

Philosophy Of the DeSoto County Schools Dyslexia Program

Children learn to read, write, and spell in different ways. A balanced reading program should meet the needs of most students. Students who do not learn to read, write and spell when presented with a broad, balanced reading program should be offered a variety of alternative strategies to meet this goal. If these alternative strategies are not successful, students who exhibit signs of dyslexia may need more specific intervention strategies. DeSoto County Schools offers a Dyslexia Program to students who have been diagnosed as dyslexic by a licensed Psychometrist, Psychologist, or Speech Language Pathologist as recognized by MS House Bill 1031. Students will be served by a Licensed Dyslexia Therapist who is also a Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT). Instruction will be provided using Orton Gillingham methods and will include the components of phonemic awareness, graphophonemic knowledge, language structure, linguistic patterns and processes. Therapists will support staff members with appropriate instructional interventions for students who have characteristics of dyslexia.

Definition of Dyslexia

International Dyslexic Association (November 12, 2002)

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.

Identification of Students with Dyslexia

The student has been evaluated and diagnosed as dyslexic by a licensed Psychometrist, Psychologist, or Speech Language Pathologist. An evaluation report has been submitted to the school. Once the school has received a copy of the evaluation, the area Dyslexia Therapist is notified through the online contact form.

Scheduling

Students with an external report will be given scheduling priority. Therapy sessions are 45 minutes, four days per week. Students who have reached monitor status will be seen as needed. If scheduling permits, students without an external diagnosis may be referred by district psychometrists, school administrators, or intervention specialists.

Screeners

Mississippi House Bill 1031 states first grade students will be screened during the fall semester and kindergarten students will be screened during the spring semester. If a teacher or other school personnel determines a student has dyslexia characteristics, a screener can be provided for the school to administer. Before a screener is given, multiple data sources should be reviewed by the teacher and interventionist, to determine if there is a need to administer a dyslexia screener. Once the screener is completed, the area Dyslexia Therapist may review the results of the screener with the teacher or person conducting the screener to determine appropriate interventions to be received through Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions.

Parent Request for Dyslexia Testing

Because Mississippi does not recognize dyslexia as one of the eligibility categories for Special Education, DeSoto County Schools does not test for dyslexia. A parent may request a screener to be conducted. This can be administered by any school personnel. The Dyslexia Therapist will be available to review the screener results and attend parent conferences as needed.

Dyslexia Accommodations

Accommodations Chart for Online and Paper-Pencil Administrations Students with Dyslexia

#	Accommodation	MAAP	MKAS2	ACT	ELPT
20/23	Extended time until the end of the school day	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
24	Administer the test over several sessions, specifying the duration of each session	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

25	Administer the test over several days, specifying the duration of each day's sessions	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
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*Grades 3-8, EOC, Math, ELA, Science Grade 5 and 8, Biology I, and U.S. History

For the above listed assessments, students with disabilities (SWDs), English learners (ELs), and students with a diagnosis of dyslexia that were evaluated by a licensed psychologist, psychometrist, or speech language pathologist (HB 1031, July 2012) may be afforded these extended time accommodations. These accommodations must be listed in the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan and specified for these assessment areas **or** students must have a documented diagnosis of dyslexia on file in accordance with Miss. Code 37-173-1 et seq.

Professional Development

The dyslexia therapists are available to provide professional development. This can be conducted during planning sessions or professional development days. If you would like to schedule professional development, contact your area therapist.

Dyslexia Therapists

Alison Black

Hernando Elementary, Hernando Hills, Oak Grove Elementary, Hernando Middle, Hernando High, Lewisburg Primary, Lewisburg Elementary, Lewisburg Intermediate, Lewisburg Middle, Lewisburg High

Melissa Burnside

Hope Sullivan, Southaven Elementary, Greenbrook Elementary, Southaven Intermediate, Southaven Middle, Southaven High, Pleasant Hill Elementary, DeSoto Central Primary, DeSoto Central Elementary, DeSoto Central Middle, DeSoto Central High

Stacey Kitchens

Lake Cormorant Elementary, Lake Cormorant Middle, Lake Cormorant High, Walls Elementary, Shadow Oaks Elementary, Horn Lake Elementary, Horn Lake Intermediate, Horn Lake Middle, Horn Lake High

Amy Moore

Center Hill Elementary, Center Hill Middle, Center Hill High, Overpark Elementary, Olive Branch Elementary, Chickasaw Elementary, Olive Branch Intermediate, Olive Branch Middle, Olive Branch High

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