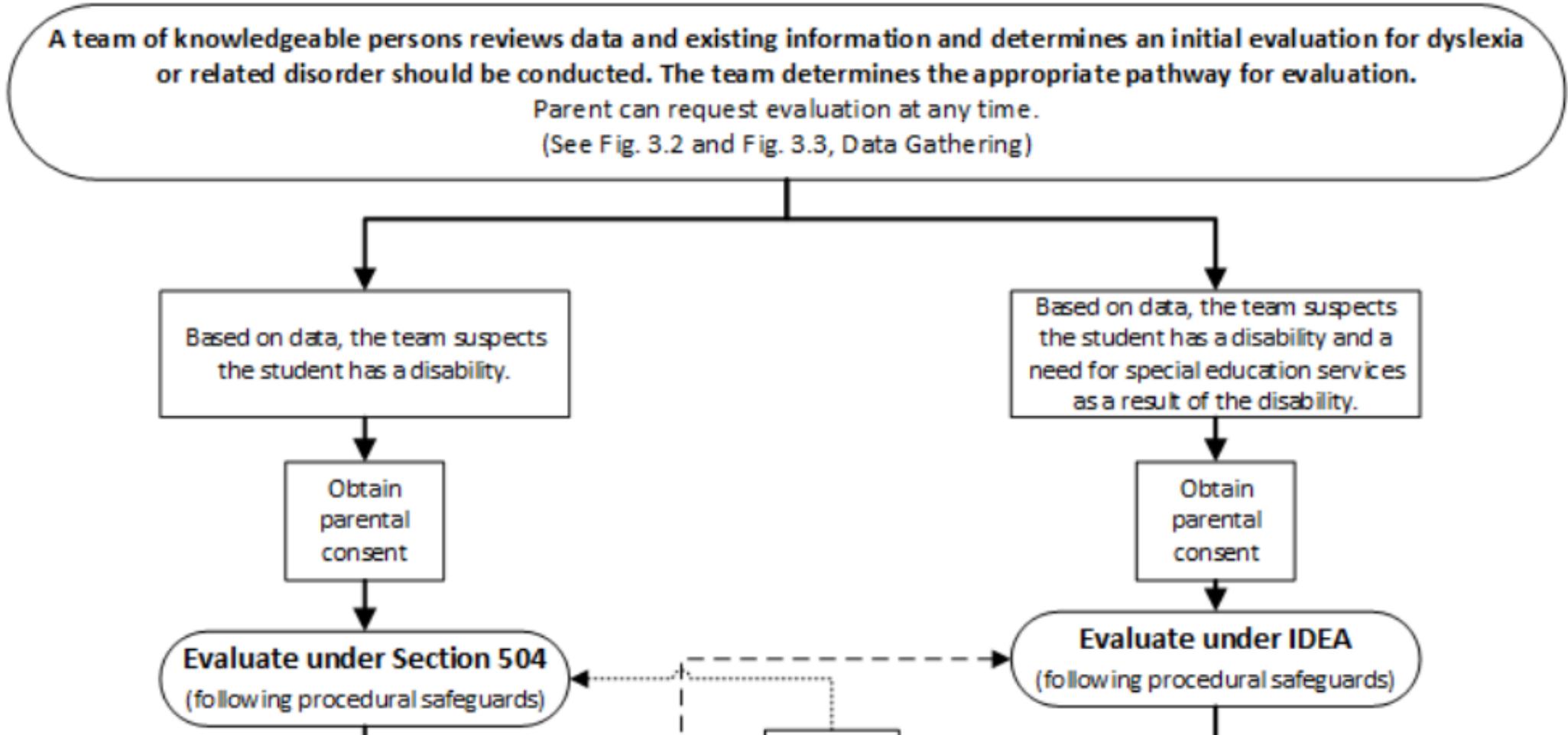
Adapting the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to address the unique needs of the child

Must address the critical, evidence-based components, as appropriate in light of the student's unique needs

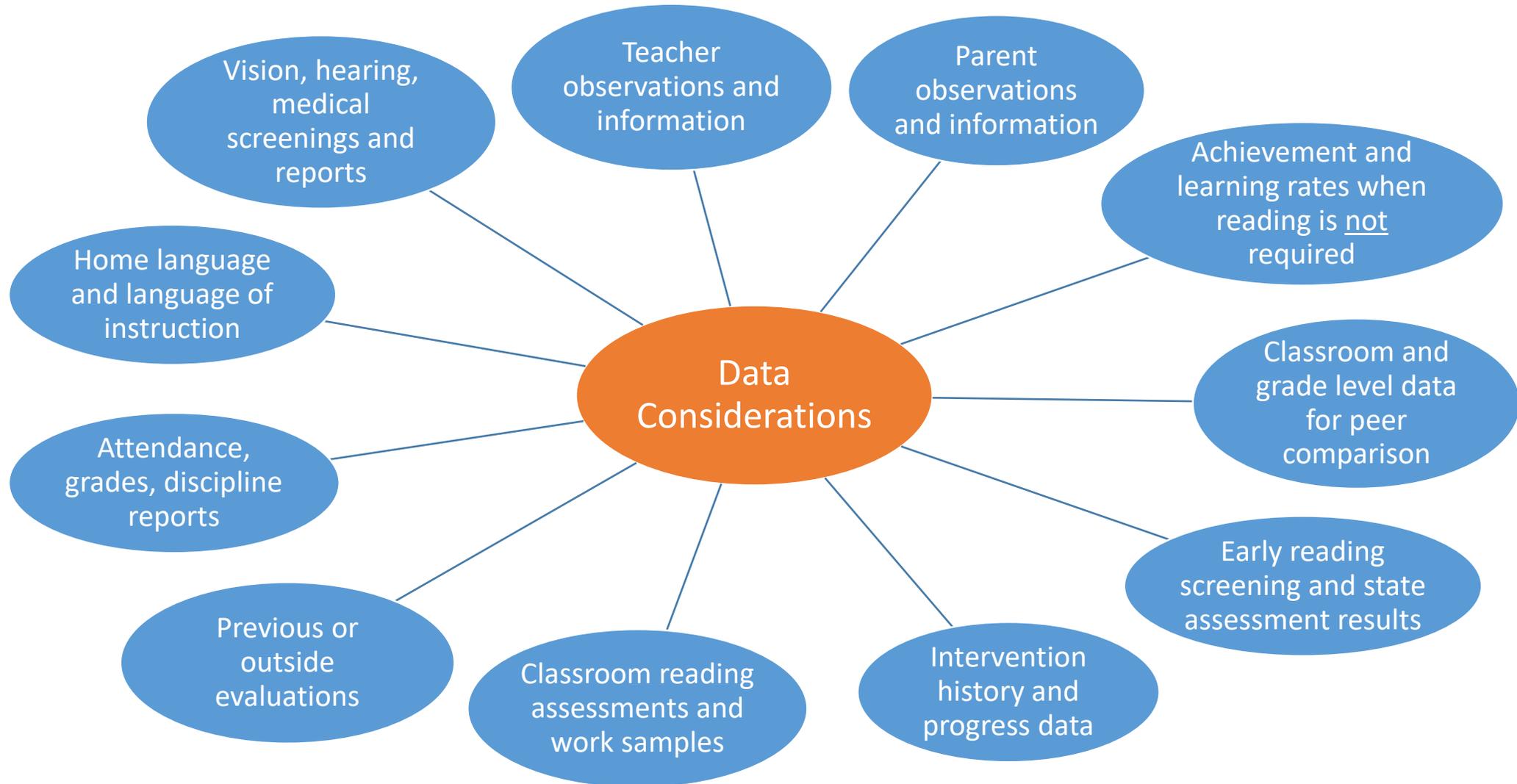
Delivery of instruction is based on the unique needs of the child

More individualized or tailored program

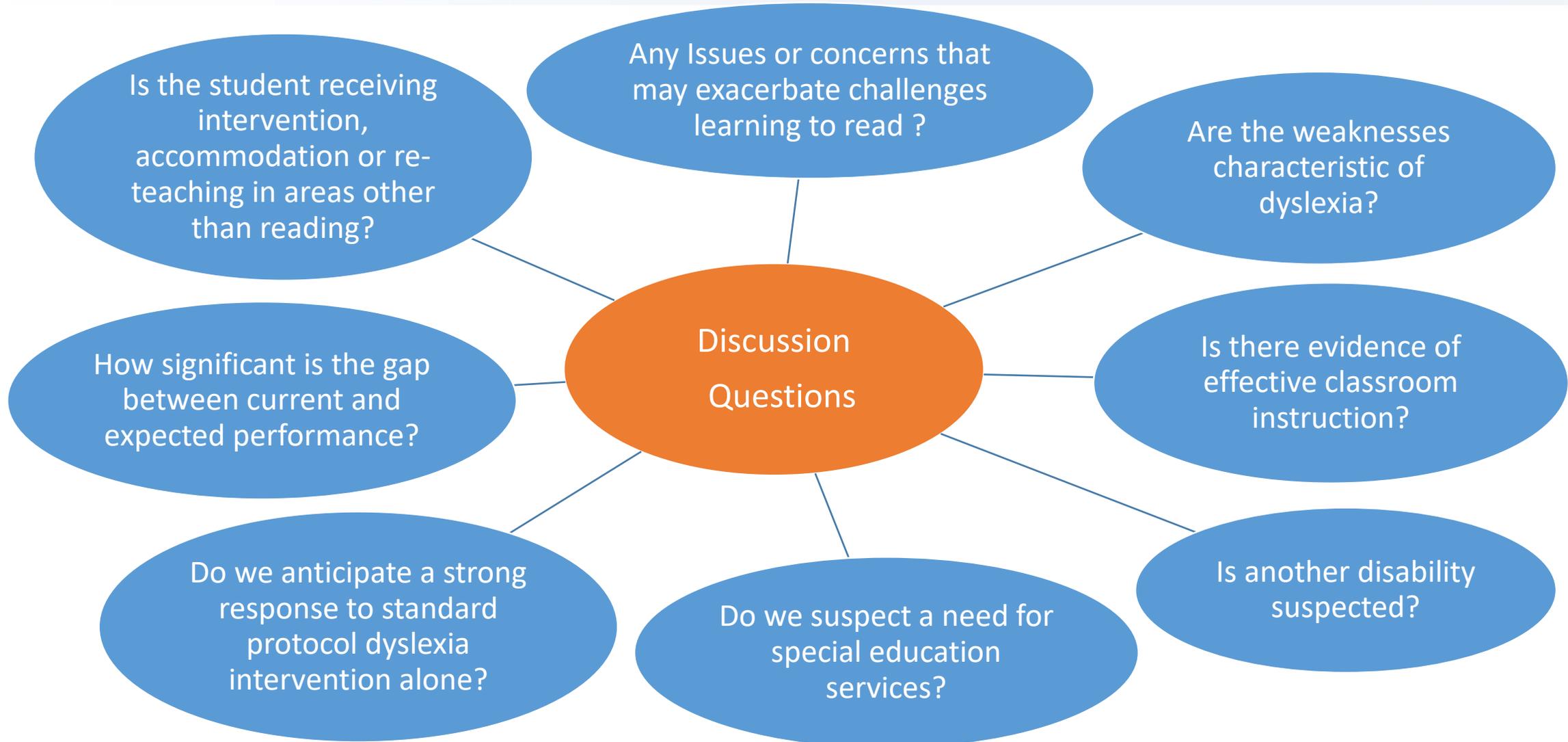
Dyslexia Handbook Appendix J



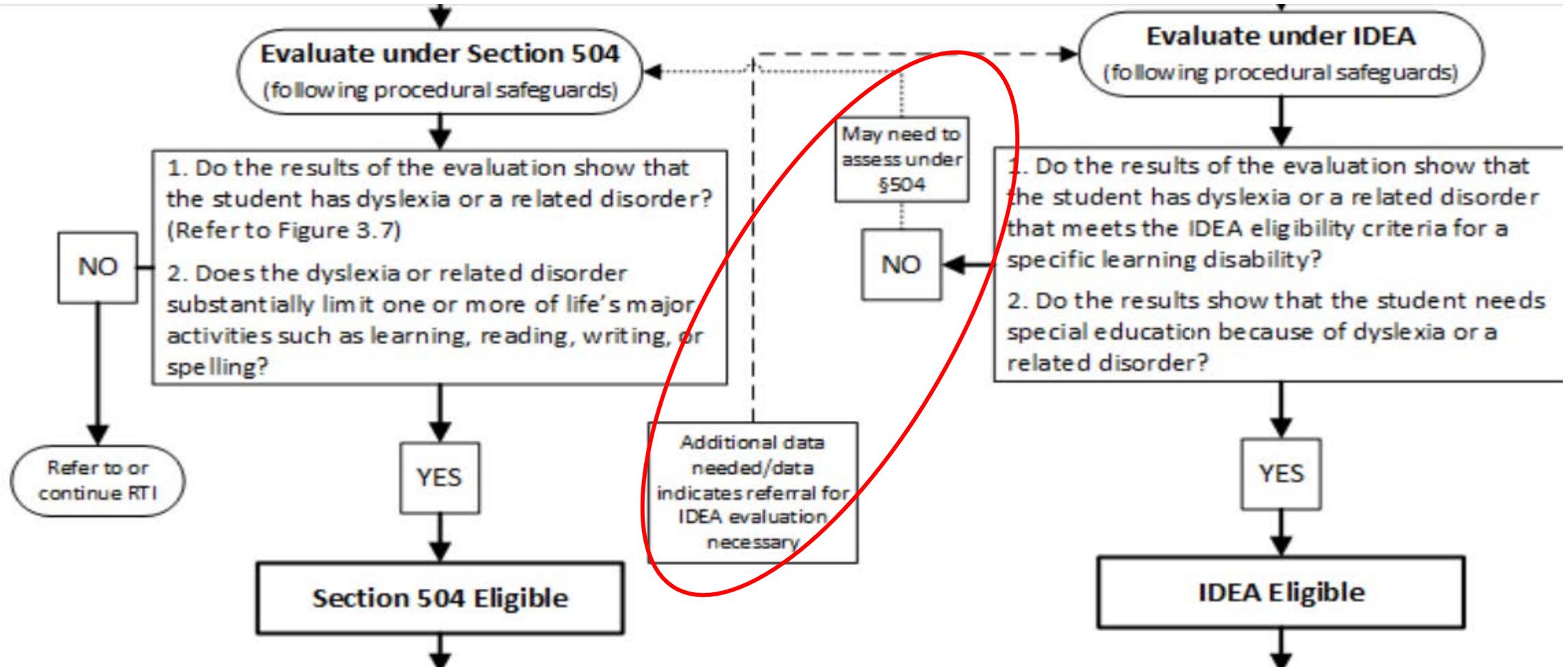
Dyslexia Pathways



Dyslexia Pathways

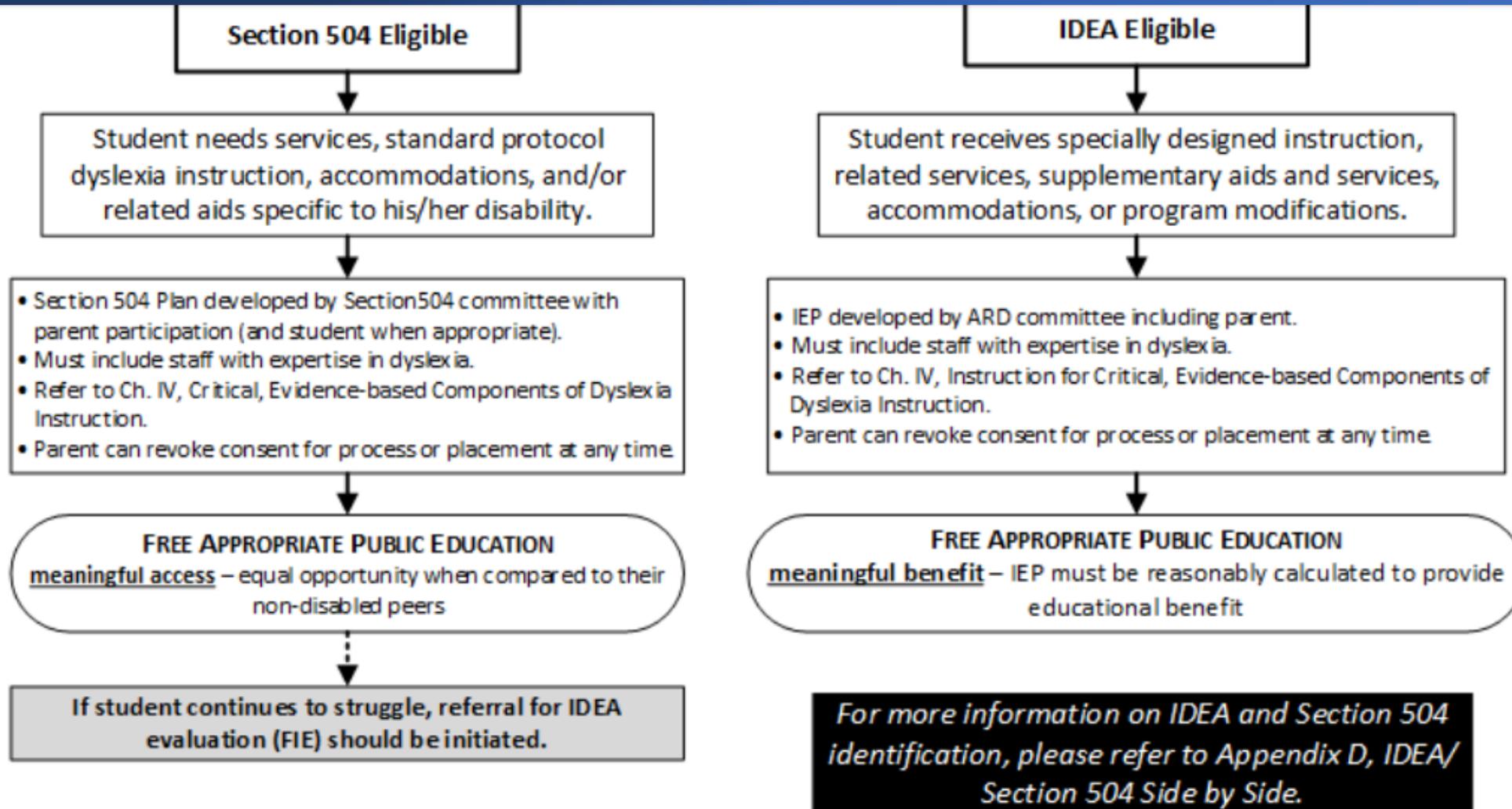


Dyslexia Handbook Appendix J



Pathways for Identification and Instruction

Dyslexia Handbook Appendix J





FAQs

Question 1

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.

Question 2

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.

71 Fed. Reg. 46651 (Aug. 14, 2006).

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'..."

Please see: <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdcltrs/guidance-on-dyslexia-10-2015.pdf>

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!