

# Dyslexia Core Assessment FAQ

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This FAQ is designed to help school systems, families, and prospective vendors understand:

- The Dyslexia Core Assessment vendor approval process (RFA)
- [Act 517](#) requirements related to screening, parent notification, and core assessment.
- What a “diagnosis of dyslexia” means in a school context, and how that may connect to supports like interventions, a 504 Plan, an individualized education plan (IEP), or neither.

## Act 517 Basics

### What does [Act 517](#) require after a dyslexia screener indicates “at risk”?

- If screening results indicate a student is at risk for dyslexia, the parent/guardian must be notified within 30 days, and if the parent requests it, a core assessment for the diagnosis of dyslexia must be administered.

### Who can provide a core assessment?

- The parent may choose either the school/LEA or an [LDOE-approved vendor/professional](#) to administer a core assessment. If the parent selects the school/LEA to administer a core assessment, a core assessment must be completed within 30 days.

### Does an LEA have to administer the core assessment if they have not applied to become a vendor?

- Yes. An LEA must administer a core assessment regardless of vendor status if the student has been determined to be at-risk based on the dyslexia screener and the parent requests the LEA to conduct it.

### What must a “core assessment” include under Act 517?

- [Act 517](#) specifies the core assessment:
  - is not based on a single test score or checklist alone,
  - includes tests of language (including phonemic assessment, real words/pseudowords, oral reading fluency, and intellectual ability),
  - Is an academic performance review,
  - and includes an interview with the parent/guardian.

### **Is funding/reimbursement guaranteed?**

- Implementation is subject to legislative appropriation. Also, the RFA notes designated legislative funding through the Dyslexia Fund (R.S. 17:392.14) established by Act 525 (2024).

### **What is the reimbursement pathway?**

- The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) reimburses the school/LEA or the approved vendor/professional.

## **RFA & Vendor Approval**

### **What is the Dyslexia Core Assessment RFA intended to do?**

- The [RFA](#) is intended to identify and approve vendors that will provide dyslexia core assessments in Louisiana.

### **Is the RFA time-limited?**

- The RFA will remain open, and the LDOE will communicate with stakeholders if the RFA closes.

### **What are the basic steps in the vendor approval process?**

- The RFA outlines:
  - Vendor submits an application (via [JotForm](#)).
  - The LDOE convenes a review panel, and applicants receive feedback within 3 weeks.
  - Approved vendors are added to the Louisiana Dyslexia Core Assessment Vendor Guide.

### **If a vendor is rejected, can they reapply?**

- Yes, rejected applications may be resubmitted, but only once per school year.

### **What qualifications must vendors/professionals meet?**

- Dyslexia core assessments must be provided by vendors/professionals who meet the publisher's qualifications and are trained to administer/interpret the assessments.
  - Examples may include: licensed psychologists, certified school psychologists, licensed/certified SLPs, educational diagnosticians, neuropsychologists, and certified academic language therapists (as applicable).

### **What must the vendor's family-facing reporting include?**

- Vendor reporting to families should include results from core components (tests of language/reading-related measures, academic performance review, interview with parent/guardian), plus recommendations and guidance for providing the results to the school-building level committee (SBLC).

### **Does the RFA require vendors to serve English Learners?**

- Yes, vendors should have the ability to assess all learning, including English Learners.

# Diagnosing Dyslexia in the School Setting

## Can a school diagnose dyslexia?

Act 517 uses the phrase “core assessment for the diagnosis of dyslexia” and describes required components and decision-making as part of the assessment process. In practice, schools typically use results to determine:

- whether the student meets the criteria for dyslexia under state policy, and
- what educational supports are needed (intervention, SBLC plan, 504, or IDEA evaluation as appropriate).

Additionally, the [OSEP Dear Colleague Letter on IDEA/IEP Terms \(October 23, 2015\)](#) clarifies that there is nothing in IDEA that prohibits the use of the terms “dyslexia,” “dyscalculia,” or “dysgraphia” in evaluations, eligibility determinations, or IEP documents.

Consistent with this guidance, when a multidisciplinary evaluation identifies a pattern of strengths and weaknesses consistent with dyslexia, teams may document dyslexia as part of the student’s educational identification and use that information to inform supports and services

## If a student is identified as having dyslexia, does that automatically mean they get an IEP?

- No, not necessarily. Dyslexia identification can lead to different support pathways depending on educational impact and whether the student needs:
  - general education interventions/accommodations,
  - a 504 Plan (disability substantially limits a major life activity and needs accommodations), or
  - an IEP under IDEA (e.g., Specific Learning Disability) if the student needs specially designed instruction.

## What is “educational impact” and why does it matter?

- Educational impact is how dyslexia affects the student’s ability to access grade-level curriculum (e.g., reading accuracy/fluency, spelling/writing, comprehension impacts, stamina). It helps determine the intensity of support and whether a formal plan is needed.

## What role does the School Building Level Committee (SBLC) typically play?

- SBLC processes often support decision-making around interventions, accommodations, and whether an IDEA evaluation should be considered.

# Timelines & Screening Requirements

## When are students screened for dyslexia in Louisiana?

- Louisiana guidance notes:
  - universal kindergarten dyslexia screening occurs in the second half of kindergarten, and
  - screening may also occur upon parent or teacher request at any grade level.

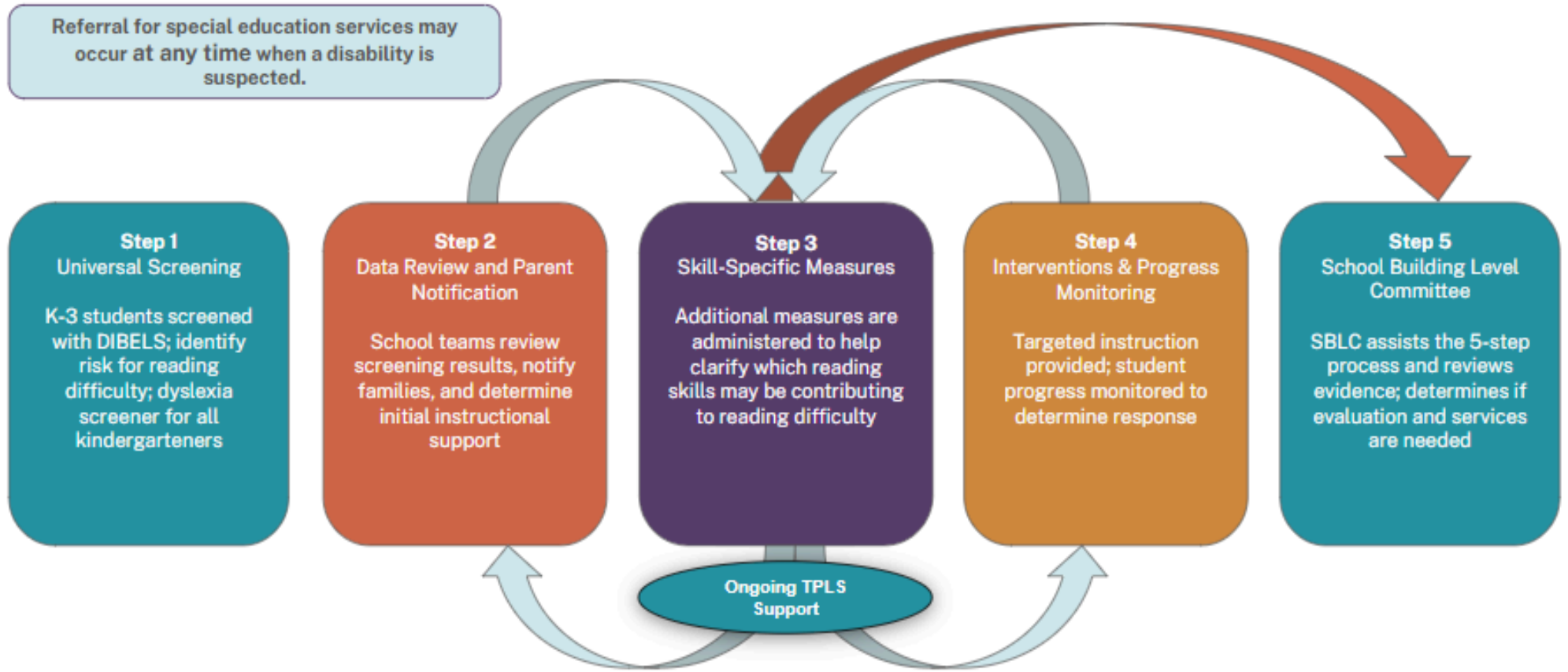
## What are the parent notification expectations?

- Parent notification for at-risk dyslexia screening occurs within 30 days of receiving results.

# Louisiana's Dyslexia 5-Step Referral Process

## Louisiana's Dyslexia 5-Step Referral Process

Referral for special education services may occur at any time when a disability is suspected.



Parents and teachers may request a dyslexia screener beyond kindergarten. Once a student is identified as "At Risk" for dyslexia, families may request a Dyslexia Core Assessment at any time.

The 5-Step Dyslexia Referral Process operates within Louisiana's Tiered Pathways for Literacy Support (TPLS).