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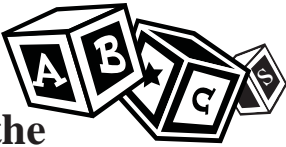
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The International Dyslexia Association, and the KS / MO Branch, support efforts to provide appropriate instruction for dyslexics. Research of instructional methods indicates that the most effective methods are multi-sensory. For a listing of methods which have a solid research base, see the IDA website (www.interdys.org). The IDA does not endorse any specific program, speaker, or instructional materials because there are a number of them that present the critical components of effective instruction for dyslexics.

The 13th Annual Spring Conference

Language & Literacy

From the  to the **SATs**

will be held
April 20 & 21, 2007
Ball Conference Center
Olathe Kansas

Friday keynote address
Dr. Hugh Catts

*The Changing Nature of Reading Disabilities:
Challenges for Identification and Intervention*

Save the Date!

ACTs and SATs Require More Documentation
Mary Gilroy, Taos Municipal Schools, Taos, NM

It is fall and students with dyslexia and other learning disabilities, like all high school seniors, become tense as they try to maintain good grades, register for the ACT or SAT, and plan for their future. No one can eliminate all the tension; however, a proactive Special Education or Section 504 team can assure that students with reading, writing, and/or math disorders receive needed accommodations when taking college entrance exams.

Assuring rightful accommodations is no longer easy. Five years ago, a simple two-page form was mailed to the ACT board stating that the student had a Specific Learning Disability with an active Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan and used accommodations in the classroom. If the student qualified for special education services more than twelve months prior, no further documentation was often needed and requests for extended time or audio cassette presentation were granted without question.

According to Melissa Behrens-Blake, M.S., Certified Education Diagnostician of the University of New Mexico Psychology Clinic, and a reviewer for the ACT, parents and schools should be aware of three factors: 1) ACT is now following the guidelines set by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which is more stringent than the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); 2) Late identification is a red flag; 3) Documentation must be thorough.

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Students who become eligible under IDEA or Section 504 in high school are under scrutiny. ACT will request full documentation if there is a recent diagnosis or if the documentation is not current and complete, including a current cognitive measure within the last three years. A recent diagnosis is usually one completed within the previous twelve months, but case have been discussed in which full documentation was requested for a student whose diagnosis had been twenty-four (24) months earlier.

The diagnostician's report should include a narrative explaining the student's disability and how it impacts his or her academic life. A simple declaration of the student's eligibility for services is no longer sufficient. If a student needs extended time, low scores must be backed by an in-depth report explaining the discrepancy between the student's cognitive level and his or her overall academic performance. The report should include a narrative on family history and academic history. If a learning disabilities specialist, certified academic language therapist, or educational therapist has also evaluated the student, their reports should be cited by the diagnostician. If the diagnostician does not include supplementary reports, the student can submit them directly to ACT.

Although documentation may place an added burden on professionals, students with disabilities, and their families, it is crucial to understand and follow current regulations and proce-

Hey! Look us Over!
Go to <http://www.ksmolda.org> and see our new link to Amazon.com. You will be able to help the KS / MO Branch by making your book, video, game, toy, and music purchases from this link. Amazon.com will donate a portion of your purchase to our branch!

To submit a newsletter article or advertisement, please e-mail the information to our branch at susanlong@ksmolda.org. Our branch would like to publicize any teacher training events using methodology accepted by the IDA. Please contact our branch with the information. If it meets the criteria of the national office, we will be happy to publicize it on our web site at www.ksmolda.org.

Henry Winker to Visit Churchill School

Henry Winkler will be speaking in St. Louis on behalf of Churchill Center & School's Speaker Series on February 24, 2007. Henry Winkler is an actor, producer, director and author whose work has won the attention of audiences and critics worldwide. He is the author of nine children's novels called "Hank Zipzer, The World's Greatest Underachiever", loosely based on his own experiences growing up dyslexic. Henry will share his own inspirational story, his challenges as well as his many successes! 7:00 – 8:00 p.m./VIP Reception to follow. Call Mary Brotherton at 314-997-4343, ext. 260.

Learning Disabilities Series

WHEN:

Thursday, February 15, 2007

WHERE:

Horizon Academy
(2 blocks north of Bishop Miega High School)
4901 Reinhardt Drive
Roeland Park, KS 66205
913-789-9443

TIME:

7:30-9:00 p.m.

WHO:

A great seminar for students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community members.

SPEAKER:

Dr. Mary Abbott has developed the LAMP curriculum to help students become successful readers and writers. Her literacy program is a multi-sensory approach with a strong emphasis on word decoding, spelling, and fluency that leads to improved reading comprehension and writing skill. Her interactive presentation will detail the skills required for successful reading and writing and provide participants with specific strategies for helping students become life long readers. Come and hear more about Dr. Abbott's passion in life...literacy!

COST: No Fee

Registration is not required.

From our President

The International Dyslexia Association exists to support individuals with dyslexia as they strive to meet their potential as learners. It's all about removing the barriers to using effective language that these individuals experience. Toward that end, the organization actively promotes effective teaching and intervention approaches, scientific study and research, and the responsible dissemination of research-based knowledge about dyslexia. One way the Kansas/Missouri Branch has contributed to the achievement of this mission is through our annual spring conference. This year, we are excited about what we will be offering in our 13th spring conference. We invite you to contribute to the achievement of our mission:

- Attend the conference—hold April 20-21 and plan to make your way to Olathe, KS
- Make a contribution to help offset the expenses of the conference
- Tell others about the conference
- Become a member of IDA.

Membership affords you discounts to IDA conferences (including our KS/MO conference) and access to current research about best practices for treating dyslexia and related learning difficulties. We have much to offer!

Sincerely,
Billie Calvery

What Is Section 504?

Taken from www.scwablearning.org

As part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Congress passed Section 504, a civil rights law to protect people with disabilities by eliminating barriers and allowing full participation in areas such as education and the workplace. Since then, the Office for Civil Rights has developed federal regulations that help to explain this law.

While the law doesn't provide any new funding for programs and agencies that comply, it carries the threat of withholding federal funds from those that don't. Since public schools receive federal tax dollars, the law applies to them. It doesn't apply to many private schools because they don't receive any money from the federal government.

Who Is Eligible?

"Handicapped person" is defined by Section 504 as a person with a mental or physical impairment that limits one or more major life activities, such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working, to a substantial degree.

All students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP) are covered automatically under Section Section 504. Almost 9% of the nation's students aged 6-21 receive special education services, with a little more than half of them identified as "specific learning disability." Because necessary accommodations are included in the IEP, there's no need to write a separate Section 504 plan for these students.

It's been estimated that 1-2 percent of students may be eligible under Section 504 alone. However, this includes students with mental, physical, and emotional disabilities, and not just learning disabilities. For example, a child with diabetes may need help from school staff to monitor blood sugar levels but have no problems with the educational program itself.

Eligibility under Section 504 isn't a consolation prize for students who aren't eligible for special education. A diagnosis of AD/HD doesn't automatically make your child eligible either. Before deciding whether she's eligible, your child is assessed by staff at the public school she attends. Then the Section 504 team considers all information about her. They must agree that she has a substantial (not mild or moderate) and pervasive (broad, comprehensive) impairment to make her eligible under this federal law.

In deciding whether a limitation is substantial, the Section 504 team also considers if your child uses a "mitigating measure" — a device or practice she uses on her own to reduce or eliminate the effects of her impairment. For example, if she tests with normal vision when wearing eyeglasses you've provided, then her visual impairment is not substantial.

If your child regularly earns report card grades of A's, B's and some C's, has standardized achievement tests scores in the average range and above, displays appropriate behavior, and attends school regularly, it's likely that she's not substantially impaired according to this particular law. If your child has problems in only one area, such as written language or math calculation, there's a good chance that the team will find she doesn't have a disability that substantially limits her learning. Section 504 does not require the school to maximize your child's learning. For Section 504 purposes, the school will compare your child's performance to that of the average child without disabilities.

What Is a Section 504 Plan?

If your child is eligible, then a Section 504 Plan will be developed to give her access to the general education curriculum. Unlike the IEP for special education, there are no legal requirements for what should be included in the plan. A free appropriate public education (FAPE) under Section 504 often means identifying reasonable accommodations to help her succeed in the classroom. An accommodation plan usually addresses the following:

- Nature of the disability and major life activity it limits
- Basis for determining the disability
- Educational impact of the disability
- Necessary accommodations
- Placement in the least restrictive environment (LRE)

What Are My Rights?

The law doesn't require parent participation in the meetings where a child's 504 plan is discussed. Nor does the law require parental permission to assess the child, or agree with the plan. However, many schools do include parents in the process. The law does require that schools let you know when they plan to evaluate your child or make a significant change in her educational placement. The Section 504 Coordinator for your school or district can advise you about grievance and due process procedures if you have a disagreement. You can request a copy of the district's Section Section 504 policy, as well.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(Rates effective January 1, 2005)

New Member Information *(please print)*

Name _____
 Organization _____
 Address _____
 City _____
 County _____
 State/Province _____ Zip Code _____
 Country _____
 Telephone (W) _____
 Telephone (H) _____
 E-Mail Address _____

Membership Levels *(please check one)*

(U.S. Currency Only)

- Individual\$70
- Individual / Sustaining.....\$150
- Individual / Supporting.....\$300
- Family\$110
- Lifetime.....\$2,000
- College Student\$40
(Copy of Student ID Required)
- Retired\$45
*(65+ and not employed fulltime)
(Copy of ID Required)*
- Institutional\$395
(Copy of Non-profit Status Required)
- *Corporate—Level-I\$295
- *Corporate—Level-II\$795

* Only For-Profit Organizations are Eligible for Corporate Levels

Signature _____

By signing this form, I certify that I (or the corporate entity) qualify for the membership category checked above.

Benefits of Membership

Contact IDA headquarters or visit our website for additional details about Institutional and Corporate member benefits.





- ~ Perspectives
- ~ Annals of Dyslexia
- ~ Discounts on IDA Conferences
- ~ Local Branch Affiliation
- ~ Branch Newsletters
- ~ Discounts on IDA Publications

Please check **all** categories that apply to you; then circle the category **that best describes your reason for joining IDA.**

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advocate | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual with Dyslexia | <input type="checkbox"/> Reading Specialist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> College Student | <input type="checkbox"/> Lawyer | <input type="checkbox"/> Researcher/Educational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Administrator | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Other Family Member of Individual w/Dyslexia | <input type="checkbox"/> Researcher/Medical |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ed. Diagnostician/Psychologist | <input type="checkbox"/> Physician | <input type="checkbox"/> Speech-Language Pathologist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Therapist | <input type="checkbox"/> Post-Secondary Educator | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Education Educator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elem./Sec. School Educator | <input type="checkbox"/> Psychiatrist | <input type="checkbox"/> Tutor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Supporter | | |

PAYMENT INFORMATION

___ Check enclosed made payable to: *The International Dyslexia Association*

___ Charge my credit card: ___ American Express  ___ Discover  ___ MasterCard  ___ Visa 



KS / MO Branch IDA
430 E. Blue Ridge Blvd.
Kansas City, MO 64145

Promoting literacy through research, education, and advocacy.