

Summary of Proposed Updates to Dyslexia Handbook: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders

1. In response to public testimony heard by the committee on instruction and notification from the USDE Office of Special Education Programs that the handbook creates confusion, guidance regarding evaluation is updated. The current process describes two pathways to identification for children suspected of having dyslexia: Section 504 dyslexia evaluation and the federally required Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Child Find process. The updated and streamlined process clarifies the Child Find mandate requiring LEAs to follow procedures for conducting a full individual initial evaluation (FIIE) under IDEA when referring and evaluating students suspected of having dyslexia. The process is fully outlined in changes to Figure 3.8.

2. While updated guidance explicitly requires an FIIE under IDEA, the updated handbook retains the following possible outcomes for a student identified as having dyslexia following an FIIE:

- A student might be eligible for and served under special education.
- A student might not be eligible for special education but might be eligible for accommodations, protections, and services under Section 504.

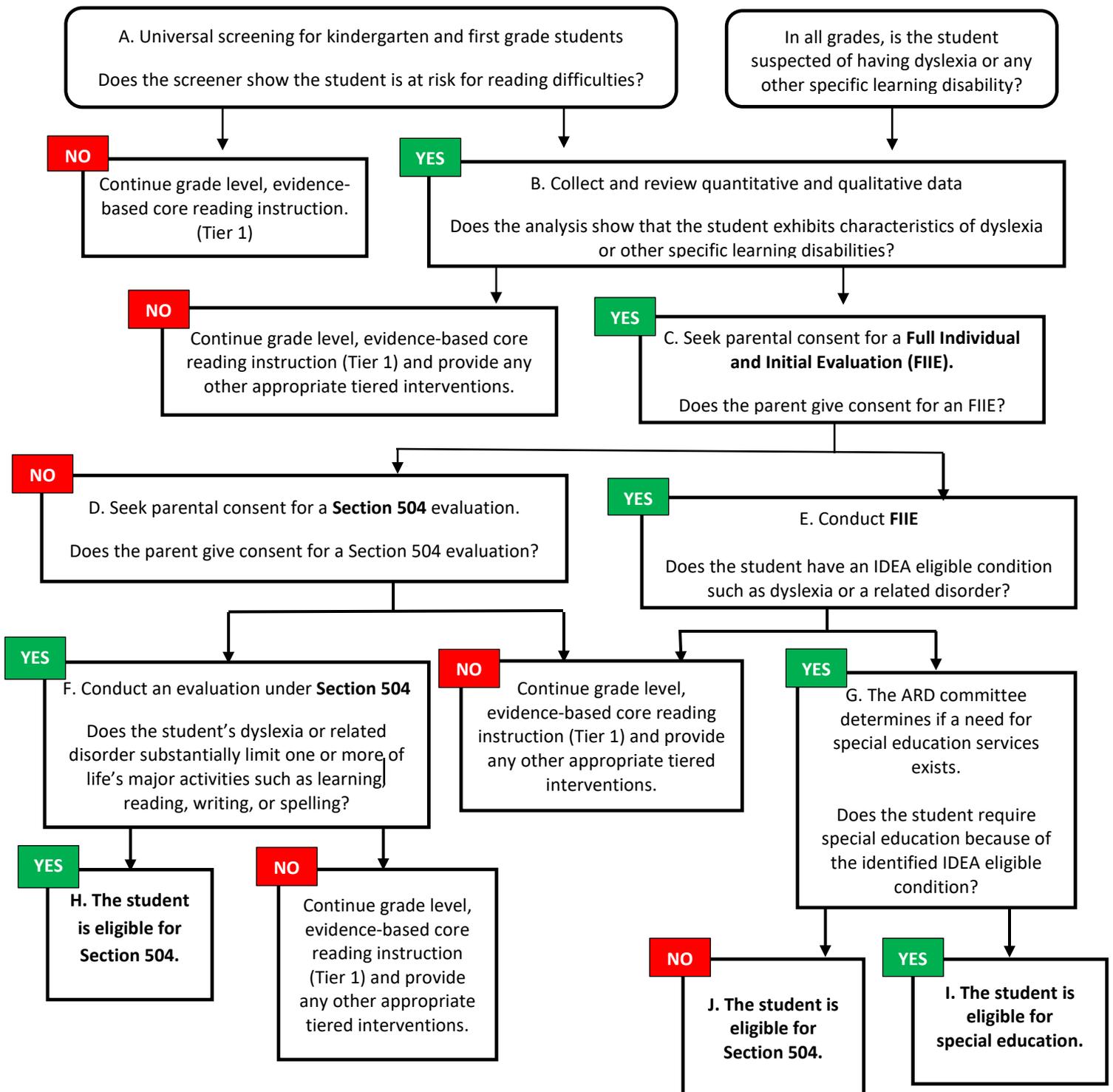
3. In response to questions and expressions of confusion from the field, the criteria for the kindergarten and grade 1 dyslexia screeners have been streamlined to ensure the dyslexia screener meets the International Dyslexia Association definition that a screener, by definition, is typically a brief assessment of a skill or ability that is highly predictive of a later outcome. Screeners are designed to quickly differentiate students into one of two groups: 1) those who are at risk of requiring dyslexia intervention and 2) those who have no or low risk. This update will clearly differentiate between the short, quick universal screener for all students and a more comprehensive evaluation for some students.

Note: The current reading instruments for kindergarten and grade 1 that have been approved by the commissioner and are made available to districts free of charge, include imbedded dyslexia screeners that align with the streamlined criteria.

4. Conforming changes are made to align references to the Commissioner's list of early reading instruments in the handbook with language regarding reading instruments in HB 3, 86th Texas Legislature, and to update links to websites.

5. Language is added to explicitly state that the handbook assumes that all students are receiving strong Tier 1 reading instruction aligned with the reading practices requirements in HB 3, including the requirement to use a systematic direct instruction phonics curriculum.

Pathway to the Identification and Provision of Instruction for Students with Dyslexia



*See next page for additional detail.

Pathway to the Identification and Provision of Instruction for Students with Dyslexia

- A.** Universal Screening for reading and dyslexia is administered to all students in kindergarten and first grade as required by TEC §28.006 and §38.003(a).
- B.** If a student is at risk for reading difficulties or the student is suspected of having dyslexia or any other specific learning disability, collect and review quantitative and qualitative data on the student. See Figures 2.3 and 2.4 in Dyslexia Handbook for more information.
- C.** If the analysis shows that the student exhibits characteristics of dyslexia or other specific learning disabilities, seek parental consent for a Full Individual and Initial Evaluation (FIIE), while continuing to provide grade level, evidence-based core reading instruction (Tier 1) and providing appropriate tiered interventions.
- D.** For students suspected of having dyslexia, if the parent does not give consent for an FIIE, seek parental consent for a Section 504 evaluation, while continuing to provide grade level, evidence-based core reading instruction (Tier 1) and providing appropriate tiered interventions.
- E.** If the parent gives consent for an FIIE, conduct the FIIE within 45 school days (subject to limited exceptions) of the date of receipt of parent consent, while continuing to provide grade level, evidence-based core reading instruction (Tier 1) and providing appropriate tiered interventions. The ARD committee (including the parent) must meet to review the results of the FIIE.
- F.** If the parent gives consent for a Section 504 evaluation, conduct an evaluation under Section 504 while continuing to provide grade level, evidence-based core reading instruction (Tier 1) and providing appropriate tiered interventions.
- G.** If a student has an IDEA eligible condition such as dyslexia or a related disorder, the ARD committee determines if a need for special education services exists.
- H.** If the student's dyslexia or related disorder substantially limits one or more of life's major activities such as learning, reading, writing, or spelling, the student is eligible for Section 504, the 504 committee (parent participation is recommended) develops a Section 504 plan for the student to provide services including standard protocol dyslexia instruction, accommodations, and/or related aids specific to the student's disability.
- I.** If the student requires special education because of the identified IDEA eligible condition, the student is eligible for special education. The ARD committee develops the IEP for the student to receive specially designed instruction which can include **any appropriate special education and related services, and general education programs and services**, including standard protocol dyslexia instruction. While an IEP is individualized to the student, in most cases the IEP should address critical, evidence-based components of dyslexia instruction such as phonological awareness, sound-symbol association, syllabication, orthography, morphology, syntax, reading comprehension, and reading fluency. The determination of eligibility and the development of an IEP, if the student is eligible, must be done within 30 days (subject to limited exceptions) from the date that the written FIIE evaluation report is completed. Obtain parental consent for special education services.
- J.** If the parent declines special education services, the LEA must still provide all general education services including any protections available under Section 504.