KANSAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Dyslexia FAQ

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General Requirements

Question A-1: Is dyslexia a new category under which children might be found eligible for special education services?

Answer: No. Dyslexia has always been included in the Federal and Kansas' definition of specific learning disability (SLD/LD). House Bill 2322 makes the indication of dyslexia required on a child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) when appropriate.

Question A-2: How is the term learning disability different from the term dyslexia?

Answer: Learning disability (LD) is a term used in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). It describes children who have a disability in reading, writing, or math. Using the term learning disability is important because it's the term used in IDEA. It needs to be used when identifying a child as eligible for special education services.

Dyslexia (a type of reading disorder) and other terms may be used to describe a particular area of need such as dyscalculia (a type of math disorder), and dysgraphia (a type of writing disorder).

Question A-3: What is the difference between a diagnosis and identification of dyslexia?

Answer: Diagnosis of dyslexia is a clinical decision made by a doctor, clinical psychologists, neuropsychologist, or other qualified clinical professional. Identification of a child with an exceptionality, including dyslexia, is a decision made through a special education comprehensive evaluation. This is done by a school team including the school psychologists and other specialized instructional support personnel, in collaboration with parents and educators.

Identification

Question B-1: Is a diagnosis or outside evaluation required for the identification of dyslexia under IDEA?

Answer: No. Parents may choose to have their child evaluated outside of the school setting for

a variety of reasons. A diagnosis or outside evaluation is not necessary for a school team to identify a child as a child with a learning disability, including dyslexia.

Question B-2: If a child has a diagnosis of dyslexia from an outside evaluation or a prescription from a medical doctor, is the child automatically eligible for an Individualized Education Program (IEP)/special education service?

Answer: No. To qualify as a child with an exceptionality under IDEA, the child must: (1) be determined to meet criteria as a child with an exceptionality; and (2) need specially designed instruction. A child can be found to have an exceptionality (dyslexia), but not need specially designed instruction through an IEP. These questions and the determination of eligibility for special education can only be made by a special education evaluation team, that includes the parent, by conducting a comprehensive evaluation that includes information from multiple data sources (record review, interviews, observations, general education interventions, and assessments).

Question B-3: If a child is identified as having dyslexia under IDEA, does that mean they automatically qualify for an Individualized Education Program/special education service?

Answer: No. To qualify as a child with an exceptionality under IDEA, the child must: (1) be determined to meet criteria as a child with an exceptionality; and (2) need specially designed instruction. A child can be found to have an exceptionality (dyslexia) but not need specially designed instruction through an IEP.

Question B-4: Can a school special education evaluation team identify a child as having dyslexia under IDEA?

Answer: Yes. School psychologists and other specialized instructional support personnel, in collaboration with parents and educators, use the comprehensive evaluation process to identify a child under IDEA, including dyslexia as a learning disability.

To qualify as a child with an exceptionality, including dyslexia, under IDEA, the child must: (1) be determined to meet criteria as a with an exceptionality; and (2) need specially designed instruction. The determination of eligibility for special education can only be made by a special education evaluation team, that includes the parent, by conducting a comprehensive evaluation that includes information from multiple data sources (record review, interviews, observations, general education interventions, and assessments).

Question B-5: When should a child, with word-level reading difficulties, be referred for a comprehensive evaluation at school?

Answer: As soon as the child is suspected of having a disability based on consistent data. The results of a single assessment, such as the dyslexia screening, might show a child as 'at-risk' but should not be the singular factor in determining when a child may be a child with a disability

and need a comprehensive evaluation.

Question B-6: Can a child have dyslexia and not be eligible for special education?

Answer: Yes. It is possible for a child to have a disability and not be eligible for special education services under IDEA due to not having a need for specially designed instruction.

To qualify as a child with an exceptionality under IDEA, the child must: (1) be determined to meet criteria as a child with an exceptionality; and (2) need specially designed instruction. The determination of eligibility for special education can only be made by a special education evaluation team, that includes the parent, by conducting a comprehensive evaluation that includes information from multiple data sources (record review, interviews, observations, general education interventions, and assessments).

Documentation

Question C-1: Can a child with an exceptionality other than learning disability have dyslexia indicated on their IEP?

Answer: No. A child must have a learning disability as a primary or secondary exceptionality to have dyslexia indicated on the IEP.

Question C-2: If a child is currently identified as a child with a learning disability as a primary or secondary exceptionality, is a reevaluation required to add dyslexia?

Answer: No. Adding dyslexia is not a change in identification and therefore does not require a reevaluation. The dyslexia indication is on the data reporting page and not part of the IEP. While the indication is a data reporting aspect, it does not prevent the IEP team from including and discussing the term dyslexia in the IEP.

Question C-3: If a child with a disability does not have an identification of learning disability, is a reevaluation required to add dyslexia?

Answer: Yes. Adding dyslexia would require changing the identification to include learning disability. A change in identification requires the reevaluation process.

Question C-4: If a child is currently identified as a child with a learning disability, is a Prior Written Notice required to add dyslexia to the data collection form?

Answer: No. Dyslexia is a specification of learning disability, therefore adding the additional information is not an action that requires Prior Written Notice.

Question C-5: Is consent required to add dyslexia to a child's IEP who has a learning disability?

Answer: No. Dyslexia is a specification of learning disability, therefore adding the additional

information of dyslexia is not an action that requires consent.

Instruction

Question D-1: Is there a specific curriculum or program that should be used with children who have dyslexia?

Answer: No. There is no single proven curriculum or program that is effective for all children. However, any intervention, curriculum, or program should provide direct, systematic, and sequential instruction, focused on the structure of language.

Question D-2: If a specific curriculum, program, or methodology is requested by the parent must the school provide the curriculum, program or methodology requested or include it in the IEP?

Answer: No. The IEP is not required to include specific instructional methodologies [programs] unless the IEP team determines that a certain instructional methodology is necessary for a child to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) (Federal Register, August 14, 2006, pp. 46665). The decision about what services, the amount of services, and the setting of services necessary to meet the unique needs of an exceptional child is based on a variety of factors and is determined by the IEP team.

Question D-3: If a specific curriculum, program, or methodology has been recommended or prescribed by an outside professional must the school provide the curriculum, program or methodology requested or include it in the IEP?

Answer: No. The IEP is not required to include specific instructional methodologies [programs] unless the IEP team determines that a certain instructional methodology is necessary for a child to receive free appropriate public education (FAPE) (Federal Register, August 14, 2006, pp. 46665). The decision about what services, the amount of services, and the setting of services necessary to meet the unique needs of an exceptional child is based on a variety of factors and is determined by the IEP team.

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