Springtown ISD

District Dyslexia Plan

Procedures Concerning Dyslexia
and Related Disorders

2021-2022

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Mission Statement

The mission of the Springtown ISD Dyslexia Program is to provide an instructional program to meet the needs of students with dyslexia and related disorders to provide opportunities for these students to develop their potential as learners.

Definition of Dyslexia

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 current definition from the International Dyslexia Association states the following:

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge (Adopted by the International Dyslexia Board of Directors, November 12, 2002).

Students identified as having dyslexia typically experience primary difficulties in phonological awareness and manipulation, single-word reading, reading fluency, and spelling. Consequences may include difficulties in phonological awareness that are unexpected for the student's age and educational level, and are not primarily the result of language difference factors. Additionally, there is often a family history of similar difficulties.

State and Federal Law Regarding Early Identification
& Intervention Prior to Formal Assessment

Both state and federal legislation emphasize early identification and intervention for students who may be at risk for reading difficulties, such as dyslexia.
In accordance with TEC §28.006 Reading Diagnosis, Springtown ISD administers early reading instruments in kindergarten, first, and second grades to determine students' reading development and comprehension. Additionally, the law requires a reading instrument from the commissioner's approved list to be administered at the beginning of grade 7 to any student who did not demonstrate proficiency on the reading assessment administered under TEC§39.023(a). If, on the basis of the reading instrument results, students are determined to be at risk for dyslexia and other reading difficulties, the students' parents/guardians are notified. In addition, an accelerated (intensive) reading program that appropriately addresses students' reading difficulties and enables them to "catch up" with their typically performing peers is implemented. The information from reading instruments administered under TEC §28.006 will be one source of information in deciding whether or not to recommend a student for assessment for dyslexia.

The provisions offered to students who are reported to be at risk for dyslexia or other reading difficulties should align to the requirements of Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) legislation, Springtown ISD will implement reading programs using scientifically based reading research as well as evidence proven effective results.

Under the Equal Education Opportunity Act (EEOA), Sprintown ISD ensures that all students are given equal access to educational services regardless of race, color, sex, religion, or national origin. Therefore, research-based interventions are to be provided to all students experiencing difficulties in reading, including English learners (EL), regardless of their proficiency in English.

Dyslexia Screening

Students enrolling in Springtown ISD shall be assessed for dyslexia and related disorders at appropriate times (TEC §38.003(a)). The appropriate time depends upon multiple factors including the student's reading performance, reading difficulties, poor response to supplemental, scientifically based reading instruction, teachers' input, and parents' or guardians' input. Additionally, all kindergarten students will be screened by the end of the school year, and grade 1 screening must conclude no later than January 31 of each year (TEC §38.003).

Screener Criteria

Regardless of the primary language of the student, instruments used to screen for dyslexia and other reading difficulties must address the skills below:

Criteria for English and Spanish Screening Instruments	
Kindergarten	**First Grade**
- Phonological Awareness - Phonemic Awareness - Sound-Symbol Recognition - Letter Knowledge - Decoding Skills - Spelling - Listening Comprehension	- Phonological Awareness - Phonemic Awareness - Sound-Symbol Recognition - Letter Knowledge - Decoding Skills - Spelling - Reading Rate - Reading Accuracy - Listening Comprehension

In addition, the following student behaviors should be observed during screening:
- Lack of automaticity
- Difficulty sounding out words left to right
- Guessing
- Self-correcting
- Inability to focus on reading
- Avoidance behavior

Administration of Screener

Springtown ISD ensures that appropriately trained and qualified individuals administer and interpret the results of the selected screening instrument. This includes a classroom teacher who holds a valid certification for kindergarten and first grade, a dyslexia teacher, special education teacher, and/or a reading specialist. **An educational aide is not eligible to administer or interpret the dyslexia screening instrument.** It is best practice that the student's current classroom teacher administers the screening instrument whenever possible.

Screener Interpretation

The purpose of screening is to help identify, as early as possible, the students at risk for dyslexia or other reading difficulties so that targeted intervention can be provided. Screening alone will never improve outcomes for students; it must lead to effective instruction for it to be useful. Therefore, once the screening has been administered, the next steps are to analyze results, identify the level of risk for each student, and make informed decisions.

The district utilizes mCLASS® DIBELS® 8th Edition as the universal reading screener in grades K-4. This assessment includes a built-in dyslexia screener with a risk indicator that clearly shows at-risk students and meets the state's K–1 requirements.

A qualified team is required to review all data to make informed decisions whether a student exhibits characteristics of dyslexia. The team must consist of individuals who:
- have knowledge of the student
- are appropriately trained in administration of the screening tool
- are trained to interpret quantitative and qualitative results from the screening process
- recognize characteristics of dyslexia

The team may consist of the student's classroom teacher(s), the dyslexia specialist, the individual who administered the screener, an LPAC representative (as appropriate), and a campus administrator. If the process of identification is initiated under IDEA, the team must also include the parent and all IDEA procedures must be followed.
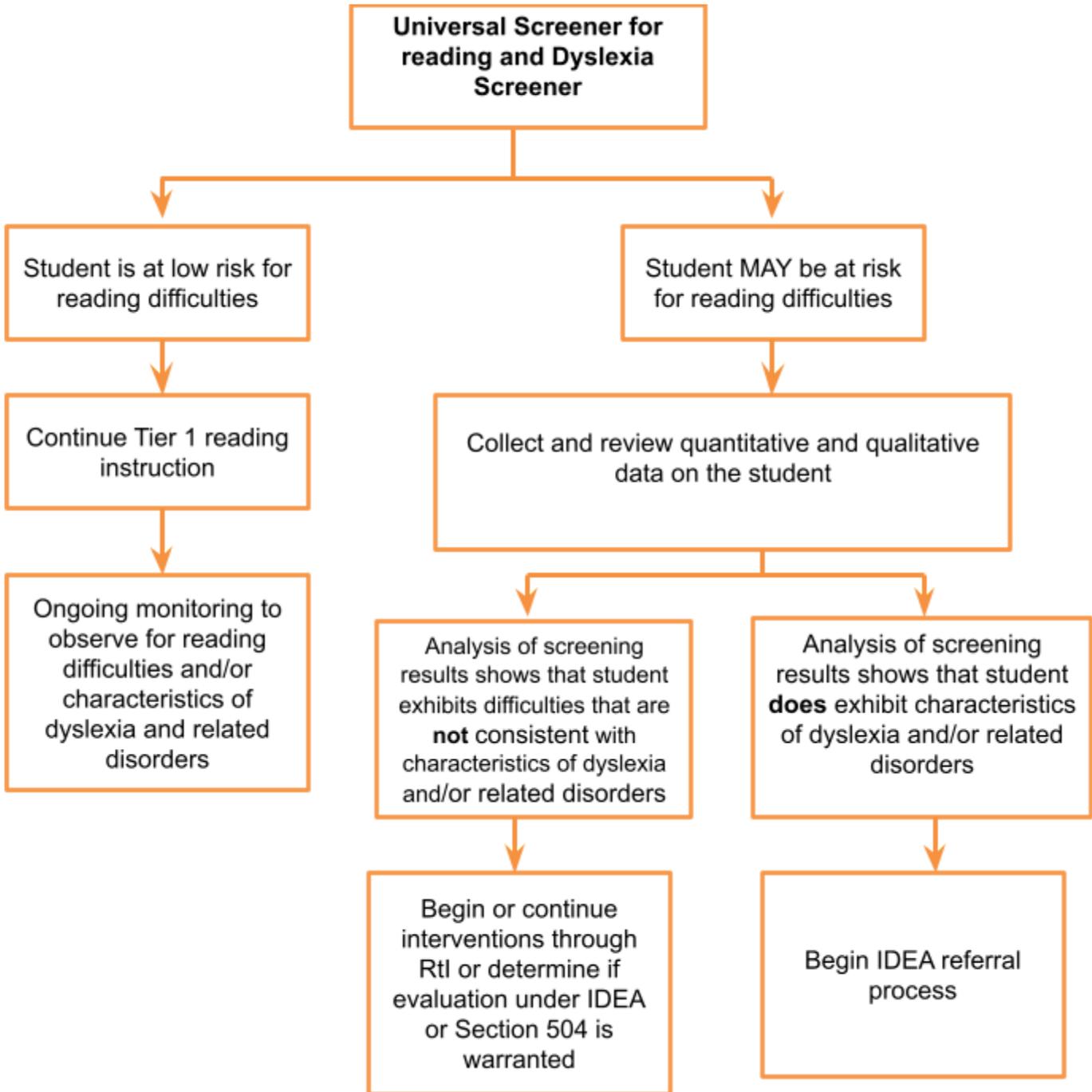
The team must use the screening data to make a plan of action for each student at-risk for dyslexia. A student form MUST be completed in Eduphoria for each student. The following recommendations can be made for the student:
- Begin/Continue a Student Support Plan
- Special Education Evaluation Referral
- Monitor Student Progress

Screening data should always be shared with parents. Once the screener has been completed, Springtown ISD campuses will send the appropriate reports home to parents/guardians.

The *Universal Screening and Data Review for Reading Risk* flowchart that follows provides information regarding the decisions campuses will make for each student as the school reviews screening results. **It is important to remember that at any point in the process a referral for a dyslexia evaluation may be made either under IDEA.** Regardless of the process in place for screening and data review, a student may be recommended for an additional evaluation whenever accumulated data indicates that the student continues to struggle with one or more of the components of reading. Parents/guardians have the right to request a referral for a dyslexia evaluation under IDEA at any time. Tiered interventions through RtI **CANNOT** delay evaluations of students suspected of having a disability.

Springtown ISD Universal Screening and Data Review
For Reading Risk

Universal Screener for reading and Dyslexia Screener

Student is at low risk for reading difficulties

Student MAY be at risk for reading difficulties

Continue Tier 1 reading instruction

Collect and review quantitative and qualitative data on the student

Ongoing monitoring to observe for reading difficulties and/or characteristics of dyslexia and related disorders

Analysis of screening results shows that student exhibits difficulties that are **not** consistent with characteristics of dyslexia and/or related disorders

Analysis of screening results shows that student **does** exhibit characteristics of dyslexia and/or related disorders

Begin or continue interventions through RtI or determine if evaluation under IDEA or Section 504 is warranted

Begin IDEA referral process

A referral may be made at any point under IDEA

Source – Dyslexia Handbook Revised 2020

Progress Monitoring

Teachers and administrators in Springtown ISD must be mindful that screening for at risk is an ongoing process. Decisions should be reevaluated and altered as more information is obtained as instruction continues. While some kindergarten and first grade students may not initially appear to be at risk for dyslexia based on screening results, they may actually still be at risk. Students who have learned to compensate for lack of reading ability and twice-exceptional students are two groups who may not initially appear to be at risk for dyslexia.

Springtown ISD will continue to monitor students for common risk factors of dyslexia in second grade and beyond, at appropriate times. **A referral for a dyslexia evaluation can be considered at any time; kindergarten-high school.**

Procedures for Evaluation

Data Gathering:

The first step in the evaluation process is data gathering. Information will be used to evaluate the student's academic progress and determine what actions are needed to ensure the student's improved academic performance. This information **should** include data that demonstrates the student was provided appropriate instruction and data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals (progress monitoring), reflecting formal assessment of student progress during instruction. Additional information to be considered includes the results from some or all of the following:

- Vision screening
- Hearing screening
- Teacher reports of classroom concerns
- Classroom reading assessments
- Accommodations or interventions provided
- Academic progress reports (report cards)
- Gifted/Talented assessments
- Samples of schoolwork
- Parent conference notes
- Speech and language assessment

- The K-2 reading instrument as required in TEC §28.006
- 7th-grade reading instrument results as required in TEC§28.006
- State student assessment program as described in TEC §39.002
- Observations of instruction provided to the student
- Full Individual Evaluation
- Outside evaluations
- School attendance
- Curriculum-based assessment measures

- Instructional strategies provided and student's response to the instruction
- Screening

Data that supports the student received appropriate instruction and that the difficulties are not primarily the result of sociocultural factors which include language differences, irregular attendance, or lack of experiential background.

Among the actions that Springtown ISD has available for the student is a recommendation that the student be assessed for dyslexia. Springtown ISD recommends assessment for dyslexia if the student demonstrates the following:
- Poor performance in one or more areas of reading and/or the related area of spelling that is unexpected for the student's age/grade
- Characteristics and risk factors of dyslexia

Primary Reading/Spelling Characteristics of Dyslexia:
- Difficulty reading words in isolation
- Difficulty accurately decoding unfamiliar words
- Difficulty with oral reading (slow, inaccurate, or labored)
- Difficulty spelling

It is important to note that students demonstrate differences in degree of impairment.

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

Consequences 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

Initial Evaluation Pathways
When formal dyslexia evaluation is recommended, Springtown ISD will refer the student for an evaluation under IDEA.

Through IDEA process, Springtown ISD will complete the evaluation using the following procedures:

1. Notify parents or guardians of proposal to conduct a Full and Individual Evaluation (FIE) for a specific learning disability, including dyslexia. .
2. Inform parents or guardians of their rights under IDEA.
3. Obtain parent or guardian consent to assess the student for special education and related services.
4. Assess student, being sure that individuals/professionals who administer assessments have training in the evaluation of students for dyslexia and related disorders (19 TAC §74.28).

If the student being assessed is already served in special education and a dyslexia evaluation is requested, IDEA 2004 procedures must be followed.

In compliance with IDEA 2004, test instruments, and other evaluation materials must meet the following criteria:

- Be validated for the specific purpose for which the tests, assessments, and other evaluation materials are used
- Include material tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely materials that are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient
- Be selected and administered so as to ensure that, when a test is given to a student with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the student's aptitude or achievement level, or whatever other factor the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the student's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills
- Be selected and administered in a manner that is not racially or culturally discriminatory
- Include multiple measures of a student's reading abilities such as informal assessment information (e.g., anecdotal records, district universal screenings, progress monitoring data, criterion referenced assessments, results of informal reading inventories, classroom observations)
- Be administered by trained personnel and in conformance with the instructions provided by the producer of the evaluation materials
- Be used for the purpose for which the assessment or measures are valid or reliable
- Be provided and administered in the student's native language or other mode of communication and in the form most likely to yield accurate information regarding what the child can do academically, developmentally, and functionally, unless it is clearly not feasible to provide or administer

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Formal Evaluation

After data gathering, the next step in the process is formal evaluation. This is not a screening; rather, it is an individualized evaluation used to gather specific data about a student.

In compliance with IDEA, Springtown ISD administers test instruments and other evaluation materials that assess the following domains:

Academic Skills
- Letter knowledge (name and associated sound)
- Reading words in isolation
- Decoding unfamiliar words accurately
- Reading fluency (rate, accuracy, and prosody)
- Reading comprehension
- Spelling

Cognitive Processes
- Phonological/phonemic awareness
- Rapid naming of symbols or objects

Based on the student's academic difficulties and characteristics, additional areas that may be assessed include the following:
- Vocabulary
- Listening comprehension
- Verbal expression
- Written expression
- Handwriting
- Memory for letter or symbol sequences (Orthographic processing)
- Mathematical/calculation reasoning
- Phonological memory
    Verbal working memory
    Processing speed

English Learners: This refers to students served in Bilingual and ESL programs as well as students designated Limited English Proficient (LEP) whose parents have denied services.

Much diversity exists among English Learners (ELs). The identification and service delivery process for dyslexia must be in step with the student's linguistic environment and educational background. Involvement of the Language

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Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) in the decision making process is required.

Additional data to be gathered when assessing English Learners:
- Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) documentation which includes the following:
  - Home language survey
  - Assessment related to identification for limited English proficiency (oral language proficiency tests and norm-referenced tests)
  - State student assessment data results when available
  - Texas English Language Proficiency system (TELPAS) information (Reading Proficiency Test in English (RPTE))
  - Type of language programming provided and language of instruction
  - Linguistic environment and second-language acquisition development
  - Previous schooling in and outside of the United States

Additional assessment when assessing English Learners:
- Comprehensive oral language proficiency testing should be completed for a dyslexia evaluation due to the importance of the information for
  - consideration in relation to academic challenges,
  - planning the assessment, and
  - interpreting assessment results.

Interpretation:
Test results of English Learners (EL) will be interpreted in light of the student's: language development (in both English and the student's native language), educational history, linguistic background, socioeconomic issues, nature of the writing system and any other pertinent factors that affect learning.

Identification of Students with Dyslexia

The identification of dyslexia is made by the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee. In order to make an informed determination, the committee **must** include members who are knowledgeable about:
- The student being assessed
- The reading process
- Dyslexia and related disorders
- Dyslexia instruction
- District, state, and federal guidelines for assessment

- The assessments used
- The meaning of the collected data

The ARD committee will review all accumulated data to determine whether the student demonstrates a pattern of evidence for dyslexia. This data will include the following:

- 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

Questions to Determine the Identification of Dyslexia
- Does the data show the following characteristics of dyslexia?   - o Difficulty with accurate and/or fluent word reading   - o Poor spelling skills   - o Poor decoding ability   - Do these difficulties (typically) result from a deficit in the phonological component of language?   **o** Note: Because previous effective instruction in phonological/phonemic awareness may remediate phonological awareness skills in isolation, average phonological awareness scores alone do not rule out dyslexia.   - Are the difficulties **unexpected** for the student's age in relation to the student's other cognitive abilities and provision of effective classroom instructions?

The ARD Committee will determine if the results of the evaluation show that (1) the student has dyslexia or a related disorder that meets the IDEA eligibility criteria for a specific learning disability and (2) the student needs special education because of the dyslexia or a related disorder.

If the answer to both questions is yes, the ARD committee develops an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that includes the critical, evidence-based components of dyslexia instruction as part of the specially designed instruction.

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Specially designed instruction differs from the standard protocol dyslexia instruction in that it offers a more individualized program specifically designed to meet a student's unique needs.

If the answer to the first question is yes and the second question is no, then the student is referred to Section 504. The Section 504 committee will develop an Individual Assistance Plan (IAP) that includes the critical, evidence based components of dyslexia instruction through the standard protocol dyslexia instruction.
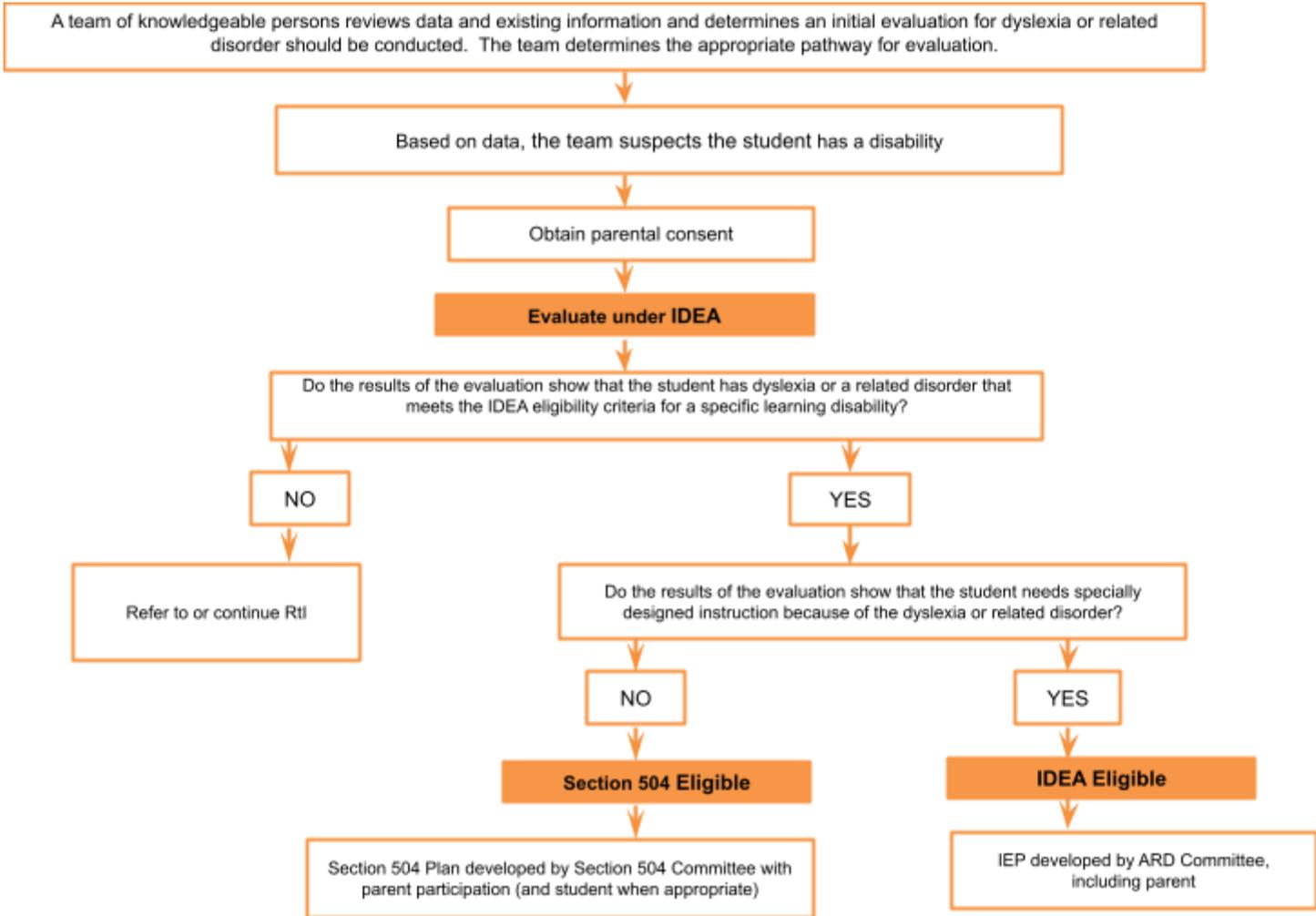
Assessment of Students Identified Outside the District
Students identified as having dyslexia or related disorders from an outside source will be evaluated for eligibility in the district's program. Springtown ISD may choose to accept the outside assessment, or may re-assess the student. In either situation, the committee (§504 or ARD) will determine the identification status of a student enrolled in Springtown ISD, and the placement of the student in the dyslexia program(s).

Pathways for the Identification and Provision of Instruction for Students with Dyslexia
The following chart illustrates the process for determining the instructional support needed by students with dyslexia. While the process may begin with an initial screening, screening is NOT required to proceed through the evaluation and identification process. **A special education evaluation should be conducted whenever it appears to be appropriate, including upon request from the parent/guardian.** Some students will not proceed through all the steps before being referred for an FIE. A dyslexia evaluation will be incorporated into the FIE through special education. Additionally, dyslexia evaluations cannot be delayed or denied because of implementation of the screening or RtI Processes.

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Pathways for the Identification and Provision of Instruction for Students with Dyslexia at Springtown ISD

A team of knowledgeable persons reviews data and existing information and determines an initial evaluation for dyslexia or related disorder should be conducted. The team determines the appropriate pathway for evaluation.

Based on data, the team suspects the student has a disability

Obtain parental consent

Evaluate under IDEA

Do the results of the evaluation show that the student has dyslexia or a related disorder that meets the IDEA eligibility criteria for a specific learning disability?

NO

YES

Refer to or continue RtI

Do the results of the evaluation show that the student needs specially designed instruction because of the dyslexia or related disorder?

NO

YES

Section 504 Eligible

IDEA Eligible

Section 504 Plan developed by Section 504 Committee with parent participation (and student when appropriate)

IEP developed by ARD Committee, including parent

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Re-evaluation for Dyslexia Identification and Accommodations
A student determined to have dyslexia during screening or testing under TEC §38.003 (a) or accommodated because of dyslexia may not be rescreened or retested for dyslexia for the purpose of reassessing the student's need to accommodations <u>until</u> the district reevaluates the information obtained from previous screening or testing of the student.

Timeline

When a referral for dyslexia assessment is made, Springtown ISD will ensure the IDEA evaluation procedure is followed in a reasonable amount of time. The timelines are as follows:

Upon receipt of parent permission to assess until assessment is completed	**45 school days**
From the completion of the assessment to the ARD committee for determination of dyslexia and program placement	**30 calendar days**
Following the committee meeting until program begins (if it is determined the student is eligible for the dyslexia program)	**Determined by committee**

Instruction for Students with Dyslexia

Once it has been determined that a student has dyslexia, Springtown ISD shall provide an appropriate instructional program for the student as required in TEC §38.003(b) states:

The board of trustees of each school district shall provide for the treatment of any student determined to have dyslexia or a related disorder.
http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.38.htm#38.003

The following procedures must be followed:

• Instructional decisions for a student with dyslexia are made by a team that is knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation information, and instructional components and delivery of instruction for students with dyslexia.

• Springtown ISD must provide each identified student access at his/her campus to an instructional program that meets the requirements in 19 TAC §74.28(c). The district shall purchase or develop a reading program for students with dyslexia and related disorders that is aligned with the descriptors found in the dyslexia handbook. The components of instruction and instructional approaches are described below.

Critical, Evidence-Based Components of Dyslexia Instruction
- Phonological Awareness
- Sound-symbol Association
- Syllabication
- Orthography
- Morphology
- Syntax
- Reading Comprehension

Delivery of Dyslexia Instruction
- Simultaneous, multisensory (VAKT Instruction)
- Systematic and Cumulative Instruction
- Explicit instruction
- Diagnostic teaching to automaticity
- Synthetic instruction
- Analytic instruction

	Springtown ISD Dyslexia Programs		
Grades K - 2	**Grades 3 - 4**	**Grades 5-8**	**Grades 9-12**
iRead	System 44	System 44/Read 180	Reading I and II courses

• Both the teacher of dyslexia, the regular classroom teacher and the special education teacher (if applicable) should provide multiple opportunities to support intervention and to strengthen these skills; therefore, responsibility for teaching reading and writing must be shared by classroom teachers, reading specialists, interventionists, and teachers of dyslexia programs.

• Teachers who provide the appropriate instruction for students with dyslexia must be trained in instructional strategies that utilize individualized, intensive, multisensory, phonetic methods and a variety of writing and spelling components specified in the next section of this plan. (19 TAC §74.28). Springtown ISD teachers who provide dyslexia instruction must complete a **minimum of 6 hours yearly** of documented **dyslexia** training aligned to 19 TAC §74.28(c). Providers of dyslexia instruction in Springtown ISD also serve as campus trainers and consultants in dyslexia and related disorders.

Instructional Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

In addition to dyslexia instruction, accommodations provide the student with dyslexia effective and equitable access to the general education classroom. Accommodations are not a one size fits all; rather, the impact of dyslexia on each individual determines the necessary accommodation. Listed below are examples of reasonable classroom accommodations for Springtown ISD:

- Copies of notes
- Note-taking assistance
- Additional time on assignments and tests
- Reduced/shortened assignments (chunking assignments into manageable units, fewer items given on a classroom test or homework assignments without eliminating concepts, or a student planner to assist with assignments)
- Alternative test location that provides a quiet environment and reduces distractions
- Priority seating assignment
- Oral reading of instructions and written materials
- Word banks
- Audiobooks
- Text to speech
- Speech to text
- Electronic spellers
- Electronic dictionaries
- Formula charts
- Adaptive learning tools and features in software programs (Read & Write)

Parent Education Program

Springtown ISD shall provide a parent education program for the parents/ guardians of students with dyslexia and related disorders. Parents/guardians will

receive resources (i.e. Dyslexia Newsletter, SISD Dyslexia Plan, Dyslexia brochure) as the parent education program. The Springtown ISD Dyslexia Plan will also be posted on the district's website as a part of the parent education program. The program should include the following:

- Characteristics of dyslexia and related disorders
- Information on assessment and diagnosis of dyslexia
- Information on effective strategies for teaching students with dyslexia
- Awareness of information on classroom modifications and especially of modifications allowed on standardized testing (19 TAC §74.28)

Student Monitoring & Dyslexia Program Exit Criteria

Upon successful completion of Springtown ISDs program(s), as measured by program mastery checks (assessments) completed at regular intervals, students will be exited from the district dyslexia program(s). Additional criteria for exit may include but is not limited to: grades from progress reports or report cards, state assessment data, benchmarks, progress monitoring data, teacher and/or parent observations/checklists, and individual dyslexia program requirements.

Students that have completed the Springtown ISD dyslexia program will receive regular monitoring during the first three year as follows:

Time After Exit	Monitoring Interval
1st Year	15 minutes per grading period
2nd Year	30 minutes per semester
3rd Year	30 minutes / year

Note: The ARD or §504 committee will meet annually for all students being served in the dyslexia program, as well as monitored students.

Monitoring may include, but is not limited to the collection/evaluation of:
- Progress reports and report cards
- State assessment data
- Teacher reports/checklists
- Parent reports/checklists
- Counselor reports
- Other program reports
- Additional assessment data

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Students qualifying for dyslexia services that are identified as §504 or special education will follow monitoring/re-evaluation requirements outlined in federal law.

No one factor is sufficient to warrant exiting a student from direct dyslexia services. Dismissal is determined by the §504 committee or ARD committee. The committee considers the following factors when recommending exiting or reduction of dyslexic services:

- Progress in the district dyslexia program
- The reevaluation and/or post-testing of student shows student growth to be closer to grade level proficiency standards
  (NOTE: Reevaluation does not mean reassessing to establish the identification of dyslexia, but rather viewing data that supports student progress and achievement.)
- The student demonstrates self-monitoring/self-correction behaviors as evidenced through informal observation by teacher and/or dyslexia teacher
- The student passed the reading portion of the state assessment (NOTE: passing the reading portion of the state assessment is never the sole source for exiting dyslexia services)
- Committee recommendation
- Parent request in writing that the student exit the program

If a student has shown substantial progress and the §504 committee or ARD 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 child is exited from the dyslexia services, a dismissal form will be completed and placed in the student's cumulative folder.

Dysgraphia

Texas state law requires districts to identify students who have dyslexia and related disorders. TEC §38.003 identifies dysgraphia as one of those related disorders. Dysgraphia is a written language disorder in the serial production of strokes to form handwritten letters. 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

composition. However, students with only dysgraphia do not have difficulty with reading.

The characteristics of dysgraphia include the following:

- Variably shaped and poorly formed letters
- Excessive erasure 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

Additional consequences of dysgraphia may include:

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

Dysgraphia is **NOT:**

- Evidence of a damaged motor nervous system
- Part of a developmental disability that has fine motor deficits
- Secondary to a medical condition
- Association with generalized developmental motor or coordination difficulties
- Impaired spelling or written expression with typical handwriting

Dysgraphia Screening

Students enrolling in Springtown ISD shall be assessed for dyslexia and related disorders at appropriate times (TEC §38.003(a)). When dysgraphia is suspected, the Springtown ISD campus dyslexia teacher will administer the Lexercise Dysgraphia screener.. If the screener provides an indication of dysgraphia **and** the student has received effective handwriting instruction, then the student should be referred for further dysgraphia evaluation.

Campuses in Springtown ISD should recommend screening for dysgraphia if the student demonstrates the following:

- Impaired or illegible handwriting that is unexpected for the student's age/grade
- Impaired handwriting that interferes with spelling, written expression, or both that is unexpected for the student's age/grade

Process for Evaluation
The same processes for evaluation of dyslexia apply to dysgraphia.

Documentation of the following characteristics of dysgraphia should be collected during the data gathering stage of evaluation:

- Slow or labored written work
- Poor formation of letters
- Improper letter slant
- Poor pencil grip
- Inadequate pressure during handwriting
- Excessive erasures
- Poor spacing between words
- Poor spacing inside words
- Inability to recall accurate orthographic patterns for words
- "b" and "d" reversals beyond developmentally appropriate time
- Inability to copy words accurately
- Inability of student to read what was previously written
- Overuse of short familiar words such as "big"
- Avoidance of written tasks
- Difficulty with visual-motor integrated sports or activities

In compliance with IDEA, Springtown ISD administers test instruments and other evaluation materials that assess the following domains:

Academic Skills
- Letter formation
- Handwriting
- Word/sentence dictation (timed and untimed)
- Copying of text
- Written expression
- Written Fluency (both accuracy and fluency)

Cognitive Processes
- Memory for letter or symbol sequences (orthographic processing)

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Based on the student's academic difficulties and characteristics, additional areas that may be assessed include the following:

- Phonological awareness
- Phonological memory
- Working memory
- Letter retrieval
- Letter matching

Review and Interpretation of Data

In order to make an informed determination, the committee **must** include members who are knowledgeable about:
- The student being assessed
- The handwriting process
- Dysgraphia and related disorders
- Dysgraphia instruction
- District, state, and federal guidelines for evaluation

The committee will review all accumulated data to determine whether the student demonstrates a pattern of evidence for dysgraphia. This data will include the following:
- 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

Questions to Determine the Identification of Dysgraphia
● Does the data show a pattern of low writing and spelling ability that is *unexpected* for the student in relation to the student's other cognitive abilities and provision of effective classroom instruction? It is important to remember that a student cannot be identified with dysgraphia if he/she has not been taught handwriting with fidelity.

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> - Does the pattern indicate the student has dysgraphia?
> - Does the student meet eligibility as a student with a disability under Section 504 or IDEA?

Instruction for Students with Dysgraphia

Between 10% and 30% of students struggle with handwriting. The following are research-based elements of effective handwriting instruction, in both manuscript and cursive handwriting:

- Show students how to hold a pencil.
- Model efficient and legible letter formation.
- Provide multiple opportunities for students to practice effective letter formation.
- Use scaffolds, such as letters with numbered arrows showing the order and direction of strokes.
- Have students practice writing letters from memory.
- Provide handwriting fluency practice to build students' automaticity.
- Practice handwriting in short sessions.

Handwriting supports spelling. Orthography is the written spelling patterns and rules in a given language. Students must be taught the regularity and irregularity of the orthographic patterns of language in an explicit and systematic manner. As a result, students with dysgraphia will benefit from the following guiding principles:

- Phoneme-grapheme correspondence
- Letter order and sequence pattern, or orthographic conventions
    - o Syllable types
    - o Orthographic rules
    - o Irregular words
- Position of phoneme or grapheme in a word
- Meaning and part of speech
- Language of origin

Students with written expression difficulties because of dysgraphia would benefit from being taught explicit strategies for composing, including the writing process and genre specific forms.

The way the content is delivered should be consistent with the principles of effective intervention for student with dysgraphia include the following:

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- Simultaneous, multisensory (VAKT)
- Systematic and cumulative
- Explicit instruction
- Diagnostic teaching to automaticity

Instructional Accommodations for Students with Dysgraphia

In addition to targeted instruction, accommodations provide the student with dysgraphia effective and equitable access to the general education classroom. Accommodations are not a one size fits all; rather, the impact of dyslexia on each individual determines the necessary accommodation. Listed below are examples of reasonable classroom accommodations for Springtown ISD:

- Allow more time for written tasks, including note taking, copying, and tests
- Reduced the length requirement of written assignments
- Provide copies of notes or assign a note taking buddy to assist with filling in missing information
- Allow the student to audio record important assignments and/or take oral tests
- Assist student with developing logical steps to complete a writing assignment instead of all at once
- Allow the use of technology
- Allow the student to use cursive or manuscript, whichever is most legible and efficient
- Allow the student to use graph paper for math, or to turn lines paper sideways, to help with lining up columns with numbers
- Offer an alternative to a written project such as an oral report, dramatic presentation, or visual media project

There are many technology resources to assist a student with dysgraphia. The technology Integration for Students with Dyslexia online tool (TEC §38.0031) is a resource developed to support school districts and charter schools in making instructional decisions regarding technology that benefit students with dyslexia and related disorders. For more information and to view this source, visit
https://www.region10.org/programs/dyslexia/techplan/