

# 21ST CENTURY DYSLEXIA ACT

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## One-Pager

### *What is Dyslexia?*

Dyslexia is a common neurocognitive difference in the United States, affecting 1-in-5 Americans, according to research done at the [Yale Center for Dyslexia & Creativity](#). It is an unexpected difficulty in reading for an individual who has the intelligence to be a much better reader, and is most commonly caused by a difficulty in the phonological processing (the appreciation of the individual sounds of spoken language), which affects the ability of an individual to speak, read, and spell.

### *Dyslexia in IDEA*

Currently, dyslexia is included as one of many disabilities under “Specific Learning Disabilities” (SLD) in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Despite dyslexia being the most prevalent disability within SLD, students are rarely tested. This prevents them from getting the services and accommodations necessary to assist dyslexic students learning to read. When children are not identified with dyslexia, evidence shows that lifelong harm is done, resulting in [lower career wages](#), [reduced graduation rates](#), and even [increased rates of incarceration](#).

### *21st Century Dyslexia Act*

The 21st Century Dyslexia Act seeks to bring a 21st Century understanding of dyslexia to federal statute and prevent the harm unidentified dyslexia can inflict on young students. It does so by pulling dyslexia out of the overly broad definition of SLD and including it in the list of disabilities included in the definition of a “child with a disability,” thus classifying dyslexia as its own category within IDEA.