

Scurry-Rosser ISD Special Programs

What is Special Programs? Special Programs within Scurry-Rosser ISD includes Special Education, Section 504, Dyslexia, and ESL (English as a Second Language).

What is Special Education? Special Education is a term that describes the flexible individual services/programs designed by ARD (Admission, Review and Dismissal) committees to meet the needs of children with disabilities on the campus. Within Scurry-Rosser ISD, we provide a continuum of services that includes mainstream which is the least restrictive to homebound which is considered the most restrictive. We also provide a variety of instructional and related services such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, adapted physical education, vision services, orientation and mobility services, auditory impairment services, and special education transportation. The goal of special education is for our students to be successful with the least amount of support necessary so that they can graduate and become productive, contributing members of society.

The Special Education program is monitored through the Performance Based Monitoring (PBM) system and State Performance Plan (SPP) Indicators. Information was released on October 17th indicating that special education was 100% compliant on all State Performance Plan Indicators and identified as Stage 1 on the PBM system. Being Stage 1 for PBM for special education does not require any submissions to TEA, but the TAIS (Texas Accountability Intervention System) process must be followed. The main area of focus this school year is to increase the number of students being served within the mainstream setting while reducing the number of students in resource classes. Another huge change this school year is that STAAR-Modified is no longer available. TEA has added STAAR-Accommodated which is an online test. STAAR-Alt is being revamped and is now called STAAR-Alt 2. Training is ongoing with teachers and staff to educate them on these changes so that we can prepare our students accordingly.

Scurry-Rosser participates in the School Health and Related Services (SHARS) program. If a child is covered under the Medicaid program, the district can obtain funding from Medicaid to offset local expenditures. The SHARS program reimburses our district for a portion of the cost of providing selected services as determined by the ARD committee. We started participating in this program during the 2012-13 school year and obtained \$21,366.11 in reimbursements. During 2013-14 the district obtained \$20,192.83 in reimbursements. The district participated in the Cost Report process in the Spring of 2014 and are projected to receive approximately an additional \$100,000 in Fall of 2015 for services provided during the 2012-13 school year.

Scurry-Rosser is making huge strides within our special education department and this is due to our devoted and dedicated staff.

What is Section 504? Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was designed to eliminate discrimination against any student with a disability in any program offered by the school district. Section 504 states that: *No otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any other program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.* Within Scurry-Rosser ISD, each campus has a Campus 504 Coordinator (school counselor) that is responsible for ensuring the 504 process is followed and proper documentation of services are completed.

Our Section 504 population has grown tremendously over the past 5 years. Due to the documentation requirements, we have implemented a web based program that is also used by special education to track 504 meetings, evaluations and service plans. The counselors have done a great job at taking this new system and running with it.

What is Dyslexia? 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

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consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge. Within Scurry-Rosser ISD we have a Dyslexia Coordinator who evaluates and provides services to our students with dyslexia.

Scurry-Rosser is one of the few districts in the area that has a Certified Academic Language Therapist. Ellen Fraser, Dyslexia Coordinator, completed a 2 year program through Scottish Rite to gain this certification and passed her certification test over the summer. As the Dyslexia Coordinator, Mrs. Fraser not only provides interventions to our current dyslexia students but closely monitors students who were previously identified and served. Her knowledge of the students within the district is a tremendous asset.

What is ESL (English as a Second Language)? An ESL student is one that has a home language other than English and who is identified as an English language learner (ELL) and shall be provided a full opportunity to participate in a bilingual education or English as a second language (ESL) program. The goal of ESL programs shall be to enable English language learners to become competent in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in the English language through the integrated use of second language methods. The ESL program shall emphasize the mastery of English language skills, as well as mathematics, science, and social studies, as integral parts of the academic goals for all students to enable English language learners to participate equitably in school.

The number of students identified as limited English Proficient (LEP) and therefore requiring ESL services has doubled in the past 2 years. For this reason the district is having to work at getting more teachers ESL certified so that we can provide an effective ESL program for our English Language Learners.

How many students are served through a special program? Below is the history of the number of students who were identified as either Special Ed, 504, or ESL on PEIMS snapshot (i.e., 10/31/**) each school year. These numbers fluctuate throughout the school year as students enter and withdraw from the district.

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Special Ed	114	100	102	100	99
504	12	27	79	85	98
ESL/LEP	7	5	9	20	22

Where can I find more information about Scurry-Rosser ISD Special Programs? On the Scurry-Rosser ISD website there is a Special Programs tab that includes general information with links to other resources such as how to access Special Education Operating Guidelines, Section 504 Manual, Dyslexia Handbook, Legal Framework, and TEA website. It also includes more detailed information about Special Education Programs and Disabilities, Section 504, Dyslexia, and Child Find. Information related to ESL will be added soon along with a Resources tab that will provide information to teachers and parents related to accommodations for student with disabilities.

What other great things are happening within Special Programs? This year the department is providing monthly campus trainings as a part of the regular staff meetings. Each month the campuses are provided pertinent information related to special programs. Specific topics have been selected to help improve teacher's knowledge base, communication, and allows an increase in direct contact with the special programs administrative and support staff. Topics include: Special Ed Update & Failure Documentation; RTI Process, Dyslexia and STAAR Changes; Sheltered Instruction/ELPS Training; 504 vs. Special Ed and Accommodations vs. Modifications; STAAR Decision Making and Accommodations for Students with Disabilities; Accelerated Instruction Plans and Student Success Initiative; End of Year Close Out Procedures for Special Ed Staff.

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