

Dyslexia: Educational Implications

LaGrange District #102


Agenda

- Definition
- Incidence
- Identification/signs of dyslexia
- Federal Guidance
- State Legislation/State Rules on dyslexia
- Assessment
- Effective teaching/instruction
- Dyslexia resource sites



Importance of Reading and Writing Instruction

- “...the ability to read and write will determine how far you will go in this world. For the most part, people who read and write well will compete and prosper; people who read and write poorly will be left behind.” (Gallagher, 2006)

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- What does dyslexia mean to you?
 - dys-difficulty, lacking in ability
 - lexia – language, pertaining to words

Struggling Students

- “Approximately 7,000 students drop out of school every day.” (Child Trends Databank, September 2013)
- “One of the most commonly cited reasons for this is that students simply do not have the literacy skills to keep up with the high school curriculum, which has become increasingly complex.” (Kamil, 2003, Snow & Biancarosa, 2003)



International Dyslexia Association definition:

- 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 the growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.



Dyslexia Basics

- Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability.
- Refers to a cluster of symptoms resulting in difficulties with specific language skills such as reading, spelling, writing, and pronouncing words.
- Dyslexia affects individuals throughout their lives; its impact can change at different stages in a person's life.
- The impact is different for each person and depends on the severity of the condition and the instruction received.
- May impact spoken language skills even after exposure to positive language models.



Incidence

- Figures vary-of the 13-14% of school aged children with disabilities, half of all these students are classified as having a SLD.
- 85% of the SLD students have a primary learning disability in reading and language processing.
- Many more, possibly 15-20% of the population have some symptoms of dyslexia including slow, inaccurate reading, poor writing, poor spelling, or mixing up similar words.



Causes and Additional Factors

- Causes not completely clear; neurological in origin.
- Brain anatomy, brain chemistry, and brain function show differences in the brains of persons with dyslexia.
- Several genetic variants are associated with dyslexia.
- Reading is supported by a network of regions in the left hemisphere; these areas change as we age and are altered in people with dyslexia.
- Dyslexia runs in families; parents with dyslexia are very likely to have children with dyslexia.

Brain Activation-Phonics Instruction

- <https://youtu.be/n15t2Snbfo?t=2613>

Louisa Moates discussing the brain chemistry of children with dyslexia with and without proper instruction.

<https://dyslexiaida.org/idas-free-webinar-series/>

IDA free webinar series available on the website.

Characteristics of Dyslexia





Signs of Dyslexia: Young Children

- Difficulties with: recognizing letters, matching letters to sounds, and blending sounds into speech.
- Difficulties with pronouncing words
- Difficulties with learning and correctly using new vocabulary words
- Problems with learning the alphabet, numbers, days of the week, and similar common word sequences
- Memorizing number facts



Signs of Dyslexia: School Aged


- Trouble with: mastering rules of spelling
- Difficulty with remembering facts and numbers
- Trouble learning and understanding new skills
- Reading and spelling difficulties
- Trouble following a sequence of directions
- Completing word problems in math
- Fatigue and/or boredom while reading
- Must frequently re-read a sentence/paragraph to comprehend

Federal Guidance on Dyslexia

- The federal Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) released guidance to state and LEAs clarifying that students with specific learning disabilities—such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia—have unique educational needs.
- Clarifies that the list of conditions in the definition of “specific learning disability,” which includes dyslexia, is not an exhaustive list of conditions that may qualify a child as a student with a learning disability;
- Reminds states of the importance of addressing the unique educational needs of children with specific learning disabilities resulting from dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia during IEP meetings and other meetings with parents under IDEA;
- Encourages states to review their policies, procedures, and practices to ensure that they do not prohibit the use of the terms dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia in evaluations, eligibility, and IEP documents.

State Legislation on Dyslexia

- On July 14, 2014, Illinois **Public Act 98-0705** was signed into law. The law requires two activities of the Illinois State Board of Education:
- 1. Adopt rules that incorporate an international definition of dyslexia into Part 226 of Title 23 of the Illinois Administrative Code.
- The definition of dyslexia from the International Dyslexia Association is currently incorporated into the 23 Illinois Administrative Code.

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- 2. Subject to appropriation or the availability of private donations, to establish an advisory group to develop a training module or training modules to provide education and professional development to teachers, school administrators, and other educational professional regarding multi-sensory, systematic, and sequential instruction in reading.
 - ***No funding was provided*** to a Reading Instruction Advisory Group to develop training modules.
 - However, the RIAG reviewed materials and produced a ‘Best Practices’ document and an Intervention Toolkit available on the ISBE website.

State Rules: January, 2016

- On January 13, 2016, changes were made to the Special Education Regulations, found in **23 Illinois Administrative Code, Part 226:**
- Section 226.125 Specific Learning Disability: Dyslexia
 - a. (New Definition per Federal and International Dyslexia Association)
 - b. dyslexia is one of a number of disorders included as a specific learning disability that may adversely affect the student's educational performance and result in the child's eligibility for special education and related services.
 - c. Each child suspected of having dyslexia or identified as dyslexic shall be referred for an evaluation in accordance with the requirements of 34 CFR 300.304 through 300.311 and Subpart B of this Part.



Best Practice Related to Dyslexia

- With a partner, review the June, 2016 ISBE RIAG (Reading Instruction Advisory Group) document on Best Practices.
- Indicate which of the best practices indicated in the table are currently implemented in District.
- Indicate areas of challenge that may require additional consideration. How could these challenges be addressed?

Assessment for Dyslexia

- Appropriate early intervention is VERY effective in closing the gap for struggling readers (K-3rd grade).
- Begin as early as possible when the gap is small and students benefit from brain plasticity advantages.
- Assessments should include:
 - Screening
 - Three times per year benchmarking
 - Evaluation (if needed)
 - Progress monitoring

Effective Instruction for Dyslexia

Structured Literacy Components

- **Phonology** – study of sound structure of spoken words includes rhyming, counting syllables in spoken words, clapping syllables; phonemic awareness important aspect – ability to segment words into their component sounds.
- **Sound-Symbol Association** – connecting phonemes to printed letters; blending sounds and letters into words as well as segmenting words into individual sounds; phonics.



Structured Literacy, Con't.

- **Syllable Instruction** – teaching the six basic syllable types in the English language: closed, vowel-consonant-e, open, consonant-le, r-controlled, and vowel pair.
- **Morphology** – teaching base words, roots, prefixes, and suffixes.
- **Syntax** – teaching principles of sequence and function of words in a sentence to convey meaning including grammar, sentence variance, and mechanics.
- **Semantics** – instruction in comprehension of written language.

Structured Literacy-Instructional Elements

- **Systematic and Cumulative** – taught in a logical order of the language starting with easiest and progressing to more complex and difficult.
- **Explicit Instruction** – requires the teaching of all concepts with continuous student-teacher interaction.
- **Diagnostic Teaching** – teacher must be adept at individualized instruction based on continuous assessment; content must be mastered to automaticity so students' cognitive resources may be used for comprehension and expression.



Structured Literacy Activity

- Review the components of a strong Structured Literacy program.
- Identify the areas of Structured Literacy that are currently implemented in District ELA programs.
- Identify components of Structured Literacy which are not addressed sufficiently in the current curriculum.



Resources

<https://dyslexiaida.org/>

International Dyslexia Association

<http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/dyslexia.htm>

Illinois State Board of Education – Dyslexia information