



Common Characteristics of a specific learning disability in reading include difficulties in:

- Processing the sounds of speech
- Acquiring phonemic awareness
- Learning letter/sound correspondence
- Learning to decode print
- Spelling
- Reading fluency
- Rapid word naming

Dyslexia is a Specific Learning Disability

The International Dyslexia Association and the National Institutes of Health adopted the following definition of dyslexia:

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 the growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

FNSBSD and DYSLEXIA

The term “dyslexia” is included in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 under the definition of specific learning disabilities.

What should you do if you suspect that your child has a learning disability in reading?

If your child is attending school in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District, contact your child's teacher with your concerns. Each building has a specialized team who will meet with you regarding your concerns and to plan the next steps for your child. If your child is struggling with reading, he or she may be placed in the school's reading intervention program. If additional support is needed, your child can be referred for an individualized evaluation. You will be asked for your written consent before this evaluation is conducted with your child. If eligible, your written consent is again needed before any specialized services will begin with your child.

If your child is not attending one of the schools in the FNSBSD, contact your child's educational provider for guidance regarding the assessment and placement process.

If you still have questions regarding the process, feel free to contact the Fairbanks North Star Borough Special Education Department at 907-452-2000, extension 11489.



Reading Interventions

The Special Education Teachers in the FNSBSD are trained in and implement a variety of interventions that are scientific and research based to improve the reading skills of students with learning disabilities. The district uses the guidance of What Works Clearinghouse, a federally funded organization that analyzes the effectiveness of reading interventions, in the selection of materials that will assist students most effectively. A variety of student grouping strategies are utilized to promote the success of the programs.

Ways to help your child at home

- Read with your child every day
- Have books and magazines available for your child at home
- Encourage your child to keep a daily journal
- Set a regular time for doing homework
- Encourage your child to develop talents not related to reading to build self-confidence.
- Collaborate with your child's teacher
- Learn about reading difficulties and how to further support your child



Assessment in the FNSBSD

Students suspected of having a specific learning disability in the area of reading in the FNSBSD are assessed using standardized tests in some or all of the following areas:

Cognitive Ability

Oral Language Skills

Word Recognition

Decoding

Spelling

Phonological Processing

Fluency

Reading Comprehension

Vocabulary Knowledge

These areas of evaluation coincide with the recommendations of the International Dyslexia Association.

Dyslexia

Assessment and Services

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