

Ector Independent School District

DYSLEXIA HANDBOOK LOCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES



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Philosophy

Not all children learn to read, write and spell in the same ways. Despite conventional and appropriate classroom instruction, some students continue to struggle. Some of these students may have a reading disability known as dyslexia. Students with dyslexia may need an intervention program in addition to what they are receiving in the regular classroom to help them be successful in school. Ector Independent School District offers dyslexia services to all students who meet eligibility criteria. Students with dyslexia will be served by a trained teacher with a program that includes evidence-based components of phonological awareness, sound-symbol association, syllabication, orthography, morphology, syntax, reading comprehension and fluency. Students with dyslexia will also be given appropriate instructional accommodations in order to be successful throughout their academic career.

The Ector Independent School District follows the guidelines set forth by The Dyslexia Handbook, Update 2021 for its local dyslexia program and guidelines. The handbook can be accessed using the link below.

<https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/texas-dyslexia-handbook-2021.pdf>

Definition and Characteristics of Dyslexia

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.
Texas Education Code (TEC) 38.003

Primary reading and 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

Primary reading and spelling characteristics are often the result of difficulty 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)

Secondary characteristics 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

Dyslexia Programs

MTA is a comprehensive, integrated language arts program addressing reading decoding and comprehension, spelling and composition, cursive handwriting, and alphabet and dictionary skills. The ungraded curriculum encompasses the structure and science of the English language, and all students begin at the beginning. The goal is to complete the curriculum, as long as students are progressing according to criterion-referenced “Mastery Checks” administered periodically. If exit criteria is based on grade-level achievement alone, permanence of learning is not guaranteed. (source: MTA PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES)

Components of Dyslexia Instruction

Phonological Awareness
Syllabication
Morphology
Reading Comprehension

Sound Symbol Association
Orthography
Syntax
Reading Fluency

Delivery of Dyslexia Instruction

Simultaneous, multisensory
Explicit instruction
Synthetic instruction

Systematic and cumulative
Diagnostic teaching to automaticity
Analytic Instruction

Screening, Evaluation and Identification Procedures

Universal Screenings

All students in Kindergarten and first grade will be screened to see if they are at risk for dyslexia. First graders are screened before January 31 and Kindergarten before school is out in May. Students who are determined to be at risk for dyslexia will be offered a full dyslexia evaluation or targeted intervention. Students in seventh grade who failed the sixth grade reading STAAR will be screened to see if they are at risk for dyslexia. Parents of students found to be at risk will be notified.

Procedures for Evaluation and Identification

A dyslexia evaluation may be requested at any time by a parent or knowledgeable school staff member. Secondary students may request evaluations for themselves, however, parental consent for the evaluation is still mandatory if the student is under 18 years of age. If dyslexia is suspected, the committee should first consider a full individual evaluation (FIE) but parents should also be informed about a dyslexia evaluation through Section 504 so they are able to make an informed decision. Students referred for a dyslexia evaluation should demonstrate difficulty in one or more of the primary reading and spelling characteristics of dyslexia. These difficulties should be unexpected for the student's age, grade level and/or intelligence.

Cumulative data (informal) from the student's educational history will be considered prior to a formal evaluation.

Once the informal data is gathered and reviewed a formal evaluation may be recommended. During a formal evaluation the domains listed below will be considered.

Domains assessed in a dyslexia evaluation are as follows:

- Letter knowledge
- Reading words in isolation
- Decoding unfamiliar words
- Reading fluency and comprehension
- Spelling
- Phonological/phonemic awareness
- Rapid naming of symbols or objects

Additional domains that may be included in the evaluation are as follows:

- Vocabulary
- Listening comprehension
- Verbal and/or written expression
- Handwriting
- Orthographic processing
- Mathematical calculation/reasoning
- Phonological memory
- Verbal working memory and processing speed

Once an evaluation is complete, a committee of knowledgeable persons (Section 504 or ARD committee) will interpret the results to determine if there is a pattern of evidence for dyslexia. The reading and spelling difficulties should be unexpected in relation to the student's other abilities, sociocultural factors, language difference, irregular attendance, or lack of appropriate and effective instruction. It is not one single factor but a preponderance of data (both formal and informal) that provide the committee with evidence for whether these difficulties are unexpected.

Once dyslexia is identified the Section 504 or ARD Committee will create an educational plan to serve the student. The committee will determine the appropriate intervention to use with the student and what instructional and testing accommodations the student will need.

Parents/guardians may request an evaluation at any time and the school district is obligated to review the student's data history to determine whether or not there is reason to believe the student has a disability. If a disability is suspected, the student will be evaluated. If the school district does not suspect a disability and determines an evaluation is not warranted, the parents/guardians must be given a copy of Section 504 Notice of Parent and Student Rights or Notice of Procedural Safeguards.

Privately obtained evaluations provided by the parents/guardians will be reviewed by the school district and become a part of the evaluation data but do not, independently, create eligibility. If the school district does not suspect a disability upon reviewing the outside evaluation, the parents/guardians must be given a copy of Section 504 Notice of Parent and Student Rights or Notice of Procedural Safeguards.

Dysgraphia

Dysgraphia frequently occurs in children, is characterized by difficulty with handwriting and may interfere with spelling and/or composing. It is a neurodevelopmental disorder manifested by illegible and/or inefficient handwriting due to difficulty with letter formation. Dysgraphia may exist concurrently with dyslexia or it could exist separately.

Characteristics of Dysgraphia

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

Possible Causes of Dysgraphia

Impaired feedback the brain is receiving from the fingers
Weaknesses using visual processing to coordinate hand movement and organize use of space
Problems with motor planning and sequencing
Difficulty with storage and retrieval of letter forms

Evaluations for dysgraphia will be completed through a full individual evaluation by the special education department.

District Contacts

Pete Slaughter
Elementary Principal
pete@ectorisdonline.org
903-961-2355

Justin Bankston
JH/HS Principal
justin@ectorisdonline.org
903-961-2355

Resources

The State Dyslexia Handbook

Texas Education Agency Site for Dyslexia and Related Disorders

<https://tea.texas.gov/academics/special-student-populations/dyslexia-and-related-disorders>

Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity

<http://www.dyslexia.yale.edu/>

International Dyslexia Association

<https://dyslexiaida.org/>

MTS Publications

<https://www.mtspublications.com/documents/FORADMINISTRATORS.pdf>

Region 10

<https://www.region10.org/programs/dyslexia-statewide/overview/>

Understood

<https://www.understood.org/>

Dyslexia Help Center at The University of Michigan

<http://dyslexiahelp.umich.edu/>

Nessy

<https://www.nessy.com/us/>

Region 10 Parent Newsletters

<https://www.region10.org/programs/dyslexia-regional/parent-information/>

Talking Books Program

<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/tbp/index.html>

State Dyslexia Helpline

1-800-232-3030

Recommended Reading and Videos for Parents

All Kinds of Minds by Mel Levine, M.D.

Basic Facts About Dyslexia & Other Reading Problems by Louisa Moats and Karen Dakin

Dyslexia, Fluency, and the Brain by Maryanne Wolf

Homework Without Tears: A Parent's Guide for Motivating Children To Do Homework and To Succeed in School by Lee Canter and Lee Hausner

Overcoming Dyslexia by Dr. Sally Shaywitz

Parenting a Struggling Reader by Susan L Hall and Louisa Moats

The Misunderstood Child: Understanding and Coping with Your Child's Learning Disability by Larry B Silver, M.D.

Journey into Dyslexia: Great Minds Think Differently (HBO)

The Big Picture: Rethinking Dyslexia (HBO)

Recommended Reading and Videos for Students

It's Called Dyslexia by Jennifer Moore-Mallinos

Hank Zipzer Series by Henry Winkler

Knees: The Mixed Up World of a Boy with Dyslexia by Vanita Oelschlager

My Name is Brain Brian by Jeanne Betancourt

The Alphabet War: A Story About Dyslexia by Dianne Burton Robb

What is Dyslexia <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zafiGBrFkRM>

Dyslexia: How Do Dyslexics Learn?
https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Dyslexia+how+dyslexics+learn

Audiobook Resources

Bookshare

<https://www.bookshare.org/cms/>

Learning Ally

<https://learningally.org/>

Storyline Online

<https://www.storylineonline.net/>

Storynory

<https://www.storynory.com/>

Texas Talking Books

<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/tbp/index.html>