

GLADEWATER  
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



District Dyslexia Program  
Procedures

Updated February, 2023

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## 1. Dyslexia Program Goals

Gladewater Independent School District strives to have an exemplary dyslexia program for students enrolled in grades K – 12. Through a response to intervention process, GISD monitors students on a regular basis utilizing formal and informal observations, student data and other assessments.

Pursuant to TEA's, *The Dyslexia Handbook, 2021 update*, students being referred for consideration of dyslexia should have demonstrated age appropriate developmental progress and have received appropriate instruction in reading, including but not limited to an accelerated reading programs as required by the state. Students who exhibit characteristics of dyslexia should be referred for consideration of a dyslexia evaluation after at least one semester of formal reading instruction has taken place pursuant to the TEC §28.006.

The Gladewater Independent School District is committed to the development and implementation of a dyslexia program that addresses both the Texas Education Code at §38.003 and the Texas Administrative Code at §74.28.

Addressing GISD's commitment, the following reflect the goals of the district dyslexia program:

- Screen, refer and evaluate, students in grades K-12 students who may be at risk of dyslexia and related disorders;
- Provide instructional treatment options for students identified with dyslexia and related disorders;
- Provide staff development that includes:
  - Characteristics of dyslexia
  - Assessment of dyslexia
  - Intervention strategies and accommodations
- Provide a parent education program that includes:
  - Awareness of the characteristics of dyslexia and related disorders
  - Information on testing and the educational diagnosis of dyslexia
  - 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 state assessment accommodations and/or accommodations allowed for postsecondary testing (PSAT/ACT/SAT).

Objective: all campuses, through a response to intervention process, will identify students with dyslexia and related disorders and provide appropriate, individualized services based on the results of a comprehensive evaluation conducted according to the guidelines outlined in TEA's *The Dyslexia Handbook, 2021 update*, and according to state and federal laws implementing Section 504 and/or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

## 2. Characteristics of Dyslexia:

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

- Difficulty with the development of phonological processing (processing the sounds of speech)
- Difficulty accurately decoding nonsense or unfamiliar words
- Difficulty reading single words in isolation
- Inaccurate and labored oral reading
- Lack of reading fluency
- Variable degrees of difficulty with reading comprehension
- Variable degrees of difficulty learning the names of letters and their associated sounds
- Difficulty with learning to spell
- Difficulty in word finding and rapid naming
- Variable difficulty with aspects of written composition
- Difficulty with learning and reproducing the alphabet in correct sequence
- Family history of similar problems

### 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 imperceptions, dysphasia, specific developmental dyslexia, developmental dysgraphia, and developmental spelling disability.

The International Dyslexia Association defines "dyslexia" in the following way:

*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, including phonemic awareness and manipulation, single-word reading, reading fluency, and spelling. Consequences may include difficulties in reading comprehension and/or written expression. The difficulties in phonological awareness are unexpected for the student's age and educational level and are primarily the result of language difference factors. Additionally, there is often a family history of similar difficulties.

The following are the 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

Secondary consequences of dyslexia may include the following:

- Difficulty with reading comprehension
- Difficulty with written language
- Limited vocabulary growth, due to reduced reading experiences

### 3. Dyslexia Screening

In accordance with TEC §28.006, Gladewater ISD administers early reading instruments to all students in kindergarten, first, and second grades to assess students' reading development and comprehension.

In accordance to Texas Education Code §38.003 and TAC §74.28, Gladewater ISD will screen kindergarten students for dyslexia at the end of the school year, and first grade students will be screened for dyslexia by January 31<sup>st</sup>.

Additionally, Gladewater ISD administers a reading instrument from the commissioner's approved list at the beginning of seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) grade 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, parents/guardians are notified.

#### *Screener Criteria*

Regardless of the primary language of the student, instruments used to screen for dyslexia and other reading difficulties must address the skills in Figure 2.2 below from *The Dyslexia Handbook, 2021 Update*.

Figure 2.2 Criteria for English and Spanish Screening Instruments	
Kindergarten	First Grade
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Letter Sounds Knowledge or Letter Naming Fluency</li><li>● Phonological Awareness</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Word Reading Accuracy or Fluency</li><li>● Phonological Awareness</li></ul>

While the selected screening instrument will be expected to measure each of the skills identified above, it is important that individuals who administer the screening instrument document student behaviors observed during the administration of the instrument. A list of behaviors that may be observed during the administration of the screening and which should be documented are included in Figure 2.3 below from *The Dyslexia Handbook, 2021 Update*.

Figure 2.3 Student Behaviors Observed During Screening
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Lack of automaticity</li><li>● Difficulty sounding out words left to right</li><li>● Guessing</li></ul>

- Self-correcting
- Inability to focus on reading
- Avoidance behavior

### Screening Data Gathering

Both quantitative and qualitative information are critical components of the screening process. Examples of quantitative and qualitative information used in determining next steps are provided in Figure 2.4 below from *The Dyslexia Handbook, 2021 Update*.

Figure 2.4 Sources and Examples of Screening Data	
Quantitative Information	Qualitative Information
Results of – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current screening instruments</li> <li>• Previous screening instruments</li> <li>• Formal and informal classroom reading assessments</li> <li>• Additional brief and targeted skill assessments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observations of student during screening (See Figure 2.3, Student Observed During Screening)</li> <li>• Other observations of student progress</li> <li>• Teacher observations</li> <li>• Parent/guardian input (e.g., family history, early language skills)</li> <li>• Current student work samples</li> <li>• Work samples from earlier grade(s)</li> <li>• Intervention history</li> </ul>

## 4. Dyslexia Assessment

At any point (from Kindergarten through grade 12) if a student demonstrates characteristics of dyslexia and a disability is suspected, Gladewater ISD will make a referral for a dyslexia assessment. When formal dyslexia assessment is recommended, Gladewater ISD completes the evaluation process as outlined in *The Dyslexia Handbook, 2021 Update*. Gladewater ISD will use formal and informal measures to assess the above characteristics and conditions for dyslexia and will make recommendations to the committee.

### Interpretation of Data

A qualified team is required to review all data to make informed decisions regarding whether a student exhibits characteristics of dyslexia. This team must consist of individuals who—

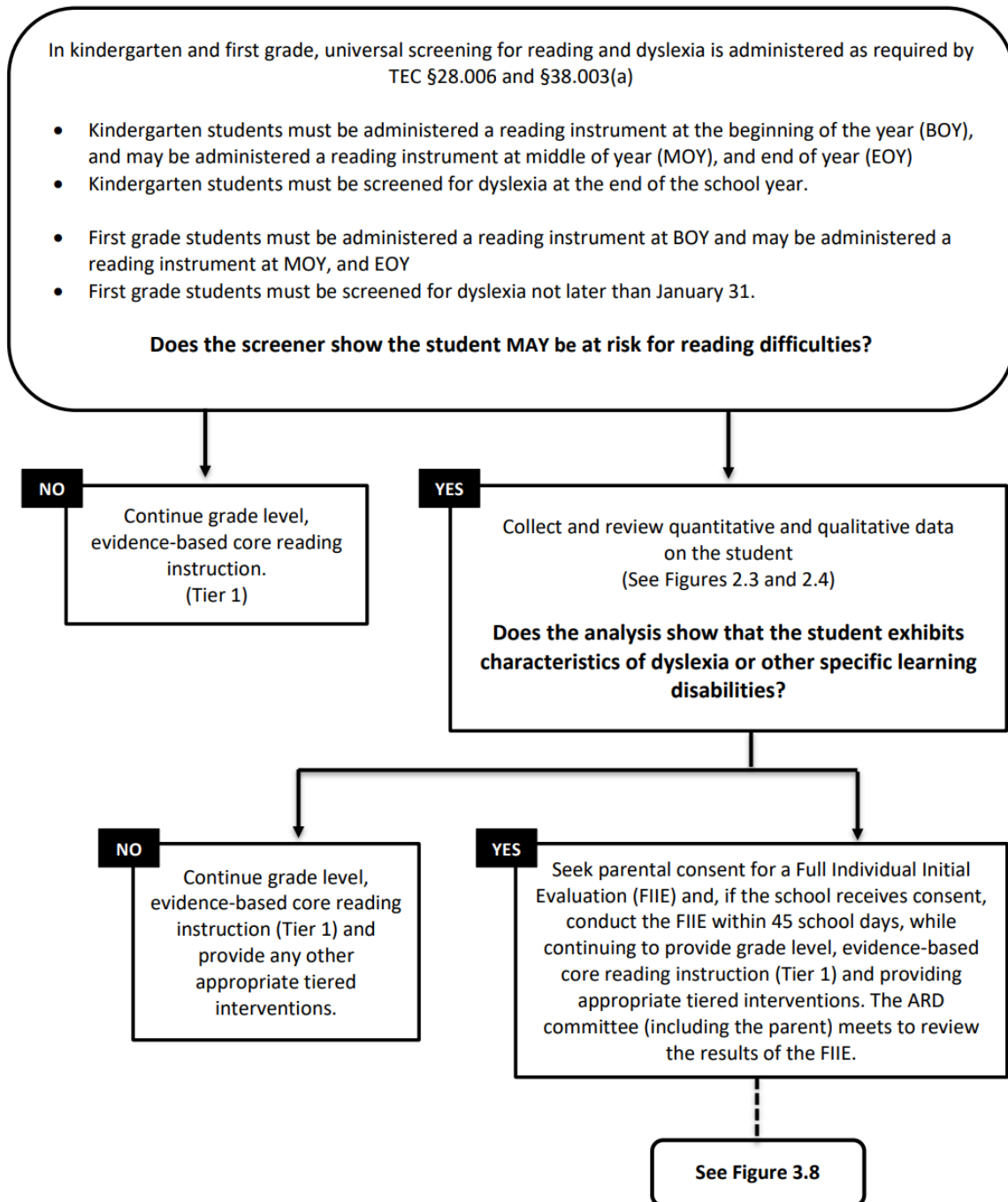
- have knowledge of the student;
- are appropriately trained in the administration of the screening tool;
- are trained to interpret the quantitative and qualitative results from the screening process; and
- recognize characteristics of dyslexia.

The team may consist of the student’s classroom teacher, the dyslexia specialist, the individual who administered the screener, a representative of the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) (as appropriate), and an administrator.

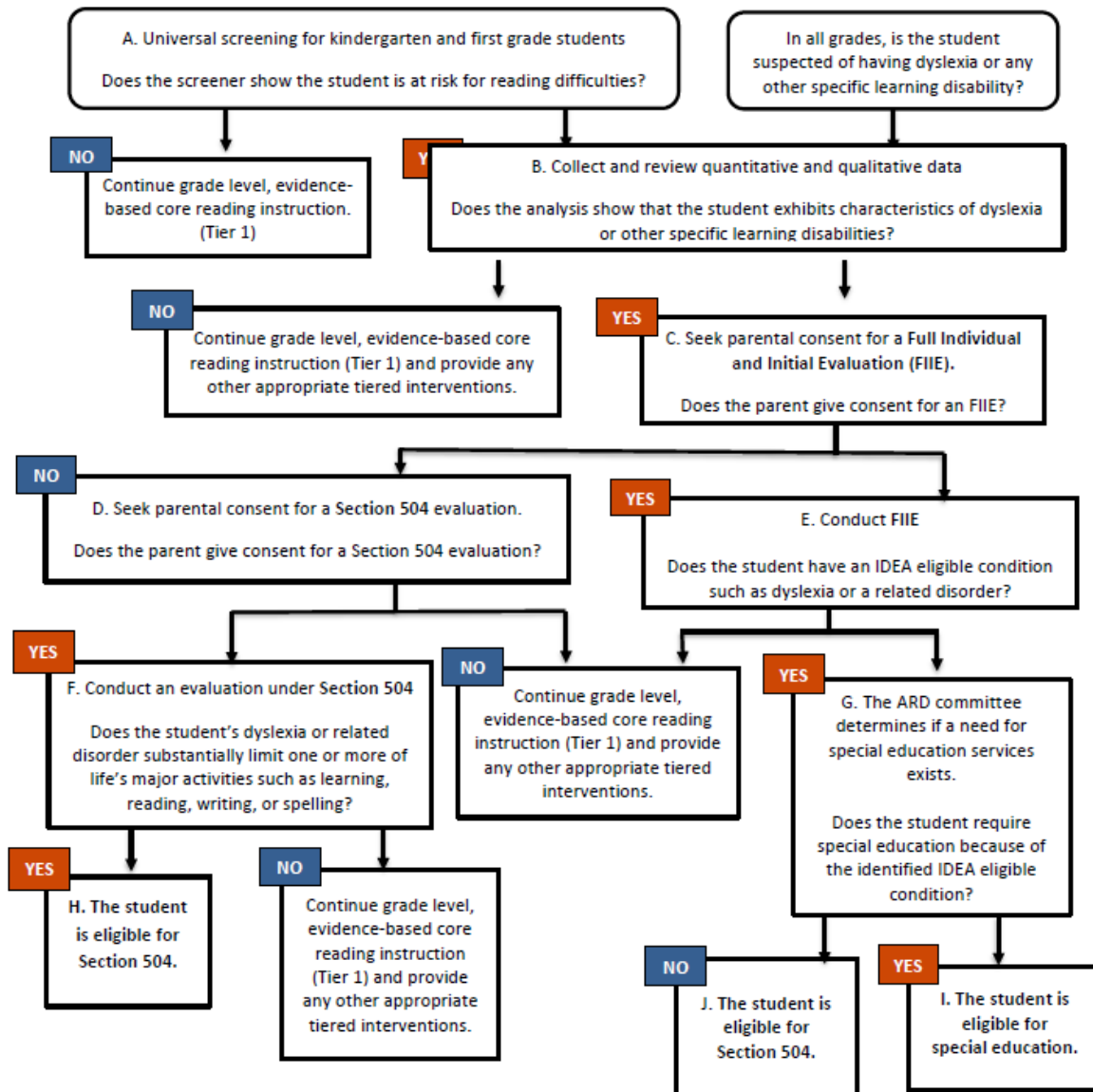
## 5. Identification and Provision of Instruction for Dyslexia charts

\*\*Gladewater ISD uses the following charts from *The Dyslexia Handbook, 2021 Update*, as guidance for identification of and provision of services for students with dyslexia.

**Figure 2.5**  
**Universal Screening and Data Review for Reading Risk**



**Figure 3.8**  
Pathways for the Identification and Provision of Instruction for Students with Dyslexia



\*See next page for additional detail.



## Pathway to the Identification and Provision of Instruction for Students with Dyslexia

<p><b>A.</b> Universal Screening for reading and dyslexia is administered to all students in kindergarten and first grade as required by TEC §28.006 and §38.003(a).</p>	
<p><b>B.</b> If a student is at risk for reading difficulties or the student is suspected of having dyslexia or any other specific learning disability, collect and review quantitative and qualitative data on the student. See Figures 2.3 and 2.4 in Dyslexia Handbook for more information.</p>	
<p><b>C.</b> If the analysis shows that the student exhibits characteristics of dyslexia or other specific learning disabilities, seek parental consent for a Full Individual and Initial Evaluation (FIIIE), while continuing to provide grade level, evidence-based core reading instruction (Tier 1) and providing appropriate tiered interventions.</p>	
<p><b>D.</b> For students suspected of having dyslexia, if the parent does not give consent for an FIIIE, seek parental consent for a Section 504 evaluation, while continuing to provide grade level, evidence-based core reading instruction (Tier 1) and providing appropriate tiered interventions.</p>	<p><b>E.</b> If the parent gives consent for an FIIIE, conduct the FIIIE within 45 school days (subject to limited exceptions) of the date of receipt of parent consent, while continuing to provide grade level, evidence-based core reading instruction (Tier 1) and providing appropriate tiered interventions. The ARD committee (including the parent) must meet to review the results of the FIIIE.</p>
<p><b>F.</b> If the parent gives consent for a Section 504 evaluation, conduct an evaluation under Section 504 while continuing to provide grade level, evidence-based core reading instruction (Tier 1) and providing appropriate tiered interventions.</p>	<p><b>G.</b> If a student has an IDEA eligible condition such as dyslexia or a related disorder, the ARD committee determines if a need for special education services exists.</p>
<p><b>H.</b> If the student’s dyslexia or related disorder substantially limits one or more of life’s major activities such as learning, reading, writing, or spelling, the student is eligible for Section 504, the 504 committee (parent participation is recommended) develops a Section 504 plan for the student to provide services including standard protocol dyslexia instruction, accommodations, and/or related aids specific to the student’s disability.</p>	<p><b>I.</b> If the student requires special education because of the identified IDEA eligible condition, the student is eligible for special education. The ARD committee develops the IEP for the student to receive specially designed instruction which can include <b>any appropriate special education and related services, and general education programs and services</b>, including standard protocol dyslexia instruction. While an IEP is individualized to the student, the IEP should address critical, evidence-based components of dyslexia instruction such as phonological awareness, sound-symbol association, syllabication, orthography, morphology, syntax, reading comprehension, and reading fluency. The determination of eligibility and the development of an IEP, if the student is eligible, must be done within 30 days (subject to limited exceptions) from the date that the written FIIIE evaluation report is completed. Obtain parental consent for special education services.</p>
	<p><b>J.</b> If the parent declines, the LEA must still provide all general education services including any protections available under Section 504.</p>

## 6. Dyslexia Program

Gladewater ISD uses Reading by Design: An Individualized Reading Intervention program. Dyslexia Therapy is delivered by teachers trained in the specific program they are administering.

Gladewater ISD's Dyslexia instruction includes the following components:

- **Phonological awareness**
- **Sound-symbol association**
- **Syllabication**
- **Orthography**
- **Morphology**
- **Syntax**
- **Reading comprehension**
- **Reading fluency**

### Effective Strategies for Teaching Students with Dyslexia and Related Disorders

- Adherence to recommendations and plan from RtI, §504, or ARD
- Service provided by a trained dyslexia teacher:
  - **Reading by Design**: a systematic, multisensory set of instructional routines which include content and pedagogically appropriate practices. This program is aligned with research-based practices for developing literacy and is designed for students with basic reading difficulties, such as dyslexia.
- Utilizing multisensory engagement:
  - visual - auditory - kinesthetic - tactile
- Cumulatively
- Explicitly
- Systematically
- Research Based Practices

## 7. Dyslexia Program Exit Criteria

Dismissal from Gladewater ISD's Dyslexia Program is determined by ARD or §504 committee. Dismissal from Gladewater ISD's Dyslexia Program is considered when either of the following occur:

Exiting a student is considered upon completion of Gladewater ISD's Dyslexia Program, as measured by program mastery checks completed at regular intervals. (Additional criteria considered for exit may include but is not limited to grades from progress reports or report cards, state assessments, unit assessments, reading progress monitoring data, MAP data, teacher reports, and parent input.)

Exiting a student is considered when a student demonstrates lack of progress and is not benefitting from the dyslexia program. This lack of progress will be documented in the student's ARD or §504 minutes and the ARD or §504 committee will determine the best plan to support the student's reading deficits. (Data considered may include but is not limited to: Reading by Design mastery checks, MAP data, grades from progress reports or report cards, state assessments, unit assessments, reading progress monitoring data, teacher reports, and parent input.)

## **8. Monitoring Students in Dyslexia**

Gladewater ISD Dyslexia Therapists will work collaboratively with classroom teachers to support application of literacy skills to students' classwork and assessments. After exiting the district dyslexia program, students may continue to receive accommodations, as determined by §504 or ARD committee.

Designated staff will monitor student progress for at least two years after completing Gladewater ISD's Dyslexia Program. (Monitored data may include, but is not limited to, grades from progress reports or report cards, MAP data, state assessments, benchmarks, and unit assessments, reading progress monitoring data, teacher reports, and parent input.) If progress monitoring indicates a concern, the §504 or ARD committee will determine appropriate student support.

## **9. Definition of Dysgraphia**

Texas Education Code §38.003 requires school districts to consider and evaluate for both dyslexia and dysgraphia:

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

For purposes of identification and assessment, Gladewater ISD will use the following definition of "dysgraphia":

Dysgraphia is 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). Secondary consequences may include problems with spelling and written expression. It is not solely due to lack of instruction and is not associated with other developmental or neurological conditions that involve motor impairment.

### *Primary Characteristics of Dysgraphia*

Primary characteristics of dysgraphia include difficulty with:

- Handwriting legibility, automaticity, and fluency
- Spelling (orthographic processing)
- Fluency and/or quality with composition (putting thoughts on paper)

Associated Cognitive Processes include:

- Orthographic processing – affecting automaticity and spelling
- Grapho-motor processing – affecting legibility, speed, and volume

## **10. Dysgraphia Assessment:**

Concerns for dysgraphia should be brought to the student’s teacher or campus administrator. A committee will collect and review data from multiple sources to make decisions regarding goals, interventions, and/ or need for dysgraphia assessment.

The process of identifying dysgraphia will follow Gladewater ISD Child Find procedures for conducting a full individual and initial evaluation (FIE) under IDEA.

## **11. Dysgraphia Program**

Once it has been determined that a student has dysgraphia and should be placed in the district’s dysgraphia program, Gladewater ISD will provide an appropriate instructional program for the student. The instructional program will be offered in a small class setting and will include handwriting and spelling instruction as necessary.

## **12. Dysgraphia Program Exit Criteria**

The dysgraphia instructional program exit criteria are based on a thorough consideration of student data. The ARD or §504 committee will make the decision to exit a student from the district’s dysgraphia instructional program if evidence is available to support the decision.

The data may include:

- Handwriting mastery checks reflect a student’s handwriting is meeting grade level expectations and ARD or §504 committee determine exiting the program is appropriate
- OR
- Data gathered shows consistent progression of improvement in student’s handwriting abilities and ARD or §504 committee determine exiting the program is appropriate.
- OR
- Data gathered shows limited improvement in student’s handwriting abilities and ARD or §504 committee determine student is best served through access to technology and accommodations and exiting the program is appropriate.
- OR
- Student demonstrates lack of progress and is not benefitting from the district’s dysgraphia instructional program. This lack of progress will be documented in either the student’s ARD or §504 committee minutes along with documentation indicating student support to follow exit from the program.

### **13. Student Monitoring - Dysgraphia:**

Gladewater ISD designated staff will work collaboratively with classroom teachers to support application of handwriting and spelling skills to students' classwork and assessments. After exiting the district dysgraphia program, students may continue to receive accommodations, as determined by ARD or §504 committee.

### **14. Parent Awareness and Support**

Through this handbook, parents have received information on the following topics regarding Parent Education (TAC 74.28, section k)

- Awareness and characteristics of dyslexia and related disorders
- Information on testing and diagnosis of dyslexia and related disorders
- Information on effective strategies for teaching students with dyslexia and related disorders
- Information on qualifications of those delivering services to students with dyslexia and related disorders
- Awareness of information on accommodations and modifications, especially those allowed for standardized testing  
Information on eligibility, evaluation requests, and services available under IDEA and the Rehabilitation Act, Section 504, and information on the response to intervention process
- Contact information for the relevant regional and/or school district school specialists...include credentials of Dyslexia teachers.
- 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."

Parent awareness begins with the RTI pre-referral process, and when the Procedural Safeguards through Section 504 are provided.

Parents are invited to attend the §504 meetings to discuss possible academic options for meeting the needs of their child. The Dyslexia Assessment Data is shared with parents once completed, and a "Permission to Place" form is signed if they choose for their child to participate in the District's Dyslexia Program. Some type of informational handout should also be provided to parents at this time.

Suggestions for Home

1. Read to your child
2. Work in harmony with your child's teacher

3. Focus on practice and reinforcement of one procedure at a time
4. Keep work at home short (15-20 minutes per day)
5. Keep it fun!
6. Keep reading material easy for child reading
7. Use colored index cards for sight word practice
8. Use magnetic letters to build words
9. Develop a habit of reading in your home
10. Encourage your child to sound out unknown words
11. Pay special attention to vowel sounds
12. Read and reread (Repeated practice is the key to reinforcing and strengthening the neural wiring for specific words)
13. Build vocabulary by discussing word meanings
14. Encourage multiple strategies in working out unknown words.

To read a book with ease, a child should be able to read about 19 out of 20 words on a page correctly. If not, the book is probably too hard for the child to read alone. Reading should always be encouraged for pleasure and for knowledge; however, if a child is halting or a tenuous reader, simply encouraging him to read silently will not make a child a better reader.

#### **15. District contact information:**

- Kim Dolese,  
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