

Dyslexia

The Huckabay ISD dyslexia program is designed to provide short-term reading intervention for children who meet Huckabay's criteria. Services are offered to qualifying students in kindergarten through grade 12. Such services provide the students with the skills and strategies to "unlock" the code of reading and to improve reading fluency. Students are instructed using The Herman Method for Reversing Failure and /or multi-sensory structured language approaches. The goal of these services is for students to gain mastery of the concepts taught and return to full time placement within the regular classroom.

Assessment

Students enrolling in Huckabay ISD shall be assessed for dyslexia and related disorders at appropriate times. 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.

The procedures followed for assessment include:

1. Notify parents or guardians of proposal to assess student for dyslexia
2. Inform parents or guardians of their rights under Section 504
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.

Huckabay ISD administers measures that are related to the student's educational needs. Depending upon the student's age and stage of reading development, the following are the areas related to reading that should be assessed:

- Reading real and nonsense words in isolation (decoding)
- Phonological awareness
- Letter knowledge (name and associated sound)
- Rapid naming
- Reading fluency (rate and accuracy)
- Reading comprehension
- Written spelling

Based on the student's academic difficulties and characteristics, additional areas that can be assessed include vocabulary, written expression, handwriting, and mathematics.

Identification of Students With Dyslexia

A committee of knowledgeable persons determines the identification of dyslexia after reviewing all accumulated data.

The student's difficulties in the area of reading will reflect one or more of the primary characteristics of dyslexia with unexpectedly low performance for the student's age and educational level in the following areas:

- Reading real words in isolation;
- Decoding nonsense words;
- Reading fluency (both rate and accuracy);
- Written spelling (an isolated difficulty in spelling would not be sufficient to identify dyslexia)

This unexpectedly low reading performance will be the result of a deficit in phonological processing, including the following:

- Phonological awareness;
- Rapid naming;
- Phonological memory

The committee must also incorporate the following guidelines:

- The student has received conventional (appropriate) instruction;
- The student has an unexpected lack of appropriate academic progress (in the areas of reading and spelling)
- The student has adequate intelligence;
- The student exhibits characteristics associated with dyslexia;
- The student's lack of progress is not due to sociocultural factors such as language differences, irregular attendance, or lack of experiential background.

Based on the above information and guidelines the committee of knowledgeable persons determines whether the student has dyslexia. If the student has dyslexia, the committee also determines whether the student has a disability under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504). Not all students with dyslexia are automatically eligible for 504. A student is considered to have a disability under 504 if the condition substantially limits the student's learning. Students with additional factors that complicate their dyslexia may require additional support or referral to special education.

Placement Options

When a child qualifies as a student with dyslexia, a meeting is scheduled. At the meeting, the results of the assessment will be shared and the committee will then determine the proper placement option for the child. The placement options are based on the amount of the intervention needed for the child to be successful in the regular classroom. The placement options become less restrictive at each level. The placement options are:

- **Direct services:**
At this level the child's initial testing indicates a need for short-term multi-sensory reading intervention, and possibly classroom accommodations
- **Monitor with possible accommodations:**
The dyslexia teacher will monitor the student's progress.
- **Possible 504 accommodations only:**
The 504 committee will meet annually to establish appropriate accommodations.
At this level, the services of a dyslexia teacher are no longer required.

Discontinuation from Direct Services

No one factor is sufficient to warrant exiting a student from direct dyslexia services after intervention. Discontinuation from direct services is determined by consensus of a committee of knowledgeable persons. This committee considers the following factors when recommending exiting or a reduction of dyslexia services:

- Completing the scope and sequence of The Herman Method for Reversing Reading Failure;
- The student passed the reading portion of the TAKS, after not previously passing; or achieving "Commended Performance" on reading TAKS;
- The reevaluation and/or post-testing of students shows growth to be closer to age level proficiency standards;
- The student demonstrates self-monitoring/self-correction behaviors as evidenced through informal observation by the teacher.

If the student has made ONLY limited academic progress while being directly served, a referral to special education may be appropriate.

FAQ about Dyslexia

What is dyslexia?

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 phonemic awareness and manipulation, single-word decoding, reading fluency, and spelling. Secondary consequences of dyslexia may include difficulties in reading comprehension and/or written expression. These difficulties are unexpected for the student's age,

educational level or cognitive abilities. Additionally, there is often a family history of similar difficulties. Many individuals learn to compensate for or practically overcome their weaknesses through proper teaching methods and practice.

How would I know if my child has dyslexia?

The characteristics of dyslexia vary from person-to-person. Some children experience problems in many areas while some may have a difficulty in only one area. Many children exhibit one or more of the following characteristics; however, if the characteristics are **unexpected** for the child's age, educational level, or cognitive ability teachers and parents should be alerted to the possibility of dyslexia:

Pre-school

- May talk later than most children;
- May have difficulty with rhyming;
- May have difficulty pronouncing words
- May have poor auditory memory for nursery rhymes and chants;
- May be slow to add new vocabulary words;
- May be unable to recall the right word;
- May have trouble learning numbers, days of the week, colors, shapes, and how to spell and write his or her name.

Kindergarten through third grade

- Fails to understand that words come apart;
- Has difficulty learning the letter names and their corresponding sound;
- Has difficulty decoding single words;
- Has difficulty spelling phonetically;
- Reads dysfluently;
- Relies on context to recognize a word;

Fourth grade through high school

- Has a history of reading and spelling difficulties;
- Avoids reading aloud;
- Reads most materials slowly; oral reading is labored, not fluent;
- Avoids reading for pleasure;
- May have an inadequate vocabulary;
- Has difficulty spelling; may resort to using less complicated words in writing that are easier to spell.

What do I do if I think my child has dyslexia?

Discuss your concerns with your child's teacher.

What happens after my child is screened?

You will be invited to a Student Intervention Team meeting. During that meeting you will be given the following information:

Parent's Rights and Responsibilities under Section 504

Results of you child's screening

Other data which may have been collected concerning your child which is necessary for the committee's decision of services

Decision of the Student Intervention Team

Accommodations (if applicable)

What is the relationship between dyslexia and special education?

Dyslexia is a form of a learning disability in reading. If the dyslexia is very severe and the student is not progressing academically, more intensive specialized instruction may be required than that provided in the general education classroom. To qualify for special education services, a student must be assessed and meet federal and state criteria.

What program is available for dyslexic students?

Huckabay Independent School District's dyslexia program includes a variety of instructional techniques. Under a state law passed in 1986, each campus is to have a program for students identified as having characteristics of dyslexia and/or related disorders.

Programs for students with dyslexia must be:

individualized to meet the unique learning needs of the student;

multi-sensory, using visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic techniques;

phonologically based;

meaning based;

systematic, sequential, and cumulative;

process oriented.

Students with dyslexia need more help than most students do in sorting, recognizing, and putting what they see, hear, and feel in order—organizing the raw materials of language for thinking and using. They must be taught by a method that uses the learning pathways of seeing, hearing, and feeling. This method must be simultaneously multi-sensory; i.e. see it, say it, and write it at the same time.

What are some effective strategies for teaching dyslexic students?

- Use multi-sensory techniques
- Concentrate on developing concepts as early as possible
- Teach concepts verbally first
- Make learning meaningful
- Use discovery learning
- Use visual and auditory clues
- Go from simple to complex
- Structure activities
- Remember to allow time and be patient

What accommodations are available for dyslexic students?

A student with dyslexia may require accommodations in the classroom setting. The most common and needed accommodations are extended time for reading due to the student's lack of fluency and not penalizing the student for spelling errors on assignments without time for editing, since dyslexia directly affects spelling. Depending on the student's individual needs, additional accommodations may be necessary.

In spring of 2004, a study (Fletcher, Francis, Copeland, Young, Kalinowski, & Vaughn) was conducted to evaluate the effects of a series of accommodations on the performance of elementary students with dyslexia on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) reading test. The study focused on three accommodations that might benefit these students on the state reading test:

- Orally reading all proper nouns associated with each passage before students began individual reading,
- Orally reading all questions and answer choices to students, and
- Extending the testing time over a two-day period.

As a result of the 2004 study and a subsequent research study, the three bundled accommodations are now available for students in grades 3 – 8 who meet the eligibility requirements. The test administrator must administer the reading test using all three accommodations as a “bundled” package. Students should be tested individually or in small groups.

An oral administration is allowable only for the state assessments in mathematics, science, and social studies. It is not allowed for the reading, writing, or English language arts tests. Only examinees served by special education or 504 or who have been identified as having dyslexia may receive an oral administration of TAKS.

Resources

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/curriculum/elar/2007EnglishHandbook.pdf>

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/curriculum/elar/2007SpanishHandbook.pdf>

Dyslexia Handbook published by the Texas Education Agency, Department of Curriculum and Professional Development. Also included is information on the Student Success Initiative. These documents are available in both Spanish and English.

International Dyslexia Association

The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) (formerly The Orton Dyslexia Society) is an international, 501 (c)(3) non-profit, scientific and educational organization dedicated to the study and treatment of dyslexia.

<http://www.interdys.org>

Dallas Area Branch of International Dyslexia Association

The Austin Area Branch (AABIDS) is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit, scientific and educational organization dedicated to the study and treatment of the learning disability, dyslexia. This Branch was formed to increase public awareness of dyslexia, and through our Seminars, Conferences, and Workshops, have been serving individuals with dyslexia, their families, and professionals in the North Texas area.

Scottish Rite Hospital- A not-for-profit organization that provides a proven, multisensory approach to teaching the basic language skills of reading, writing, and spelling to all students, including students with learning differences, especially dyslexia.

<http://www.tsrnc.org>

LD OnLine is a service of The Learning Project at WETA, Washington, D.C., in association with The Coordinated Campaign for Learning Disabilities. LD OnLine is made possible in part by generous support from The Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation, NEC Foundation of America and Long Aldridge & Norman.

Dyslexia Online- An online magazine offering information on and resources for dyslexia.

