

# OPERATING PROCEDURES

## DYSLEXIA AND RELATED DISORDERS

Fabens ISD

071903

Template update October 2024

Legal Framework: DYSLEXIA AND RELATED DISORDERS

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Broad Category: CHILD FIND

### PROCEDURES:

#### DYSLEXIA SERVICES

##### What is Required

The District's Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that campuses are implementing procedures for identifying and providing critical, evidence-based instructional services for all students identified with dyslexia or related disorders. The District's procedures will be implemented according to federal and state approved strategies for screening, individualized evaluation, and techniques for treating dyslexia and related services as described in *The Dyslexia Handbook: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Services* ("The Dyslexia Handbook"). The District must report through PEIMS the number of students enrolled in the District who are identified as having dyslexia.

##### Parent Notification

Parents or guardians of a student with dyslexia or a related disorder must be informed of all services and options available to the student, including general education interventions under response to intervention and multi-tiered systems of support models as well as the option for an evaluation and services under the IDEA and Section 504.

The District must provide written notification to the student's parent or guardian at least five days before any evaluation or identification procedure is used with a specific student suspected of having dyslexia or a related disorder. This notice must be in English or in the parent or guardian's native language and include the following:

- A reasonable description of the evaluation procedure to be used with the student;
- Information regarding instructional interventions or strategies provided to the student prior to the evaluation;
- An estimated time frame for completion of the evaluation; and
- Contact information for the Campus Dyslexia Personnel that the parent can contact regarding dyslexia services, relevant parent training and information projects, and any other appropriate parent resources.

In addition, before an FIIE is conducted to determine whether a student, who is suspected to have a specific learning disability (dyslexia or a related disorder), has a disability under the IDEA, the Campus Special Education Personnel must comply with the special education procedures related to Prior Written Notice and Referral for Possible Special Education Services as well as provide the parent with all

information indicated above. Campus Special Education Personnel shall also provide the parent a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards and give the parent an opportunity to give written consent for an FIIE.

### **Universal Dyslexia Screening & Identification**

In compliance with child find requirements, the District will screen all students for dyslexia and related disorders at appropriate times in accordance with The Dyslexia Handbook and state law. Specifically, the law requires that all kindergarten and first grade students be screened for dyslexia and related services. In addition, the law requires the District to administer to students in kindergarten by the end of the year and, by January 31st for first grade. In addition, a universal screener will be administered to all 7<sup>th</sup> grade students who fail their 6<sup>th</sup> grade STAAR Reading assessment to comply with the general reading diagnosis under TEC 28.006 and the Dyslexia Handbook: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and related Services

Only District or Campus Personnel who are trained in valid, evidence-based assessments and can appropriately evaluate students for dyslexia and related disorders should conduct the screenings. This includes an individual who is certified/licensed in dyslexia or a classroom teacher who holds a valid certification and who is trained in instructional strategies that use individualized, intensive, multisensory, phonetic methods, as well as a variety of writing and spelling components. Documents will be maintained for individuals that have training in current research and evidence-based assessments that are used to identify the most common characteristics of dyslexia.

The District is required to consider prior screenings and testing before rescreening or retesting a student determined to have dyslexia during a prior screening or testing.

The District may not use early intervention strategies, such as Response to Intervention systems or other multi-tiered systems of support, to delay or deny the special education evaluation of a student suspected to have a specific learning disability, including dyslexia or a related disorder.

### **Dyslexia Services**

The District must provide a reading program for any student with a specific learning disability (dyslexia or a related disorder) that is in accordance with the descriptors and implementation requirements found in The Dyslexia Handbook. All Dyslexia Providers must be trained in the instructional strategies that use individualized, multisensory, phonetic methods and a variety of writing and spelling components as described in The Dyslexia Handbook.

The District must provide each student identified as having dyslexia access to the District's dyslexia services with a provider trained in dyslexia and related disorders at the student's campus. Additional services can be offered at a centralized location if the parent or guardian agrees to the services, but centralized services must not prevent the student from receiving services at the student's campus.

### **Parent Information**

Campus Personnel must provide parents or guardians of students suspected of having dyslexia or a related disorder a copy or a link to the electronic version of The Dyslexia Handbook as soon as the suspicion arises.

# OPERATING PROCEDURES

## DYSLEXIA AND RELATED DISORDERS

Fabens ISD

071903

The District and/or Campus Personnel must also offer information for parents or guardians of students with dyslexia and related disorders. This information must include:

- Characteristics of dyslexia and related disorders;
- Evaluation and identification of dyslexia and related disorders;
- Information on effective instructional strategies for teaching students with dyslexia and related disorders;
- Qualifications and contact information for providers of dyslexia instruction at each campus
- Instructional accommodations and modifications, including those for statewide assessments;
- The steps in the special education process, as described in the Overview of Special Education for Parents from; and
- How to request a copy and access an electronic version of the Dyslexia Handbook.

### Definitions

“Dyslexia” is 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.

“Universal screening” is 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 is not a formal evaluation.

### Additional Procedures

#### Dyslexia Screening & Identification

Campus Personnel are responsible for ensuring that all students in kindergarten and first grade are screened for dyslexia in an appropriate and timely manner. Before screening may take place, District or Campus Administration will select a screening instrument from the Commissioner’s List of Reading Instruments list for Campus Personnel to use that addresses the following skills:

- Kindergarten – Letter Sound Knowledge or Letter Naming Fluency; Phonological Awareness
- First Grade – Word Reading Accuracy or Fluency; Phonological Awareness,

Screenings for all kindergarten students should take place in the later part of the spring semester. Considerations for scheduling the kindergarten screener may include the following factors: (1) has adequate time for instruction been provided during the school year; (2) has adequate time been provided

## OPERATING PROCEDURES

### DYSLEXIA AND RELATED DISORDERS

Fabens ISD

071903

to compile data prior to the end of the school year; (3) how will the timing of the screener fit in with the timing of other required assessments; (4) has sufficient time been provided to inform parents in writing of the results of the reading instrument and whether the student is at risk for dyslexia or other reading difficulties; (5) has adequate time been provided for educators to offer appropriate interventions to the student and (6) has sufficient time been provided for decision making regarding next steps in the screening process.

Screenings for all first grade students should take place no later than the middle of the school year and must conclude by January 31 of each year. Results of the dyslexia and related disorder screenings for students in Kindergarten and Grade 1 shall be reported through the Texas Student Data System Public Education Information Management System (TSDS PEIMS).

All Campus Personnel conducting screenings must understand and be able to identify primary characteristics of dyslexia, including challenges with reading words in isolation, decoding, reading orally, and spelling. In addition, the individuals who administer the screening instrument must also document student behaviors observed during the administration of the instrument, including lack of automaticity, difficulty sounding out words left to right, guessing, self-correcting, inability to focus on reading, and avoidance behavior.

Campus Administration will verify that all Campus Personnel conducting screenings have undergone the required trainings and are properly certified to fill this role. Specifically, an individual who administers and interprets the screening instrument must, at a minimum, be an individual who is certified/licensed in dyslexia or a classroom teacher who holds a valid certification for kindergarten and Grade 1. Where possible, the student's current classroom teacher will administer the screening instrument for dyslexia and reading difficulties. Then, the teacher (or other Campus Personnel) conducting screenings will report the results of dyslexia and related disorder screenings required for each student in kindergarten and first grade through PEIMS. The results must also be provided to the parent of the student with an explanation of the scores.

Campus Personnel will continue to monitor students for common risk factors for dyslexia in second grade and beyond.

Based on the universal screener for reading and dyslexia, if a student is at low risk for reading difficulties, the campus will continue evidence-based core reading instruction and continue to monitor the student for reading difficulties in the future.

If the Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) determines that the data does not give the members reason to suspect that a student has a specific learning disability (dyslexia, a related disorder or other disability), the MTSS may decide to provide the student with additional supports in the classroom or through the Response to Intervention process or other Campus-based intervention system. However, the student is not referred for an FIIE at this time.

If the Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) suspects that the student has a specific learning disability (dyslexia or a related disorder), the Student Support Team should refer the student for an FIIE under the IDEA, as there is a reason to suspect that special education services are necessary for the student.

It is important to remember that at any point in the process, a referral for an FIIE may be made under IDEA if a disability and a corresponding need for special education services are suspected. Progression through the intervention process is not required in order to begin the identification of a specific learning disability (dyslexia or related services). For example, Campus Personnel should refer a student for an FIIE if regular progress monitoring reflects a difficulty with reading, decoding, and/or reading comprehension or when a student is not reaching grade-level benchmarks due to reading difficulty. In addition, parents or guardians have a right to request an FIIE under the IDEA at any time. While the use of tiered intervention may be part of the identification and data collection process for a specific learning disability (dyslexia or related services), Campus Personnel must ensure that evaluations of students suspected of having a disability are not delayed or denied because of implementation of tiered interventions, especially when parent or teacher observations reveal the common characteristics of a specific learning disability (dyslexia or related services).

### **Referral for IDEA Evaluation**

If the Student Support Team determines that a specific learning disability (dyslexia or related services) is suspected and there is a suspected corresponding need for special education services, the Student Support Team must refer a student for an FIIE under the IDEA. The Student Support Team will make decisions regarding referrals on a case-by-case basis, carefully considering all data obtained from screenings and other sources. In addition, parents or guardians may also request a referral for an FIIE under the IDEA. District Assessment Personnel must seek parental consent for an FIIE and follow all procedural safeguards required under the IDEA, including the provision of proper Prior Written Notice and a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards to the parent. When specific learning disability (dyslexia or related services) is a suspected disability, the MDT responsible for the comprehensive evaluation of the student must include, as a member, someone with specific knowledge of the reading process, dyslexia and related disorders, and dyslexia instruction.

### **Provision of Dyslexia Services**

If a student is evaluated under IDEA and the results of the evaluation show that the student has a specific learning disability (dyslexia or a related disorder), the student may be eligible for dyslexia services. If the student is determined to be eligible under the IDEA, and the ARD Committee determines the student requires specially designed instruction, the student will receive related services, supplementary aids and services, accommodations, or program modifications, as determined by his/her ARD Committee.

If the student is determined to be eligible for dyslexia or a related disorder but does not require specially designed instruction as determined by the ARD Committee, the student is eligible for Section 504 services, standard protocol dyslexia instruction, accommodations and/or related aids as determined by his/her Section 504 committee.

If the student is receiving standard protocol dyslexia instruction for specially designed instruction under IDEA, the dyslexia services provided must address the following critical, evidence-based components:

- Phonological awareness
- Sound-symbol association
- Syllabication
- Orthography
- Morphology

# OPERATING PROCEDURES

## DYSLEXIA AND RELATED DISORDERS

Fabens ISD

071903

- Syntax
- Reading comprehension
- Reading fluency

In addition to the above content, it is also critical that the way the content is delivered is consistent with research-based principles. Campus Administration and the Dyslexia Service Provider will ensure that all of the following principles of effective intervention for students with dyslexia are utilized:

- Simultaneous, multisensory
- Systematic and cumulative
- Explicit instruction
- Diagnostic teaching to automaticity
- Synthetic instruction
- Analytic instruction

The District Administration will ensure that dyslexia instruction is provided by individuals trained to deliver such instruction. Teachers, such as reading specialists, master reading teachers, general education classroom teachers, or special education teachers, who provide dyslexia intervention for students are not required to hold a specific license or certification. However, these educators must at a minimum have additional documented dyslexia training aligned to the requirements of The Dyslexia Handbook and must deliver the instruction with fidelity. In addition, educators who teach students with dyslexia should be trained in new research and practices related to dyslexia as part of their continuing profession education (CPE) hours. A provider of dyslexia instruction does not need to be certificated as a special educator when serving a student who also receives special education and related services if the provider is the most appropriate person to offer the dyslexia instruction.

District Administration will decide whether to purchase a reading program or develop its own evidence-based reading program for students with dyslexia and related disorders. If the District decides to develop its own reading program, District Administration must ensure that the program is aligned with the procedures in The Dyslexia Handbook, including the required components and principles above.

The District will maintain documentation requirements of compliance associated with Texas Student Data System (TSDS), Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), and State Performance Plan (SPP). District staff will provide training, with follow up, to ensure the documentation required is in place and compliant.

### **Evidence of Implementation**

- Cumulative Student Data
- Instructional Strategies Provided and Student Response
- Section 504 Evaluation
- FIE
- Evidence of Trainings for Campus Personnel Administering Screenings
- Certifications of Campus Personnel Administering Screenings
- Evidence of Training for Dyslexia Service Providers

## OPERATING PROCEDURES

### DYSLEXIA AND RELATED DISORDERS

Fabens ISD

071903

- Certifications of Dyslexia Service Providers
- ARD/IEP
- Section 504 Plan
- Right to Information Provided to Parent
- Receipt From Parent of The Dyslexia Handbook
- Receipt From Parent of Procedural Safeguards Under IDEA and/or Section 504
- Approved Dyslexia Program
- Documentation of Dyslexia Services Provided to Student
- Documentation of Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports
- Documentation for the state in TSDS, PEIMS, and SPP
- Progress reports prepared and communicated to parent at least once per grading period