

**Hughes Springs I.S.D.**

**Dyslexia**

**Handbook**

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1. **Definition of Dyslexia**

As defined in Texas Education Code §38.003

(1) *“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.

(2) *“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 definition of Dyslexia by the International Dyslexia Association states:

*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).

The primary difficulties of a student identified as having dyslexia occur in phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness and manipulation, single-word reading, reading fluency, and spelling. Secondary consequences of dyslexia 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.

**II. Procedures Required by State Law Prior to Formal Assessment**

In accordance with TEC §28.006, Hughes Springs ISD administers early reading instruments in kindergarten, first, and second grades to determine students’ reading development and comprehension. Also, TEC §38.003 requires all kindergarten and grade 1 students to be screened for dyslexia. Districts must implement a screening program that includes each of the following:

* screening of each student in kindergarten at end of school year
* screening of each student in the first grade no later than January 31st.

 Students receiving special education services should be screened using the K/1

 dyslexia screener unless:

* The ARD committee determines the screener is not appropriate; or
* The student is already identified with dyslexia.

 According to the Dyslexia Handbook, the screening instrument (or combination of instruments) must:

* Take only a brief time to administer and be cost effective
* Have established validity and reliability and standards
* Include distinct indicators identifying students as either not at risk or at risk for dyslexia or reading difficulties
* Provide standardized directions for administration as well as clear guidance for the administrator regarding scoring and interpretation of indicators/results
* Include adequate training for educators on how to administer the instrument and interpret results



While the selected screening instrument will be expected to measure each of the skills identified above, it is important that individuals who administer the screening instrument document student behaviors observed during the administration of the instrument. A list of behaviors that may be observed during the administration of the screening and which should be documented are included in Figure 2.3 below.



Additionally, a reading instrument from the Commissioner’s approved list will be administered at the beginning of grade 7 to any student who did not demonstrate proficiency on the reading assessment administered under TEC §39.023(a). If, on the basis of the reading instrument results, students are determined to be at risk for dyslexia or other reading difficulties, the students’ parents/guardians are notified. In addition, an accelerated (intensive) reading program that appropriately addresses students’ reading difficulties and enables them to “catch

up” with their typically performing peers is implemented. Should students continue to struggle with reading, writing, and spelling during the intensive reading instruction, then Hughes Springs ISD will initiate procedures to recommend these students for assessment for dyslexia. The information from the early reading instruments will be one source of information in deciding whether or not to recommend a student for assessment for dyslexia. Other sources may include but are not limited to: performance on state mandated test(s), a student’s grades/performance in reading and written spelling, and teachers’ observations of the characteristics of dyslexia.

**III. Referral Process**

At any time that a student demonstrates poor performance in one or more areas of reading and spelling that is unexpected for the student’s age/grade, or demonstrates characteristics and risk factors of dyslexia indicated in Definitions of Dyslexia and Primary Reading/Spelling Characteristics of Dyslexia, Hughes Springs ISD will collect additional information about the student. Progression through tiered intervention is not required in order to begin the identification of dyslexia.

Parents/guardians always have the right to request a referral for a dyslexia assessment at any time. Once a parent request for dyslexia assessment has been made, Hughes Springs ISD will review the student’s data history (both formal and informal data) to determine whether there is a reason to believe the student has a disability. If a disability is suspected, the student will be evaluated following the guidelines outlined in this Handbook and the State Dyslexia Handbook. If Hughes Springs ISD does not suspect a disability and determines that an evaluation would not be warranted, the parents/guardians will be notified of the reasons an evaluation is denied including documentation that the denial is based on data and given a copy of their due process rights.

**Data Gathering:**

Information will be used to evaluate the student’s academic progress and determine what actions

are needed to ensure the student’s improved academic performance. This information **should** include data that demonstrates the student was provided appropriate instruction and data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals (progress monitoring), reflecting formal assessment of student progress during instruction. This cumulative data also includes information from parents/guardians. Sources and examples of cumulative

data are:

 Vision screening

 Hearing screening

 Teacher reports of classroom concerns

 Classroom reading assessments

 Accommodations or interventions provided

 Academic progress reports and/or report cards

 Gifted and Talented assessments

 Samples of school work

 Parent conference notes

 Speech and language assessment

* The K-2 reading instrument as required in TEC §28.006 (English and native language, if

 possible)

* State student assessment program results as described in TEC §39.002
* 7th-grade reading instruments results as required in TEC §28.006
* Observations of instruction provided to the students
* Full Individual Evaluation (FIE)
* Outside evaluations
* School attendance
* Curriculum-based assessment measures
* Instructional strategies provided and student’s response to the instruction
* Universal screening

Data that support that the difficulties are not due to cultural factors or environmental or economic disadvantage. Having data related to these factors may help in determining whether the student’s struggles with reading are due to a lack of opportunity or a reading disability, including dyslexia.

Among the actions that Hughes Springs ISD has available for the student is a recommendation that the student be assessed for dyslexia. Hughes Springs ISD recommends assessment for dyslexia if the student demonstrates the following:

* Poor performance in one or more areas of reading and the related area of spelling that is unexpected for the student’s age/grade, and;
* Characteristics of dyslexia.

**Primary Reading/Spelling Characteristics of Dyslexia:**

* Difficulty reading words in isolation
* Difficulty accurately decoding unfamiliar words
* Difficulty with oral reading (slow, inaccurate, or labored)
* Difficulty spelling

It is important to note that individuals demonstrate differences in degree of impairment.

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 composition
* Limited vocabulary growth due to reduced reading experiences

When a referral for dyslexia assessment is made, Hughes Springs ISD will ensure the evaluation

procedures are followed in a reasonable amount of time.

**IV. Assessment for Dyslexia**

Students enrolling in Hughes Springs 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, poor response to supplemental, scientifically based reading instruction, teachers’ input, and parents’ or guardians’ input. Additionally, the appropriate time for assessing is early in a student’s school career (19 TAC

§74.28), the earlier the better. While earlier is better, students will be recommended for assessment for dyslexia even if the reading difficulties appear later in a student’s school career.

Formal assessment includes both formal and informal data. All data will be used to determine whether the student demonstrates a pattern of evidence for dyslexia. Findings from the formal assessment will be different for each child. Professionals conducting assessment for the identification of dyslexia will look beyond scores on standardized assessments alone and examine the student’s classroom reading performance, educational history, and early language experiences to assist with determining reading and spelling abilities and difficulties.

Hughes Springs ISD will complete the evaluation process as outlined in IDEA. Through the Special Education Evaluation process, the school completes the evaluation as outlined using the following procedures:

1. Notify parents or guardians of proposal to assess student for dyslexia

2. Inform parents or guardians of their rights under IDEA

3. Obtain parent or guardian permission to assess the student for dyslexia

4. Assess student, being sure that individuals/professionals who administer assessments have

 training in the evaluation of students for dyslexia and related disorders (19 TAC §74.28).

Tests, assessments, and other evaluation materials will meet the following criteria in compliance with IDEA:

* Be validated for the specific purpose for which they are used
* Include material tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely materials that are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient
* Be selected and administered so as to ensure that, when a test is given to a student with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the student’s aptitude or achievement level, or whatever other factor the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the student’s impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills
* Be selected and administered in a manner that is not racially or culturally discriminatory. Include multiple measures of a student’s reading abilities such as informal assessment, information (e.g., anecdotal records, district universal screenings, progress monitoring data, criterion-referenced assessments, results of informal reading inventories, classroom observations)
* Be administered by trained personnel and in conformance with the instructions provided by the producer of the evaluation materials
* Be used for the purpose for which the assessment or measures are valid or reliable
* Be provided and administered in the student’s native language or other mode of

communication and in the form most likely to yield accurate information regarding what the child can do academically, developmentally, and functionally, unless it is clearly not feasible to provide or administer

**Domains to Assess**

The school administers measures that are related to the student’s educational needs. Difficulties in the areas of letter knowledge, word decoding, and fluency (rate and accuracy) may be evident depending upon the student’s age and stage of reading development. In addition, many students with dyslexia may have difficulty with reading comprehension and written composition.

*Academic Skills*

• Letter knowledge (name and associated sound)

• Reading words in isolation

• Decoding unfamiliar words accurately

• Reading fluency (both rate and accuracy are assessed)

• Reading comprehension

• Spelling

*Cognitive Processes*

• Phonological/phonemic awareness

• Rapid naming of symbols or objects

*Possible Additional Areas*

• 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

**English Language Learners (This refers to students served in Bilingual and ESL programs as well as students designated Limited English Proficient (LEP) whose parents have denied services.)**

Much diversity exists among English Language Learners (ELLs). A student’s language proficiency may be impacted by any of the following: native language, English exposure, parent education, socioeconomic status of the family, amount of time in the United States, experience of formal schooling, immigration status, community demographics, and ethnic heritage (Bailey, Heritage, Butler, & Walqui, 2000) The identification and service delivery process for dyslexia must be in step with the student’s linguistic environment and educational background. In Hughes Springs ISD, the LPAC (Language Proficiency Assessment Committee) will be involved in

the decision making process.

Additional data to be gathered when assessing English Language Learners:

•Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) documentation which includes the following:

o Home language survey

o Assessment related to identification for limited English proficiency (oral language proficiency tests and norm-referenced tests - all years available)

o Texas English Language Proficiency System (TELPAS) information for four language domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing)

o Type of language program model provided and language of instruction

o Instructional interventions provided to address language needs

o Previous schooling inside and/or outside of the United States.

A professional involved in the assessment, interpretation of assessment results, and identification of ELLs with dyslexia needs to have the following training/knowledge:

• Knowledge of first and second language acquisition theory

• Knowledge of the written system of the first language – transparent (Spanish,

 Italian, German), syllabic (Japanese-kana), Semitic (Arabic, Hebrew) and

 morphosyllabic (Chinese-Kanji)

• Knowledge of student’s literacy skills in native and second language

• Knowledge of how to interpret results from a cross-linguistic perspective

• Knowledge of how to interpret the TELPAS (Texas English Language Proficiency

 Assessment System)

• Knowledge of how to interpret the results of the student’s oral language proficiency in

 two or more languages in relation to the results of the tests measuring academic

 achievement and cognitive processes as well as academic data gathered and economic

 and socioeconomic factors.

**If there is not a test in the native language of the student, information measures of evaluation such as reading a list of words or listening comprehension in the native language may be used.**

**V. Identification of Students with Dyslexia**

The identification of dyslexia is made by the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee. In order to make an informed determination, either committee must include members who are knowledgeable about the

* The student being assessed
* The reading process
* Dyslexia and related disorders
* Dyslexia instruction
* District or charter school, state, and federal guidelines for assessment
* The assessments used
* The meaning of the collected data

To appropriately understand evaluation data, the committee of knowledgeable persons (ARD) must interpret test results in light of the student’s educational history, linguistic background, environmental or socioeconomic factors, and any other pertinent factors that affect learning.

The ARD committee must first determine if a student’s difficulties in the area 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 (both rate and/or accuracy)
* Spelling (an isolated difficulty in spelling would not be sufficient to identify dyslexia)

Should the ARD committee determine that the student exhibits weaknesses in reading and spelling, the committee will then examine the student’s data to determine whether these difficulties are 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 indicator but a preponderance of data (both informal and formal) that provide the committee with evidence for whether these difficulties are unexpected.

**Questions to Be Considered When Making a Determination**

•Do the data show a pattern of low reading and spelling skills that is unexpected for the student in relation to the student’s other cognitive abilities and provision of effective classroom instruction?

•Does this pattern indicate the student has dyslexia?

•Does the student have a disability under IDEA?

Based on the data, if the committee determines that weaknesses are indicated in reading and spelling, the committee, based on the student’s pattern of performance over time, test profile and response to instruction, will determine the intervention plan. Refinement of that plan will occur as the student’s response to instruction is observed.

**Review of Data by the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee**

If, through the evaluation process, it is established that the student has the condition of dyslexia, then the student meets the first prong of eligibility under the IDEA (identification of condition). In other words, the identification of dyslexia, meets the criterion for the condition of a specific learning disability in basic reading and/or reading fluency. However, the presence of a disability condition alone, is not sufficient to determine if the student is a student with a disability under the IDEA. Eligibility under the IDEA consists of both identification of the condition and a corresponding need for specially designed instruction as a result of the disability. In IDEA, dyslexia is considered a specific learning disability (SLD). The IDEA evaluation requirements for SLD eligibility in 34 C.F.R. §300.309(a)(1) specifically designate the following areas for a learning disability in reading: basic reading skills (dyslexia), reading fluency skills, and/or reading comprehension.

If a student with dyslexia is found eligible for special education (i.e., student requires specially designed instruction), the student’s IEP must include appropriate reading instruction. Appropriate reading instruction includes the components and delivery of dyslexia instruction.

If a student has previously met special education eligibility and is later identified with dyslexia, the ARD committee should include in the IEP goals that reflect the need for dyslexia instruction and determine the least restrictive environment for delivering the student’s dyslexia instruction. Changes in instruction and/or accommodations must be supported by current data (e.g., classroom performance and dyslexia program monitoring).

**Assessment of Students Identified Outside the District**

Students identified as having dyslexia or related disorders from an outside source will be reviewed for placement in the district’s program. After Hughes Springs ISD’s evaluation of the information obtained from the previous testing of the student, Hughes Springs ISD may choose to accept the outside assessment, or may re-assess the student. In either situation, the ARD committee will determine the identification status of a student enrolled in Hughes Springs ISD, and the placement of the student in the dyslexia program(s).

 **VI. Instruction for Students with Dyslexia**

Once it has been determined that a student has dyslexia, the school district shall provide an appropriate instructional program for the student as required in TEC §38.003(b):

*In accordance with the program approved by the State Board of Education, the board of trustees of each school district shall provide for the treatment of any student determined to have dyslexia or a related disorder.*

http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.38.htm#38.003

Each school must provide an identified student access at his/her campus to an instructional program that meets the requirements in 19 TAC §74.28(c) and to the services of a teacher trained in dyslexia and related disorders. While the components of instruction for students with dyslexia include good teaching principles for all teachers, the explicitness and intensity of the instruction, fidelity to program descriptors, grouping formats, and training and skill of the teachers are

wholly different from core classroom instruction.

Instruction decisions for a student with dyslexia must be made by an ARD committee that is knowledgeable about the instructional components ad approaches for students with dyslexia. In accordance with 19 TAC §74.28 (c), districts shall purchase or develop a reading program for students with dyslexia and related disorders that incorporates all the components of instruction and instructional approaches in the following sections.

**Components of Instruction**

The instructional program should be offered in a small group arrangement (e.g., 1:3 – 1:6) and include reading, writing, and spelling as appropriate. 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 with dyslexia, include all of the following**:

* **Phonological awareness** -- The understanding of the internal sound structure of words.

A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a given language that can be distinct from other sounds. The ability to segment spoken words into their component phonemes is an important aspect of phonological awareness (Birsh, 2001, p.19)

* **Sound-symbol association** – 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, 2011, p.19).

• **Syllabication** – A unit of oral or written language with one vowel sound. The six

 basic types of syllables in the English language are: closed, open, vowel-

 consonant-e, r- controlled, vowel pair (or vowel team), and consonant-le (or final

 stable syllable). (Birsh, 2001, p.19)

* **Orthograph**y – written spelling patterns and rules in a given langue. The

 instruction should be integrated with phonology and sound-symbol knowledge.

• **Morphology** – The study of how a base word, prefix, root, suffix (morphemes) combine to form words. A morpheme is the smallest unit of meaning in a given language. (Birsh, 2011, p.19)

• **Syntax** – The sequence and function of words in a sentence in order to convey meaning. (Birsh, 2011, p.19).

• **Reading comprehension** – 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, 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, 2011, pp. 9 and 368; Snow, 2002).

• **Reading fluency** – The ability to read text with sufficient speed and accuracy to

 support comprehension (Moats & Dakin, 2008, p. 52).

Both the teacher of dyslexia and the regular classroom teacher should provide multiple opportunities to support intervention and to strengthen these skills; therefore, responsibility for teaching reading and writing must be shared by classroom teachers, reading specialists, interventionists, and teachers of dyslexia programs.

**Delivery of Dyslexia Instruction**

Principles of effective intervention for students with dyslexia include all of the following:

• **Simultaneous, multisensory (VKAT)** – Utilizes all learning pathways in the brain (visual, auditory, kinesthetic-tactile) simultaneously in order to enhance memory and learning (Birsh, 2001, p.19).

• **Systematic and cumulative** – Requires the organization of material follow order of the language. The sequence must begin with the easiest concepts and progress methodically to more difficult concepts, with each step based on elements previously learned (Birsh, 2011, p. 19).

• **Explicit instruction** – Explained and demonstrated by the teacher one language and print concept at a time, rather than left to discovery through incidental encounters with information (Moats & Dakin, 2008, p. 58).

• **Diagnostic teaching to automaticity** – Knowledge of prescriptive instruction that will meet individual student needs of language and print concepts (Birsh, 2001, p. 19).

• **Synthetic instruction** – Presents the parts of any alphabetic language (morphemes) to teach how the word parts work together to form a whole (Birsh, 2011, p. 19)

• **Analytic instruction** – presents the whole and teachers how the whole word can be broken into its component parts (Birsh, 2011, p. 19).

As appropriate intervention is provided, students with dyslexia make significant gains in reading.

Effective instruction is highly-structured, systematic, and explicit, and it lasts for sufficient

duration. In addition, because effective intervention requires highly structured and systematic

delivery, it is critical that those who provide intervention for students with dyslexia be trained in the program used and that the program is implemented with fidelity.

**Instructional Intervention Consideration for English Language Learners (ELLs) with**

**Dyslexia**

Learning to read, write, and spell in two languages can be facilitated by building on a student’s

native language knowledge and helping to transfer that knowledge to a second language. While direct, systematic instruction is still required for all aspects of reading, additional explicit instruction will be needed to address the similarities and differences in sounds, syllable structure, morphology, orthography, and syntax between the first and second languages.

Direct and systematic instruction of the cross-linguistic correlations is beneficial for ELLs.

Instruction can subsequently include those sound-symbol correlations that partially overlap or

present a slight variation from the native language to the second language. Unfamiliar phonemes

and graphemes then can be presented.

In addition to all the components of effective instruction previously mentioned, intervention for

ELLs also must emphasize oral language development. The similarities of words in the native

language and English must be explicitly taught.

It is also necessary to incorporate ESL strategies during the intervention process and in all

content areas. In Texas, school districts are required to implement the English Language

Proficiency Standards (ELPS) as an integral part of each subject area in the required curriculum

(TAC §74.4). Dyslexia instruction for ELLs must incorporate the ELPS. A few strategies to

consider include:

• Establish routines so that ELLs understand what is expected of them

• Provide native language support when giving directions or when students do not understand the task.

• Provider opportunities for repetition and rehearsal so that the new information can be learned to mastery.

• Adjust the rate of speech and the complexity of the langue used according to the second language proficiency level of each student.

• Provide extra time for the ELL to process the English language. This is especially necessary during the early stages of second language development.

• Provide extra time for the ELL to formulate oral and written responses.

• Emphasize text that includes familiar content and explain the structure of the text.

**Instructional Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

By receiving specialized instruction that contains the components described in this chapter, the

student with dyslexia is better equipped to meet the demands of grade-level or course instruction.

In addition to specialized instruction, accommodations provide the student with dyslexia

effective and equitable access to grade-level or course instruction in the general education

classroom. Accommodations are not a one size fits all; rather, the impact of dyslexia on each

individual student determines the accommodation. Listed below are **examples** of reasonable

classroom accommodations:

• Copies of notes (teacher or peer provided)

• Note-taking assistance

• Additional time on class assignments and tests

• Reduced/shortened assignments (chunking assignments into manageable units, fewer items given on a classroom test or homework assignment without eliminating concepts, or student planner to assist with assignments)

• Alternative test location that provides a quiet environment and reduces distractions

• Priority seating assignment

• Oral reading of directions or written material

• Word Banks

• Formula charts

When making decisions about accommodations, instruction is always the foremost priority. Not

all accommodations used in the classroom are allowed during a state assessment. However, an

educator’s ability to meet the individual needs of a student with dyslexia should not be limited by

whether an accommodation is allowable on a state assessment.

Accommodations are changes to materials, actions, or techniques, including the use of

technology, that enable students with disabilities to participate meaningfully in grade-level or

course instruction. The use of accommodations occurs primarily during classroom instruction as

educators use various instructional strategies to meet the needs of each student. A

student may need an accommodation only temporarily while learning a new skill, or a student

might require the accommodation throughout the school year or over several years.

In order to make accommodation decisions for students, educators should have knowledge of the

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and how a student performs in relation to them.

Educators should also collect and analyze data pertaining to the use and effectiveness of

accommodations (e.g., assignment/test scores with and without the accommodation,

observational reports) so that informed educational decisions can be made for each student. By

analyzing data, an educator can determine if the accommodation becomes inappropriate or

unnecessary over time due to the student’s changing needs. Likewise, data can confirm for the

educator that the student still struggles in certain areas and should continue to use the

accommodation.

**Access to Instructional Materials for Students with Disabilities**

Accessible instructional materials (AIM) are textbooks and related core instructional materials

that have been converted into specialized formats (e.g., Braille, audio, digital text, or large print)

for students who are blind or have low vision, have a physical disability, or have a reading

disability such as dyslexia. Digital books or text-to-speech functions on computers and mobile

devices provide access to general education curriculum for students with dyslexia. TEA provides

helpful links and resources regarding accessible instructional materials for students with

disabilities at http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=2147487109.

**Texas State Student Assessment Program Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Educators, parents, and students must understand that accommodations provided during

classroom instruction and testing might differ from accommodations allowed for use on state

assessments. The state assessment is a standardized tool for measuring every student’s learning

in a reliable, valid, and secure manner. An accommodation used in the classroom for learning

may invalidate or compromise the security and integrity of the state assessment; therefore, not all

accommodations suitable for instruction are allowed during the state assessments. It is important

to keep in mind that the policies for accommodation use on state assessments **should not** limit an

educator’s ability to develop individualized materials and techniques to facilitate student

learning. **Instruction comes first** and can be customized to meet the needs of each student.

For the purposes of the statewide assessments, students needing accommodations due to a

disability include the following:

• Students with an identified disability who receive special education services and meet established eligibility criteria for certain accommodations.

• Students with an identified disability who receive §504 services and meet established eligibility criteria for certain accommodations.

• Students with a disabling condition who do not receive special education or services but meet established eligibility criteria for certain accommodations.

For students who receive special education or §504 services the decisions for student use of

accommodations during the statewide assessments is made by the ARD committee or §504

placement committee. In those rare instances where a student does not receive services but

meets the eligibility criteria due to a disability condition, the decision about using

accommodations on the state-wide assessments is made by the appropriate team of people at the

campus level, such as the RtI team or student assistance team. For more information about

accommodations on statewide assessments, see

www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/accommodations/staar-telpas/

**Enrollment in Gifted/Talented and Advanced Academic Programs**

A student who has been identified with dyslexia can also be a gifted learner, or a twice-

exceptional learner. A twice-exceptional learner is a child or youth who performs at or shows the

potential for performing at a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared to others

of the same age, experience, or environment and who exhibits high-performance capability in an

 intellectual, creative, or artistic area; possesses an unusual capacity for leadership; or excels in a

specific academic field (TEC §29.121) and who also gives evidence of one or more disabilities

as defined by federal or state eligibility (IDEA 2004) (300.8) (§504) criteria such as learning

disabilities, speech and language disorders, emotional/behavioral disorders, physical disabilities,

sensory disabilities (hearing impaired, visually impaired, blind-deaf), traumatic brain injury,

autism spectrum disorder, or other health impairments such as ADHD.

Assessment and identification of twice-exceptional learners can be challenging and requires

those vested in the education of these learners to be knowledgeable of the unique characteristics

and behaviors demonstrated by these learners. Often the disability masks the giftedness, which

places emphasis on barriers to learning instead of the potential that the learner has as a result of

the gifted attributes. Conversely, the giftedness may mask the disability, which may result in the

learner’s experiencing gaps in learning compounded by the disability, thus affecting how the

learner perceives his or her abilities.

Twice-exceptional students must be provided access to all service and course options available to

other students. The US Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights offers information for

addressing students with disabilities seeking enrollment in advanced academic programs (e.g.,

Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate). For more information, see

www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-20071226.pdf

Additional support, information, and resources are available through the Equity in

Gifted/Talented (G/T) Education website at www.gtequity.org/index.php. *The Texas State Plan*

*for the Education of Gifted/Talented* Students, available at

www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=6420, mandates that once any student is identified as gifted,

he/she must be provided gifted/talented services that are commensurate with his/her abilities

(1.4C, 1.6C, 2.1C, and 3.3C). Additionally, due to the disability, twice-exceptional learners

should have an IEP through special education services or a §504 plan through 38 DRAFT

general education. Additional support for districts serving twice-exceptional students is available

at www.gtequity.org/twice.php.

**Legislative Action to Assist Teachers**

Even though students with dyslexia are to receive extensive and intensive intervention according

to the district-selected program, two pieces of Texas legislation require additional attention by

districts.

**Technology Integration for Students with Dyslexia (TEC §38.0031)**

The research is definitive regarding technology and instruction for students with dyslexia. When

students have access to effective technology, their overall educational performance improves.

One of the best ways to use technology is in combination with instruction in reading strategies

and processes (Pisha & O’Neill, 2003). Technology is not intended to take the place of quality

reading instruction. It should be used in combination with teacher-directed instruction and

intervention. Technology should never be used as a substitute for quality instruction; it is

intended to supplement, not supplant. In fact, technology shows mixed results in improving

 phonemic awareness, phonics, and vocabulary, with computer-mediated approaches having no

clear advantage over teacher-directed instruction (Hecker & Engstrom, 2011).

The *Technology Integration for Students with Dyslexia* online tool (TEC §38.0031) is a resource

developed to support instructional decisions regarding technology that benefits students with

dyslexia. To view this source, visit www.region10.org/dyslexia/techplan.

**Professional Development Relative to Dyslexia for All Teachers**

Research consistently confirms the impact that a knowledgeable teacher can have on the success

or failure of even the best reading programs (Shaywitz, 2003). To ensure that teachers are

knowledgeable about dyslexia, TEC §21.054(b) and TAC §232.11(e) require educators who

teach students with dyslexia to be trained in new research and practices related to dyslexia as a

part of their continuing professional education (CPE) hours.

http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.21.htm

Teachers of students with dyslexia must be prepared to use the techniques, tools, and strategies

outlined in the previous sections of this chapter. They may also serve as trainers and consultants

in the area of dyslexia and related disorders for regular, remedial, and special education teachers.

**VII. Student Monitoring and Dyslexia Program Exit Criteria**

Upon successful completion of the district dyslexia program(s), as measured by program mastery

checks (assessments) completed at regular intervals, students will be exited from the district

dyslexia program(s). Additional criteria for exit may include but is not limited to: grades from

progress reports or report cards, state assessment data, benchmarks, progress monitoring data,

teacher and/or parent observations/checklists, and individual dyslexia program requirements.

Students that have completed the Hughes Springs ISD dyslexia program will receive regular

monitoring during the first year.

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

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

In addition to monitoring, exited students will receive support which may include, but is not limited to:

* Accommodations in the classroom
* RTI/Tier II intervention
* Talking Book Program
* Learning Ally

Students qualifying for dyslexia services that are identified as §504 or Special Education will

follow monitoring requirements outlined in federal law. A student determined to have dyslexia

during testing under TEC §38.003(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.

No one factor is sufficient to warrant exiting a student from direct dyslexia services. Dismissal is

determined by consensus of the committee of knowledgeable persons or ARD

committee. The committee considers the following factors when recommending exiting or

reduction of dyslexic services:

* Completion of the district dyslexia program;
* The reevaluation and/or post-testing of student shows student growth to be closer to grade level proficiency standards;
* The student demonstrates self-monitoring/self-correction behaviors as evidenced through informal observation by teacher and/or dyslexia teacher;
* The student passed the reading portion of the state assessment;
* Committee recommendation;
* Parents request in writing that the student exit the program.

If a student has shown substantial progress and the committee of knowledgeable persons

determines the student is ready to be dismissed completely from the program, the committee may

recommend monitoring services instead of direct services. When a child is exited from the

dyslexia program, a dismissal form will be completed and placed in the child’s cumulative

folder.