



Keller ISD Dyslexia Handbook

Mission Statement

The mission of the Keller ISD Dyslexia Department is to embrace all learners and empower them to realize their potential.

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Definitions and Characteristics of Dyslexia

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 IDA Board of Directors, November 12, 2002

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>

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.

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

The Texas Dyslexia Handbook 2024 Update, pages 7-8

It is important for the campus specialist to be knowledgeable regarding the definitions and characteristics of dyslexia. The specialist should be prepared to provide information and resources to families for educational support. Additionally, the specialist must provide dyslexia training to certified staff members on their campus at least once per school year. The specialist should educate staff to look for student behaviors that could indicate dyslexia. The state handbook provides a list of characteristics by grade level as shown below.

Kindergarten and First Grade

- Difficulty breaking words into smaller parts, or syllables (e.g., “baseball” can be pulled apart into “base” “ball” or “napkin” can be pulled apart into “nap” “kin”)
- Difficulty identifying and manipulating sounds in syllables (e.g., “man” sounded out as /m/ /ă/ /n/)
- Difficulty remembering the names of letters and recalling their corresponding sounds
- Difficulty decoding single words (reading single words in isolation)
- Difficulty spelling words the way they sound (phonetically) or remembering letter sequences in very common words seen often in print (e.g., “sed” for “said”)

Second and Third Grade

Many of the previously described behaviors remain problematic along with the following:

- Difficulty recognizing common sight words (e.g., “to,” “said,” “been”)
- Difficulty decoding single words
- Difficulty recalling the correct sounds for letters and letter patterns in reading
- Difficulty connecting speech sounds with appropriate letter or letter combinations and omitting letters in words for spelling (e.g., “after” spelled “eftr”)
- Difficulty reading fluently (e.g., reading is slow, inaccurate, and/or without expression)
- Difficulty decoding unfamiliar words in sentences using knowledge of phonics
- Reliance on picture clues, story theme, or guessing at words
- Difficulty with written expression

Fourth Grade through Sixth Grade

Many of the previously described behaviors remain problematic along with the following:

- Difficulty reading aloud (e.g., fear of reading aloud in front of classmates)
- Avoidance of reading (particularly for pleasure)
- Difficulty reading fluently (e.g., reading is slow, inaccurate and/or without expression)
- Difficulty decoding unfamiliar words in sentences using knowledge of phonics
- Acquisition of less vocabulary due to reduced independent reading

- Use of less complicated words in writing that are easier to spell than more appropriate words (e.g., “big” instead of “enormous”)
- Reliance on listening rather than reading for comprehension

Middle and High School

Many of the previously described behaviors remain problematic along with the following:

- Difficulty with the volume of reading and written work
- Frustration with the amount of time required and energy expended for reading
- Difficulty reading fluently (e.g., reading is slow, inaccurate, and/or without expression)
- Difficulty decoding unfamiliar words in sentences using knowledge of phonics
- Difficulty with written assignments
- Tendency to avoid reading (particularly for pleasure)
- Difficulty learning a foreign language

The Texas Dyslexia Handbook 2024 Update, pages 9-10

Screening

In 2017, the 85th Texas Legislature passed House Bill (HB) 1886, amending Texas Education Code (TEC) §38.003, Screening and Treatment for Dyslexia, to require that all kindergarten and first-grade public school students be screened for dyslexia and related disorders. Additionally, the law requires that all students beyond first grade be screened or tested as appropriate.

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Grade	What	When	Who
Kindergarten	Universal Screening	EOY	Classroom Teacher
First Grade	Universal Screening	May begin BOY and conclude by MOY January 31.	Classroom Teacher

The following is a list of behaviors that may be observed during the screening and should be documented.

- Lack of automaticity
- Difficulty sounding out words left to right
- Guessing
- Self-correcting
- Inability to focus on reading
- Avoidance behavior

Universal Screening and Data Review for Reading Risk

In kindergarten and first grade, universal screening for reading and dyslexia is administered as required by TEC §28.006 and §38.003(a)

- Kindergarten students must be administered a reading instrument at the beginning of the year (BOY), and may be administered a reading instrument at middle of year (MOY), and end of year (EOY)
- Kindergarten students must be screened for dyslexia at the end of the school year.
- First grade students must be administered a reading instrument at BOY and may be administered a reading instrument at MOY, and EOY
- First grade students must be screened for dyslexia not later than January 31.

Does the screener show the student MAY be at risk for reading difficulties?

NO

Continue grade level, evidence-based core reading instruction. (Tier 1)

YES

Collect and review quantitative and qualitative data on the student
(See Figures 2.3 and 2.4)

Does the analysis show that the student exhibits characteristics of dyslexia?

NO

Continue grade level, evidence-based core reading instruction (Tier 1) and provide any other appropriate tiered interventions.

YES

Seek parental consent for a Full Individual Initial Evaluation (FIIIE) and follow all required procedures, including giving parents the required Overview of Special Education for Parents form, and, if the school receives consent, conduct the FIIIE within 45 school days, while continuing to provide grade level, evidence-based core reading instruction (Tier 1) and providing appropriate tiered interventions. The ARD committee (including the parent) meets to review the results of the FIIIE.

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Evaluation and Identification

The pathway for identification of dyslexia is through a Full Individual and Initial Evaluation (FIIE). The student should continue to receive core instruction and appropriate tiered interventions while the process is being completed.

An individualized evaluation includes formal and informal data that will be used to determine if a student demonstrates a pattern that indicates dyslexia. The student must be evaluated for all areas of suspected disabilities.

When the school suspects a student has dyslexia, they must provide parents with the TEA form explaining rights under IDEA, which may be in addition to those under Section 504. Parents will be provided Prior Written Notice (PWN), Notice of Procedural Safeguards, Overview of Special Education for Parents form, and the opportunity to provide written consent to evaluate.

A student's academic history will provide critical information relevant to the evaluation. Campus staff should collect data to provide a comprehensive review. The involvement of the LPAC committee is required when evaluating emergent bilingual (EB) students.

The evaluation must be completed within 45 school days.

When reviewing data, campus teams should consider the data from Figure 3.7 of the state handbook.

Figure 3.7. Questions to Determine the Identification of Dyslexia
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do the data show the following characteristics of dyslexia?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 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? (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?

The Texas Dyslexia Handbook 2024 Update, pages 33-34

The ARD committee must determine if a student's reading and spelling difficulties reflect a pattern of evidence of dyslexia. The committee will examine the student's data to determine if the student exhibits weaknesses in reading and spelling that are unexpected in relation to the student's other abilities, effective instruction, and all other factors that impact learning. One single indicator may not be used as evidence of unexpectedness. It must be based on a preponderance of informal and formal data. The campus dyslexia specialist should be included in the ARD committee whenever initial or continued eligibility for dyslexia is considered. The specialist participating in the ARD must sign into Frontline to document participation in the student's individualized education program (IEP).

Campus specialists should collaborate with special education professionals to ensure completion of the student's present level of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP) and measurable IEP goals.

The ARD committee determines if a student has dyslexia and the need for special education and related services. The identification of dyslexia meets the criterion for a specific learning disability (SLD) and should be noted as an identified SLD in evaluation and IEP documentation. When the ARD committee determines a student has dyslexia and needs specially designed instruction, the student meets the two prongs of special education eligibility. Evidence-based dyslexia instruction is considered specially designed instruction. The ARD committee determines the services for the student. The IEP must include appropriate reading instruction. Appropriate instruction includes the components and delivery of evidence-based dyslexia instruction.

If it is determined that a student with dyslexia does not need dyslexia instruction, the student may receive accommodations under Section 504. The Section 504 committee should use the FIIE to determine a student's plan. This applies only to students not needing dyslexia instruction. A student needing dyslexia instruction would be served under IDEA because evidence-based dyslexia instruction is specially designed instruction.

Identification of Students with Dyslexia Grades K-12

Is the student suspected of having dyslexia?

Yes

Collect quantitative and qualitative data. Does the data reflect the student shows characteristics of dyslexia?

No

Continue Tier 1 instruction and provide appropriate tiered intervention.

Yes

Does parent give consent for a Full Individual and Initial Evaluation (FIIIE)?

No

Continue Tier 1 instruction and appropriate tiered interventions. Consider a Section 504 evaluation.

Yes

A multidisciplinary team conducts evaluation. Does the evaluation data indicate dyslexia?

No

Yes

Eligibility is determined by the ARD committee. If the student has dyslexia and needs evidence-based dyslexia instruction, the student is eligible for special education services.

Dyslexia Instruction and Specialist Responsibilities

Evidence-Based Dyslexia Instruction

Evidence-based dyslexia instruction provides multi-sensory structured literacy instruction for students with dyslexia. The instruction is explicit, systematic, and intentional in approach. The instruction is delivered in a small group setting. Evidence-based dyslexia instruction should be—

- effective for students with dyslexia;
- taught by an appropriately trained instructor
- implemented with fidelity.

Evidence-based dyslexia programs are considered specially designed instruction (SDI). The provision of services must follow IDEA requirements. Dyslexia instruction is only available to students served under IDEA. When making instructional decisions for a student with dyslexia, ARD committees must first consider an evidence-based dyslexia program taught with fidelity. The ARD committee should only consider deviations from a program's fidelity when data collection and the student's IEP clearly indicate the need for more intensive or supplemental support.

Multisensory Teaching Approach

Dyslexia instruction should incorporate explicit, systematic teaching in phonological awareness, sound-symbol association, syllabication, orthography, morphology, syntax, reading comprehension and reading fluency. The interventions should be simultaneous and multisensory, systematic, and cumulative. It should include explicit instruction and diagnostic teaching to automaticity. This includes both synthetic and analytic instruction. Providers of Dyslexia Instruction (PDI) must have documented dyslexia training. Campus dyslexia specialists fulfill these requirements by implementing the Multisensory Teaching Approach (MTA). The specialist must adhere to the following guidelines:

- It is recommended that all students begin at the beginning of MTA with KIT 1
- Provide dyslexia instruction as outlined in the student's IEP
- MTA Mastery Checks should be administered upon completion of each kit

Dysgraphia

Texas state law requires districts and charter schools to identify students who have dyslexia and related disorders. Texas Education Code §38.003 identifies the following examples of related disorders: developmental auditory imperception, dysphasia, specific developmental dyslexia, developmental dysgraphia, and developmental spelling disability.

Definition and Characteristics of Dysgraphia

Dysgraphia is 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). Secondary consequences may include problems with spelling and written expression. The difficulty is not solely due to a lack of instruction and is not associated with other developmental or neurological conditions that involve motor impairment.

The characteristics of dysgraphia include the following:

- 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
- Heavy pressure and hand fatigue
- Slow writing and copying with legible or illegible handwriting

Additional consequences of dysgraphia may also include:

- Difficulty with unedited written spelling
- Low volume of written output as well as problems with other aspects of written expression

Dysgraphia is not:

- Evidence of a damaged motor nervous system
- Part of a developmental disability that has fine motor deficits (e.g., intellectual disability, autism, cerebral palsy)
- Secondary to a medical condition (e.g., meningitis, significant head trauma, brain trauma)
- Association with generalized developmental motor or coordination difficulties (Developmental Coordination Disorder)
- Impaired spelling or written expression with typical handwriting (legibility and rate)

The Texas Dyslexia Handbook 2024 Update, pages 55-56

Procedures for Evaluation

The pathway for identification of dysgraphia is through a Full Individual and Initial Evaluation (FIIIE). This will be handled by the campus diagnostician. When dysgraphia is identified, the ARD committee

must determine if the student is eligible under IDEA as a student with a specific learning disability. A student with dysgraphia is eligible for services under IDEA when special education services are needed because of the dysgraphia. If the student is found eligible for special education, the student's IEP must include appropriate handwriting instruction. The ARD committee is responsible for instructional decisions for IDEA eligible students with dysgraphia.

If the student does not require specialized instruction, the student may receive appropriate accommodations under Section 504.

Delivery of Instruction

Content should be delivered in a way that is consistent with the principles of effective intervention including:

- Simultaneous, multisensory (VAKT-visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile)
- Systematic and cumulative
- Explicit instruction
- Diagnostic teaching to automaticity

Instructional Accommodations for Students with Dysgraphia

The following list provides examples of possible classroom accommodations that may benefit students with dysgraphia:

- Allow more time for written tasks including note taking, copying, and tests
- Reduce the length requirements of written assignments
- Provide copies of notes or assign a note taking buddy to assist with filling in missing information
- Allow the student to audio record important assignments and/or take oral tests
- Assist student with developing logical steps to complete a writing assignment instead of all at once
- Allow use of technology (e.g., speech to text software, etc.)
- Allow the student to use cursive or manuscript, whichever is most legible and efficient
- Allow the student to use graph paper for math, or to turn lined paper sideways, to help with lining up columns of numbers
- Offer an alternative to a written project such as an oral report, dramatic presentation, or visual media project

The Texas Dyslexia Handbook 2024 Update, pages 66-67

ASSURANCE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

Keller ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, and also provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups, in accordance with Title VI of the *Civil Rights Act of 1964*, as amended; Title IX of the *Educational Amendments of 1972*; Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as amended; *Age Discrimination Act of 1975*; Title II of the *Americans with Disabilities Act*; and the *Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act*.

The following district staff members have been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements:

- Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex:
Sheri Rich
Director of Human Resources-Employee Benefits
350 Keller Parkway, Keller, TX 76248
Sheri.Rich@kellerisd.net | (817) 744-1000
- Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability:
Leigh Cook
Director of Federal Programs & Academic Compliance 350
Keller Parkway, Keller, TX 76248
Leigh.Cook@kellerisd.net | (817) 744-1000
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability:
Johjania Najera
Executive Director of Human Resources 350
Keller Parkway, Keller, TX 76248
Johjania.Najera@kellerisd.net | (817) 744-1000
- All other concerns regarding discrimination:
Office of the Superintendent
350 Keller Parkway, Keller, TX 76248
(817) 744-1000

All complaints shall be handled through established channels and procedures beginning with the building principal, followed by appeal to the appropriate central administration contact, and finally the board of trustees, in accordance with Policy FNG.

If you need the assistance of the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) of the Department of Education, the address of the OCR Regional Office that covers Texas is:

*Dallas Office
Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620
Dallas, TX 75201-6810
Telephone: (214) 661-9600
Facsimile: (214) 661-9587
Email: OCR.Dallas@ed.gov*