



Dyslexia Manual

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Mission Statement

*The mission of the Mansfield
Independent School District Dyslexia
Program is to provide specialized
instruction to the individual needs of
students with dyslexia and related
disorders to provide opportunities for
these students to develop their
potential as learners.*

Dyslexia Defined

As defined by 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 imperception, dysphasia, specific developmental dyslexia, developmental dysgraphia, and developmental spelling disability.

The current definition from the International Dyslexia Association states the following:

“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.” (2012)

Students identified as having dyslexia typically experience primary difficulties in phonological awareness and manipulation, single-word reading, reading fluency, and spelling. Consequences may include 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.

Strengths of a Dyslexic

*Dyslexic students may exhibit all or none of the following:

Preschool Years – First Grade

- Curiosity
- A great imagination
- Eager to embrace new ideas
- Getting the gist of things
- A good understanding of new concepts
- Surprising maturity
- A large vocabulary for the age group
- Enjoyment in solving problems
- Talent at building models
- Excellent comprehension of stories read or told to him

Second Grade – Teens

- Excellent thinking skills: conceptualization, reasoning, imagination, abstraction
- Learning that is accomplished best through meaning rather than rote memorization
- Ability to get the “big picture”
- A high level of understanding what is read to him
- The ability to read and to understand a high level overlearned words in a special area of interest
- Improvement as an area of interest becomes more specialized and focused, when he develops a miniature vocabulary that he can read
- A surprisingly sophisticated listening vocabulary
- Excellence in areas not dependent on reading, such as math, computers, and visual arts, or excellence in more conceptual subjects such as philosophy, biology, social studies, neuroscience, and creative writing

Young Adults and Adults

- A high learning capability
- A noticeable improvement when given additional time on multiple-choice exams
- Noticeable excellence when focused on a highly specialized area
- Excellence in writing if content and not spelling is important
- A noticeable articulateness in the expression of ideas and feelings
- Exceptional empathy and warmth, and feeling for others
- Success in areas not dependent on rote memory
- A talent for high-level conceptualization and the ability to come up with original insights
- Big picture thinking
- Inclination to think out of the box
- A noticeable resilience and ability to adapt

-Overcoming Dyslexia by Sally Shaywitz

Common Risk Factors Associated with Dyslexia

From *The Dyslexia Handbook, Revised 2014*, Texas Education Agency

If the following behaviors are unexpected for an individual's age, educational level, or cognitive abilities, they may be risk factors associated with dyslexia. A student with dyslexia usually exhibits several of these behaviors that persist over time and interfere with his/her learning. A family history of dyslexia may be present...

Preschool

- Delay in learning to talk
- Difficulty with rhyming
- Difficulty pronouncing words
- Poor auditory memory for nursery rhymes and chants
- Difficulty in adding new vocabulary words
- Inability to recall the right word
- Trouble learning and naming letters and numbers and remembering the letters in his/her name
- Aversion to print

Kindergarten and First Grade

- Difficulty breaking words into smaller parts (syllables)
- Difficulty identifying and manipulating sounds in syllables
- Difficulty remembering the names of letters and recalling their corresponding sounds
- Difficulty decoding single words
- Difficulty spelling words the way they sound or remembering letter sequences in very common words seen often in print

Second Grade and Third Grade

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

- Difficulty recognizing common sight words
- 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
- Difficulty reading fluently
- 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
- Avoidance of reading
- 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
- Reliance on listening rather than reading for comprehension

Middle School 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 with written assignments
- Tendency to avoid reading
- Difficulty learning a foreign language

Trends and Tendencies Related to Dyslexia

*Dyslexic students may exhibit all or none of the following:

- ❑ Grades slip downward year to year
- ❑ Inconsistent grades from day to day
- ❑ Inconsistent performances on standardized tests
- ❑ Confusion with math symbols, but not computation
- ❑ Math computation better than word problems
- ❑ Memorized spelling better than spontaneous spelling
- ❑ Homework better quality than class work
- ❑ Excessive amount of time spent on homework
- ❑ Deteriorating organization and study habits
- ❑ Deteriorating motivation and self-esteem
- ❑ Good grades but excessive struggle required
- ❑ Chooses oral performance over written when given choice
- ❑ Compensates by use of pictures, prompts from the teacher, etc.
- ❑ Stress reflected by irregular writing and uneven pencil pressure

Early Identification

Both state and federal legislation emphasize early identification and intervention for students who may be at risk for reading difficulties, such as dyslexia. In accordance with TEC § 28.006 Reading Diagnosis, Mansfield ISD administers early reading instruments in kindergarten and first grades to determine students' reading development and comprehension. If, on basis of the reading instrument results, students are determined to be at risk for dyslexia and 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. The information from reading instruments administered under TEC § 28.006 will be one source of information in deciding whether or not to recommend a student for assessment for dyslexia.

Mansfield ISD will implement reading programs using scientifically based reading research as well as evidence proven effective results based on the diagnosis.

Under the Equal Education Opportunity Act (EEOA), Mansfield ISD ensures that all students are given equal access to educational services regardless of race, color, sex, religion, or national origin. Therefore, research-based interventions are to be provided to all students experiencing difficulties in reading, including English language learners (ELL), regardless of their proficiency in English.

§504 Child Find Notice

Pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the District has a duty to identify, refer, evaluate and if eligible, provide a free, appropriate public education to disabled students. It is important to note that school districts have an obligation to Child Find and identify children with disabilities early; therefore, RtI cannot be a roadblock to referral to special education or dyslexia.

Dyslexia Identification Process

I. Data Gathering

If a student is failing to make expected academic progress by struggling in one of the areas of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency, reading comprehension) and exhibits characteristics of dyslexia, the reading specialist or classroom teacher will initiate the cumulative data gathering process in order for the dyslexia committee to make an instructional decision about the student's needs.

II. RtI - Campus Committee

If problems in academic achievement have been noted through academic progress reports, parent conferences, or inadequate performance on STAAR, the RtI committee will evaluate the student's progress to determine what actions are needed to ensure improved academic performance. A recommendation for dyslexia assessment may be appropriate at any point in this process; however, needed support actions may also need to be recommended as intervention strategies.

III. Committee Actions

At this point, a decision should be made about placing the student in the most appropriate intervention. The options include, but are not limited to, a formal dyslexia assessment, a special education referral, or other instructional interventions. If a student does not make appropriate progress, a recommendation may be made for either dyslexia assessment or a special education referral. Parent notification and written consent is needed to conduct individual evaluation of the student.

IV. Recommend for Formal Assessment

A. Parental Notification of 504 Guidelines

Notice of 504 Guidelines must be sent to parents and returned to school before dyslexia assessments can be initiated.

If the student is being assessed as part of a special education evaluation or is already served in special education and a dyslexia evaluation is requested, IDEA 2004 procedures must be followed.

B. Assessment

Areas to be assessed will include the following:

Academic Skills – *letter knowledge, word decoding, fluency, reading comprehension, spelling and writing composition*

Cognitive Processes – *phonological and phonemic awareness, rapid naming, orthographic processing, language processing*

Based on the student's academic difficulties and characteristics and/or language acquisition, additional areas related to vocabulary, listening comprehension, oral language proficiency, written expression, and other cognitive abilities may need to be assessed.

V. Dyslexia/504 Committee

The dyslexia committee will meet to interpret the results of testing in light of the student's educational history, linguistic background environmental or socioeconomic factors. The committee will make the determination if the student meets eligibility requirements.

VI. Identification of Dyslexia/Determination of Services

Once the identification of dyslexia has been made and parents have given approval, the student will be placed in the district's dyslexia program. Instructional decisions for a student with dyslexia must be made by a committee (504 or ARD) that is knowledgeable about the instructional components and approaches for students with dyslexia.

CRITICAL, EVIDENCE-BASED COMPONENTS OF DYSLEXIA INSTRUCTION

- **Phonological Awareness**
- **Sound-Symbol Association**
- **Syllabication**
- **Orthography**
- **Morphology**
- **Syntax**
- **Reading Comprehension**
- **Reading Fluency**

From *The Dyslexia Handbook, Revised 2014*, Texas Education Agency; see p. 26

DELIVERY OF DYSLEXIA INSTRUCTION

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

From *The Dyslexia Handbook, Revised 2014*, Texas Education Agency; see p. 28

MISD employs dyslexia programming to address the state-required components for dyslexia program instruction in the following areas:

PHONEMIC AWARENESS INSTRUCTION

Phonemic awareness instruction enables the student to detect, segment, blend, and manipulate sounds in spoken language. It is the insight that spoken words can be conceived as a sequence of sounds.

GRAPHOPHONEMIC KNOWLEDGE- (PHONICS) INSTRUCTION

Graphophonemic knowledge (phonics) instruction takes advantage of the letter-sound plan in which words that carry meaning are made of sounds, and sounds are written with letters in the right order. Students with this understanding can blend sounds associated with letters into words and can separate words into component sounds for spelling and writing.

LANGUAGE STRUCTURE INSTRUCTION

Language structure instruction encompasses morphology (the study of meaningful units of language such as prefixes, suffixes and roots), semantics (ways that language conveys meaning), syntax (sentence structure) and pragmatics (how to use language in a particular context).

LINGUISTICS INSTRUCTION

Linguistic instruction is directed toward proficiency and fluency with patterns of language so that words and sentences are the carriers of meaning.

STRATEGY-ORIENTED INSTRUCTION

Strategy-oriented instruction enables students to use strategies for decoding (reading), encoding (spelling), word recognition, fluency and comprehension that students need to become independent readers.

Dyslexia Program Exit Criteria

Upon completion of Mansfield ISD Dyslexia program, as measured by program mastery checks (assessments) completed at regular intervals, student will be exited from the district dyslexia program*. 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.

*Dismissal is determined by the 504 committee, or ARD committee.

Students that have completed the Mansfield ISD dyslexia program will receive regular monitoring during the first year.