

Van Vleck Independent School District

Dyslexia Plan

Van Vleck Independent School District
142 South Fourth Street
Van Vleck, TX 77482

Definition of Dyslexia and Related Disorders

For the purposes of this plan, the Van Vleck ISD will use the definition of dyslexia as found in Texas Education Code 38.003:

1. “**Dyslexia**” is defined as a disorder of constitutional origin manifested by a difficulty in learning to read, write, or spell, despite conventional instruction, adequate intelligence, and socio-cultural opportunity.
2. “**Related Disorders**” is defined as any disorders similar to or related to dyslexia such as developmental auditory imperception, dysphasia, specific developmental dyslexia, developmental dysgraphia, and developmental spelling disability.

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

- difficulty with the development of phonological awareness and phonological processing skills (processing the sounds of speech), including segmenting or breaking spoken words into individual sounds;
- 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 (in either written or oral form); and
- family history of similar problems.

Data Gathering

As stated in Texas Education Code 38.003 (a):

- (a) Students enrolling in public schools in this state shall be tested for dyslexia and related disorders at appropriate times in accordance with a program approved by the State Board of Education.

The Van Vleck Independent School District will provide dyslexia screening for any student who is identified by school personnel, parents, or other appropriate sources as exhibiting unexpected and continuing reading, writing, or spelling difficulties that hinder academic progress and/or who exhibits characteristics associated with dyslexia and related disorders. This screening shall be provided in a timely manner by a professional with training in dyslexia screening methods.

Initial screening shall consist of the gathering of data, which may include such information as the results:

- vision screening;
- hearing screening;
- speech and language screening through a referral process;
- academic progress reports;
- teacher reports of aptitude, behavior, and problems;
- parent conferences;
- results of state student assessment programs or standardized testing as described in TEC 39.022;
- results of tests for limited English proficiency;
- results of K-2 reading inventories as described in TEC 28.006; and
- other information as appropriate.**

**If individual assessment beyond that found in students' cumulative or classroom records is to be considered, parent permission shall be secured prior to that assessment.

This data shall be gathered and presented to the Student Assistance Team on the student's home campus. Members of this team shall include the principal or designee, the campus dyslexia contact, a classroom teacher, an educational diagnostician, the student's counselor, the student's parent or guardian, and any other individual with expertise in making decision concerning student instructional needs and services.

This committee shall meet within 60 calendar days of the initial referral for the purpose of considering the data that has been gathered and to make recommendations to ensure improved academic performance of the identified student.

Intervention Options

As stated in Texas Education Code 38.003 (b):

- (b) In accordance with the program approved by the State Board of Education, the board of trustees of each school district shall provide for the treatment of any student determined to have dyslexia or a related disorder.

The Van Vleck Independent School District is committed to providing services needed to support and promote each student's academic success. If the Student Assistance Team determines from gathered data that the student is experiencing difficulties with academic performance and is not making expected progress, a decision should be made regarding appropriate placement and interventions for the student.

The team may recommend any of the intervention options to promote student success in the least restrictive environment:

Support Strategies include, but are not limited to:

- vision or hearing correction;
- rearrangement of class assignments;
- supportive counseling;
- English as a second language instruction;
- tutoring;
- extended year services;
- use of appropriate technology; and
- classroom modifications.

If such support services are determined to be the appropriate intervention, the student shall also be monitored regularly (each six weeks) by the instructional facilitator for one calendar year to determine if adequate progress is being made. If, at any time within the year, it appears that the student is failing to progress as expected, the Student Assistance Team shall reconvene to determine additional intervention options to improve student success.

Remedial Strategies include, but are not limited to:

- placement in content mastery at elementary and high school campuses;
- grade-level team remediation at middle school campus;
- regular tutorials;
- optional extended year; or
- a specific computer-enhanced instructional program.

Parent permission should be obtained prior to individual assessment or placement in remedial programming. Rights and procedures for appeal of any such placement decision shall be provided to parents/guardians.

All remedial reading and compensatory teachers shall have training in instructional practices and performance monitoring that may be used with students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia, but who have not been identified as dyslexic. If the teacher determines that the student is not making adequate progress in the remedial/compensatory program in which he/she has been placed, that teacher will inform the Campus Dyslexia Contact who will then reconvene the Student Assistance Team to determine further placement/intervention options for the student.

Identification and Placement into a Dyslexia Instructional Program: If it is determined that a student who has been identified as having primary difficulties in reading, writing, and/or spelling is not progressing academically despite provision of support services and/or remedial instruction, then continued evaluation in the areas of dyslexia and related disorders must be considered. This determination may be made at the initial meeting of the Student Assistance Team which considers data relating to the student's lack of progress and need for services, whether or not, but especially if, other program modifications, support services, and/or remedial strategies have already been tried, or it may be made after such options have been recommended, but monitoring of the student's performance indicates continuing academic problems.

Identification, as required in Texas Education Code 38.003 and Texas Administrative Code 74.28 shall be determined by:

1. the student's exhibiting characteristics associated with dyslexia,
2. the student's unexpected lack of academic progress,
3. the student's having adequate intelligence and ability to learn,
4. the student's receiving conventional instruction, and
5. the student's lack of progress not being due to socio-cultural factors such as language differences, inconsistent attendance, and lack of experiential background.

Once identification of dyslexia or a related disorder has been made, the school district shall provide an appropriate instructional program for the student so identified. This program shall be offered in a remedial setting at the student's own campus. The major instructional strategies in the program(s) that the district adopts shall utilize individualized, intensive, multisensory methods, contain writing and spelling components, and include the following descriptors:

- **Graphophonemic knowledge** (explicit, synthetic, and analytic phonics): instruction which takes advantage of the letter-sound plan in which words carry meaning are made of sounds; sounds are written with letters in a certain order; students with this understanding can blend sounds associated with letters into words and can separate words into component sounds for spelling and writing.

- **Individualized:** instruction that meets the specific learning needs of each individual student. A reading program in which both materials and methods are matched to each student's individual ability level. This does not necessarily require that the program be carried out in a one-on-one setting, but that it is geared to each participating student's individual needs.
- **Linguistic:** instruction directed toward proficiency and fluency in the patterns of language so that words and sentences are the carriers of meaning.
- **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 presentations and practice.
- **Phonemic awareness:** instruction that enables students to detect, segment, and blend, and manipulate sounds in spoken language.
- **Process oriented:** instruction based on the processes, a reliable set of procedures for students, to use for decoding and encoding, leading to word recognition, fluency, and comprehension which students need to become independent readers, during presentation and practice.
- **Language structure:** instruction that encompasses morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics.
- **Explicit direct instruction:** instruction which is systematic (structured), sequential, and cumulative, and is organized and presented in a way that follows a logical sequential plan and fits the nature of language (alphabetic principle), with no assumption of prior skills or language knowledge. The sequence of the instruction should be aligned as far as possible to that of the regular instructional program from which the student comes in order to reinforce and strengthen concepts in a complimentary way.
- **Research based:** instruction based on the timeliest and effective methods as identified by current research.

Teachers of these classes shall be prepared to utilize these techniques and strategies and to act as trainers and consultants in the area of dyslexia and related disorders to regular, remedial, and special education teachers.

Referral for Special Education Services: Some students with severe dyslexia or related disorders may be unable to make adequate academic progress with any of the programs described previously. In such cases, referral to special education for a comprehensive assessment and possible identification as disabled within the meaning of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) should be made as needed.

Such referrals would be accompanied by the written general and specific notices to parents of federal and state rights for children with disabilities and would follow all mandated procedures.

Certain students with dyslexia or other specific learning disabilities qualify as disabled under federal and state law and may receive special education and related services. If the student with dyslexia is found eligible for special education in the area of reading, the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee **must include appropriate reading instruction on the student's individual education program (IEP). Appropriate reading instruction includes the descriptors listed in Chapter IV on Instruction for Students with Dyslexia.**

Other students with less severe learning disabilities or dyslexia who may still qualify as disabled under federal and state law, may not require special education services and should benefit from specific assistance with regular or remedial programs. The Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee may include the descriptors listed in Identification and Placement into a Dyslexia Instructional Program for the student's individual education program (IEP).

Exiting from Dyslexia Services: A student who has successfully completed a course of remedial or dyslexic instructional services may be exited from further such services and integrated back into the traditional reading classroom upon recommendation of the campus dyslexia contact and teacher. Parents should be informed of the successful completion of such course of services. Depending on the recommendation of the dyslexia contact and teacher, the student may be monitored to assure continued academic success or may be monitored and provided appropriate support services as needed to promote ongoing success. Monitoring and support services shall be available to the student as needed until their graduation from high school.

On occasion, a student who has completed a course of remedial or dyslexic instructional services may still not be prepared for academic success; in that case, the Student Assistance Team should reconvene to reexamine and decide what intervention options would be appropriate for the student at that point.

Acceptance of Student Transferring from Other School Districts into the Dyslexia Program: Students entering Van Vleck ISD from other school districts who have been identified as dyslexic by school personnel based on such data as described in the “Data Gathering” section of this document may be accepted into the Van Vleck ISD program without further screening when record of such identification is available.

Effort shall be made to offer the student services similar to those he/she was receiving in the preceding district and/or to help the student transition into services provided by Van Vleck ISD.

If adequate records of such identification are not available and cannot be obtained from the prior district, the student shall enter the screening process as detailed in the “Data Gathering” section as soon as adequate data concerning the student’s academic performance is available to the campus dyslexia contact (within twelve weeks of enrollment in Van Vleck ISD). In the interim, the campus dyslexia contact or instructional facilitator may work with that student’s classroom teachers to provide appropriate modifications and strategies to support the student’s instructional success.

Statements or records from a source other than school records (such as physician’s statements or outside testing sources) should be considered part of the data gathered in the screening process, but are not, in and of themselves, acceptable records of identification.

Parental Involvement and Rights: The Van Vleck Independent School District recognizes and supports the rights of parents to be informed and involved in the education of their students. In accordance with these rights, parents shall be informed and their permission sought:

- before specialized individual testing of a student beyond that done with most students in the classroom setting is undertaken. Results of such testing shall be available and explained to parents upon request.
- before intervention options are undertaken. Parents shall be invited and may be a part of the Student Assistance Team that is considering data and intervention options for their student; their written permission shall be obtained if the student will be placed in a remedial program, dyslexia instructional program, or referred for special education assessment.

Parents/guardians of students eligible under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973-504 shall be informed of all services and options available to the student under that federal statute.

Parents shall be informed of their student’s progress within the intervention options chosen and of changes in services or options being offered to their student.

In addition, the school district will offer opportunities for parents to be involved in planning and decision-making for the dyslexia services within the district as well as parent education programs for parents of students with dyslexia and related disorders.

Parent Appeals: Parents may appeal decisions concerning the identification of their student as dyslexic or concerning the intervention options recommended for the student. These appeals should follow normal district guidelines: appeal should be first made in writing to the Student Assistance Team for consideration, then to the campus principal, then to the superintendent, and then to the Van Vleck ISD Board of Trustees. Appeals should be in writing and presented within ten calendar days of identification or placement decisions. The appropriate school district representative should then respond to the appeal within ten calendar days.

If you have any questions regarding dyslexia, please contact Mrs. Christie Dement, Director of Curriculum and Special Programs at 979-323-5000.