

BRACKETT ISD

Dyslexia/Dysgraphia

Program

Procedures/Handbook

2021-2022

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I. Definition of Dyslexia

The student who struggles with reading and spelling often puzzles teachers and parents. The student displays ability to learn in the absence of print and receives the same classroom instruction that benefits most children; however, the student continues to struggle with some or all of the many facets of reading and spelling. This student may be a student with dyslexia.

As defined in Texas Education Code §38.003

- (1) *“Dyslexia”* means a disorder of constitutional origin manifested by a difficulty in learning to read, write, or spell, despite conventional instruction, adequate intelligence and sociocultural opportunity.
- (2) *“Related disorders”* includes disorders similar to or related to dyslexia such as developmental auditory imperceptions, dysphasia, specific developmental dyslexia, developmental dysgraphia, and developmental spelling disability.

The definition of Dyslexia by the International Dyslexia Association states:

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 consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge. (Adopted by the International Dyslexia Board of Directors, November 12, 2002).

The primary difficulties of a student identified as having dyslexia occur in phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness and manipulation, single-word reading, reading fluency, and spelling. Secondary consequences of dyslexia may include difficulties in reading comprehension and/or written expression. These difficulties in phonological awareness are unexpected for the student's age and educational level, and are not primarily the result of language difference factors. Additionally, there is often a family history of similar difficulties.

II. Procedures Required by State Law Prior to Formal Assessment

In accordance with TEC §28.006, Brackett ISD administers early reading instruments in kindergarten, first, and second grades to determine students' reading development and comprehension. Additionally, a reading instrument from the Commissioner's approved list will be administered at the beginning of grade 7 to any student who did not demonstrate proficiency on the reading assessment administered under TEC §39.023(a). If, on the basis of the reading instrument results, students are determined to be at risk for dyslexia or other reading difficulties, the students' parents/guardians are notified. In addition, an accelerated (intensive) reading program that appropriately addresses students' reading difficulties and enables them to "catch up" with their typically performing peers is implemented. Should students continue to struggle with reading, writing, and spelling during the intensive reading instruction, then Brackett ISD will initiate procedures to recommend these students for assessment for dyslexia. The information from the early reading instruments will be one source of information in deciding whether or not to recommend a student for assessment for dyslexia. Other sources may include, but are not limited to: performance on state mandated test(s), a student's grades/performance in reading and written spelling, and teachers' observations of the characteristics of dyslexia.

III. Referral Process

At any time that a student demonstrates poor performance in one or more areas of reading and spelling that is unexpected for the student's age/grade, or demonstrates characteristics and risk factors of dyslexia indicated in Definitions of Dyslexia and Primary Reading/Spelling Characteristics of Dyslexia, Brackett ISD will collect additional information about the student. Progression through tiered intervention is not required in order to begin the identification of dyslexia.

Parents/guardians always have the right to request a referral for a dyslexia assessment at any time. Once a parent request for dyslexia assessment has been made, Brackett ISD will review the student's data history (both formal and informal data) to determine whether there is a reason to believe the student has a disability. If a disability is suspected, the student will be evaluated following the guidelines outlined in this Handbook and the State Dyslexia Handbook. If Brackett ISD does not suspect a disability and determines that an evaluation would not be warranted, the parents/guardians will be notified of the reasons an evaluation is denied including documentation that the denial is based on data and given a copy of their due process rights.

Data Gathering:

Information will be used to evaluate the student's academic progress and determine what actions are needed to ensure the student's improved academic performance. This information should include data that demonstrates the student was provided appropriate instruction and data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals (progress monitoring), reflecting formal assessment of student progress during instruction.

This cumulative data also includes information from parents/guardians. Sources and examples of cumulative data are:

- Vision screening
- Hearing screening
- Teacher reports of classroom concerns
- Classroom reading assessments
- Accommodations or interventions provided
- Academic progress reports and/or report cards
- Gifted and Talented assessments
- Samples of school work
- Parent conference notes
- Speech and language assessment
- The K-2 reading instrument as required in TEC §28.006 (English and native language, if possible)
- State student assessment program results as described in TEC §39.002
- 7th-grade reading instruments results as required in TEC §28.006
- Observations of instruction provided to the students

- Full Individual Evaluation (FIE)
- Outside evaluations
- School attendance
- Curriculum-based assessment measures
- Instructional strategies provided and student's response to the instruction • Universal screening

Data that support that the difficulties are not due to cultural factors or environmental or economic disadvantage. Having data related to these factors may help in determining whether the student's struggles with reading are due to a lack of opportunity or a reading disability, including dyslexia.

Among the actions that Brackett ISD has available for the student is a recommendation that the student be assessed for dyslexia. Brackett ISD recommends assessment for dyslexia if the student demonstrates the following:

- Poor performance in one or more areas of reading and the related area of spelling that is unexpected for the student's age/grade, and;
- Characteristics of dyslexia.

Primary Reading/Spelling Characteristics of Dyslexia:

- Difficulty reading words in isolation
- Difficulty accurately decoding unfamiliar words
- Difficulty with oral reading (slow, inaccurate, or labored)
- Difficulty spelling

It is important to note that individuals demonstrate differences in degree of impairment.

The reading/spelling characteristics are most often associated with the following:

- Segmenting, blending, and manipulating sounds in words (phonemic awareness)
- Learning the names of letters and their associated sounds
- Holding information about sounds and words in memory (phonological memory)
- Rapidly recalling the names of familiar objects, colors, or letters of the alphabet (rapid naming)

Consequences of dyslexia may include the following:

- Variable difficulty with aspects of reading comprehension
- Variable difficulty with aspects of written composition
- Limited vocabulary growth due to reduced reading experiences

When a referral for dyslexia assessment is made, Brackett ISD will ensure that evaluation procedures are followed in a reasonable amount of time.

IV. Assessment for Dyslexia

Students enrolling in Brackett ISD shall be assessed for dyslexia and related disorders at appropriate times (TEC §38.003(a) (See Appendix)). The appropriate time depends upon multiple factors including the student's reading performance, reading difficulties, poor response to supplemental, scientifically based reading instruction, teachers' input, and parents' or guardians' input. Additionally, the appropriate time for assessing is early in a student's school career (19 TAC §74.28), the earlier the better. While earlier is better, students will be recommended for assessment for dyslexia even if the reading difficulties appear later in a student's school career.

Formal assessment includes both formal and informal data. All data will be used to determine whether the student demonstrates a pattern of evidence for dyslexia. Findings from the formal assessment will be different for each child. Professionals conducting assessment for the identification of dyslexia will look beyond scores on standardized assessments alone and examine the student's classroom reading performance, educational history, and early language experiences to assist with determining reading and spelling abilities and difficulties.

Brackett ISD will complete the evaluation process as outlined by the state. Identification of dyslexia will require a referral for special education and possible identification as a child with a disability with the meaning of IDEA 2004 (20U.S.C. §1400 et seq.). District is required to seek parental consent for a Full Individual and Initial Evaluation. It is the recommendation of the state to conduct an FIE; however if the parent does not give consent then a Section 504 consent may be considered.

Through the process, the school completes the evaluation as outlined using the following procedures:

1. Notify parents or guardians of proposal to assess student for dyslexia
2. Inform parents or guardians of their rights
3. Obtain parent or guardian permission to assess the student for dyslexia
4. Assess student, being sure that individuals/professionals who administer assessments have training in the evaluation of students for dyslexia and related disorders (19 TAC §74.28).

Tests, assessments, and other evaluation materials will meet the following criteria in compliance with §504 and IDEA 2004:

- Be validated for the specific purpose for which they are used
- Include material tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely materials that are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient

- Be selected and administered so as to ensure that, when a test is given to a student with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the student's aptitude or achievement level, or whatever other factor the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the student's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills
- Be selected and administered in a manner that is not racially or culturally discriminatory

Include multiple measures of a student's reading abilities such as informal assessment information (e.g., anecdotal records, district universal screenings, progress monitoring data, criterion-referenced assessments, results of informal reading inventories, classroom observations)

- Be administered by trained personnel and in conformance with the instructions provided by the producer of the evaluation materials
- Be used for the purpose for which the assessment or measures are valid or reliable
- Be provided and administered in the student's native language or other mode of communication and in the form, most likely to yield accurate information regarding what the child can do academically, developmentally, and functionally, unless it is clearly not feasible to provide or administer

Domains to Assess

The school administers measures that are related to the student's educational needs. Difficulties in the areas of letter knowledge, word decoding, and fluency (rate and accuracy) may be evident depending upon the student's age and stage of reading development. In addition, many students with dyslexia may have difficulty with reading comprehension and written composition.

Academic Skills

- Letter knowledge (name and associated sound)
- Reading words in isolation
- Decoding unfamiliar words accurately
- Reading fluency (both rate and accuracy are assessed)
- Reading comprehension
- Spelling

Cognitive Processes

- Phonological/phonemic awareness
- Rapid naming of symbols or objects

Possible Additional Areas

- Vocabulary
- Listening comprehension
- Verbal expression
- Written expression
- Handwriting
- Memory for letter or symbol sequences (orthographic processing)
- Mathematical calculation/reasoning
- Phonological memory
- Verbal working memory
- Processing speed

English Language Learners (This refers to students served in Bilingual and ESL programs as well as students designated Limited English Proficient (LEP) whose parents have denied services.)

Much diversity exists among English Language Learners (ELLs). A student's language proficiency may be impacted by any of the following: native language, English exposure, parent education, socioeconomic status of the family, amount of time in the United States, experience of formal schooling, immigration status, community demographics, and ethnic heritage (Bailey, Heritage, Butler, & Walqui, 2000). The identification and service delivery process for dyslexia must be in step with the student's linguistic environment and educational background. In Brackett ISD, the LPAC (Language Proficiency Assessment Committee) will be involved in the decision-making process.

Additional data to be gathered when assessing English Language Learners:

- Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) documentation which includes the following:
 - Home language survey
 - Assessment related to identification for limited English proficiency (oral language proficiency tests and norm-referenced tests - all years available)
 - Texas English Language Proficiency System (TELPAS) information for four language domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing)
 - Type of language program model provided and language of instruction
 - Instructional interventions provided to address language needs
 - Previous schooling inside and/or outside of the United States.

A professional involved in the assessment, interpretation of assessment results, and identification of ELLs with dyslexia needs to have the following training/knowledge:

- Knowledge of first and second language acquisition theory

- Knowledge of the written system of the first language – transparent (Spanish, Italian, German), syllabic (Japanese-kana), Semitic (Arabic, Hebrew) and morpho syllabic (Chinese-Kanji)
- Knowledge of student’s literacy skills in native and second language
- Knowledge of how to interpret results from a cross-linguistic perspective
- Knowledge of how to interpret the TELPAS (Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System)
- Knowledge of how to interpret the results of the student’s oral language proficiency in two or more languages in relation to the results of the tests measuring academic achievement and cognitive processes as well as academic data gathered and economic and socioeconomic factors.

If there is not a test in the native language of the student, information measures of evaluation such as reading a list of words or listening comprehension in the native language may be used.

V. Identification of Students with Dyslexia

The identification of dyslexia is made by a §504 committee or, in the case of a special education referral, the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee. In order to make an informed determination, either committee must include members who are knowledgeable about:

- The student being assessed
- The reading process
- Dyslexia and related disorders
- Dyslexia instruction
- District or charter school, state, and federal guidelines for assessment
- The assessments used
- The meaning of the collected data

To appropriately understand evaluation data, the committee of knowledgeable persons (§504 or ARD) 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.

The committee (§504 or ARD) must first determine if a student’s difficulties in the area of reading and spelling reflect a pattern of evidence for the primary characteristics of dyslexia with unexpectedly low performance for the student’s age and educational level in some or all of the following areas:

- Reading words in isolation

- Decoding unfamiliar words accurately and automatically
- Reading fluency for connected text (both rate and/or accuracy)
- Spelling (an isolated difficulty in spelling would not be sufficient to identify dyslexia)

Should the committee (§504 or ARD) determine that the student exhibits weaknesses in reading and spelling, the committee will then examine the student's data to determine whether these difficulties are unexpected in relation to the student's other abilities, sociocultural factors, language difference, irregular attendance, or lack of appropriate and effective instruction. It is not one single indicator but a preponderance of data (both informal and formal) that provide the committee with evidence for whether these difficulties are unexpected.

If the student's difficulties are unexpected in relation to the student's other abilities, the committee must then determine if the student has dyslexia. If the student has dyslexia, the committee also determines whether the student has a disability under §504. A student is disabled under §504 if the physical or mental impairment (dyslexia) substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as the specific activity of reading (34 C.F.R. §04.3(j)(1)). Additionally, the committee must not consider the ameliorating effects of any mitigating measures that student is using. If the committee does not identify dyslexia, but the student has another condition or disability that substantially limits the student, eligibility for §504 services related to the student's other condition or disability should be considered. The committee will also consider whether the student is eligible for accommodations. This is a separate determination from the determination that the student has dyslexia.

Questions to Be Considered When Making a Determination

- Does the data show a pattern of low reading and spelling skills that is unexpected for the student in relation to the student's other cognitive abilities and provision of effective classroom instruction?
- Does this pattern indicate the student has dyslexia?
- Does the student have a disability under §504?

Based on the data, if the committee determines that weaknesses are indicated in reading and spelling, the committee, based on the student's pattern of performance over time, test profile and response to instruction, will determine the intervention plan. Refinement of that plan will occur as the student's response to instruction is observed.

Review of Data by the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee

At any time during the assessment for dyslexia, identification process, or instruction related to dyslexia, students may be referred for evaluation for special education services. At times, student will display additional factors complicating their dyslexia and will require more support than what is available through the general education dyslexia program. At other times,

students with severe dyslexia or related disorders will be unable to make a sufficient rate of academic progress within any of the programs described in the procedures related to dyslexia. In such cases, a referral to special education for evaluation and possible identification as a child with a disability within the meaning of IDEA 2004 (20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq.) should be made.

If the student with dyslexia is found eligible for special education services in the area of reading, and the ARD committee determines that the student's instructional needs for reading are most appropriately met in a special education placement, the student's individualized education program (IEP) must include appropriate reading instruction. If a student has previously met special education eligibility, the ARD committee should include goals that reflect the need for dyslexia instruction in the IEP and determine the least restrictive environment for delivering the student's dyslexia intervention.

Assessment of Students Identified Outside the District

Students identified as having dyslexia or related disorders from an outside source will be reviewed for placement in the district's program. After Brackett ISD's evaluation of the information obtained from the previous testing of the student, Brackett ISD may choose to accept the outside assessment, or may re-assess the student. In either situation, the §504 committee (this is recommended since the evaluation is conducted through a §504 process) will determine the identification status of a student enrolled in Brackett ISD, and the placement of the student in the dyslexia program(s).

VI. Instruction for Students with Dyslexia

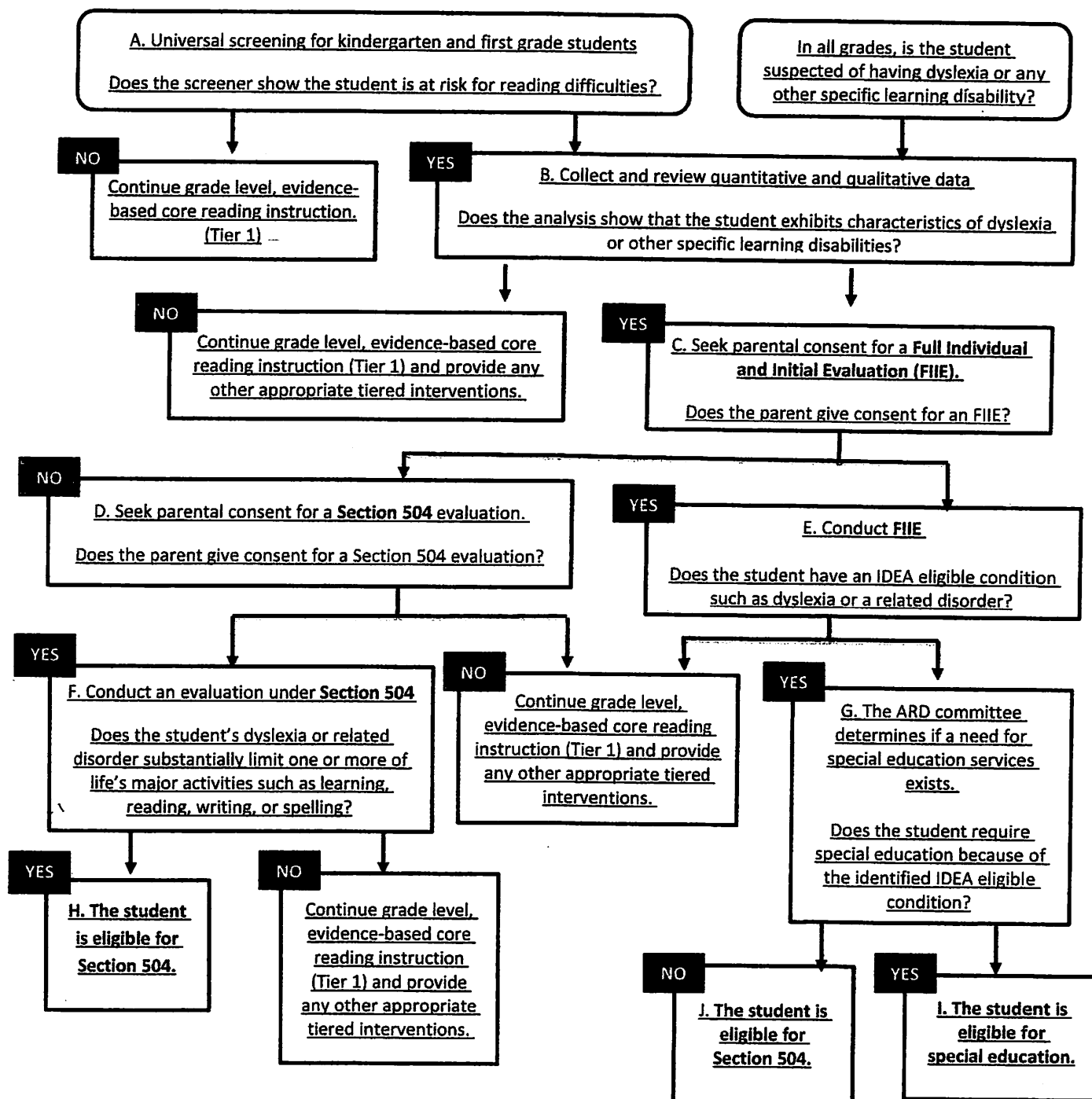
Once it has been determined that a student has dyslexia, the school district shall provide an appropriate instructional program for the student as required in TEC §38.003(b):

In accordance with the program approved by the State Board of Education, the board of trustees of each school district shall provide for the treatment of any student determined to have dyslexia or a related disorder.

Each school must provide an identified student access at his/her campus to an instructional program that meets the requirements in 19 TAC §74.28(c) and to the services of a teacher trained in dyslexia and related disorders. While the components of instruction for students with dyslexia include good teaching principles for all teachers, the explicitness and intensity of the instruction, fidelity to program descriptors, grouping formats, and training and skill of the teachers are wholly different from core classroom instruction.

Figure 3.8

Pathways for 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 (FIIIE), 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 FIIIE, 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 FIIIE, conduct the FIIIE 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 FIIIE.

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 FIIIE evaluation report is completed. Obtain parental consent for special education services.

J. If the parent declines, the LEA must still provide all general education services including any protections available under Section 504.