

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Dallas Independent School District (ISD) provides campus-based services across the district for students who have been identified with dyslexia.¹ The stated mission of the Dallas ISD Dyslexia Services department is “to assist students with dyslexia in the achievement of independent literacy skills by providing service and support to students, their parents, and school personnel through identification, instruction, and community awareness.”²

The purpose of the evaluation was to examine a) program implementation, b) stakeholder perceptions, and c) program outcomes.³

Program Components

Student Programming

The student programming offered by the department include the *Wilson Reading System*, the *Esperanza Spanish Language Program*, *Lexia PowerUp Literacy*, the Multisensory Teaching Approach/Alphabetic Phonics (MTA/AP), and *Wilson Foundations*. At the elementary school level, students participate in services for 45-minutes, four days a week, in groups of ten to 15 students. At the high school level, students participate in services for 180-minutes per week, in groups of ten to 15 students.

Dyslexia Services Staff Members

Dyslexia evaluators ($N = 24$) identify student needs and prescribe appropriate accommodations and services to students. Evaluators conduct both formal and informal evaluations for dyslexia identification as well as manage and compile all required records and documentation for the process. Evaluators also serve as a liaison between the campus Section 504 chairperson and the district Section 504 coordinator and supervisor providing dyslexia assessment data to these individuals. Additionally, evaluators often conduct campus visits to ensure students receive dyslexia services in accordance with state and local mandates.

Dyslexia interventionists are certified teachers with specialized training who work with identified students to provide supplemental multisensory instruction. Dyslexia interventionists continually assess the achievement levels of identified students and train campus teachers to provide effective curricular accommodations for those identified students, according to the guidelines established in the Individual Accommodations Plan (IAP) or Individual Education Plan (IEP). Additionally, dyslexia interventionists

work with and train classroom teachers in the MTA/AP program

In 2022-23, the dyslexia services department employed 192 lead ($N = 49$) and non-lead ($N = 143$) staff (Table 1). Most of the lead (89.8%) and non-lead (88.1%) staff were female. The largest proportion of lead staff were Hispanic (44.9%), and the largest proportion of non-lead staff were African American (42.7%).

Table 1: 2022-23 Characteristics of Dyslexia Services Department Staff Members

	Lead dyslexia interventionists and dyslexia evaluators ($N = 49$)	Non-lead dyslexia interventionists ($N = 143$)
Sex		
Female	89.8	88.1
Male	10.2	11.9
Race/Ethnicity		
African American	24.5	42.7
Hispanic	44.9	39.9
White	30.6	15.4
Other/Missing	0.0	2.1
Highest Degree Earned*		
Associate's	0.0	0.7
Bachelor's	51.0	55.2
Master's	40.8	39.2
Doctoral	0.0	0.7
Other/Missing	8.2	4.2
Number of Years in the District		
Less than 1	2.0	0.7
1-5	10.2	20.3
6-10	28.6	32.9
10+	59.2	46.2

Source: Dallas ISD Dyslexia Services staff roster provided 12/13/22. Dallas ISD Human Capital Management (HCM) personnel file dated 03/28/23.

Note: * Staff educational attainment is based on highest reported degree at the time of hire. Percentages may not add to 100.0 because of rounding.

Budget

The total 2022-23 budget for the Dyslexia Services department was \$18,346,430 which included \$11,574,830 from the district general operating funds and \$6,771,600 from Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funding.

Program Goals

The district budgeted approximately \$33.8 million aimed at improving and expanding dyslexia services in middle and

¹ For information on dyslexia screening, evaluation, and identification, please refer to the TEA Dyslexia Handbook found at <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/special-student-populations/dyslexia-and-related-disorders>

² <https://www.dallasisd.org/Page/74987>. Link retrieved 09/27/2021.

³ Portions of this report were replicated or adapted from Mastrogiovanni, 2022.

high schools. The overall goal of these efforts was to achieve three performance objectives related to student achievement, dyslexia training program, and campus and community engagement. The following are the district's performance objectives for these activities:

1. Increase the department *Word Identification and Spelling Test (WIST)* student scores which measures the standard scores for the Fundamental Literacy Ability Index (FLAI) and the Sound Symbol Knowledge (SSK). The two goals are, by 2022-23 end-of-year (EOY), the 2021-22 targets for FLAI and SSK standard scores will increase from 75.6 to 79.3, and from 78.75 to 82.7, respectively.
2. Out of the 33 dyslexia interventionists assigned to middle and high school campuses; 33 (100%) will complete the *Wilson* Dyslexia Practitioner certification, and 12 of the 33 (36.4%) will complete the *Wilson* Dyslexia Therapist certification by 2024-2025.
3. Dyslexia interventionists will conduct campus professional development (PD) and informational parent meetings per campus, twice a year and as needed for dyslexia awareness month in October by 2022-23 EOY.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS/OUTCOMES

How were Dyslexia Trainings and Services implemented?

As part of the department's overarching goal of early identification, the department implemented a variety of strategies to ensure future academic success for all students. These strategies included employing dyslexia interventionists and evaluators, providing students various programming services, and offering an assortment of trainings.

Program Context

- As a result of moving evaluations to a single pathway for identification under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), the department saw a decrease in the number of evaluations coming through Section 504. In 2022-23, six evaluators worked with the Special Education (SPED) department to offer support with conducting full individual evaluations under the new single pathway.
- The department had 22 staff vacancies. To offer additional supports, seven dyslexia evaluators worked part-time in classrooms to off-set potential impacts of these vacancies.
- The department hosted a parent event in addition to the parent trainings offered at the campuses.
- The department honored staff accomplishments and achievements by hosting an end of year celebration.

Professional Development Trainings

- In 2022-23, the department central staff members were offered a variety of PD trainings.

- Trainings typically covered the following topics: 1) Student Programming, 2) Department Overviews, Policies, and Procedures, 3) Region 10 Dyslexia Academy Trainings, 4) Assessment and Data Tracking Trainings, and 5) TEA Dyslexia Trainings: Handbook, HB 1886, and Single Pathway for Evaluations.

Dyslexia Services Training Program

- The department is on track to meet their ESSER Training Program objective by 2024-25.
- Of the 33 ESSER-funded dyslexia interventionists, 27 (81.8%) completed Practitioner Level certifications and three (9.1%) completed Therapist Level certifications.

Campus and Community Engagement

- The department met their ESSER Campus and Community Engagement performance objective.
- The department reported 287 parents attended in the fall and 368 parents attended in the spring.
- The department reported 3,325 campus staff attended in the fall and 4,551 attended in the spring.
- Overall, 89 percent to 96 percent of staff who attended the spring campus PD indicated positive perceptions of the trainings.

Students Served

- In 2022-23, 8,058 (5.8%) students in the district were identified with dyslexia, compared to 7,703 in 2021-22 (Table 2).
- Students with dyslexia had a larger proportion of male students (56.8%) and SPED students (45.5%), and a smaller proportion of Emergent Bilingual (EB) students (45.6%) compared to the district.
- Out of the 8,058 students identified with dyslexia, 5,734 students participated in department programming. The highest percentage of students participated in the *Wilson Reading System* program (84.6%).

Table 2: 2022-23 Characteristics of Students with Dyslexia

	Students with Dyslexia (N = 8,058)	
	n	%
Sex		
Female	3,484	43.2
Male	4,574	56.8
Race/Ethnicity		
Hispanic/Latino	5,888	73.1
African American	1,475	18.3
White	515	6.4
Other/Missing	180	2.2
Special Student Groups		
Econ. Dis.	6,831	84.8
Emergent Bilingual	3,674	45.6
Special Education	3,664	45.5

Source: SIS demographic file dated 05/12/23.

Note: Econ. Dis. = Economically Disadvantaged. Percentages may not add to 100.0 because of rounding.

What were the non-lead dyslexia interventionists' perceptions of the Dyslexia Services department?

Of the 143 non-lead dyslexia interventionists invited to complete the Dyslexia Services Satisfaction survey, 79 (55.2%) completed the survey. Overall, 84.7 percent to 93.1 percent reported positive perceptions of the department.

Core 4 Responses

Overall, 83 percent of staff were satisfied with the quality of customer services provided by the department. 81 to 88 percent of staff indicated that the department was fast, flexible, friendly, and focused.

Barriers to Service Implementation

Staff indicated that large caseloads ($n = 16$; 34%) and cross-departmental disruptions ($n = 10$; 21%) were the primary barriers of implementation.

Supports Needed from Department

Staff indicated that they needed the department to provide additional support in the following areas: support facilitating cross-departmental collaboration ($n = 7$; 16%), offering additional trainings ($n = 5$; 11%), having time dedicated during the week to planning and preparation ($n = 3$; 7%).

Perceived Factors Impacting Student Success

Staff most often attributed positive factors impacting student success to the department's/supervisor's eagerness to help ($n = 13$; 28%), the value of the staff trainings ($n = 12$; 26%), and the access to materials ($n = 9$; 19%).

Staff most often attributed factors adversely impacting student success to large caseloads ($n = 11$; 26%) and number of books students are required to complete annually ($n = 8$; 19%).

What were the achievement outcomes for students with dyslexia?

Word Identification and Spelling Test

- EOY *WIST* results indicated all grade levels demonstrated increases in the percentage of students achieving the average or above FLAI and SSK standard score ratings (Table 3).
- Increases ranged from 7.7 percentage-points (grade 11) to 21.3 percentage-points (grade 3) on the FLAI ratings and ranged from 7.7 percentage-points (grade 11) to 31.9 percentage-points (grade 9) on the SSK ratings.

Table 3: 2022-23 Percentage of Students Attaining *WIST* Average or Above Standard Score Ratings by Grade Level

Grade Level	BOY %	EOY %	BOY to EOY % Point Δ
FLAI Standard Score			
2	2.6	19.4	16.8
3	7.3	28.6	21.3
4	15.4	35.7	20.3
5	25.0	39.6	14.6
6	11.7	25.0	13.3
7	13.2	25.8	12.6
8	11.2	21.7	10.5
9	17.1	33.6	16.5
10	26.2	39.5	13.3
11	15.4	23.1	7.7
SSK Standard Score			
2	0.5	14.7	14.2
3	6.6	27.7	21.1
4	11.0	31.8	20.8
5	21.4	47.7	26.3
6	16.4	47.5	31.1
7	33.0	51.6	18.6
8	28.8	52.2	23.4
9	24.8	56.7	31.9
10	45.2	62.8	17.6
11	23.1	30.8	7.7

Source: Dallas ISD Dyslexia Services *WIST* data files provided 01/17/23 (BOY) and 07/18/23 (EOY). SIS demographic file dated 05/12/23.

Note: Δ = Percentage points difference. Results include data for students with scores at least six months between BOY and EOY. In 2022-23, *WIST* test version data was not collected by the department.

- The department met their ESSER Student Achievement performance objective for the SSK standard score⁴ but did not meet their performance objective for the FLAI standard score.
- One out of six grade levels (grade 10) achieved the FLAI performance objective scoring equal to or greater than 79.3 and five grade levels (grades 6 through grade 10) achieved the SSK performance objective scoring equal to or greater than 82.7.

NWEA Measures of Academic Progress

- On the EOY Reading English *MAP* assessment, grades two, three, and nine demonstrated increases in the percentage of students at the Average Achievement Quintile or above from BOY to EOY (+1.6% to +8.5%) (Table 4).
- On the EOY Reading Spanish *MAP* assessment, grades three and four demonstrated increases in the percentage of students at the Average Achievement Quintile or above from BOY to EOY (+4.6% to +7.1%).
- The percentage of students with dyslexia performing at the Average Achievement Quintile or above on the EOY Reading English and Spanish assessments was lower than the district across all grade levels.

⁴ The 2022-23 *WIST* performance objective targets were students to achieve an average EOY FLAI standard score of 79.3 or greater and an average EOY SSK standard score of 82.7 or greater.

Table 4: 2022-23 BOY to EOY MAP Reading Average Achievement Quintile or Above Rates by Grade Level and Test Language

Grade Level	BOY		EOY		Diff. %
	N	%	N	%	
Reading (English)					
1	144	35.4	158	27.8	-7.6
2	382	20.4	401	28.9	8.5
3	546	26.6	560	31.1	4.5
4	588	32.1	594	30.3	-1.8
5	608	32.4	612	28.8	-3.6
6	852	22.7	853	17.8	-4.9
7	672	19.8	657	19.5	-0.3
8	567	19.6	520	16.7	-2.9
9	496	20.0	421	21.6	1.6
10	*	*	-	-	-
11	*	*	-	-	-
Reading (Spanish) ^a					
1	126	38.1	117	29.1	-9.0
2	252	29.8	246	28.9	-0.9
3	317	26.2	273	33.3	7.1
4	364	24.7	311	29.3	4.6
5	349	28.1	283	25.8	-2.3

Source: Dallas ISD MAP files dated 09/27/22 (BOY) and 06/25/23 (EOY). SIS demographic file dated 05/12/23.

Note: * = indicates fewer than 10 students available for analysis.

^a The MAP Reading (Spanish) assessment is administered to students in kindergarten through grade 5.

State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness

- On the STAAR and STAAR EOC reading tests, rates of students with dyslexia at the Approaches+ standard ranged from 41 percent (grade 4, Eng I EOC) to 59 percent (grade 8).
- Rates of students with dyslexia at the Meets+ standard ranged from 17 percent (grade 3) to 22 percent (grade 8).
- Rates of students with dyslexia at the Masters standard ranged from one percent (English II EOC) to six percent (grade 5).

- Overall, the percentage of students with dyslexia at the Approaches+, Meets+, and Masters standards was lower than the district percentage on all STAAR and STAAR EOC reading tests, resulting in a performance gap between the two groups.
- One-year trends indicated that the overall performance gap between the district and students with dyslexia widened from 2021-22 (3.8 percentage-points to 27.7 percentage-points) to 2022-23 (5.2 percentage-points to 31.5 percentage-points).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Monitor the impact of the new districtwide curricula on student outcomes.

Implement a centralized data management system.

Continue efforts to improve academic outcomes of students with dyslexia.

Monitor and investigate the impact of House Bill (HB) 3928 on implementation of services to students with dyslexia.

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