

Advocating for your child with dyslexia

NAVIGATING THE
SPECIAL EDUCATION
SYSTEM



Identifying the problem |

Preliminary Considerations

Most schools do brief screenings. Doing well on these does not necessarily mean that your child is doing fine.

What are your concerns regarding your child's learning- Put these in writing.

Have a meeting with your child's teacher.

Ask where your child is performing in relationship to other children in the same grade.

Evaluations

Request an evaluation in writing if your child is having consistent difficulties with reading, you may request an evaluation for special education and related services.

Within 14 school days after receiving a written request for an evaluation, the district will decide whether or not to conduct an evaluation.

If the district decides to proceed with the evaluation they must provide you with the paperwork (domains) to provide written formal consent for the evaluation.

If the district denies your request they must notify you in writing of the decision not to evaluate and the reasons.

Evaluations (cont)

Evaluation must be in all areas of suspected disability

At the domain meeting, ask why these specific tests or areas are relevant for your child.

Schools have 60 school days to evaluate your child.

Private Evaluations

A good investment

Pick someone who has experience.

Ask them what their experience is with evaluating students with dyslexia.

Do they attend IEP meetings?

It is best to identify an evaluator (typically a psychologist) who has worked with parents and school districts.

School districts don't have to agree with the results of a private evaluation. They must "duly consider" the results

Eligibility for Special education

Specific learning disability is defined by federal law as a disorder in one or more basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia.

It does not include

Learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities or intellectual disability or emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage.

Illinois Criterion for SLD in Illinois

A. Demonstrate performance that is significantly below the performance of peers or expected standards, (Discrepancy), and

B. Exhibit significant deficiencies in his or her rate of learning based on progress monitoring data (Educational Progress), and

C. Demonstrate that his or her needs in the area of curriculum, instruction, and or environmental conditions are significantly different that that of his or her general education peers, (Instructional Need), and in order to make educational progress, the student requires interventions of an intensity or type that exceed general education resources.

Additional considerations

The IEP must determine that (1) the disability adversely affects the student's educational performance and (2) that the student requires special education as a result of of such disability.

Special Education

Special Education means specially designed instruction, at no cost to parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability. Specially designed instruction means adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to address the unique needs of the child that result from the child's disability and to ensure access of the child to the general education curriculum.

Identifying Dyslexia

See characteristics from Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity.

[Http://dyslexia.yale.edu/dyslexia/signs](http://dyslexia.yale.edu/dyslexia/signs) of dyslexia..