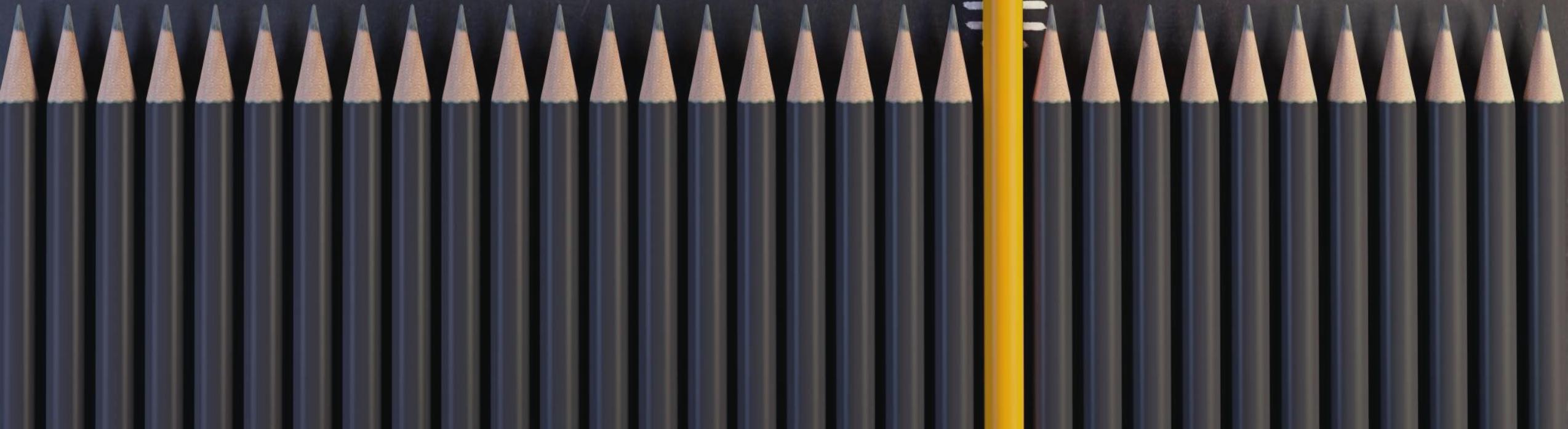


**DYSLEXIA
AND
SPECIAL
EDUCATION**



WHAT IS DYSLEXIA?

According to the International Dyslexia Association, “Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological 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.”

WHAT DYSLEXIA IS NOT

- It is not a visual problem
- Laziness
- Caused by a lack of motivation
- Outgrown
- Caused by poor parenting (parents not reading to their kids)

CHARACTERISTICS OF DYSLEXIA

- Dyslexia impacts people differently.
- Characteristics can be seen as early as 5 years old:
 - Difficulty in rhyming
 - Difficulty in learning letter names
 - Mispronounces familiar words
- 40% of those with dyslexia report that they were aware they couldn't do what their classmates could starting at age 5.
- 15-20% of students demonstrate characteristics

CHARACTERISTICS OF DYSLEXIA

- The core difficulty is with:
 - Word recognition
 - Reading fluency
 - Spelling
 - Writing
- Some may have problems with:
 - Spoken language
 - Sequencing
 - Spatial reasoning
 - Remembering facts, sequences
 - Correctly performing math operations
- Social Emotional Implications: task avoidance, increased anxiety

DYSLEXIA IN THE SCHOOLS

- While dyslexia is not a separate and distinct disability classification under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Idaho's Special Education Manual, its characteristics are addressed under several classifications.
 - **Specific Learning Disability:** Specific Learning Disability (SLD) means a disorder in one or more of the 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 to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, **dyslexia**, and developmental aphasia. (Idaho Special Education Manual, 2024)
 - **Language Impairment:** A language impairment exists when there is a disorder or delay in the development of comprehension and/or the uses of spoken or written language and/or other symbol systems. The impairment may involve any one or a combination of the following:
 - the form of language (morphological and syntactic systems);
 - the content of language (semantic systems); and/or
 - the function of language in communication (pragmatic systems). (Idaho Special Education Manual, 2024)

HOW DYSLEXIA IS IDENTIFIED

- A comprehensive evaluation that utilizes a variety of screening tools and standardized assessments is required in order to qualify for support through special education.
- Areas to be assessed (International Dyslexia Association):
 - Receptive and Expressive language skills
 - Phonological Awareness (including phonemic awareness)
 - Phonological or language-based memory
 - Rapid Automatic Naming Ability
 - Oral Reading Fluency
 - Spelling
 - Written Expression (sentence and paragraph)
 - Decoding (real word and nonsense word)
 - Basic Math Facts and Math Reasoning
 - Working Memory
 - Processing Speed
- Developmental/Medical History (looks at developmental history and family history)

COMMON ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Age Range	What It Measures
Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement (WJ ACH)	2-90	Reading, decoding, spelling, written language, reading comprehension
Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT-III/IV)	4-50	Word reading, pseudoword decoding, reading comprehension, written expression
Gray Oral Reading Tests (GORT-5)	6-23	Oral reading fluency, accuracy, comprehension
Test of Word Reading Efficiency (TOWRE-2)	6-24	Sight word recognition, decoding efficiency
Feifer Assessment of Reading (FAR)	5-21	Phonological awareness, decoding, fluency (oral & silent), vocabulary, orthographic & morphological processing, rapid naming, word memory, reading comprehension
Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP-2)	4-24	Phonological awareness, phonological memory, rapid naming

COMMON ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Age Range	What It Measures
Phonological Awareness Test 2 (PAT-2)	5-12	Sound segmentation, blending, manipulation
Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC-V)	6-16	Verbal comprehension, working memory, processing speed, cognitive abilities
Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children (KABC-II)	3-18	Cognitive processing, problem-solving, learning potential
Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT-5)	2-90	Receptive vocabulary, language comprehension
Rapid Automatized Naming (RAN/RAS)	5-17	Speed of naming letters, numbers, colors, objects
Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS)	K-3 (grade)	Phonological awareness, letter-sound knowledge, early literacy skills

SUPPORTS FOR DYSLEXIA

- In Idaho, in order to qualify with a Specific Learning Disability, a student must demonstrate the following:
 - a pattern of strength and weaknesses in his/her cognitive processing abilities,
 - a deficit in a related academic area,
 - the inability to make sufficient progress given interventions, AND
 - the need for specially designed instruction
- In some cases, a student will have been tested in the community and have a "diagnosis" of dyslexia and the student still may not qualify because he/she has not met one of the above criteria.

SUPPORTS FOR DYSLEXIA

- If a student does not meet the criteria for a SLD, he/she may qualify for a Section 504 Accommodation Plan.
- Common Accommodations:
 - Repetition of instructions
 - Fewer items per page
 - Audio format (text to speech)
 - Use of calculator
 - Use of speech to text software
 - Use of scribe
 - Use of keyboard for writing
 - Individual or small group setting
 - Extended time
 - Allowing frequent breaks

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES FOR DYSLEXIA

- Multisensory approaches are most effective.
 - Write it
 - Read it (aloud)
 - Feel it (i.e. use clay, sand or textured paper, or chalk boards)
 - Hear it (read it aloud, sing/rap it)
 - Picture it (draw a picture)
- Use visualization whenever possible.
- Have the student retell the new learning in their own words as soon as possible.
- Systematic and explicit teaching techniques (Structured Literacy Program).

WHAT YOU CAN DO IF YOU SUSPECT...

- Gather data (classroom performance, benchmark assessments)
- Talk to the parent
- Refer to MTSS team

QUESTIONS?

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