Parent Information Handbook

DYSLEXIA
AND
RELATED DISORDERS

PLANO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
DYSLEXIA DEFINED

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 imperception, dysphasia, specific developmental dyslexia, developmental dysgraphia, and developmental spelling disability.

The definition of the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) states:

"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.”

Adopted by the IDA Board of Dyslexia, Nov. 12, 2002 - The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) also uses this definition.

Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability and refers to a cluster of symptoms, which result in people having difficulties with specific language skills, particularly reading. Students with dyslexia usually experience difficulties with other language skills, such as spelling, writing, and pronouncing words. Dyslexia affects individuals throughout their lives; however, its impact can change at different stages in a person’s life. It is referred to as a learning disability because dyslexia can make it very difficult for a student to succeed academically in the typical instructional environment, and in its more severe forms, will qualify a student for special education, special accommodations, and/or extra support services (International Dyslexia Association (IDA), 2017).

It is equally important to understand what dyslexia is not. There are many misconceptions and myths about dyslexia, which can make it more difficult for someone with dyslexia to receive help and be understood. It is a myth that individuals with dyslexia “read backwards.” Their spelling can look quite jumbled at times not because they read or see words backwards, but because students have trouble remembering letter symbols for sounds and letter patterns in words. Dyslexia is not a disease, and therefore, there is no cure. With proper diagnosis, appropriate and timely instruction, hard work, and support from family, teachers, friends, and others, individuals who have dyslexia can succeed in school and later as adults (IDA, 2017).
CAUSES

The exact causes of dyslexia are still not completely clear, but anatomical and brain imagery studies show differences in the way the brain of a person with dyslexia develops and functions. Moreover, most people with dyslexia have been found to have problems with identifying the separate speech sounds within a word and/or learning how letters represent those sounds, a key factor in their reading difficulties. Dyslexia is not due to either lack of intelligence or desire to learn; with appropriate teaching methods, students with dyslexia can learn successfully (IDA, 2017).

CHARACTERISTICS OF DYSLEXIA

The following difficulties may be associated with dyslexia if they are unexpected for the individual’s age, educational level, or cognitive abilities:

- difficulty with phonological awareness processing the sounds of speech, including segmenting or breaking spoken words into individual sounds;
- difficulty with rhyming words,
- variable degrees of difficulty learning the names of letters and their associated sounds,
- difficulty with learning and reproducing the alphabet in correct sequence (in either oral or written form),
- difficulty decoding nonsense or unfamiliar words,
- difficulty reading single words in isolation,
- inaccurate and labored oral reading,
- lack of reading fluency,
- difficulty with learning to spell,
- variable degrees of difficulty with reading comprehension,
- avoidance of reading,
- limited vocabulary due to reduced reading experience,
- reliance on listening rather than reading,
- variable difficulty with aspects of written composition,
- difficulty with volume of reading and written work,
- difficulty with note-taking, and
- family history of similar problems.

Some students are able to succeed with learning early reading and spelling tasks (especially if they have strong memory skills); however, they begin to experience problems when the requirements of reading/understanding complex texts and writing with complex language skills increase in the intermediate or upper grades.
ASSOCIATED ACADEMIC DIFFICULTIES AND OTHER CONDITIONS

Besides academic struggles, some students with dyslexia may exhibit other complicated conditions and/or behaviors. The most common co-occurring disorder with dyslexia is attention deficit disorder. As a result, many students with dyslexia perform erratically from day-to-day and make inconsistent errors. Anxiety is the most common emotional symptom for students with dyslexia. Constant frustration and confusion in school contribute to the fear of failure, thus causing dyslexics to avoid whatever frightens them. This avoidance behavior is often mistaken for laziness. Students with dyslexia often experience lower self-image and feel inferior to their peers. Depression can result from negative thoughts about themselves. Motivation can be a critical factor contributing to the success or failure of instructional practices. These additional conditions can have a significant impact on the effectiveness of instruction.

Therefore, all of the factors that may affect learning must be considered when identifying and providing instruction for students with dyslexia. ADHD or symptoms of anxiety, anger, depression, or low self-esteem may lower a student’s motivation and engagement in learning. Educators are responsible for providing an environment that motivates and engages the student with dyslexia and complicating conditions (TEA, The Dyslexia Handbook, 2014).

IDENTIFICATION OF DYSLEXIA

The Plano Independent School District follows the policies and procedures outlined in the Texas Education Code §38.003. The decision process established by the district for identification, intervention, and placement concerning dyslexia and other related disorders is in accordance with federal and state guidelines.

The procedures followed as part of this process ensure that parents are kept informed and involved. Parents/guardians are notified of a proposal to assess a student for dyslexia and are informed of their rights under §504, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Parent permission must be obtained to assess a student for dyslexia.
The evaluation process includes the following domains:

- phonological awareness,
- letter knowledge,
- reading single words in isolation,
- word decoding,
- rapid naming,
- fluency/rate and accuracy,
- reading comprehension,
- spelling,
- orthographic memory,
- vocabulary,
- listening comprehension,
- written language,
- handwriting,
- mathematical calculation,
- mathematical reasoning,
- math facts fluency,
- verbal working memory, and
- cognitive development.

Analysis of an individualized evaluation includes the following:

- the student’s exhibiting characteristics associated with dyslexia,
- the student’s unexpected lack of appropriate academic progress,
- the student’s having adequate intelligence, the ability to learn,
- the student’s receiving conventional instruction, and
- the student’s lack of progress not being due to socio-cultural factors such as language differences, inconsistent attendance, and lack of experiential background.

A committee of knowledgeable persons determines whether the student has dyslexia. If the student has dyslexia, the §504 Committee furthermore determines whether the student has a disability under the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, §504. Students with additional factors that complicate their dyslexia may require additional support or referral to special education.
COMPONENTS OF THE DYSLEXIA INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

While the components of instruction for students with dyslexia include good teaching principles for all teachers, the explicitness and intensity of the instruction, fidelity of the program, grouping formats, and training/skill of the teachers are extremely different from core classroom instruction (TEA Dyslexia Handbook, 2014).

Components of instruction include:

- Phonemic awareness instruction that enables students to detect, segment, blend, and manipulate sounds in spoken language;

- Sound-symbol association (phonics) instruction that utilizes the letter-sound plan in which words that carry meaning are made of sounds, and the sounds are written with letters in the correct 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 that encompasses syllabication (six syllable types), orthography (written spelling patterns), 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);

- Linguistic instruction directed toward proficiency/fluency with patterns of language and that words/sentences carry meaning;

- Comprehension instruction that incorporates extracting and constructing meaning through the interaction of the reader with the text; and

- Process-oriented instruction in the procedures or strategies students use for decoding, encoding, word recognition, fluency, and comprehension to become independent readers.
While it is necessary that students are provided instruction in the above content, it is also critical that content is delivered with consistent, research-based practices (TEA Dyslexia Handbook, 2014).

**Principles of effective intervention practices** for students with dyslexia include:

- Explicit, direct instruction that is systematic (structured), sequential, and cumulative. Instruction is organized and presented in a way that follows a logical sequential plan, fits the nature of language (alphabetic principle) with no assumption of prior skills or language knowledge, and maximizes student engagement;

- Instruction that meets the specific learning needs of the student in a small group setting and contains all of the *Components of Instruction* mandated in 19 TAC §74.28;

- Intensive, highly concentrated instruction that maximizes student engagement, uses specialized methods and materials, produces results, and contains all the *Components of Instruction* mandated in 19 TAC §74.28;

- Meaning-based instruction that is directed toward purposeful reading and writing, with an emphasis on comprehension and composition; and

- Multisensory instruction that incorporates the simultaneous use of two or more sensory pathways (auditory, visual, kinesthetic, tactile) during teacher presentations and student practice.
ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations, provided for both testing and instruction, change the way students access information and demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities; they do not change academic standards or expectations. Accommodations should be matched to the individual student’s educational needs and be incorporated into classroom practice routinely before using in assessment situations (IDA, 2017).

Types of Accommodations

The following accommodations are suggested by the International Dyslexia Association.

**Presentation, Response, Setting, and Timing/Scheduling** are the four basic types of accommodations used during instruction and assessment:

**Presentation** accommodations allow students to access instructional materials in ways that do not require them to read standard print presented in a standard visual format.

- Verbal instructions
- Repetition of instructions
- Text/Instructions in audio-format
- Larger print
- Fewer items per page
- Visual prompts or cues
- Highlighted text
- Information in songs or poems
- Text-to-Speech software
- Electronic dictionary
- Audio Books
- Note-taking assistance

**Digital Books**

- Learning Ally: [https://www.learningally.org](https://www.learningally.org)
- Bookshare: [https://www.bookshare.org](https://www.bookshare.org)
Response accommodations allow students alternatives for completion of activities, assignments, and tests. Students demonstrate their knowledge and skills in alternate ways.

- Mark answers in test book instead of on separate answer sheet
- Alternative answer sheet
- Dictate to scribe or record oral responses on audio device
- Speech-to-Text Software
- Point to response choices
- Type (keyboard) response
- Verbal or oral responses
- Electronic spell check
- Word banks
- Formula banks

Setting accommodations change the location in which a test or assignment is given or the conditions of the classroom setting.

- Individual or small group
- Reduce visual and/or auditory distractions (e.g., wear headphones while working independently)
- Distraction-free setting (separate room)
- Priority seating arrangements

Timing/Scheduling accommodations change the length of time allowed for completion of a test, project, or assignment and may change the way the time is organized (e.g., breaks).

- Flexible scheduling (e.g., several sessions vs. one)
- Extended time
- Allowing for more frequent breaks (as appropriate)
- Changing order of tasks or subtests.
- Chunking or breakdown long assignments
Organization and Study Strategies

Organization

In addition to the types of accommodations and examples listed, devices and strategies that help students organize their time and work can be helpful.

- Timers to keep track of time
- Highlighters to mark text
- Planners for tracking assignments
- Graph paper to organize math problems on paper
- Color Coding (e.g., subject areas, categorization within notes)

Study Strategies

- Visualization
- Retelling as soon as possible after a lecture
- Putting new learning into own words as soon as possible after class—talking about learning
- Making flashcards of important words and concepts
- Organizing a study group for discussion (practice)

Additional organizational tools can be found at the following link:


Technology Tools

Jamie Martin, an assistive technology consultant, has created a resource of assistive technology for dyslexia. He has included technology tools that help with dictation, word predictions, graphic organizers, and literacy/study skills. These tools can be utilized on Chrome, Android, and iOS apps.

PARENT TIPS AND RESOURCES

You may find the following suggestions, tips, and resources helpful in working with your child.

READING ALOUD

Struggling readers need daily practice in reading aloud. Use strategies below to guide your child’s reading.

Problem Solving Strategies for Parents

A good reader is one who can figure out (problem-solve) unknown words. A good reader has a repertoire of strategies and can flexibly make use of these as needed. You can help by being aware of strategies and prompting your child to make use of these rather than providing answers.

1. Your child should monitor his/her reading. Young readers will try to make words and picture agree or match. Looking puzzled, stopping, and/or starting over are signals that something is confusing.

   PARENTS: It is important that the child do the monitoring. Do not “help” too quickly. Give your child thinking time. If your child cannot continue after allowing sufficient time, you can ask, “Was that okay?” “Why did you stop?” “What did you notice?” “Was there something tricky in that sentence? Show me.”

2. Your child should self-correct his errors.

   PARENTS: Allow time for correcting errors. The reader must take the first step and use strategies to figure out difficult words.

3. Your child should crosscheck strategy use. Readers constantly check to see if words make sense.

   PARENTS: If your child becomes frustrated and does not know what to do, try one of the following prompts:

   “What word could you try?”
   “Do you know another word that starts like that?”
   “Do you know a word that looks like this word?”
   “What do you think it could be?”
   “Run your finger under the tricky word.”
   “Do the letters give you any clues?”
   “Get your mouth ready to say that first sound.”
**Fix Up Strategies**

**Strategies for Confusing Words:**
- Check word parts you know
- Do I notice prefixes, suffixes, or other word parts that carry meaning?
- Try sounding the word out.
- Is there another word that looks like this one?
- Are there any clues in the sentence or surrounding sentences that can help me determine the meaning of the word?

**Strategies for Confusing Ideas:**
- Identify the confusing part.
- Slow down and reread the confusing part.
- Reread the whole page and parts before and after the confusing part.
- Summarize what has happened so far.
- Think about the parts you do understand.
- Think about what you know.
- Read on. Does it make sense now?

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TIPS TO ENCOURAGE READING AND WRITING

1. Keep books and magazines in your child’s room.

2. Carry books along when you go to the dentist, doctor, or places you may have to wait.

3. Reading a story or poem soothes a fretful child or relieves boredom.

4. Have your child help with a family message center. Children love the sense of accomplishment – and helping! Have your child help with the grocery or shopping list. At the same time, you are getting your child to read – while seemingly doing something else. Keep grocery lists, chore lists, messages, shopping lists, “love notes,” etc.

5. Read recipes. Not all reading happens in books. When you are cooking, ask your child to read the ingredients to you.

6. Read road signs. While you are driving, ask your child to read the road signs: Stop, Yield, One Way, street signs, or maps.

7. Get audio recordings of books. You may lack time to read to your child as much as you would like; however, listening to audio books provides access to a world of knowledge and builds listening comprehension.

8. Encourage your child to keep a daily journal.

9. Vary the writing your child does at home for different audiences and different purposes.

10. Encourage creativity and the enjoyment of writing.

11. Model reading and writing for your children.

**Graphic Organizers**: Samples of graphic organizers for writing tasks can be found at the following link:

SELECTING BOOKS FOR YOUR CHILD

Use the steps below in selecting books from the library or bookstore that are an appropriate reading level for your child.

1. Choose a random page from the middle of the book and ask your child to read it aloud.
2. Keep an unseen count of errors.
3. If there are more than five errors on a page, the book is likely too difficult.

If your child shows interest in a book and it is too difficult, find an audio recording so that your child can follow along. Experiencing fluent reading provides a wonderful opportunity for students to hear the flow and pace of language as the author intended.

HOMEWORK HELP

- Establish the habit of using a planner to record assignments, directions, and due dates. Make sure your child understands the expectations of the assignment. Coach your child to seek clarification from the teacher.

- Set a regular time for doing homework. Take into account the need for having a break from schoolwork and the importance of getting work done early in the evening. For many families, right after dinner is a good time.

- Designate a regular place for doing homework that takes into account your child’s learning preferences. Have needed supplies on hand.

- Model good work habits yourself.

- If your child has difficulty with lengthier assignments, establish checkpoints along the way. Coach your child at the beginning and end of an assignment.

- If your child has difficulty working independently on assignments, establish a schedule that includes time of working alone before asking for help. Discuss the kinds of help you will give and the things you expect to be done independently.

- Schedule breaks and limit the number of spontaneous interruptions.

- Break a long assignment into smaller, more manageable tasks. Coach your child until this becomes an independent task.
BOOK SELECTIONS FOR STUDENTS

Adam Zigzag by Barbara Berrie (1995)

Close to Famous by Joan Bauer (2012)

Eleven by Patricia Reilly Giff (2009)


I Have Dyslexia. What Does That Mean? By Shelley Ball-Dannenberg (2009)

It’s Called Dyslexia by Jennifer Moore-Mallinos (2007)


My Name is Brain Brian by Jeanne Betancourt (1995)

Thank-you, Mr. Falker by Patricia Polacco (2012)


The Hank Zipzer Series by Henry Winkler (2009)

The Lightning Thief by Rick Riordan (2006)
STUDY SKILLS

Graphic organizer for comparing two books:

How they are the same

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 

Title: 
Description: 
1. 
2. 

Title: 
Description: 
1. 
2. 

How they are different

1. 
2. 
3. 
4.
Graphic organizer for comparing:
Graphic organizer for comparing:
Graphic organizer for main idea:
Graphic organizer for sequencing:
## Graphic organizer for persuasive writing:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion or Position Statement:</th>
<th>Arguments that support opinion:</th>
<th>Arguments against opinion:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.</td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.</td>
<td>3.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion:**
Graphic organizer for content:

Concept Map
SUCCESS STORIES

Many people who have struggled with dyslexia or other related learning disorders in an academic environment have become true success stories as adults. You may find it helpful to share some of these names with your child, with the message that having dyslexia and achieving success can go hand-in-hand.

Hans Christian Andersen    Author of children's fairy tales
Harry Anderson            Actor, magician, comedian
Stephen Bacque             Entrepreneur of the Year, 1998
Ann Bancroft               Explorer, lecturer, educator, first woman to travel across the ice to the North and South Poles
Harry Belafonte            Singer, actor, entertainer
Alexander Graham Bell      Inventor
Dale S. Brown              Author, disability advocate
George Burns               Actor, comedian
Stephen J. Cannell         Screenwriter, producer, director
Gaston Caperton            Former governor of West Virginia
John T. Chamber            CEO of Cisco Systems
Nola D. Chee               Award-winning poet and author
Cher                       Entertainer, actress
Agatha Christie            English mystery writer
Winston Churchill          Former Prime Minister of Britain
John Corcoran              Real estate millionaire
Tom Cruise                 Actor
Fred Curry                 Navy pilot, CEO of Greyhound Lines
Leonardo Da Vinci           Renaissance artist, sculptor, painter
Walt Disney                Cartoonist, visionary founder of Disneyland/Disneyworld
Dr. Red Duke               Physician, television commentator
Frank Dunkle               Director of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Thomas Edison              Inventor, scientist
Tomima Edmark              Author, entrepreneur
Albert Einstein            Scientist, philosopher
Gustave Flaubert           Writer
Danny Glover               Actor
John Grisham               Author
Whoopi Goldberg            Actress
Edward Hallowell, MD        Author, psychiatrist, ADD specialist
Ellie Hawkins              Record-breaking rock climber
William Hewlett            co-founder of Hewlett-Packard
John Horner                Curator of paleontology, technical advisor to Steven Spielberg for Jurassic Park and The Lost World
John Irving                Author and screenwriter
William James              Psychologist, philosopher
Bob Jimenez  
Magic Johnson  
David Jones  
Thomas H. Kean

Sylvia Law  
Jay Leno  
Craig McCaw  
Edward James Olmos  
Paul J. Orfalea  
George Patton  
Patricia Polacco  
Robert Rauschenberg  
Nelson Rockefeller

Nolan Ryan  
Charles Schwab  
William Simmons, MD  
Tom Smothers  
Nancy L. Sonnabend  
Jackie Stewart  
Richard Strauss  
Victor Villasenor  
Lindsay Wagner  
Russell White  
Roger W. Wilkins  
Woodrow Wilson  
Henry Winkler  
Eric Wynalda  
William B. Yeats

TV anchorman  
Professional athlete  
Stunt man, pioneer in helicopter aerial photography  
President of Drew University, former governor of New Jersey  
Professor of law and medicine, author  
Comedian and TV show host  
Pioneer of cellular industry  
Actor, community activist  
Enterpreneur, founder of Kinkos  
Military General  
Author, illustrator of children’s books  
Former governor of New York, former vice president of the United States  
Professional athlete  
Founder of investment brokerage  
Professor of anesthesiology  
Comedian  
Researcher, inventor, author  
Race car driver  
Real estate developer, banker  
Award-winning author  
Actress, author, "The Bionic Woman"  
Professional athlete  
Head of the Pulitzer Prize Board  
Former president of the United States  
Actor, director, humanitarian, "The Fonz"  
Professional athlete  
Poet, dramatist, Nobel prize winner
GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Explicit direct instruction: presents a structured plan in a cumulative sequence.

Fluency: the ability to read with speed, accuracy, and proper expression. Fluency is one of several critical factors necessary for reading comprehension.

Graphonemic knowledge: the blending of sounds associated with letters into words. Graphonemic knowledge is necessary to separate words into component sounds for spelling and writing.

Language structure instruction: encompasses components of language such as morphology, semantics, syntax, and pragmatics.

Linguistic instruction: provides the concepts and understanding of patterns and relationships within a language.

Meaning-based instruction: directs purposeful reading and writing, with an emphasis on comprehension and composition.

Morphology: involves the study of word formations and their relationships to other words in the same language. Morphology is the analysis of word structure and parts of words, such as stems, root words, prefixes, and suffixes and their meaning.

Multisensory instruction: incorporates the simultaneous use of two or more sensory pathways (auditory, visual, kinesthetic, and tactile).

Orthographic memory: the memory for letter patterns and word spellings.

Orthography: the conventional spelling system of a language.

Phonemic awareness: detecting, blending, and manipulating sounds in spoken language.

Phonics instruction: teaches the relationships between the letters of written language and the sounds of spoken language.

Phonological memory: passive short-term memory that briefly stores speech-based information in phonological form.

Phonological awareness: involves an individual's awareness of the phonological structure or sound structure of words. Phonological awareness is an important and reliable predictor of later reading ability.

Pragmatics: relationships between words, expressions, or symbols and their users.

Process-oriented: strategies used for decoding and encoding, leading to word recognition, fluency, and comprehension.

Semantics: the meaning of a word, phrase, sentence, or text.

Syntax: the arrangement of words and phrases to create well-formed sentences in a language.
RESOURCES AND REFERENCES


