



**Dyslexia Manual
2023-2024**

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Willis Independent School District Dyslexia Program Goals

Willis Independent School District strives to have an exemplary dyslexia program for students in grades K-12. Through a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) in which MTSS/RtI (Response to Intervention) is a component, WISD monitors students regularly utilizing formal and informal observations, student data, and other assessments, including but not limited to district screeners, district curriculum based assessments, writing samples and/or written evidence of curriculum-based activities.

The Willis Independent School District is committed to the development and implementation of a dyslexia program that addresses both the Texas Education Code at §38.003 and the Texas Administrative Code at §74.28.

Addressing WISD's commitment, the following reflects the goals of the district dyslexia program:

- Screen, refer and evaluate, students in grades K-12 who may be at-risk of dyslexia and related disorders;
- Provide instructional intervention options for students identified with dyslexia and related disorders;
- Provide staff development that includes:
 - Characteristics of dyslexia
 - Assessment of dyslexia
 - Intervention strategies and accommodations
- Provide a parent education program that includes:
 - Awareness of the characteristics of dyslexia and related disorders and information on testing and the educational diagnosis of dyslexia
 - Information of effective strategies and options for parents/ guardians to use at home to effectively communicate and help their child with dyslexia and related disorders
 - Information on state assessment accommodations

Objective: All campuses, through screeners, campus based assessments, and a MTSS/RtI process, will identify students with dyslexia and related disorders and provide appropriate, individualized services.

Definition and Characteristics of Dyslexia - Texas Education Code §38.003:

The student who struggles with reading and spelling often puzzles teachers and parents/ guardians. The student displays the ability to learn in the absence of print and receives the same classroom instruction that benefits most children; however, the student continues to struggle with some or all of the many facets of reading and spelling. This student may be a student with 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” includes disorders similar to or related to dyslexia, such as developmental auditory imperceptions, dysphasia, specific developmental dyslexia, developmental dysgraphia, and developmental spelling disability.

The International Dyslexia Association defines “dyslexia” in the following way:

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurological 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 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. These consequences are typically unexpected for the student’s age and educational level. These differences are not a result of language acquisition or such factors.

The following are the primary reading/spelling characteristics of dyslexia:

- Difficulty reading words in isolation
- Difficulty accurately decoding unfamiliar words
- Difficulty with oral reading (slow, inaccurate, or labored without prosody)
- Difficulty spelling

It is important to note that individuals demonstrate differences in degree of impairment and may not exhibit all the characteristics listed above.

The reading/spelling characteristics are most often associated with the following:

- Segmenting, blending, and manipulating sounds in words (phonemic awareness)
- Learning the names of letters and their associated sounds
- Holding information about sounds and words in memory (phonological memory)
- Rapidly recalling the names of familiar objects, colors, or letters of the alphabet (rapid naming)

Consequences of dyslexia may include the following:

- Variable difficulty with aspects of reading comprehension
- Variable difficulty with aspects of written language
- Limited vocabulary growth due to reduced reading experiences

Multi-Tiered Symptoms of Support (MTSS)/Response to Intervention (RtI)

- In Texas and throughout the country, there is a focus on MTSS/RtI or tiered intervention support as a vehicle for meeting the academic and behavioral needs of all students. Current federal legislation under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), calls for the use of universal assessments for early identification of struggling students before they fail. In fact, state law requires the use of early reading assessments that are built on substantial evidence of best practices. Carefully chosen, these assessments can give crucial information about a student's learning and can provide a basis for the tiered intervention model. Through tiered intervention supports, schools can document students' learning strengths and difficulties, provide supplemental instruction, and monitor reading achievement progress for students at risk for dyslexia or other reading difficulties.
- Regardless of the Response to Intervention supports in place, parents/ guardians always have the right to request a referral for assessment at any time through a Full and Individual Initial Evaluation (FIIE).

State and Federal Law Regarding Early Identification and Intervention Prior to Formal Evaluation

In accordance with TEC §28.006, Willis ISD administers early reading inventories and screening instruments in kindergarten, first, and second grades to determine a students' reading development and emerging comprehension skills. The law 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 sixth grade state reading assessment. In addition to the above grade levels, Willis ISD administers reading inventories to all students in grades 3-5 and grades 6 and 8 at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year.

Based on the reading instrument results, a student may be determined to be *at risk* for dyslexia and/or other reading difficulties. This information is provided to the student's parent/ guardian. In Willis ISD, the campus Intervention Support Team utilizes the "*Dyslexia Screener Letter*" document as a means of documentation and communication for both parents and school staff. This document is only one of the numerous ways in which our school campuses and teachers will continuously communicate the student's progress and/or lack of with parents/ guardians.

In addition to the notification letter, an accelerated (intensive) reading program that appropriately addresses and targets the specific nature of the individual student's reading difficulties may be implemented. The information from reading instruments administered under TEC§28.006 will be one source of information or accumulated data in deciding whether or not to recommend a student for assessment.

For all students the following sources of data may be used to assist in the determination of a needed assessment for dyslexia. These sources may include, but are not limited to: student performance in the classroom, a student's response to specific and targeted interventions provided to the student, performance on state and district mandated test(s), grades, a review of the student's grades, a historical review of a student's academic progress and areas of weakness, performance or curriculum based data in reading, writing and spelling, teacher/ parent/ guardian input, and work samples.

Data Gathering Procedures and Consideration of Evaluation

As a result of monitoring a student's progress or lack thereof within the components of reading, the teacher shares progress monitoring data and other relative data with the Campus Intervention Team. The committee may determine that additional data and/or documentation is needed to be gathered and utilized so that further action can be considered and/or determined. The academic history of each student will be provided to ensure the underachievement in a student suspected of having dyslexia is not due to lack of appropriate instruction in reading. This information should include data that demonstrates that the student was provided appropriate instruction and include data-based documentation of repeated evaluations of achievement at reasonable intervals (progress monitoring), reflecting formal evaluation of student progress during instruction.

Data Gathering: The following data collected by the teacher and the Campus Intervention Team committee will be used within the decision-making process of a student's academic progress. This will assist in determining what actions are needed to ensure a student's improved academic performance.

Cumulative Data

- Vision and hearing screening;
- Teacher reports of classroom concerns;
- Class and/or district reading assessments;
- Accommodations, MTSS/RtI Interventions and progress monitoring data provided by teacher(s);
- Attendance records
- Parent conference notes and input
- Samples of schoolwork applicable to academic concerns
- Academic progress reports (report cards)
- Speech and Language screening or services, if applicable
- Gifted/Talented assessments, if applicable
- Results of testing for Limited English Proficiency (Home Language Survey)
- State student assessment results and recommendations as described in TEC § 39.022
- Results of special education evaluation, if applicable
- Consideration of outside evaluations conducted, submitted by parent/ guardian
- Curriculum-based assessment measures (ie unit or module assessments)
- Instructional strategies provided and student's response to the instruction
- K-grade 2 reading instrument results as required in TEC §28.006
- 7th grade reading instrument results as required in TEC §28.006

- Progress Monitoring: This information collected should include data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals. This reflects progress monitoring of the student's performance.
- Data that supports the student received conventional (appropriate) instruction and that the difficulties are not primarily the result of socio-cultural factors which include language differences, irregular attendance, or lack of experiential background.

Dyslexia Evaluation Guidelines

Students enrolling in Willis ISD 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, limited response to supplemental and scientifically based reading instruction, teachers' input, and parent/ guardian input. Additionally, the appropriate time for assessing is early within a student's school career (19 TAC §74.28). Regardless of a student's age/ grade, if recommended for an assessment based on a review of the collection of data, the student will be assessed.

When formal evaluation is recommended for completion, Willis ISD follows the request for evaluation process described below. This process for the dyslexia evaluation follows IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Act) Guidelines. Once the evaluation is completed, a FIE: Full and Initial Individual Evaluation is presented to an ARD Committee: Admission, Review, and Dismissal Committee.

This committee will serve as the individuals who will make appropriate educational decisions for the student. If the student is determined to meet the necessary components that define the condition of dyslexia, the outcomes of programming will include a recommendation of special education eligibility, based on a Specific Learning Disability along with an identification of dyslexia and an individual education plan (IEP) for the student along with accommodations that will support the student's educational progress across all academic settings. Sources of referrals or requests for evaluation may include but are not limited to:

- parents/guardians
- school personnel

MTSS/ RtI Request for Dyslexia Evaluation

- All Dyslexia evaluations will go through an FIE (Full and Initial Individual Evaluation).
- This process includes ongoing communication with the student's parent/ guardian, as they must be notified prior to the request for evaluation being made. Once the request is made and documented through the MTSS/RtI committee data and concerns are shared with the campus Child Find contact, they will move the referral forward to the district office for approval or denial.
- The evaluation for dyslexia will be conducted and completed by a multidisciplinary group of professionals that will include evaluation specialists (Diagnostician and/or LSSP), along with campus based Dyslexia Specialist or teachers of Dyslexia Instruction. In collaboration with campus based staff and gathered data that has been submitted and collected, the evaluation is completed. Through this collaborative and multidisciplinary evaluation process, the student's evaluation is reported within an FIE Report.

Parent/ Guardian Request for Dyslexia Evaluation

A parent/ guardian may request to have his/her child evaluated by school staff for dyslexia or a related disorder. When a parent/ guardian requests the assessment to be completed, the campus MTSS/RtI committee will follow district Child Find guidelines by providing the request, data, and concerns to the campus Child Find contact, which will follow the guidance and timelines as defined within IDEA.

Timeline: A total of 15 school days from the date the school receives a written request.

- Evaluation is recommended: An informed decision is made by the campus Child Find contact to evaluate, based on a thorough review of the collected data. The parent/ guardian is contacted by the campus Child Find contact with the campus based decision to have the evaluation conducted, as the campus Child Find contact turns in the required documents/ data as defined within the guidelines of district expectations. Within the 15 day timeframe, the parent/ guardian is contacted by school evaluation staff to set up a mutual and agreeable time in which consent is obtained.
- Alternatively, after an informed data based decision is made and recommended by the Child Find contact that an evaluation is not educationally necessary; the parent/ guardian is notified by the campus Child Find contact that the student will not be assessed for Dyslexia and/or a related disorder. Along with this recommendation determined by the campus, the parent/guardian is given the necessary documents or guidance, as outlined within IDEA. This includes a *Copy of the Procedural Safeguards and Prior Written Notice: Notice of Refusal*.

Referral for Dyslexia Evaluation: Special Education Students

If a student is currently eligible for special education and exhibits the characteristics of dyslexia or related disorders and is then referred for assessment by the ARD committee, assessment procedures for students under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) will be followed.

- Current and historical data will be collected from teachers, parents, and district resources.
- Assessment data from prior special education assessments may be utilized, and/or additional assessment may be conducted by personnel trained in assessment to evaluate students for dyslexia and related disorders.
- Once the evaluation is completed, the FIIE: Full and Initial Individual Evaluation Report is presented to the ARD committee for further consideration.

Dyslexia Identified Transfer Students

Per Texas Education Agency guidelines: Newly enrolled or transfer students identified as having dyslexia or a related disorder from a previous district within Texas will be considered for eligibility within the district's program of multisensory based instruction. Once the student enrolls, **assessment records** will be requested by campus staff. Once the **evaluation reports have been obtained**, the campus will notify the Dyslexia Specialist, provide a copy for review and will receive further guidance.

Commensurate services to what the student received prior to enrollment shall be considered and/or provided once the campus is aware of the student's educational needs based on the established dyslexia.

Referral for Evaluation: Current students under Section 504

In accordance with HB 3928, all students receiving the evidence-based dyslexia program under Section 504 will be reviewed at their Section 504 Reevaluation meeting or sooner. During this meeting, discussion about the continued need for an evidenced-based dyslexia program will occur along with a discussion about a referral for a Full and Individual Initial Evaluation (FIIE). If the parent refuses consent for an FIIE, their child will no longer be eligible to receive an evidenced -based dyslexia program. The Texas

Education Agency expects all Section 504 meetings to be held prior to the end of the 2024-2025 school year. An Overview of the Special Education for Parents is provided to the parent.

Referral for Evaluation from MTSS/RtI Committee for Emergent Bilinguals

Emergent bilingual students include students served through a Bilingual or English as a Second Language program, as well as students designated as an emergent bilingual whose parent/ guardian have denied services. Since the identification and service delivery process for dyslexia must be aligned to the student's linguistic environment and educational background, involvement of the LPAC is required.

Required Additional Data Gathering

Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) documentation TEC 89.1220 (g, h, i) that is necessary when identifying EBs with dyslexia.

- Initial home language survey;
- Assessment related to identification for limited English proficiency (oral language proficiency tests and norm-referenced tests);
- Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) information for four language domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing);
- Linguistic instructional accommodations provided to address language needs;
- Type of language program model provided and language of instruction;
- Previous schooling in and outside of the United States.

Students who Struggle to Read in Their Native Language

Similar measures to previously discussed assessments, in the student's native language, are used. This may require that dyslexia personnel work with the bilingual staff to administer the measure and determine if student performance is lower than would be expected for the student's age/grade. Additional assessment of oral language proficiency should be completed for the dyslexia evaluation due to the importance of the information for consideration in relation to academic challenges, planning the assessment, and interpreting assessment results.

Required Additional Assessment:

- 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" needs to be completed in both languages to the appropriate extent.

Considerations for Native English Speakers in a Dual Language Environment

English dominant students participating in a dual language two-way immersion program are exposed to a second language (Spanish) for their core academic instruction. These students will develop their skills in Spanish over time in the following sequence: listening, speaking, reading, and then writing. Students may need linguistic instructional accommodations in the classroom.

Evaluation Tests and Measures

The student is assessed for dyslexia using appropriate tests and assessment measures by a trained

professional as outlined in [The Dyslexia Handbook \(Texas Education Agency, 2021\)](#). After completion of the assessments, a report will be compiled summarizing all scores, observations, and recommendations of the assessor. The following are required areas of assessment in determining whether a student has dyslexia.

1. Academic Assessment

- Letter Knowledge (name and associated sound)
- Reading words in isolation
- Decoding unfamiliar words accurately
- Reading fluency (rate, accuracy, and prosody are assessed)
- Reading comprehension
- Spelling

2. Cognitive Processes

- Phonological/phonemic awareness
- Rapid Naming of symbols or objects

3. Additional Areas for Consideration

- Vocabulary
- Listening Comprehension
- Verbal expression
- Written expression
- Handwriting
- Memory for letter or symbol sequences (orthographic processing)
- Mathematical calculation/reasoning
- Phonological memory
- Verbal working memory
- Processing Speed

Dyslexia Criteria and Identification

The identification of eligibility under dyslexia is made by the ARD committee. When considering the condition of dyslexia, In addition to required ARD committee members, the committee should also include members who have specific knowledge of:

- the reading process,
- dyslexia and related disorders, and
- dyslexia instruction.

The committee must first determine if a student’s difficulties in the areas of reading and spelling reflect a pattern of evidence for the characteristics of dyslexia with unexpectedly low performance for the student’s age and educational level in some or all of the following areas listed on the template below.

A determination must first be made regarding whether a student's difficulties in the areas of reading and spelling reflect a pattern of evidence for the primary characteristics of dyslexia with unexpectedly low performance for the student's age and educational level in some or all of the following areas:

- Reading words in isolation
- Decoding unfamiliar words accurately and automatically
- Reading fluency for connected text (rate and/or accuracy and/or prosody)
- Spelling (an isolated difficulty in spelling would not be sufficient to identify dyslexia)

If the student's difficulties are **UNEXPECTED** in relation to other abilities, the ARD committee must then determine if the student has dyslexia. For EBs, an LPAC representative must be included on the ARD committee. The list of questions below must be considered when making a determination regarding dyslexia.

Questions for the ARD Committee to Determine the Identification of Dyslexia

- Does the data show the following characteristics of dyslexia?
 - Difficulty with accurate and/or fluent word reading
 - Poor spelling skills
 - Poor decoding ability
- Do these difficulties (typically) result from a deficit in the phonological component of language? (Cognitive Processes) (Please be mindful that average phonological scores alone do not rule out dyslexia.)
- Are these difficulties **UNEXPECTED** for the student's age in relation to the student's other abilities and provision of effective classroom instruction?(adequate intelligence, not average)
- **Findings and Recommendations:** Reported within the FIE will be summarizations, conclusions, and/or recommendations on the basis of the report findings. This may include an identification of Dyslexia and/or a Specific Learning Disability within the reading area, or findings that the student does not meet the criteria to be identified as having the condition of Dyslexia or a Specific Learning Disability. Based upon the student's educational need, the ARD committee may refer the student for eligibility under Section 504 for dyslexia.

Re-evaluation for Dyslexia: As defined within TEC §38.003(b-1), the following is stated when in consideration of a *re-evaluation* for dyslexia: Unless otherwise provided by law, a student determined to have dyslexia during testing under Subsection (a) or accommodated because of dyslexia may not be retested for dyslexia for the purpose of reassessing the student's need for accommodations until the district reevaluates the information obtained from previous testing of the student.

Program Description & Components

Once it has been determined that a student has dyslexia, Willis ISD shall provide an appropriate instructional program for the student (TEC §38.003). The following procedures are generally followed:

- Instructional decisions for a student with dyslexia are made by the ARD Committee/ Section

504 Committee that is knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation information, and instructional components and approaches for students with dyslexia.

- Willis ISD shall purchase an evidence based reading program or develop their own for students with dyslexia and related disorders as long as the program is characterized by the descriptors found in the Texas Dyslexia Handbook 2021 (see Critical, Evidence-based Components of Dyslexia Instruction).
- Willis ISD will provide each identified student access at his/her campus to the services of a teacher trained in dyslexia and related disorders.
- Parents/guardians of students eligible under the Section 504 Rehabilitation Act or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), will be informed of all services and options available to the student under that federal law.
- Teachers who provide the appropriate instruction for students with dyslexia will be trained in the professional development activities specified by the district and/or campus decision making committee. As stated in 19 TAC, §74.28, the teachers who provide appropriate instruction for students with dyslexia must be trained and be prepared to implement instructional strategies that utilize individualized, intensive, multisensory, phonetic methods and a variety of writing and spelling components. They may serve as consultants in the area of dyslexia and related disorders to general education, intervention specialists, and special education teachers.
- If the student with dyslexia is found eligible for special education services in the area of reading, and the ARD committee determines that the student’s instructional needs for reading are most appropriately met in a special education placement, the student’s individualized education program (IEP) must include appropriate reading instruction. Appropriate reading instruction includes the components and delivery of dyslexia instruction listed in The Dyslexia Handbook – Revised 2021, pgs. 40-43. If a student has previously met special education eligibility, the ARD committee should include goals that reflect the need for dyslexia instruction in the IEP and determine the least restrictive environment for delivering the student’s dyslexia intervention.

Dyslexia Programs Overview

Program Name and Purpose	Reading by Design	Really Great Reading	Esperanza
	In WISD’s Tailored Specialized Dyslexia Intervention Program, Volumes 1-4 teach letter sounds, phoneme awareness, and linking letters and phonemes to writing and reading from decodable texts to reinforce emergent literacy skills necessary for successful decoding.	WISD’s Really Great Reading program is a program that can be used for all grade levels. The primary focus is on preventing and remediating decoding weaknesses in students. Their approach to reading instruction is research-based,	Esperanza is a Spanish, multimodality, structured language program for our spanish speaking students in WISD. It is a comprehensive intervention program for students identified with dyslexia. This program addresses phonological awareness, phonics,

	<p>Many factors contribute to a student’s ability to read at “grade level” as reading levels are subjective. Some of these factors are: the severity of a student’s dyslexia, the age at which intervention began, comorbidities, Tier 1 classroom instruction, etc. Due to the variety of impactful factors, not all students will be reading on the same level after completing the dyslexia program (this may be above or below “grade level”).</p> <p>While our program has a heavy focus on foundational skills it also incorporates many of the components of language comprehension such as syntax, verbal reasoning, and structure. Addressing both foundational skills and language skills along with high-quality Tier 1 literacy instruction and ample opportunity for supported and independent reading practice, students with dyslexia can achieve high levels of reading success.</p>	<p>interactive, explicit, structured, and multisensory. Lessons are designed to not only learn to read but enjoy the learning process. Automaticity in decoding is a critical skill for proficient reading of texts with strong comprehension. The Really Great Reading program addresses this skill with scaffolding instruction to build strong readers.</p>	<p>fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension skills while incorporating each of the components of language throughout the lesson cycle. The Esperanza materials promote biliteracy as many of the phonics concepts utilize keywords that are cognates with English. For example, B, bate /b/ which correlates with English B, bat, /b/. The Esperanza program materials are presented in authentic and academic Spanish. The program is not a translation of another program.</p>
<p>Research Approach</p>	<p>An Individualized Literacy Intervention is a systematic, multisensory approach aligned with research-based practices for developing literacy. This intervention follows an intensive, explicit, and cumulative design for remediation of reading and writing skills at all grade levels. These components meet the requirements in the Texas Dyslexia Handbook for critical, evidence-based components of instruction and the delivery of instruction.</p>	<p>An Individualized Literacy Intervention is a systematic, multisensory approach aligned with research-based practices for developing literacy. This intervention follows an intensive, explicit, and cumulative design for remediation of reading and writing skills at all grade levels. These components meet the requirements in the Texas Dyslexia Handbook for critical, evidence-based components of instruction and the delivery of instruction.</p>	<p>An individualized literacy Spanish multi-sensory, structured approach for reading, writing and spelling. The Esperanza program addresses the five components of effective reading instruction identified by the National Reading Panel’s research: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and reading comprehension.</p>

Lesson Components and Approximate Times	Not ALL components are in every lesson in every Volume. Phonological Awareness: 1-2 minutes Alphabet: 3-4 minutes Review Decks: 3-5 minutes New Learning: 5-10 minutes Reading Practice: 5-10 minutes Handwriting Practice: 3-5 minutes Spelling Practice: 7-10 minutes Extended Reading Practice: 5 minutes Components of Language: 5 minutes	Blast Letter sounds/sight words Phonemic Awareness Phonics Instruction Student Practice Wrap-up HD Word Oral Reading Phonemic Awareness Phonics Instruction Student Practice Wrap-Up	Review (1 minute) Phonological Awareness/Morphology (5-8 minutes) Alphabetic principle (5-8 minutes) Reading Deck (3 minutes) Spelling Deck(3 minutes) New concept (5 minutes) Reading(8), Writing (5) and Spelling Practice (5) Expression (5 minutes) Listening Comprehension (5 minutes)
Full Lessons and Time Frames	Each lesson is designed to take anywhere from 30-60 minutes to complete; most often it takes 45 minutes	Each lesson is designed to take 30 minutes to complete a lesson.	Each lesson is designed to take anywhere from 35-60 minutes to complete.
Group Sizes	Elementary - up to 6 students Secondary - up to 8 students	Elementary - up to 6 students Secondary - up to 6 students	Elementary - up to 6 students
Student Placement	Complete Mastery Check(s) to properly place students in the RbD Dyslexia group.	Decoding Surveys Oral Reading Fluency	Complete Esperanza Screening Protocol to properly place students.
How Often?	4 days per week - 30 minutes each class	4 days a week - 30 minutes each class or at the discretion of the ARD committee based upon the needs of the student.	4 days per week - 30 minutes each class

Dyslexia Placement Guidance

IDEA 2004 requires that public schools (districts and charters) serve students with disabilities with their nondisabled peers, to the maximum extent appropriate (34 CFR 300.114 (a) (2) (i). This requirement specifically includes students in public school or private institutions or other care facilities. Additionally, schools must ensure that a student with a disability is removed from the general educational environment (including removal to separate schools or special classes) **only when the nature of severity of the student’s disability is such that he/she cannot be educated in general education classes**, even with the use of supplementary aids and services (34 CFR 300.114 (a) (2).

HB 3928: This Dyslexia Bill became effective on June 10, 2023. For additional information, please check out the FAQs: Dyslexia Evaluation, Identification, & Instruction

	Dyslexia with a “program”	Dyslexia with a “modified program”	Dyslexia without a “program”
Who	Special education students	Special education students not progressing in the Reading by Design program but would benefit from a modified program	Special education students that have significant delays and/or additional disability areas that prevent them from being ready for a reading “program” No letters/sounds/etc
What program	Reading by Design implemented by Dyslexia Specialist trained in the program	Really Great Reading implemented by special education teacher trained in the program	Integrated into Resources and IEP Goals Phonics/Phonemes
Frequency & Duration	M - Th (30 mins.) Pull-out with Dyslexia Specialist Aligned to dyslexia goal (s)and critical need(s) of the student	M - Th (30 mins.) or at the discretion of the ARD committee Aligned to dyslexia goal(s) and critical need(s) of the student	Decided by the ARD committee Aligned to the reading goal and critical needs of the student
Schedule Page	Reflect 4x per week for 30 minutes on ARD schedule page as dyslexia in sped setting	Reflect frequency and duration per ARD committee decision on schedule page as dyslexia in sped setting	Reflect frequency and duration per ARD committee decision on schedule page in sped setting Minutes align to goals on schedule page for ELAR Dyslexia services required - NO Dyslexia supplement page in dyslexia notes section state “Student will receive instruction on reading deficits with a variety of instructional tools”

ARDC should consider addressing the critical, evidence-based components of dyslexia instruction (phonological awareness, sound symbol association, syllabication, orthography, morphology, syntax, reading comprehension and reading fluency).

Instructional Services

Once a student is identified as meeting criteria for a student with dyslexia, there are several courses of action available for use depending on the needs and accommodations of the individual student.

- Assign appropriate accommodations based on the student’s unique need for the disability of dyslexia. Accommodations must be provided based on current screening and individual student needs.
- Instruction in the regular classroom with accommodations by the regular education teacher
- Instruction by a Dyslexia Specialist with specially designed dyslexia instruction (SDI) along with necessary accommodations followed by all teachers that service the student.
- Instruction by SpEd teacher trained in the district’s Specially Designed Instruction services for dyslexia.
- Instruction by SpEd teacher focusing on student’s individual reading deficits with a variety of instructional tools.

Components of Pull-Out Instruction

The intervention program should be offered in a small class setting and include reading, writing, and spelling as appropriate for each student. 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:

- **Phonological awareness**—“Phonological awareness is the understanding of the internal sound structure of words. A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a given language that can be recognized as being distinct from other sounds. An important aspect of phonological awareness is the ability to segment spoken words into their component phonemes [phonemic awareness].”(Birsh, 2018, p. 26).
- **Sound-symbol association**—Sound-symbol association is the knowledge of the various speech sounds in any language to the corresponding letter or letter combinations that represent those speech sounds. The mastery of sound-symbol association (alphabetic principle) is the foundation for the ability to read (decode) and spell (encode) (Birsh, 2018, p. 26). “Explicit phonics refers to an organized program in which these sound symbol correspondences are taught systematically” (Berninger & Wolf, 2009, p. 53).
- **Syllabication**—“A syllable is a unit of oral or written language with one vowel sound. Instruction must include the six basic types of syllables in the English language; closed, open, vowel-consonant-e, r-controlled, vowel pair (or vowel team), and final stable syllable. Syllable division rules must be directly taught in relation to the word structure” (Birsh, 2018, p. 26).
- **Orthography**—Orthography is the written spelling patterns and rules in a given language. Students must be taught the regularity and irregularity of the orthographic patterns of a language in an explicit and systematic manner. The instruction should be integrated with phonology and sound symbol knowledge.
- **Morphology**—“Morphology is the study of how morphemes are combined to form words. A

morpheme is the smallest unit of meaning in the language” (Birsh, 2018, p. 26).

- **Syntax**—“Syntax is the set of principles that dictate sequence and function of words in a sentence in order to convey meaning. This includes grammar, sentence variation, and the mechanics of language” (Birsh, 2018, p. 26).
- **Reading comprehension**—Reading comprehension is the process of extracting and constructing meaning through the interaction of the reader with the text to be comprehended and the specific purpose for reading. The reader’s skill in reading comprehension depends upon the development of accurate and fluent word recognition, oral language development (especially vocabulary and listening comprehension), background knowledge, use of appropriate strategies to enhance comprehension and repair it if it breaks down, and the reader’s interest in what he or she is reading and motivation to comprehend its meaning (Birsh, 2018, p.14; Snow, 2002).
- **Reading fluency**—“Reading fluency is the ability to read text with sufficient speed and accuracy to support comprehension” (Moats & Dakin, 2008, p. 52). Fluency also includes prosody. Teachers can help promote fluency with several interventions that have proven successful in helping students with fluency (e.g., repeated readings, word lists, and choral reading of passages) (Henry, 2010, p. 104).

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

- **Simultaneous, multisensory (VAKT)**—“Teaching is done using all learning pathways in the brain (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile) simultaneously in order to enhance memory and learning” (Birsh, 2018, p. 26). “Children are actively engaged in learning language concepts and other information, often by using their hands, arms, mouths, eyes, and whole bodies while learning” (Moats & Dakin, 2008, p. 58). 43
- **Systematic and cumulative**—“Multisensory language instruction requires that the organization of material follow order of the language. The sequence must begin with the easiest concepts and most basic elements and progress methodically to more difficult material. Each step must also be based on [elements] already learned. Concepts taught must be systematically reviewed to strengthen memory” (Birsh, 2018, p. 26).
- **Explicit instruction**—“Explicit instruction is explained and demonstrated by the teacher one language and print concept at a time, rather than left to discovery through incidental encounters with information. Poor readers do not learn that print represents speech simply from exposure to books or print” (Moats & Dakin, 2008, p. 58). Explicit Instruction is “an approach that involves direct instruction: The teacher demonstrates the task and provides guided practice with immediate corrective feedback before the student attempts the task independently” (Mather & Wendling, 2012, p. 326).
- **Diagnostic teaching to automaticity**—“The teacher must be adept at prescriptive or individualized teaching. The teaching plan is based on careful and [continual] assessment of the individual’s needs. The content presented must be mastered to the degree of

automaticity” (Birsh, 2018, p. 27). “This teacher knowledge is essential for guiding the content and emphasis of instruction for the individual student” (Moats & Dakin, 2008, p. 58). “When a reading skill becomes automatic (direct access without conscious awareness), it is performed quickly in an efficient manner” (Berninger & Wolf, 2009, p. 70).

- **Synthetic instruction**—“Synthetic instruction presents the parts of the language and then teaches how the parts work together to form a whole” (Birsh, 2018, p. 27).
- **Analytic instruction**—“Analytic instruction presents the whole and teaches how this can be broken into its component parts” (Birsh, 2018, p. 27).

Dyslexia Program Monitoring Status

Consideration to move to monitor status will be given based on the student’s progress in the dyslexia program and/or successful completion of the district’s dyslexia program(s), as measured by mastery checks completed at regular intervals. Additional criteria to move to monitor status may include but is not limited to: present levels of student performance in the areas of reading fluency, accuracy, and comprehension, grades from progress reports or report cards, state assessment data, benchmarks, teacher and/or parent/ guardian observations/checklists, currently provided accommodations and individual dyslexia program progress data.

Parent/ Guardian Refusal or Revocation of Direct Dyslexia Services

If the parent/ guardian refuses dyslexia services for a special education student, the ARD committee will complete the Prior Written Notice and document this request in the ARD minutes. The parent/ guardian must be in attendance at the meetings to refuse services.

Monitoring of Students: General Education and Special Education

General Education/ Section 504 Students:

General education students served under Section 504 in grades K-12, who have completed / transitioned from the Willis ISD dyslexia instructional program, will be monitored by the campus 504 coordinator, student’s teachers, and parents.

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

- progress reports
- report cards
- state assessment data
- teacher reports/checklists
- parent/ guardian reports/checklists
- counselor reports
- other program reports
- additional assessment data

Special Education Students:

Special education students who have completed/ transitioned from the instructional program will be

monitored by special education teachers and staff, as defined within the IEP and ARD process.

Procedures for Students Presenting Outside Independent Evaluations for Dyslexia Services

For students whose parents/ guardians present evidence of outside independent evaluations addressing dyslexia, the outside evaluation (assessment) must:

- have been administered by an individual certified to conduct an educational evaluation and knowledgeable about dyslexia;
- be considered valid and comparable to the evaluation standards that Willis ISD would conduct; and
- comply with the requirements set forth in Section 504 and the TEA requirements specified in TEA's, *The Dyslexia Handbook – Revised 2021*.

Additionally, TEA requirements as outlined in *House Bill 3928 FAQ # 10* has identified certain expectations in regards to the referral process for a dyslexia assessment and/or eligibility. An outside independent evaluation is considered a single source of data. IDEA requires that data must be provided from a variety of sources in determining a child's eligibility for services. Case law allows the District to maintain the right to conduct their own evaluation.

Dyslexia Specialist Role

Texas does not have a certification requirement specific to teachers providing intervention to students identified with dyslexia. School districts must consider the needs of students and the qualification of teachers. It is important that teachers (general or special education) who provide instruction for students with dyslexia must have training in critical, evidence-based components, and delivery of dyslexia instruction.

Roles of Dyslexia Specialist:

- Deliver instructional reading program for identified dyslexic students with fidelity. Completing "other duties as assigned" by campus/district administration shall NOT prevent the Dyslexia Specialist from providing their assigned dyslexia interventions. This is a compliance/FAPE issue.
- In the dyslexia intervention program, maintain a teacher/student ratio not to exceed 1:8.
- In the SpEd dyslexia intervention program, maintain a teacher/student ratio not to exceed 1:8.
- Administer and gather mastery checks and instructional data to monitor program effectiveness and student growth in the area of reading.
- Communicate with student's teachers, administrators and parents/ guardians as needed regarding student's progress.
- Maintain all necessary student documentation and attendance records required by the district

and the dyslexia program.

- Provide parent/ guardian awareness and support through district events. Willis ISD assists parents/ guardians in helping their student's develop skills that support life-long learning.
- Attend professional development each year to stay abreast of current research and development in dyslexia and research-based reading programs as assigned by the District.
- Assist in organizing and/or conducting trainings at their assigned campus to support and ensure general classroom teacher knowledge on dyslexia.
- Attend 504/ARD meetings for current and new students when applicable.
- Comply with all state and federal laws as well as district policies.

Dyslexia Parent Awareness – Legal Requirements

Texas Administrative Code 19 TAC 74.28 (I)

Each school district and open-enrollment charter school shall provide a parent/ guardian an education program for parents/guardians of students with dyslexia and related disorders. This program must include:

- awareness and characteristics of dyslexia and related disorders;
- information on testing and diagnosis of dyslexia and related disorders;
- information on effective strategies for teaching students with dyslexia and related disorders;
- information on qualifications of those delivering services to students with dyslexia and related disorders;
- awareness of information on accommodations and modifications, especially those allowed for standardized testing;
- information on eligibility, evaluation requests, and services available under IDEA and the Rehabilitation Act, §504, and information on the MTSS/RtI process; and contact information for the relevant regional and/or school district or open-enrollment charter school specialists.
- School districts and open-enrollment charter schools shall provide to parents/ guardians of children suspected to have dyslexia or a related disorder a copy or a link to the electronic version of the "Dyslexia Handbook: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders."

Help your child understand the nature of his/her difficulty:

- Read books or view videos about dyslexia.

- Emphasize the child’s abilities instead of “disabilities.”

Parent/ Guardian Suggestions for Student Success:

- Establish good study habits for the child. Consider a regular study schedule and a quiet study environment to address possible interference. Monitor nightly study to verify work is progressing or is completed.
- Work closely with your child’s teacher. Regular communication between parent/ guardian and teacher is necessary.
- Reading with your child 15 minutes a day or using audiobooks to read along with.
- Help your child develop a positive attitude and understanding of self-worth.
- Help family members and others to recognize and understand your child’s strengths and challenges.

For more information concerning Dyslexia and related disorder and TEA Rules and Regulations please visit Region 6 Education Service Center at https://esc6.net/377221_4

Helpful Resources for Dyslexia

Websites:

- **Understood.org** - www.understood.org
- **International Dyslexia Association** - www.dyslexiaida.org
- **Houston Branch of the International Dyslexia Association**
www.HoustonIDA.org
- **Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity** - www.dyslexia.yale.edu
- **Texas Dyslexia Handbook** [Texas-Dyslexia-Handbook](#)
- **WISD’s Dyslexia Plan** - www.willisisd.org (Go to Departments —>Special Programs—>Dyslexia)

Books:

Overcoming Dyslexia, by Sally Shawitz, M.D. (Vintage Books, 2003)