

Dyslexia Program

Policies and Procedures



Bells Independent School District

Revised 2019

Table of Contents

Purpose of Program & Program Goals	3
Legal Requirements.....	4
Section 504 Rights.....	6
Definition and Characteristics	7
Common Signs	9-10
K-1 Screening	11
Assessment Process.....	12-16
Referral to Special Education	17
Instruction	18-19
Accommodations/Modifications.....	20
Program Monitoring	20
Exiting/Monitoring Procedures.....	20-21
Resources for Parents and Students	22

Bells Independent School District Dyslexia Program Policies and Procedures have been determined as per directives in *The Dyslexia Handbook* developed by the Texas Education Agency. The handbook includes a copy of the complete 504 Law. The handbook can be found at

<http://www.region10.org/dyslexia/index/>.

Purpose for a Dyslexia Program

Bells ISD believes that individuals with dyslexia have talents that may not always be evident in an academic setting. The student's difficulty with academic tasks is not an indicator of their intelligence, but of a difficulty with words and/or language that is not within the student's control. Bells ISD desires to help such students attain academic success, and offers a dyslexia program for students who meet eligibility criteria. Students will be served by a trained teacher/therapist with a program which includes the components of phonemic awareness, graphophonemic knowledge, language structure, linguistic patterns and processes. Students identified as showing signs of dyslexia will be given support and appropriate instructional interventions in order to be successful in their academic career.

Program goals are as follows:

- Properly screen, assess, identify and instruct students with dyslexia so that these students can experience academic success.
- Provide appropriate accommodations to the student, emphasizing high expectations and appropriate teaching strategies.
- Effectively communicate between classroom teacher, dyslexia therapist, and special education teacher if the student qualifies for special education.
- Provide encouragement and support to dyslexic students and assist them to develop their talents while helping the students achieve academic success in school.

The purpose of the Bells ISD Dyslexia Manual is to outline procedures for assessment, identification, and instruction of students with dyslexia and related disorders.

Legal Requirements

At Bells ISD, the identification and instruction of students with dyslexia and related disorders is mandated and structured by Texas state laws, State Board of Education rule and federal law.

Texas Administrative Code §74.28 (State Board of Education Rule) Students with Dyslexia and Related Disorders

- (a) In order to support and maintain full educational opportunity for students with dyslexia and related disorders and consistent with federal and state law, school districts and open-enrollment charter schools shall provide each student with dyslexia or a related disorder access to each program under which the student qualifies for services.
- (b) The board of trustees of a school district or the governing body of an open-enrollment charter school must ensure that procedures for identifying a student with dyslexia or a related disorder and for providing appropriate, evidence-based instructional services to the student are implemented in the district.
- (c) A school district's or open-enrollment charter school's procedures must be implemented according to the State Board of Education (SBOE) approved strategies for screening, individualized evaluation, and techniques for treating dyslexia and related disorders. The strategies and techniques are described in the "Dyslexia Handbook: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders," a set of guidelines for school districts and open-enrollment charter schools that may be modified by the SBOE only with broad-based dialogue that includes input from educators and professionals in the field of reading and dyslexia and related disorders from across the state.
- (d) Screening as described in the "Dyslexia Handbook: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders" and further evaluation should only be conducted by individuals who are trained in valid, evidence-based assessments and who are trained to appropriately evaluate students for dyslexia and related disorders.
- (e) A school district or open-enrollment charter school shall purchase a reading program or develop its own evidence-based reading program for students with dyslexia and related disorders that is aligned with the descriptors found in the "Dyslexia Handbook: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders." Teachers who screen and treat these students must be trained in instructional strategies that use individualized, intensive, multisensory, phonetic methods and a variety of writing and spelling components described in the "Dyslexia Handbook: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders." The professional development activities specified by each open-enrollment charter school and district and/or campus planning and decision making committee shall include these instructional strategies.
- (f) At least five school days before any evaluation or identification procedure is used selectively with an individual student, the school district or open-enrollment charter school must provide written notification to the student's parent or guardian or another person standing in parental relation to the student of the proposed identification or evaluation. The notice must be in English, or to the extent practicable, the individual's native language and must include the following:
 - (1) a reasonable description of the evaluation procedure to be used with the individual student;
 - (2) information related to any instructional intervention or strategy used to assist the student prior to evaluation;
 - (3) an estimated time frame within which the evaluation will be completed; and
 - (4) specific contact information for the campus point of contact, relevant Parent Training and Information Projects, and any other appropriate parent resources.

- (g) Before a full individual and initial evaluation is conducted to determine whether a student has a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the school district or open-enrollment charter school must notify the student’s parent or guardian or another person standing in parental relation to the student of its proposal to conduct an evaluation consistent with 34 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), §300.503, provide all information required under subsection (f) of this section, and provide:
 - (1) a copy of the procedural safeguards notice required by 34 CFR, §300.504;
 - (2) an opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation, and
 - (3) a copy of information required under Texas Education Code (TEC), §26.0081.
- (h) Parents/guardians of a student with dyslexia or a related disorder must be informed of all services and options available to the student, including general education interventions under response to intervention and multi-tiered systems of support models as required by TEC, §26.0081(d), and options under federal law, including IDEA and the Rehabilitation Act, §504.
- (i) Each school or open-enrollment charter school must provide each identified student access at his or her campus to instructional programs required in subsection (e) of this section and to the services of a teacher trained in dyslexia and related disorders. The school district or open-enrollment charter school may, with the approval of each student’s parents or guardians, offer additional services at a centralized location. Such centralized services shall not preclude each student from receiving services at his or her campus.
- (j) Because early intervention is critical, a process for early identification, intervention, and support for students at risk for dyslexia and related disorders must be available in each district and open-enrollment charter school as outlined in the “Dyslexia Handbook: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders.” School districts and open-enrollment charter schools may not use early intervention strategies, including multi-tiered systems of support, to delay or deny the provision of a full and individual evaluation to a child suspected of having a specific learning disability, including dyslexia or a related disorder.
- (k) Each school district and open-enrollment charter school shall provide a parent education program for parents/guardians of students with dyslexia and related disorders. This program must include:
 - (1) awareness and characteristics of dyslexia and related disorders;
 - (2) information on testing and diagnosis of dyslexia and related disorders;
 - (3) information on effective strategies for teaching students with dyslexia and related disorders;
 - (4) information on qualifications of those delivering services to students with dyslexia and related disorders;
 - (5) awareness of information on accommodations and modifications, especially those allowed for standardized testing;
 - (6) information on eligibility, evaluation requests, and services available under IDEA and the Rehabilitation Act, §504, and information on the response to intervention process; and
 - (7) contact information for the relevant regional and/or school district or open-enrollment charter school specialists.
- (l) School districts and open-enrollment charter schools shall provide to parents of children suspected to have dyslexia or a related disorder a copy or a link to the electronic version of the “Dyslexia Handbook: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders.”
- (m) School districts and open-enrollment charter schools will be subject to monitoring for compliance with federal law and regulations in connection with this section.

Source: The provisions of this §74.28 adopted to be effective September 1, 1996, 21 TexReg 4311; amended to be effective September 1, 2001, 25 TexReg 7691; amended to be effective August 8, 2006, 31 TexReg 6212; amended to be effective August 24, 2010, 35 TexReg 7211; amended to be effective August 27, 2018, 43 TexReg 5519.

Section 504 Rights

Students with dyslexia and related disorders may qualify as persons with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This federal law is a civil rights statute designed to protect qualified persons with disabilities from discrimination in any program that receives federal funding. Although sometimes confused with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the law is not an entitlement or funding statute. It does, however, provide certain procedural protections for persons with disabilities to ensure that their needs are met as adequately as are the needs of nondisabled persons. Some students with dyslexia may qualify under IDEA (Special Education); if so, the requirements under IDEA apply. A student with dyslexia may be considered to have a disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 if the condition substantially limits the student's learning activities. If a student's dyslexia substantially limits the student's learning, a referral to the Section 504 committee is appropriate.

Some students with less severe learning disabilities or dyslexia may not require special education services and should benefit from specific assistance within regular or remedial programs. If a student's dyslexia substantially limits his/her learning, a referral to Section 504 is appropriate. The Committee or individual should contact the Section 504 Coordinator.

The interface of Section 504 with the dyslexia guidelines established by the State Board of Education of Texas is crucial. Section 504 requires each school to:

- Conduct an unbiased evaluation of a child who has a disability, has a record of such disability, or is regarded as having a disability.
- Make placement decisions using a team of persons knowledgeable about the student and the assessment data.
- Offer due process procedures for the resolution of disputes.

Definition of Dyslexia

Texas Education Code (TEC) §38.003 defines dyslexia in the following way:

“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.

“Related disorders” include disorders similar to or related to dyslexia such as developmental auditory imperceptions, dysphasia, specific developmental dyslexia, developmental dysgraphia, and development spelling disability.

TEC §38.003 (d)(1)-(2)(1995)

<http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED38.htm#38.003>

The current definition from the International Dyslexia Association 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 International Dyslexia Association Board of Directors, November 2002

Characteristics of Dyslexia

The primary characteristics of dyslexia are:

- Difficulty reading words in isolation
- Difficulty accurately decoding unfamiliar words
- Difficulty with oral reading (slow, inaccurate, or labored without prosody)
- Difficulty spelling

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 associated sounds
- Holding information about sounds and words in memory (phonological memory)
- Rapidly recalling the names of familiar objects, colors, or letters of the alphabet (rapid naming)

Secondary characteristics of dyslexia may include the following:

- Variable difficulty with aspects of reading comprehension
- Variable difficulty with aspects of written language
- Limited vocabulary growth due to reduced reading experiences

“Unexpectedness” of dyslexia:

The most current definition of dyslexia from the International Dyslexia Association indicates that the difficulties the student exhibits in reading are often **unexpected** in relation to the student’s other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. “Cognitive abilities” can be measured using FSIQ, oral language skills, problem-solving and reasoning skills, ability to learn in the absence of print, or strong math skills in comparison to reading skills.

Dyslexia is not....

- A lack of intelligence or ability to learn
- A behavioral problem
- A vision problem
- A disease; there is no cure
- A balance problem

Common Signs of Dyslexia

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; in fact, recent studies reveal that the whole spectrum of reading disabilities is strongly determined by genetic predispositions (inherited aptitudes)(Olsen, Keenan, Byrne, & Samuelsson, 2014). The following signs may be associated with dyslexia if they are **unexpected** for the individual's age, educational level, or cognitive ability.

Preschool

- Delay in learning to talk
- Difficulty with rhyming
- Difficulty pronouncing words (e.g., “pusgetti” for “spaghetti,” “mawn lower” for “lawn mower”)
- Poor auditory memory for nursery rhymes and chants
- Difficulty in adding new vocabulary words
- Inability to recall the right word (word retrieval)
- Trouble learning and naming letters and numbers and remembering the letters in his/her name
- Aversion to print (e.g., doesn't enjoy following along if book is read aloud)

Kindergarten and First Grade

- Difficulty breaking words into smaller parts, or syllables (e.g., “baseball” can be pulled apart into “base” “ball” or “napkin” can be pulled apart into “nap” “kin”)
- Difficulty identifying and manipulating sounds in syllables (e.g., “man” sounded out as /m/ /ă/ /n/)
- Difficulty remembering the names of letters and recalling their corresponding sounds
- Difficulty decoding single words (reading single words in isolation)
- Difficulty spelling words the way they sound (phonetically) or remembering letter sequences in very common words seen often in print (e.g., “sed” for “said”)

Second Grade and Third Grade

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

- Difficulty recognizing common sight words (e.g., “to”, “said”, “been”)
- 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 (e.g., “after” spelled “eftr”)
- Difficulty reading fluently (e.g., slow, inaccurate, and/or without expression)
- 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 and Fifth Grade

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

- Difficulty reading aloud (e.g., fear of reading aloud in front of classmates)
- Avoidance of reading (e.g., particularly for pleasure) Difficulty reading fluently (e.g., slow, inaccurate, and/or without expression)
- Difficulty reading fluently (e.g., slow, inaccurate, and/or without expression)
- Difficulty decoding unfamiliar words in sentences using knowledge of phonics
- 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 (e.g., “big” instead of “enormous”)
- 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 reading fluently (e.g., slow, inaccurate, and/or without expression)
- Difficulty decoding unfamiliar words in sentences using knowledge of phonics
- Difficulty with written assignments
- Tendency to avoid reading (particularly for pleasure)
- Difficulty learning a foreign language

(The Dyslexia Handbook – Revised 2018)

K-1 Dyslexia Screening

The early identification of students with dyslexia along with corresponding early intervention programs for these students will have significant implications for their future academic success.

Dyslexia screening is a tool for identifying children who are at risk for this learning disability, particularly in preschool, kindergarten, or first grade. This means that the screening does not “diagnose” dyslexia. Rather, it identifies “predictor variables” that raise red flags, so parents and teachers can intervene early and effectively.

--Richard Selznck, Dyslexia Screening: Essential Concepts for Schools and Parents, 2015

State Requirements

In 2017, the 85th Texas Legislature passed House Bill (HB) 1886, amending Texas Education Code (TEC) §38.003, Screening and Treatment for Dyslexia, to require that all kindergarten and first-grade public school students be screened for dyslexia and related disorders. Additionally, the law requires that all students beyond first grade be screened or tested as appropriate.

Texas Education Code §38.003 mandates that kindergarten students be screened at the end of the school year. First grade screening must conclude no later than January 31 of each year. Screening of first grade students by the middle of the school year will ensure that sufficient time is provided for data gathering, evaluation, early intervention, etc., to meet the needs of students.

BISD uses NWEA Measures of Academic Performance (MAP) and iStation as our universal screeners for dyslexia,

Results are analyzed at the end of each student’s kindergarten and middle of 1st grade year to see which students might be at risk. Results will be analyzed to determine if the student’s performance on MAP in Foundational Skills is in the LOW range. The Individual Student Indicator of Progress Report (ISIP) results will be analyzed to determine if the student’s percentile rank is 25% or below in the areas of letter knowledge, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, and listening comprehension (for Kindergarten); adding text fluency, alphabetic decoding and comprehension (for 1st grade). Word recognition data from end of year reading assessment using district approved sight words list is also considered. If so, the student will be monitored and further data will be collected.

Dyslexia Program Assessment Process

If a student exhibits any combination of characteristics or difficulties as discussed in the previous pages, a teacher, parent, or any other knowledgeable person may request a formal/informal dyslexia screening. Requests for screening will be made to a Response to Intervention (RtI) team and other knowledgeable persons who either have experience working with the student or have knowledge of dyslexia and/or related reading disorders.

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 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.)**

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

- **Phonological awareness**
- **Rapid naming**
- **Phonological memory**

Many students with dyslexia will have difficulty with the secondary characteristics of dyslexia, including reading comprehension and written expression.

If the RTI Team determines a **formal dyslexia assessment** is needed, the following steps must be taken prior to the evaluation:

- **Notify the parents/guardians of proposal to assess student for dyslexia and obtain permission for assessment.**
- **Inform parents/guardians of their rights under §504.**

Notices and consents will be provided in the native language of the parent or guardian or other mode of communication used by the parent or guardian, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so.

Students referred to the Dyslexia program will be screened/assessed within a timely manner. Referrals may be received throughout the year. New groups are formed at the beginning of the Fall and Spring semester. If a student is identified Dyslexic in the middle of the semester, he/she will receive intervention support in Pre-Flight or Rite Flight with the Reading Specialist for the remainder of the current semester.

Identification

There are three steps in the identification of a child with dyslexia:

1. Data gathering
2. Screening
3. Assessment/Evaluation
 - Each step is separate but may use data from the other steps. If it is determined that a child does not have dyslexia; all three steps may not be completed. Even after all three steps are completed, it may still be determined that a child does not have dyslexia.

A team or committee of knowledgeable persons determines whether the student has dyslexia. The team must be knowledgeable about the following:

- 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.

A committee of knowledgeable persons determines the identification of dyslexia after reviewing all accumulated data including the following areas:

- The observations of the teacher, district or charter school staff, and/or parent/guardian;
- Data gathered from the classroom (including student work and the results of classroom measures) and information found in the student's cumulative folder (including the developmental and academic history of the student);
- Data-based documentation of student progress during instruction/intervention;
- The results of administered assessments;
- Language Assessment Proficiency Committee (LPAC) documentation, when applicable.
- All other accumulated data regarding the development of the student's learning and his/her educational needs.

Data Gathering

The Response to Intervention Team will gather data to determine if a dyslexia screening should take place. As much data as possible should be gathered in order to make an accurate recommendation. Data that may be gathered are as follows:

- Vision and hearing screening
- Teacher reports
- Parent or guardian reports/conferences
- Results of state mandated student assessments
- Records and results of intervention strategies provided by classroom teachers and/or other special programs or tutoring services
- Reports provided by parents or guardians from a private diagnostician or other source.
- K-2 reading screening results
- NWEA MAP data
- iStation data
- Speech and language or learning disability screening results
- Academic progress reports, information regarding retention, attendance, and behavior
- Student work samples
- Unedited writing samples
- Limited English Proficiency data
- Classroom reading assessments
- Guided reading level
- Results of any intellectual ability tests
- Results of any accommodations/interventions provided by classroom teachers.

The RTI Team should determine that the student's poor performance in one or more areas of reading, writing, or spelling are **unexpected** for the student's age/grade and cognitive ability and that the characteristics of dyslexia exist.

The student will be assessed by individuals/professionals who have training in the evaluation of students for dyslexia and related disorders. Depending upon the student's age and stage of reading development, the following areas related to reading will be assessed.

Domains to Assess

1. Academic skills

- Letter knowledge (name and associated sound)
- Reading words in isolation
- Decoding unfamiliar words accurately
- Reading fluency (both rate and accuracy should be measured)
- Reading comprehension
- Written spelling

2. Cognitive processes that underlie these reading difficulties

- Phonological/phonemic awareness-Difficulties in phonological and phonemic awareness are typically seen in students with dyslexia that impact a student's ability to hear individual speech sounds (or phonemes) in spoken syllables and words and manipulate those sounds by blending, segmenting, matching, or deleting. The ability to notice, identify, and manipulate sound in words has a strong relationship to reading ability.
- Rapid naming of symbols or objects- Difficulties in rapid naming may or may not be weak, but if deficient, will impact a student's ability to quickly and efficiently retrieve letters and read words at an appropriate rate.

3. Additional areas that may be assessed

- Vocabularly
- Listening comprehension
- Verbal expression
- Written expression
- Handwriting
- Memory for letter or symbol sequence (orthographic processing)
- Mathematical calculations/reasoning
- Phonological memory
- Verbal working memory
- Processing speed

Assessment instruments include the Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing, 2nd Edition (**CTOPP-2**), Woodcock Reading Mastery Test, 3rd edition (**WRMT-III**), Gray Oral Reading Test, 5th Edition (**GORT-5**), and Test of Written Spelling, 5th edition (**TWS-5**).

Medical and/or private diagnosis of dyslexia, if present, may be provided as part of the evaluation criteria for admittance into the dyslexia program but will not guarantee placement.

The district dyslexia committee will determine the eligibility and admittance to the dyslexia program. This determination is made based on the following five questions:

- Does the student demonstrate one or more of the primary reading characteristics of dyslexia in addition to a spelling deficit?
- Are the reading and spelling difficulties the result of a phonological processing deficit?
- Are the reading, spelling, and phonological processing deficits **unexpected**?
- Does the student have a preponderance of strengths that could be assets?
- Are there coexisting deficits that may complicate identification and the response to intervention and may deserve further assessment and intervention?

A 504 or ARD (Annual Review and Dismissal) committee must determine the following guidelines have been met as authorized by TEC§38.003 and 19 TAC§74.28:

- 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 (an average ability to learn in the absence of print or in other academic areas)
- 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

If the student has dyslexia, the 504 committee determines an educational plan 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.

If a parent chooses to not have his/her child screened/evaluated, a Denial of Screening/Evaluation form needs to be completed and returned within one week. This Denial form shall be kept in the Dyslexia Consideration folder for that child until he/she graduates.

Referral to Special Education

At any time during the assessment for dyslexia, identification process, or instruction related to dyslexia, students may be referred for an evaluation for special education. At times, students will display additional factors complicating their dyslexia and will require more support than what is available through dyslexia instruction. At other times, students with severe dyslexia will be unable to make adequate academic progress within the dyslexia program. In these cases, a referral to special education for an evaluation and possible identification as a child with a disability within the meaning of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) should be made as needed.

If the student with dyslexia is found eligible for special education, the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee must include appropriate reading instruction on the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

A student who has already been determined to have a disability within the meaning of IDEA and is suspected of having dyslexia as determined by his/her ARD committee may be referred for a dyslexia screening and/or assessment. All decisions concerning the student's education plan and the addition of dyslexia services will be determined by the ARD committee.

Dyslexia Instruction

Once it has been determined that a student has dyslexia, BISD shall provide an appropriate instructional program for the student as stated in TEC §38.003. This instruction will be given by a teacher trained in dyslexia and related disorders.

The best educational practice for students with dyslexia is early identification and intervention. It is the goal of BISD to identify students with dyslexia at the elementary level and intervene with Take Flight. Take Flight is an Orton-Gillingham based curriculum written by the staff of the Luke Waites Center for Dyslexia and Learning Disorders of Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children. The curriculum was designed to be delivered by a Certified Academic Language Therapist to students with dyslexia ages 7 years and older with average to above-average cognitive abilities. It is a multi-sensory structured language education program that contains the five components of effective reading instruction supported by the National Reading Panel research. The program takes approximately two years to complete. It is designed to be delivered in a small group setting of no more than 6 students for a minimum of 60 minutes per day, four days each week, or 5 days per week at 45 minutes per session.

Components of Curriculum:

- Phonemic awareness: instruction that enables students to detect, segment, blend, and manipulate sounds in spoken language.
- Graphophonemic knowledge (explicit, synthetic and analytic phonics): instruction which takes advantage of the letter-sound plan in which words which carry meaning are made of sounds, 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 that 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).
- Linguistic: instruction directed toward proficiency and fluency with the patterns of language so that words and sentences are the carriers of meaning.
- Strategy-oriented instruction in the strategies students use for decoding, encoding, word recognition, fluency, and comprehension that students need to become independent readers.
- Explicit direct instruction: instruction which is systematic (structured), sequential and cumulative, and is organized and presented in a way that follows a logical sequential plan and fits the nature of language (alphabetic principle), with no assumption of prior skills or language knowledge.

- Individualized: instruction that meets the specific learning needs of each individual student in a small group setting; a reading curriculum that matches each student’s individual ability level 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.
- Multisensory: instruction which incorporates the simultaneous use of two or more sensory pathways (auditory, visual, kinesthetic, tactile) during presentations and practice.
- Meaning based instruction which is directed toward purposeful reading and writing, with an emphasis on comprehension and composition.

The number of years required to achieve mastery of the curriculum varies. Some factors that influence the rate of mastery are listed below:

STUDENT

- Degree of emotional overlay
- Degree of severity; mild, moderate, severe
- Innate potential
- Motivation
- Existing knowledge

FAMILY

Support and understanding from parents, siblings, others

SCHOOL

- Instructional grouping; number of students in the group; appropriateness of grouping; homogeneous vs. heterogeneous
- Support/accommodations from other teachers
- Teacher experience: experience teaching the program

Accommodations/Modifications

Once a student is diagnosed as dyslexic, it is probable that the student will need continued academic support in order to maintain success until graduation from high school. To address student needs, the dyslexia therapist should be accessible to the district staff. The dyslexia therapist is available to answer questions and concerns related to dyslexia and related disorders. The dyslexia therapist becomes a part of an identified student's interdisciplinary team and is available to assist the student and teachers as needs arise throughout the student's academic career.

Monitoring of the Program

The Bells ISD Dyslexia Program will be monitored on a yearly basis to check that it is best helping the students of this district. The evaluation will be based on the following indicators:

- Student's end of year reading grades
- Student's promotion rate to the next grade
- State assessment data
- Teacher observation/reports
- Program progress monitoring data
- Benchmarks
- Individual dyslexia program requirements

Student Exiting and Monitoring Procedures

No one factor is sufficient to warrant exiting a student from direct Dyslexia services. Dismissal is determined by consensus of the Dyslexia Committee. The committee considers the following factors when recommending exiting or reduction of dyslexia services:

- The student passed the reading portion of the STAAR test, after not previously passing.
- The student has spent a minimum of two years in the program.

- The reevaluation and/or post-testing of student show 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 therapist.
- Committee recommendation
- The student has excessive absences preventing progress in the curriculum
- Regular or disruptive behavior which interferes with student success and peer's ability to learn and/or poor motivation toward the dyslexia program
- Parent/guardian request in writing that the student exit the program.

If a student has shown substantial progress and the Dyslexia Committee determines the student is ready to be dismissed completely from the program, the committee may recommend monitoring services instead of direct services. When a student is exited from the dyslexia program, a Dismissal form will be completed and placed in the child's cumulative folder.

Monitoring services: The dyslexia therapist will meet with the student's teacher(s) to ensure the student is continuing to be successful in the classroom without direct intervention from the dyslexia therapist. Possible monitoring activities can include, but are not limited to:

- Dialoging with the teacher(s) concerning student learning, academic performance, and/or organization within classroom.
- Discussing possible modifications/accommodations with the teacher for the student's continued classroom success.
- Checking with the teacher about the student's grades to ensure the student is passing in reading intensive classes.

Resources for Parents and Students

Websites:

www.ldonline.com- learning differences
www.learningally.org- Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic
www.region10.org/dyslexia- Bell's Educational Service Center
www.interdys.org- International Dyslexia Association
www.ALTAread.org- Academic Language Therapist Association
www.neuhaus.org- Resources for Parents
www.dyslexia.yale.edu- Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity
www.tsrhc.org- Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children

Books for Parents:

Overcoming Dyslexia by Sally Shaywitz
Parenting a Struggling Reader by Susan L. Hall and Louisa C. Motes
Essentials of Dyslexia Assessment and Intervention by Nancy Mathers and Barbara J. Wendling

Books for Students:

Hank Zipzer Series by Henry Winkler

Videos:

“The Boy with His Head in the Clouds” Arthur video available from Amazon
“Ennis’ Gift” a film about learning differences available at www.hellofriend.org
“Journey into Dyslexia” and “The Big Picture: Rethinking Dyslexia” HBO documentaries

For more information concerning State of Texas Dyslexia laws, refer to the State Dyslexia Handbook that is linked to the Region 10 website. www.region10.org

From main page choose: Programs

Type Dyslexia in Search Our Programs box

Select Dyslexia-Statewide

Select- Dyslexia Handbook tab

State Dyslexia Helpline: 800-232-3030

Special Education Helpline: 855-773-3839