

Buna I.S.D.

District Dyslexia Plan



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Table of Contents

- I. District and Campus Contact Information
- II. Definition of Dyslexia
- III. Procedures Required by State Law Prior to Formal Assessment
- IV. Referral Process
- V. Assessment for Dyslexia
- VI. Identification of Students with Dyslexia
- VII. Program Description and Options
- VIII. Timeline
- IX. Student Monitoring and Program Exit Criteria
- X. Procedure for Serving In-State or Out of State Transfer for Students Identified with Dyslexia
- XI. Flow Chart

District and Campus Contact Information

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Central Administration

Superintendent - Dr. Donny Lee

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction – Kelley Peck

Assistant Superintendent of Finance – Dr. Sharon Mosely

Campuses

High School (9-12)

711 CR 734
409-994-4811

Principal
Assistant Principal
Counselor

Mike Brewster
Shawn Clubb
Traci Sherman

Jr. High (6-8)

177 FM 253
409-994-4860

Principal
Assistant Principal
Counselor

Amber Flowers
Pete Bond
Lacy Girola

Elementary (K-5)

650 C.R. 725
409-994-4840

Principal
Assistant Principal

Counselor

Karen Hebert
Katie Parish
Kristy Yoes
Rachelle Meche

Mission Statement

Policy AE

The development of social and academic skills that assure all students the opportunity to become productive members of our democratic society is the primary mission of the Buna Independent School District. The belief that all students can learn is integral to accomplishing this mission.

Definition of 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 imperception, dysphasia, specific developmental dyslexia, developmental dysgraphia, and developmental spelling disability.

The definition of 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 phonemic awareness and manipulation, single-word decoding, reading fluency, and spelling. Secondary consequences of dyslexia may include difficulties in reading comprehension and/or written expression. These difficulties are unexpected for the student’s age, educational level, or cognitive abilities. Additionally, there is often a family history of similar difficulties.

The following are the primary reading/spelling characteristics of dyslexia:

- Difficulty reading words in isolation
- Difficulty accurately decoding unfamiliar words
- Difficulty with oral reading (slow, inaccurate or labored without prosody)
- Difficulty spelling

It is important to note that individuals demonstrate differences in degree of impairment and may not exhibit all the characteristics listed above. (*The Dyslexia Handbook, 2018 Update*)

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 language
- Limited vocabulary growth due to reduced reading experiences

Procedures Required by State and Federal Law

Prior to Formal Assessment

In accordance with TEC §28.006, Buna ISD administers early reading instruments in kindergarten, first, and second grades to determine students' reading development and comprehension. Additionally, the law requires a reading instrument from the commissioner's approved list to be administered at the beginning of grade 7 to any student who did not demonstrate proficiency on the sixth-grade state reading assessment. If, based on the reading instrument results, students are determined to be at risk for dyslexia and 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 Buna ISD will initiate procedures to recommend these students for an assessment for dyslexia. The information from the reading instruments administered under TEC §28.006 will be one source of information in deciding whether or not to recommend a student for assessment for dyslexia. Other sources may include, but not limited to, performance on state mandated test(s), student's grades/performance in reading and written spelling, and teachers' observations of the characteristics of dyslexia.

In 2017, the 85th Texas Legislature passed House Bill (HB) 1886, amending Texas Education Code (TEC) §38.003, Screening and Treatment for Dyslexia, to require

that all kindergarten and first grade public school students be screened for dyslexia and related disorders. Additionally, the law requires that all students beyond first grade be screened or tested as appropriate.

Referral Process

At any time that a student continues to struggle with one or more components of reading, Buna ISD will collect additional information about the student.

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. Additional information to be considered includes the results from some or all of the following:

- Vision screening
- Hearing screening
- Teacher reports of classroom concerns
- Basal reading series assessment
- Accommodations provided by classroom teachers
- Academic progress reports and/or report cards
- Gifted/Talented assessments
- Samples of schoolwork
- Parent conferences
- Results of kindergarten-grade 1 universal screening as required in TEC §38.003
- K-2 reading instrument results as required in TEC §28.006 (English and native language, if possible)
- 7th grade reading instrument results as required in TEC §28.006
- State student assessment program results as described in TEC §39.002
- Observations of instruction provided to the student
- Full Individual Evaluation (FIE)
- Outside evaluations
- Speech and language assessment
- School attendance
- Curriculum-based assessment measures
- Instructional strategies provided and student's response to the instruction
- Universal screening for all grade levels available

- Parent survey
- Cognitive and achievement screeners administered through Response to Intervention

Data that support the student received conventional (appropriate) instruction and that the difficulties are not primarily the result of sociocultural factors which include language differences, irregular attendance, or lack of experiential background.

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

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

Primary Reading/Spelling Characteristics of Dyslexia:

- Difficulty reading real words in isolation
- Difficulty accurately decoding nonsense words
- Slow, inaccurate, or labored oral reading (lack of reading fluency)
- Difficulty with learning to spell

The reading/spelling characteristics are the result of difficulty with the following:

- The development of phonological awareness, including segmenting, blending, and manipulating sounds in words
- Learning the names of letters and their associated sounds
- Phonological memory (holding information about sounds and words in memory)
- Rapid naming of familiar objects, colors, or letters of the alphabet

Secondary consequences of dyslexia may include the following:

- Variable difficulty with aspects of reading comprehension
- Variable difficulty with aspects of written composition
- A limited amount of time spent in reading activities

If a student continues to struggle with reading, the identification of reading disabilities, including dyslexia, will follow one of two procedures. Buna ISD will typically evaluate for dyslexia through §504; however, if a student is suspected of

having a disability within the scope of IDEA, all special education procedures must be followed.

Assessment for Dyslexia

Students enrolling in Buna ISD shall be assessed for dyslexia and related disorders at appropriate times (TEC §38.003(a)). 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.

When formal assessment is recommended, Buna ISD completes the evaluation process as outlined in §504 unless a referral to Special Education is initiated.

Through §504 process, Buna ISD will complete the evaluation using the following procedures:

- Notify parents or guardians of proposal to assess student for dyslexia
- Inform parents or guardians of their rights under §504
- Obtain parent or guardian permission to assess the student for dyslexia
- 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).

In compliance with §504 and IDEA, test instruments and other evaluation materials must meet the following criteria:

- 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

Domains to Assess

Buna ISD administers measures that are related to the student's educational needs. Depending upon the student's age and stage of reading development, the following are the areas related to reading that should be assessed:

Academic Skills

- Letter knowledge (name and associated sound)
- Reading real and nonsense words in isolation (decoding)
- Reading fluency
- Reading comprehension
- Written spelling

Cognitive processes that underline the reading difficulties

- **Phonological/phonemic awareness** (Difficulties in phonological and phonemic awareness are typically seen in students with dyslexia and impact a student's ability to learn letters and the sounds associated with letters and letter combinations, learn the alphabetic principle, use the sounds of the letters and letter combinations to decode words and to accurately spell.)
- **Rapid naming** (Difficulties in rapid naming may or may not be weak, but if deficient, will impact a student's ability to automatically name letters and read words and to read connected text at an appropriate rate.)
- **Orthographic processing** (Memory for letter patterns, letter sequences, and the letters in whole words may be selectively impaired or may coexist with phonological processing weaknesses.)
- **Various language processes** (Language processes, such as morpheme and syntax awareness, memory and retrieval of verbal labels, and the ability to formulate ideas into grammatical sentences, may also be factors affecting reading.)

Based on the student's academic difficulties and characteristics, additional areas that can be assessed include the following:

- Vocabulary
- Listening comprehension
- Verbal expression
- Written expression
- Handwriting
- Orthographic processing
- Mathematical reasoning and calculation
- 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). The identification and service delivery process for dyslexia must be in step with the student's linguistic environment and educational background. In Buna 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)
 - TAKS results when available
 - Texas English Language Proficiency system (TELPAS)
 - Type of language programming provided and language of instruction
 - Linguistic environment and second-language acquisition development
 - Previous schooling in and outside of the United States.

Additional assessment when assessing English Language Learners:

- Comprehensive oral language proficiency testing should be completed in English and the student's native language whenever possible
- If the student has received academic instruction in his/her native language,

as well as English, then the “Domains to Assess” need to be completed in both languages to the appropriate extent.

Interpretation:

Test results of English Language Learners will be interpreted in light of the student’s: language development (in both English and the student’s native language), educational history, linguistic background, socioeconomic issues, and any other pertinent factors that affect learning.

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 admissions, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee. In order to make an informed determination, the committee must be knowledgeable about the following:

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

The §504 or ARD committee will review all accumulated data to determine whether the student demonstrates characteristics of dyslexia based on the dyslexia evaluation report. The report will include the following:

- The observations of the teacher, district staff, and parent or guardian
- Data gathered from the classroom (including student work and the results of classroom measures) and information found in the student’s cumulative folder (including the developmental and academic history of the student)
- Data-based documentation of student progress during instruction/intervention
- Language Assessment Proficiency Committee (LPAC) documentation, when applicable
- The results of administered assessments
- All other accumulated data regarding the development of the student’s learning and his/her educational needs

- Outside screening may be assessed; however, the committee has the final decision.

§504 or ARD Committee Decision Points for Dyslexia Identification:

- The pattern of weaknesses in a student with dyslexia will reflect one or more difficulties with low performance for the student's age and educational level in the following academic skills:
 - Reading real words in isolation
 - Decoding nonsense words
 - Reading fluency (both rate and accuracy)
 - Written spelling (an isolated difficulty in spelling would not be sufficient to identify dyslexia)
- Based on the data, if the committee determines weaknesses are indicated in the listed academic skills, then the committee will look next at the underlying cognitive processes for the difficulties seen in the student's word reading and written spelling. These academic difficulties in reading and written spelling will typically be the result of a deficit in phonological or phonemic awareness.
- The student may also demonstrate difficulties in other areas of cognitive processing, including one or more of the following:
 - Rapid naming
 - Orthographic processing
 - Phonological memory
 - Verbal working memory
 - Processing speed
- If the student exhibits reading and written spelling difficulties and currently has appropriate phonological/phonemic processing, it is important to examine the student's history to determine if there is evidence of previous difficulty with phonological/phonemic awareness. **Note:** Because previous effective instruction in phonological/phonemic awareness may remediate phonological awareness skills in isolation, average phonological processing deficits can be exhibited in word reading and/or written spelling.
- If the §504 or ARD committee determines the student exhibits weaknesses in reading and written spelling that are the result of a deficit in phonological/phonemic awareness, the committee will then examine the

student's data to determine whether these difficulties are **unexpected** for the student in relation to the student's other cognitive abilities (the ability to learn in the absence of print) and **unexpected** in relation to the provision of effective classroom instruction. There should be documented evidence of unexpectedness: Unexpectedness is considered in relation to the student's other cognitive abilities, age, or educational level. This may include an average ability to learn in the absence of print or in other academic areas.

It is not one single indicator but a preponderance of data (both formal and informal) that provide the committee with evidence for whether these difficulties are unexpected.

Questions to Determine the Identification of Dyslexia:

- Do the data show the following characteristics of dyslexia?
 - Difficulty with accurate and/or fluent word reading
 - Poor spelling skills
 - Poor decoding ability
- Do these difficulties (typically) result from a deficit in the phonological component of language? (Please be mindful that average phonological scores alone do not rule out dyslexia.)
- Are these difficulties **unexpected** for the student's age in relation to the student's other cognitive abilities and provision of effective classroom instruction?

Many students with dyslexia will have difficulty with the secondary characteristics of dyslexia, including reading comprehension and written composition.

The §504 or ARD Committee will also incorporate the following guidelines from TEC §38.003 and 19 TAC §74.28:

- The student has received conventional (appropriate) instruction
- The student has an unexpected lack of appropriate academic progress (in the areas of reading and spelling)
- The student has adequate intelligence (an average ability to learn in the absence of print or in other academic areas)
- The student exhibits characteristics associated with dyslexia
- The student's lack of progress is not due to socio-cultural factors such as language differences, irregular attendance, or lack of experiential background

Assessment under Section 504

The §504 committee must first determine whether the student has dyslexia. If the student has dyslexia, the committee also determines whether the student has a disability under §504. Whether a student is eligible for §504 accommodations is a separate determination from the determination that the student has dyslexia. A student is considered to have a disability under §504 if the condition substantially limits the student's learning, including the specific activity of reading.

Additionally, the §504 committee in determining whether a student has a disability that substantially limits the student in a major life activity, 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's learning, eligibility for §504 services related to the student's other condition or disability should be considered.

Students with additional factors that complicate their dyslexia may require additional support or referral to special education. If a student is already qualified as a student with a disability under special education, the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee should determine the least restrictive environment for delivering the student's dyslexia intervention.

Assessment under Special Education

At any time during the assessment for dyslexia, identification process, or instruction related to dyslexia, students may be referred for evaluation for special education. At times, students will display additional factors/areas complicating their dyslexia and requiring 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 adequate academic progress within any of the programs for dyslexia or related disorders. In such cases, a referral to special education for evaluation and possible identification as a child with a disability within the Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA) will be made as needed. Students with additional factors that complicate their dyslexia may require additional support or referral to special education.

Assessment of Special Education Students

If a student is already in special education but exhibits the characteristics of dyslexia or related disorders and is referred for assessment, assessment procedures for students under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEIA 2004) will be followed.

Assessment data from prior special education assessments may be utilized, and/or additional assessment may be conducted by personnel trained in assessment to

evaluate students for dyslexia and related disorders. In this case, the ARD committee will serve as the committee of knowledgeable persons.

If the student with dyslexia is found eligible for special education in the area of reading, and the ARD committee determines the student's instructional needs for reading are more appropriately met in a special education placement, the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) must include appropriate reading instruction. Appropriate reading instruction includes the components and delivery of dyslexia instruction listed in The Dyslexia Handbook-2018 Update, "Critical, Evidenced-Based Components of Dyslexia Intervention".

Assessment of Students Identified Outside the District

Students identified as having dyslexia or related disorders from an outside source will be evaluated for eligibility in the district's program. Buna ISD may choose to accept the outside assessment or may re-assess the student. In either situation, the committee of knowledgeable persons will determine the identification status of a student enrolled in Buna ISD, and the placement of the student in the dyslexia program(s).

Program Description & Options

Once it has been determined that a student has dyslexia, Buna ISD shall provide an appropriate instructional program for the student (TEC §38.003).

The following procedures will be followed:

- Instructional decisions for a student with dyslexia are made by a team that is knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation information, and instructional components and approaches for students with dyslexia.
- Buna ISD shall purchase a reading program or develop their own reading program for students with dyslexia and related disorders that is aligned with the descriptors found in the state dyslexia handbook 2018 Update.
 - The descriptors include the components of:
 - Phonological awareness
 - Sound-symbol association
 - Syllabication
 - Orthography
 - Morphology
 - Syntax
 - Reading comprehension
 - Reading fluency
 - Instructional approaches include simultaneous, multisensory,

systematic, and cumulative, explicit, diagnostic teaching to automaticity, synthetic, and analytic instruction (19 TAC§74.28). The components of instruction and instructional approaches are described in the next section of the Buna ISD plan.

- Buna ISD will provide each 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. The district may, with the approval of each student's parents or guardians, offer additional services at a centralized location. Such centralized services shall not preclude each student from receiving services at his or her campus (19 TAC§ 74.28).
- Parents/guardians of students eligible under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, §504, will be informed of all services and options available to the student under that federal statute.
- Teachers who provide the appropriate instruction for students with dyslexia will be trained in the professional development activities specified by the district and/or campus decision making committee. As stated in 19 TAC, §74.28, the teachers who provide appropriate instruction for students with dyslexia must be trained and be prepared to implement instructional strategies that utilize individualized, intensive, multisensory, phonetic methods and a variety of writing and spelling components. They may serve as trainers and consultants in the area of dyslexia and related disorders to regular, remedial, and special education teachers.

Buna ISD will provide a parent education program for the parents/guardians of students with dyslexia and related disorders. The program will include:

- Characteristics of dyslexia and related disorders
- Information on assessment and diagnosis of dyslexia
- Information on effective strategies for teaching students with dyslexia
- Awareness of information on classroom modifications and especially of modifications allowed on standardized testing (19 TAC §74.28)

Critical, Evidence-Based Components of Dyslexia Instruction

The instructional program will be offered in a small group arrangement (e.g., 1:3 - 1:6) and include reading, writing, and spelling as appropriate. The major instructional strategies will utilize individualized, intensive, and multisensory methods as appropriate. Components of instruction, as appropriate for the reading needs of the student, include:

- Phonological awareness
- Sound-symbol association
- Syllabication
- Orthography
- Morphology
- Syntax
- Reading Comprehension
- Reading fluency

Delivery of Dyslexia Instruction

Instructional approaches, as appropriate to meet the instructional needs of the student, include:

- Simultaneous, multisensory (VAKT)
- Systematic and cumulative
- Explicit instruction
- Diagnostic teaching to automaticity
- Synthetic instruction
- Analytic instruction

Both the teacher of dyslexia intervention and the regular classroom teacher should provide multiple opportunities to support intervention in order to strengthen these skills; therefore, the responsibility for teaching reading and writing must be shared by classroom teachers, reading specialists, interventionists, and teachers of the dyslexia programs.

Standard Protocol Dyslexia Instruction

For the student who has not benefitted from the research-based core reading instruction, the components of instruction will include additional focused intervention as appropriate for the reading needs of the student with dyslexia. Standard protocol instruction provides evidence-based, multisensory structured literacy instruction for students with dyslexia. A standard protocol dyslexia instructional program must be explicit, systematic, and intentional in its approach. This instruction is designed for all students with dyslexia and will often take place in a small group setting. Standard protocol dyslexia instruction must be-

- Evidence-based and effective for students with dyslexia
- Taught by an appropriately trained instructor
- Implemented with fidelity

Timeline

When a referral for dyslexia is made, Buna ISD will ensure the evaluation procedure is followed in a reasonable amount of time. Section 504 does not require specific timelines; therefore, Buna ISD will follow the timelines Texas has established for the completion of the initial special education evaluations through TEC §29.004(a). Buna ISD will complete the dyslexia evaluation within 45 school days after receipt of consent from the parent or guardian.

Special Education students shall follow the timelines required by federal law, under IDEA 2004. Buna ISD will complete the dyslexia evaluation within 45 school days After receipt of consent from the parent or guardian.

Student Monitoring and Program Exit Criteria

Upon successful completion of the district dyslexia program(s), as measured by program mastery checks (assessments) completed at regular intervals, students will be exited from the district dyslexia program(s). Additional criteria for exit may include but is not limited to grades from progress reports or report cards, state assessment data, benchmarks, progress monitoring data, teacher and/or parent observations/checklists, and individual dyslexia program requirements.

Students that have completed the Buna ISD dyslexia program will receive regular monitoring during the first year.

Monitoring may include, but is not limited to the collection/evaluation of:

- progress reports
- report cards
- state assessment data
- teacher reports/checklists
- parent reports/checklists
- counselor reports
- other program reports
- additional assessment data

Students qualifying for dyslexia services that are identified as §504 or Special Education will follow monitoring/re-evaluation requirements outlined in federal law.

No one factor is sufficient to warrant exiting a student from direct Dyslexia services. Dismissal is determined by consensus of the committee of knowledgeable persons.

The committee considers the following factors when recommending exiting or reduction of dyslexic services:

- Completion of the district dyslexia program
- The student passed the reading portion of the state assessment (Note: passing the reading portion of the state assessment is never the sole source for exiting dyslexia services)
- The student demonstrates self-monitoring/self-correction behaviors as evidenced through informal observation by teacher and/or dyslexia interventionist
- Committee recommendation
- Parents request in writing that the student exit the program.

If a student has shown substantial progress and the §504 committee or ARD committee determines the student is ready to be dismissed completely from the program, the committee may recommend monitoring services instead of direct services. When a child is exited from the dyslexia program, a dismissal form will be completed and placed in the child's cumulative folder.

Procedures for Serving In-State or Out of State Transfer for Students Identified with Dyslexia

Students transferring from another state or another school within Texas will be considered for service in Buna ISD in the dyslexia program if a copy of their dyslexia evaluation is presented, and the testing shows the student has characteristics of dyslexia due to a deficit in phonological awareness that is unexpected for the student's cognitive/academic ability.

If no testing is found, the student will be assessed for dyslexia with the understanding that the student has received intervention in the areas that would affect their scores in decoding, single word recognition, comprehension, spelling and/or phonological awareness (previous school records of that student's participation in intervention would be beneficial or personal contact with the student's previous intervention teacher). The committee of knowledgeable persons will consider all information presented to determine best placement for each student.

Pathways for the Identification and Provision of Instruction for Students with Dyslexia

