



Brookeland ISD District Dysgraphia Plan

**Brookeland ISD
187 Wildcat Walk
Brookeland, Texas 75931**

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Definition of Dysgraphia

Texas Education Code 38.003 requires school districts to consider and evaluate for dyslexia and dysgraphia. For the purposes of identification and assessment, BISD will use the following definition of dysgraphia: A review of recent evidence indicates that dysgraphia is best defined a “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).

-Berninger, 2015

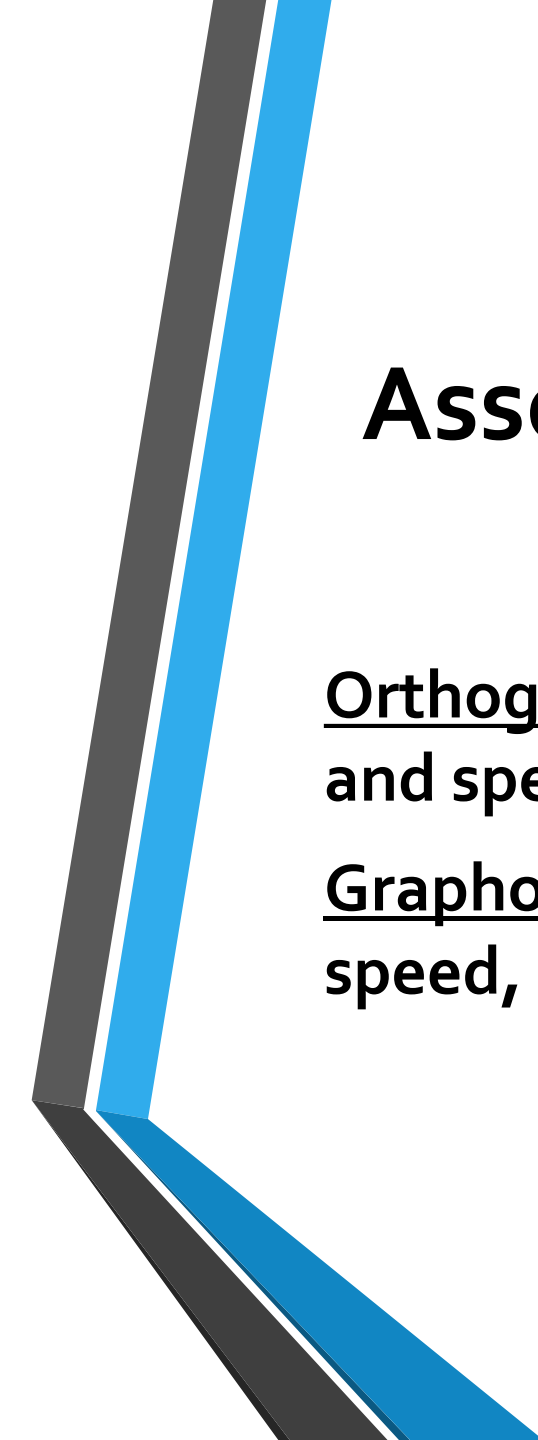
Secondary consequences may include problems with spelling and written expression. The difficulty is not solely due to lack of instruction and is not associated with other developmental or neurological conditions that involve motor impairment.”

-The Dyslexia Handbook 2021 Update

Primary Characteristics of Dysgraphia

The characteristics of dysgraphia include the following:

- Variably shaped and poorly formed letters
- Excessive erasures 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 (Andrews & Lombardino, 2014)



Associated Cognitive Processes to Consider:

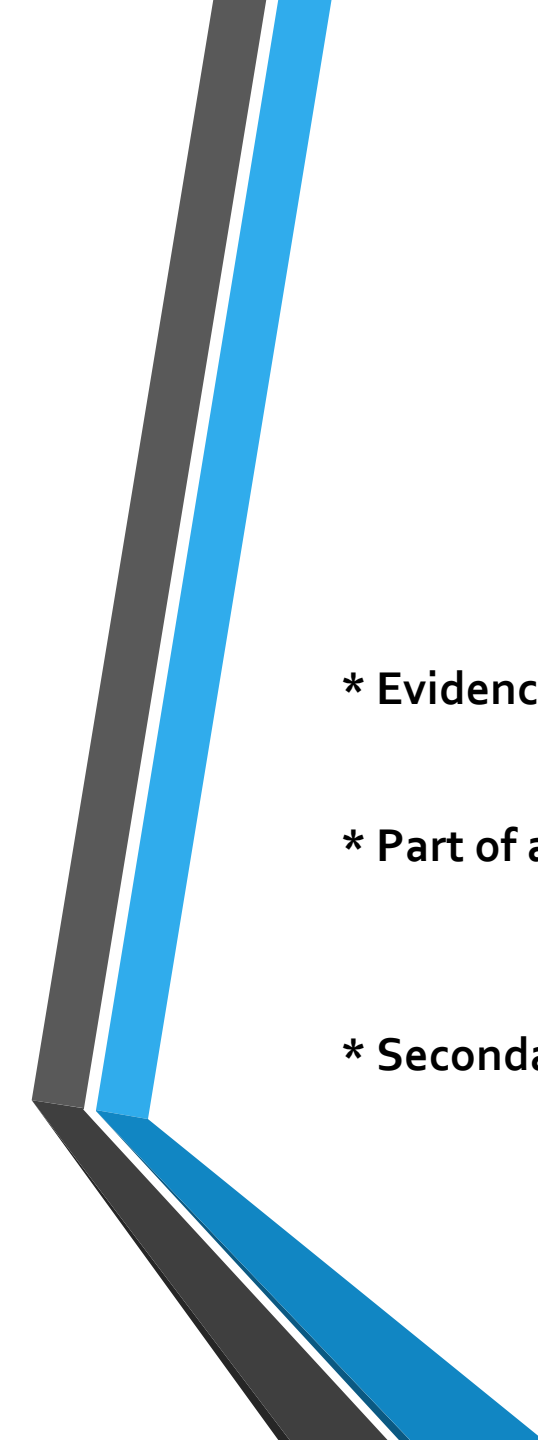
Orthographic processing – affecting automaticity
and spelling

Grapho-motor processing – affecting legibility,
speed, and volume

Additional Characteristics and Consequences

Dysgraphia CAN Include:

- * Difficulty with unedited written spelling**
- * Low volume of written output**
- * Impaired feedback the brain is receiving from the fingers**
- * Problems with motor planning and sequencing**
- * Difficulty with storage and retrieval of letter forms**



Additional Characteristics and Consequences

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

Assessment for Dysgraphia

***The initial referral of dysgraphia is made by a campus literacy team.**

***The identification and determination of dysgraphia is made by a 504 committee or, in the case of a special education referral, the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) Committee.**

***Teacher referrals should be submitted to the dyslexia teacher who presents collected data to the campus literacy committee to make an informed determination.**

***Each committee must include members who are knowledgeable about the student being assessed, assessments used, and meaning of the collected data.**



Assessment Instruments

TWS-5: Test of Written Spelling-Fifth Edition: Complete Kit
Organized Fast Write with Fidelity Vs Oral Expression
Student Work Samples

Research to Guide Educators

Despite the widespread beliefs that handwriting is purely a motor skill or that only multisensory methods are needed to teach handwriting, multiple language processes are also involved in handwriting. Handwriting draws on language by hand (letter production), language by ear (listening to letter names when writing dictated letters), language by mouth (saying letter names), and language by eye (viewing the letters to be copied or reviewing for accuracy the letters that are produced from memory) (Berninger & Wolf, 2016).

Procedures for Identification Summary

- * Campus Literacy Team initiates referral
- * Committee follows Child Find procedures for conducting a full individual and initial evaluation (FIIE) under IDEA
- * Data Gathering
- * Formal Evaluation
- * Review and Interpretation of Data
- * Delivery of Intervention

Procedures for Identification

After the initial referral, the process of identifying dysgraphia will follow Child Find procedures for conducting a full individual and initial evaluation (FIIE) under the IDEA. These procedural processes require coordination among the teacher, campus administrators, diagnosticians, and other professionals as appropriate when factors such as a student's English language acquisition, previously identified disability, or other special needs are present. The first step in the evaluation process, data gathering, should be an integral part of the district's or charter school's process for any student exhibiting learning difficulties.

Documentation of the following characteristics of dysgraphia could be collected during the data gathering phase:

Procedures for Identification

- Slow or labored written work
- Poor formation of letters
- Improper letter slant
- Poor pencil grip
- Inadequate pressure during handwriting (too hard or too soft)
- Excessive erasures
- Poor spacing between words

Procedures for Identification continued

- 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

Data Gathering

***Schools collect data on all students to ensure that instruction is appropriate and scientifically based.**

***Essential components of comprehensive literacy instruction, including writing, are defined as explicit instruction in writing, including opportunities for children to write with clear purposes, with critical reasoning appropriate to the topic and purpose, and with specific instruction and feedback from instructional staff.**

Data Gathering (continued)

***Any time from kindergarten through grade 12 a student continues to struggle with one or more components of writing, schools must collect additional information about the student.**

***Schools should use previously collected, as well as current information, to evaluate the student's academic progress and determine what actions are needed to ensure the student's improved academic performance.**

Examples of Cumulative Data

- *Vision and hearing screening**
- *Teacher reports of classroom concerns**
- *Parent reports of concerns about handwriting, spelling, or written expression**
- *Classroom handwriting assessments**
- *Classroom spelling assessments**
- *Samples of written work (e.g., journal, story responses, writing samples, etc.)**
- *Accommodations or interventions provided**
- *Academic progress reports (report cards)**

Examples of Cumulative Data Continued

- *Samples of written schoolwork (both timed and untimed)
- *State student assessment program results as described in TEC §39.022
- *Observations of instruction provided to the student
- *Full Individual and Initial Evaluation
- *Outside evaluations
- *Speech and language assessment
- *School attendance
- *Curriculum-based assessment measures instructional strategies provided and student's response to the instruction
- *Universal screening
- *Parent survey

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 evaluation data.**

***Formal evaluation includes both formal and informal data. All data will be used to determine whether the student demonstrates a pattern of evidence for dysgraphia.**

*** Information collected from the parents/guardians also provides valuable insight into the student's early years of written language development.**

Formal Evaluation (Continued)

***This history may help to explain why students come to the evaluation with many different strengths and weaknesses; therefore, findings from the formal evaluation will be different for each child.**

***Professionals conducting evaluations for the identification of dysgraphia will need to look beyond scores on standardized assessments alone and examine the student's classroom writing performance, educational history, and early language experiences to assist with determining handwriting, spelling, and written expression abilities and difficulties.**

Review and Interpretation of Data

To appropriately understand evaluation data, the ARD committee must interpret test results in light of the student's educational history, linguistic background, environmental or socioeconomic factors, and any other pertinent factors that affect learning. A determination must first be made regarding whether a student's difficulties in the areas of writing and spelling reflect a pattern of evidence for the primary characteristics of dysgraphia with unexpectedly low performance for the student's age and educational level in some or all of the following areas:

- Handwriting
- Writing fluency (accuracy and rate)
- Written Expression
- Spelling

Delivery of Intervention

The literacy team will determine and plan a program of intervention content as specified in the 2021 Dyslexia Handbook. The way content is delivered should be consistent with the principles of effective intervention for students with dysgraphia and include the following:

- * Simultaneous, multisensory (VAKT) visual, auditory, kinesthetic-tactile**
- * Systematic and cumulative (easier concepts which progress to more difficult ones)**
- * Explicit (leaves nothing to chance or discovery; one concept at a time)**
- * Diagnostic teaching to automaticity (content presented and mastered to the degree of automaticity)**

Instructional Accommodations

Accommodations are not a one size fits all; rather, the impact of dysgraphia on each individual student determines the accommodation. When considering accommodations for the student with dysgraphia, Broaddus ISD will consider the following:

- **The rate of producing written work**
- **The volume of the work to be produced**
- **The complexity of the writing task**
- **The tools used to produce the written product**
- **The format of the product (Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children, 2018, p. 5).**

Additional Resources

Dyslexia Handbook 2021 Update

<https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/texas-dyslexia-handbook-2021.pdf>

Texas Education Agency

Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, and Dyscalculia and the IEP

Free Training through TEA

<https://tea.texas.gov/>

Additional Information:

<https://www.neuhaus.org/our-services/families/parents-faq/>

District Contact Information

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