

# **Dyslexia Handbook**

**Mabank Independent  
School District  
310 East Market Street  
Mabank, Texas 75147**



MISD Dyslexia Handbook  
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## **INTERVENTION ASSISTANCE TEAMS**

Mabank ISD is committed to providing quality education to all students enrolled in MISD. In every effort to provide individually appropriate instruction, Intervention Assistance Teams (IAT) were developed on each campus. These teams were established to review available information and identify appropriate educational interventions for students who are experiencing difficulty. MISD recognizes its responsibility to use all available options to ensure that students receive reasonable benefit from instruction.

The Intervention Assistance Team (IAT) on each campus is composed of professionals including administrators, teachers, and support staff who provide a wide range of experience and expertise together to analyze data and select appropriate instruction to assist students. Parent input is essential in ensuring that the IAT has a complete and balanced profile of the student. Collaborative efforts between parents and professional staff are vital in reaching positive results for students in the educational environment.

### **REFERRAL TO THE INTERVENTION ASSISTANCE TEAM**

A referral or recommendation to the IAT should be made when a student is experiencing significant educational difficulty. Campus personnel, such as a teacher, principal or counselor may make a referral. In addition, sources outside the local campus, such as parents, physicians, and private schools, or other appropriate sources may make a referral. When the decision is made to refer a student to the IAT, the person initiating the referral should complete the IAT referral form. When the referral or recommendation is someone other than campus personnel, it will be necessary for campus personnel to assist in the completion of this form.

### **INTERVENTION ASSISTANCE TEAM MEMBERSHIP**

The IAT should include persons knowledgeable about the student and about programs and educational interventions, which may assist the student in meeting obstacles experienced in the educational environment. The building administrator or his/her designee and the student's regular education teacher must be in attendance. In cases, where a staff member other than the student's general education teacher makes the recommendation, that staff member must attend. The building principal or designee should serve as the chairperson. The team may include other professionals based on the individual student.

## **IDENTIFICATION**

Many of the characteristics associated with dyslexia are also found in children with other specific learning disabilities or with speech/spoken language disorders. Some of the characteristics may also be present in some young children in the course of normal development. While the focus of the dyslexia program is early intervention, a student must be allowed the opportunity to develop cognitively. However, when these characteristics are not age-appropriate and interfere with learning, they may be symptoms of a language or learning disorder, including dyslexia and the child may need special assistance in academic or related areas.

### **EARLY INTERVENTION**

All Mabank ISD students in kindergarten through second grade will be screened with an instrument from the commissioner's list of approved assessments. Parents will be notified of the results of this screening. Screening results will be combined with other criteria such as basal reading series assessment and samples of schoolwork to identify students who are at risk for dyslexia or other reading difficulties. Each campus will design an individualized program to address the needs of the students identified at each grade level. A description of this program and a list of students being served will be maintained at each campus.

First and second grade students will be screened by the end of September and will be identified for the Three Tiered Reading Process. Students in this program and others who show signs of needing intervention will be assessed again in January, with any necessary adjustments being made at that time. Kindergarten students will be screened by the end of January and will be identified for the Three Tiered Process. Through this program, identified students will be provided additional intensive instruction designed to address their needs and accelerate their learning. Parents will be notified when any program placement change occurs.

Students who continue to struggle, despite this intervention, may be recommended by the classroom teacher for assessment for dyslexia or evaluation for special education consideration.

### **Recommendation for Dyslexia Assessment**

Should a student continue to struggle with one or more components of reading, the Intervention Assistance Team must collect additional information about the student. The IAT will use this information to evaluate the student's academic progress and determine what actions are needed to ensure the student's improved academic performance. Some of the information that the district collects is in the student's cumulative folder; other information is available from teachers and parents. Information to be considered includes the results from some or all of the following:

- Vision screening (school may conduct);
- Hearing screening (school may conduct);
- Teacher reports of classroom concerns;
- Basal reading series assessment;
- Accommodations and modifications provided by the classroom teacher(s);
- Academic progress reports (report cards);
- Samples of school work;
- Parent conferences;
- Testing for limited English proficiency;
- Speech and language screening through a referral process;
- TPRI, or similar assessment results; The K-2 reading instruments described in TEC§ 28.006;
- State student assessment program as described in TEC § 39.002

Among the actions that the IAT has available for the student is recommendation to assess the student for dyslexia. The IAT recommends assessment for dyslexia if the student demonstrates the following:

- Poor performance in one or more areas of reading and/or related areas of writing and spelling that is unexpected for the student's age/grade; and
- Some or all of the characteristics of dyslexia.

Data gathering consists of collecting all available information on the student and deliberating about possible solutions to the problems demonstrated by the student. This step is available to all children with learning and behavior problems. Recommendations may be made by anyone, including the parent. The following data is completed **prior** to the meeting:

- IAT packet is completed by referring party
- IAT/504 Committee Meeting Parental Notice is sent to parents
- Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) report is completed for students classified as LEP

### **Assessment Procedures**

After the Intervention Assistance Team (IAT) has determined that the student exhibits characteristics of dyslexia, the committee must complete the following procedures:

- Provide Parental Notification by letter of the proposal to assess student for dyslexia (Section 504) and obtain parental consent for this assessment;
- Provide Notice of Parent and Student Rights under Section 504.

After receiving written Parental Consent for Dyslexia Assessment, the dyslexia designee will:

- Have the teacher complete the Information From the Classroom Teacher Form
- Have the parents or guardian complete the Information from Parent/ Guardian Form
- Complete request for records with parent if needed
- Administer additional testing from the recommended test list
- Chart all information on the Dyslexia Assessment Student Profile
- Work with the campus Section 504 Chairperson to schedule a Section 504/Dyslexia meeting to discuss results and determine instructional interventions and/or educational programming

Based on the information gathered and following the TAC 19§74.28 guidelines, the 504/Dyslexia Committee determines whether the student is dyslexic. If the student is dyslexic, the committee also determines whether the student has a disability under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, §504 (NOTE: Not all students with dyslexia are necessarily 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.

If the student requires additional support, the 504/Dyslexia Committee will implement an Individualized Accommodation Plan (IAP) designed to address the needs of the identified student.

The deliberations of the committee should be documented on the 504/Dyslexia Committee Form. If the parent does not attend, notification of the decision should be provided to the parent.

### **Referral for Special Education Consideration**

There are some students with severe dyslexia or related disorders who will be unable to make satisfactory progress without the provision of special education services. In these instances, the IAT should follow the usual procedures for referring the student for a complete individual evaluation and consideration of special education services.

Decisions regarding these students should be made by an Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) Committee and documented in the Individualized Education Program (IEP). The interventions may vary according to the unique needs of the student, but may also include one of the highly structured multi-sensory approaches.

**Note:** At any time that the student does not make expected progress, after interventions have been implemented, then the Intervention Assistance Committee should consider a referral for special education consideration. Sequential progression through these steps is not required.

## **TESTS to ASSESS DOMAINS**

### **Initial Evaluation**

Listening Comprehension;  
Reading Single Words in Isolation (real and nonsense words [decoding]);  
Phonological Awareness;  
Letter Knowledge ;  
Rapid Naming;  
Fluency/Rate and Accuracy;  
Reading Comprehension;  
Written Spelling.

## **PROGRESS MONITORING**

All identified dyslexia students will be given benchmarks throughout the academic school year. Progress monitoring through programs will be on-going. For non-English speakers who struggle to read in their native language, similar measures in the student's native language would be used as appropriate.

## COMPONENTS OF INSTRUCTION

The instructional program should be offered in a small class setting at the student's home campus and include reading, writing and spelling as appropriate. The major instructional strategies should utilize individualized, intensive, and multi-sensory methods as appropriate.(19TAC§ 74.28.)

Components of instruction, as appropriate for the reading needs of the student include:

- Phonemic awareness instruction that enables students to detect, segment, blend, and manipulate sounds in spoken language;
- Graphophonemic knowledge (phonics) instruction that takes advantage of the alphabetic principal in which words that carry meaning are made of sounds and sounds are written with letters in the right order. Students with this understanding can blend sounds associated with letters into words and can separate words into component sounds for spelling and writing ;
- Language structure instruction 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; and
- Strategy-oriented instruction in the strategies students use for decoding, encoding, word recognition, fluency, and comprehension that students need to become independent readers.

Instructional approaches, as appropriate to meet the needs of the student include:

- Explicit, direct instruction that is systemic (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. This instruction proceeds at a rate commensurate with the students' needs, ability levels, and demonstration of progress;
- 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;
- Meaning-based instruction that is directed toward purposeful reading and writing, with an emphasis on comprehension and composition;
- Multisensory instruction that incorporates the simultaneous use of two or more sensory pathways (auditory, visual, kinesthetic, tactile,) during teacher presentations, and student practice.

Teachers of students with dyslexia shall be prepared to utilize these techniques and strategies. They may also serve as trainers and consultants in the area of dyslexia and related disorders to regular, remedial, and special education teachers.

## **STUDENT EXIT PROCEDURES**

When the student completes the prescribed dyslexia curriculum, or demonstrates a lack of progress, or when the parent/guardian requests an exit, the following procedures should be followed:

- Committee meets to discuss student exit from the prescribed dyslexia curriculum;
- Decision from committee to retain student §504 eligibility while releasing student from prescribed dyslexia curriculum if applicable;
- Dyslexia Instruction Exit Form complete with parent/guardian signature.

## **TEXAS ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

**Notes:** Teachers should refer to the current issues of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills Coordinator's Manual for each year's list of accommodations. The accommodations may change from time to time. For further information contact the website: [www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment)

[http://www.tea.state.tx.us/...ccommManual\\_2007\\_08\\_tagged.pdf](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/...ccommManual_2007_08_tagged.pdf)

### **Test Accommodations**

Certain test administration procedures that do not cause test results to be invalid may be used. Information about testing accommodations, should be communicated to administrators and other interested individuals. A list of test accommodations has also been included in the test administrator manuals.

The decision to use a particular accommodation with a student should be made on an individual basis and should take into consideration (a) the needs of the student, and (b) whether the student routinely receives the accommodation in the classroom instruction.

### **Allowable Accommodations**

A testing accommodation is a change to the testing environment to assist a student with special needs so that assessment can mirror classroom instruction as much as possible without invalidating test results. Some testing accommodations that are utilized for classroom or district level tests (e.g., reduction in the number of test items) may not be appropriate for use on state tests. Only test accommodations that do not cause test results to be invalid may be used with state tests.

The decision to use a particular accommodation with a student should be made on an individual basis and should take into consideration (a) the needs of the student and (b) whether the student routinely receives the accommodation in classroom instruction. For additional information about allowable and non-allowable testing accommodations for state tests, contact the Texas Education Agency, Student Assessment Division, at 512-463-9536 [www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment).

### **Dyslexia Accommodations—State Reading Assessment**

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.

These three accommodations were “bundled.” That is, the purpose of the study was not to determine which accommodation was most effective but whether these bundled accommodations “leveled the playing field” for students who had been identified with dyslexia or who had a severe reading disability that caused them to have difficulty reading words in isolation. The study found that these three accommodations provided appropriate support for this population of students without creating an unfair advantage or invalidating their reading performance on the test.

As a result of the 2004 study and a subsequent research study, the three bundled accommodations are now available for students in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 who meet the eligibility requirements listed. These accommodations can be used to administer the TAKS reading test in English and Spanish at grades 3–6, including all three Student Success Initiative (SSI) opportunities at grades 3 and 5, and the TAKS reading tests in English at grades 7–8. The dyslexia accommodations may also be used for all three SSI test opportunities offered at grade 8 beginning with the 2007–2008 school year.

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.

Fletcher, J. M., Francis, D. J., Boudousquie, A., Copeland, K., Young, V., Kalinowski, S., & Vaughn, S. (2005). Effects of accommodations on high-stakes testing for students with reading disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, 72(2), 136–150.

### **Eligibility Requirements**

A student who meets the following criteria is eligible to receive the set of three bundled accommodations on the English and Spanish TAKS reading tests at grades 3, 4, 5, and 6, and in English at grades 7 and 8.

- A student **not receiving special education services** must be identified with dyslexia; **or**
- A student **receiving special education services** must either be identified with dyslexia or have a severe reading disability that exhibits the characteristics of dyslexia, causing the student to lack word-identification skills and to have difficulty reading words in isolation; **and**
- The student must routinely receive accommodations in classroom instruction and testing that address the difficulties he/she has reading words in isolation.

### **Authority for Decision**

For a student with dyslexia not receiving special education services who meets both criteria listed, the decision to provide the bundled accommodations must be made either by the student's placement committee as required by §504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and documented by the school in the student's Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP) or by the committee of knowledgeable persons as outlined in *The Dyslexia Handbook – Revised 2007*. In the latter case, the committee's decision must be documented in writing in appropriate school records.

For a student receiving special education services who meets both criteria listed, the decision to provide the bundled accommodations must be made by the student's admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee and documented in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Administration instructions can be found in the *TAKS District and Campus Coordinator Manual* and in the relevant test administration manuals. For additional information about the bundled accommodations, contact the Texas Education Agency, Student Assessment Division at 512-463-9536; [www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment).

### **Oral Administration**

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.**

### **Classroom Accommodations**

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 editing, since dyslexia directly affects spelling. Depending on the student's individual needs, additional accommodations may be necessary.

### **Resource for classroom accommodations**

International Dyslexia Association – Fact Sheet #51:

*Accommodating Students with Dyslexia in All Classroom Settings*

[www.interdys.org/fact%20sheets/Accommodations%20FS%20N.pdf](http://www.interdys.org/fact%20sheets/Accommodations%20FS%20N.pdf)

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