

Walnut Bend ISD

Dyslexia Mission Statement

Provide all eligible students identified as having characteristics of dyslexia with the multi-sensory strategies and phonological processing skills necessary to compensate for deficiencies in then area of reading, writing, and spelling. The goal is to nurture a strong self-esteem and provide opportunities for students to develop their talents. Strategies will be taught to help students gain personal success while learning to compensate for their reading disorder and enable them to become a life-long learner.

The Dyslexia Program is built upon the foundation of the Walnut Bend Independent School District mission statement:

Walnut Bend ISD commits itself to developing all of our children mentally, morally, and emotionally so that every student is prepared to meet the challenges and rigors of a dynamic, changing world. In cooperation of the teachers, parents, and community members, our students will develop these skills by living its school creed each day.

Walnut Bend Students Are: **Proud**

Inquisitive

Respectful

Achievers

Team Players

Expecting the Best

Dyslexia Definition

Texas Education Code (TEC) §38.003 defines dyslexia and related disorders as 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” can include disorders similar to or related to dyslexia, such as developmental auditory imperception, dysphasia, specific developmental dyslexia, developmental dysgraphia, and developmental spelling ability.

Addressing WBISD's commitment, the following reflect the goals of the District's Dyslexia Program:

- Screen, refer, and evaluate, student in grades K-8, who may be at risk of dyslexia and related disorders
- Provide appropriate instructional intervention options for students with dyslexia and related disorders
- Provide staff development that includes:
 - Characteristics of Dyslexia
 - Assessment of Dyslexia
 - Intervention strategies and accommodations ●

Provide parent education program that includes:

- Awareness of the characteristics of dyslexia and related disorders
- Information on testing and the educational diagnosis of dyslexia and related disorders
- Information of effective strategies and options for parents to use at home to effectively communicate and help their child with dyslexia and related disorders
- Information on classroom accommodations and accommodations allowed for State testing (STAAR).

Procedures to Determine Eligibility of Students Participating in the Dyslexia Program

Walnut Bend ISD Protocol

Universal Screening

Screening is defined as a universal measure administered to all students by qualified personnel to determine which students are at risk for dyslexia or reading difficulties and/or a related disorder. Screening is not a formal evaluation.

Texas Education Code [§38.003](#) mandates that first grade and kindergarten students be screened at the end of the school year. Walnut Bend ISD will assess each grade level at the times listed below:

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Grade Level	Timeframe for Testing
Kindergarten	End of April
First Grade	End of January

- Parent of Kindergarten students will be notified in May of results
- Parents of First Grade students will be notified in February of results
- Assessments will include TPRI and/or other Locally Developed Assessments

Walnut Bend ISD Referral for Dyslexia or Related Service **Process**

Educators shall recommend screenings for dyslexia, or related services, if the student demonstrates the following:

- Poor performance in **one or more areas** of reading and spelling that is unexpected for the student's age/grade
- Kindergarten-Grade 1 - teacher will recommend any student who performs below expectation on the District Developed Early Reading battery.
- Characteristics and risk factors of dyslexia indicated in this manual or The Dyslexia Handbook.

[The Dyslexia Handbook](#) - Revised 2018, pg 1-5

Teachers, students, or parents can initiate the referral process. ***Parent referrals must go through the same process as referrals initiated by the school.***

1. **Teacher/ Parent notices the student demonstrating characteristics of Dyslexia.**
2. **Intervention documentation, using the Response to Intervention (RTI) model, begins or intensifies to determine if student demonstrating dyslexic characteristics will progress through regular intervention.**

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3. Rtl Committee reviews intervention documentation. If a student is not showing progress with regular intervention, a student may be referred for Dyslexia Assessments. Teacher requests and completes the **Walnut Bend Referral Packet**, collects student data required and submits to the Campus §504 Coordinator.
4. The Campus §504 Coordinator reviews WISD Dyslexia Referral Packet for completeness and appropriateness of referral. If a student displays poor performance in the areas of reading and spelling, that is unexpected for the student's age/grade, and demonstrates the characteristics and risk factors of dyslexia indicated in Chapter 1: Definitions and Characteristics of Dyslexia of [The Dyslexia Handbook](#) - Revised 2018, (pages 1-5) the dyslexia referral may be appropriate.
5. If referral is appropriate, Campus **§504 Coordinator** initiates §504 Procedures within 45 instructional days.
6. Parents are sent **Notice of §504 Evaluation for Dyslexia, §504 Parent Rights, and Consent for Dyslexia Evaluation under §504.**
7. Parents have 10 instructional days to return consent.
8. Once permission is gained, the student may be assessed. **NOTE- Do not request consent for assessment until after the referral documentation is all in place and approved.**

Assessment, Identification and Placement Process

Walnut Bend ISD WILL NOT assess until parental consent for evaluation is obtained.

Dyslexia Interventionist will not perform any screenings or assessment until after the referral documentation is all in place and approved by the Dyslexia Coordinator.

1. Within 45 instructional days of parent consent for Dyslexia Assessment, the student must be assessed by individuals/professionals who have been trained in the evaluation of students for dyslexia and related disorders 919 TAC §74.28(d)).
2. In compliance with §504 and IDEA 2004, the Dyslexia Interventionist will use the assessment characteristics of dyslexia.
3. The Dyslexia Interventionist shall integrate the sum of the data collected into the final Dyslexia Assessment Report.
4. Within 30 instructional days of receipt of completed Dyslexia Assessments, the Section 504 Committee and/or (other appropriate personnel-i.e., ARD, LPAC, Rtl, ect) schedules with parents and meets to make determination of Dyslexia and/or

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Section 504 eligibility. A representative from the Dyslexia Program must attend the meeting.

5. The Section 504 (or other, as defined above) Committee, shall use ALL pertinent student data collected to interpret the results.
6. Upon determination of eligibility, the §504 Coordinator (or other assigned personnel) completes all required §504 (or other) forms including the Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP) if a student qualifies.
7. Parents are given/sent Consent for Placement in Dyslexia Program for Services.
8. Within 30 instructional days of parental Consent for Placement in Dyslexia Program, instruction in Dyslexia Intervention Program (DIP) begins.
9. See the Pathways for Identification and Provision of Instruction for Students with Dyslexia on the following page for additional information.

For more information about dyslexia and related services, please refer to [The Dyslexia Handbook](#) or contact the 504 Coordinator.

DYSGRAPHIA

DYSGRAPHIA

- Difficulty with handwriting frequently occurs in children with dyslexia. When Texas passed dyslexia legislation, the co-existence of poor handwriting with dyslexia was one reason why dysgraphia was called a related disorder. Subsequently, dyslexia and dysgraphia have been found to have diverse co-morbidities, including phonological awareness (Döhla and Heim, 2016). However, dyslexia and dysgraphia are now recognized to be distinct disorders that can exist concurrently or separately. They have different brain mechanisms and identifiable characteristics. Dysgraphia is related to dyslexia as both are language-based disorders. In dyslexia, the impairment is with word-level skills (decoding, word identification, spelling). Dysgraphia is a written language disorder in serial production of strokes to form a handwritten letter. This involves not only motor skills but also language skills—finding, retrieving and producing letters, which is a subword-level language skill. The impaired handwriting may interfere with spelling and/or composing, but individuals with only dysgraphia do not have difficulty with reading (Berninger, Richards, & Abbott, 2015).

A review of recent evidence indicates that dysgraphia is best defined as a neurodevelopmental disorder manifested by illegible and/or inefficient handwriting due to difficulty with letter formation. This difficulty is the result of deficits in graphomotor function (hand movements used for writing) and/or storing and retrieving orthographic codes (letter forms) (Berninger, 2015). Secondary consequences may include problems with spelling and written expression. The difficulty is not solely due to the lack of instruction and is not associated with other developmental or neurological conditions that involve motor impairment.

The characteristics of dysgraphia include the following:

- Variably shaped and poorly formed letters
- Excessive erasures and cross-outs
- Poor spacing between letters and words
- Letter and number reversals beyond early stages of writing
- Awkward, inconsistent pencil grip
- Heavy pressure and hand fatigue
- Slow writing and copying with legible or illegible handwriting (Andrews & Lombardino, 2014)

Additional consequences of dysgraphia may also include:

- Difficulty with unedited written spelling
- Low volume of written output as well as problems with other aspects of written expression

Dysgraphia can be due to:

- Impaired feedback the brain is receiving from the fingers
- Weaknesses using visual processing to coordinate hand movement and organize the use of space
- Problems with motor planning and sequencing
- Difficulty with storage and retrieval of letter forms (Levine, 1999)

Despite the widespread beliefs that handwriting is purely a motor skill or that only multisensory methods are needed to teach handwriting, multiple language processes are also involved in handwriting. Handwriting draws on language by hand (letter production), language by ear (listening to letter names when writing dictated letters), language by mouth (saying letter names), and language by eye (viewing the letters to be copied or reviewing for accuracy the letters that are produced from memory) (Berninger & Wolf, 2016).

Procedures for Assessment

The identification of writing disabilities, including dysgraphia, will follow one of two procedures. A district will typically evaluate for dysgraphia through §504. On the other hand, if a student is suspected of having a disability within the scope of IDEA 2004, all special education procedures must be followed. These procedural processes require coordination among the teacher, campus administrators, diagnosticians, and other professionals as appropriate when factors such as a student's English language acquisition, previously identified disability, or other special needs are present.

The first step in the assessment process, data gathering, should be an integral part of the district's or charter school's process for any student exhibiting learning difficulties.

1.Data Gathering

Cumulative Data

The academic history of each student will provide the school with the cumulative data needed to ensure that the writing difficulties in a student suspected of having dysgraphia are not due to lack of appropriate instruction in handwriting/written expression. This information should include data that demonstrates that the student was provided appropriate instruction and include data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals (progress monitoring), reflecting formal assessment of student progress during instruction. This cumulative data also includes information from parents/guardians. Sources and examples of cumulative data are provided in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 Sources and Examples of Cumulative Data	
Vision screening	Samples of written work:
Hearing screening	Worksheets or answers to questions in workbook
Medical history	Spelling tests
Teacher reports of classroom concerns	Journal writing
Accommodations provided	Short written assignments (3-4 paragraphs)
Interventions provided	Reports or essays (more than 1 page)
History of writing difficulties	Note-taking assignments
Other difficulties besides handwriting	Speech and language assessment
Statewide writing assessment (4 th /7 th)	Parent information

2. Formal Assessment

Notification and Permission

When formal assessment is recommended, the school completes the evaluation process as outlined in §504 or IDEA 2004.

Through the §504 process, the school completes the evaluation as outlined using the following procedures:

1. Notify parents/guardians of the proposal to assess student for dysgraphia (§504).
2. Inform parents/guardians of their rights under §504.
3. Obtain written permission from parents/guardians to assess the student for dysgraphia.
4. Assess the student.

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