DYSLEXIA ADVOCATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

PROGRAM GUIDE

Winter/Spring 2027

January 25 – April 2, 2027

PRESENTED BY
DYSLEXIA TRAINING INSTITUTE

DYSLEXIA
TRAINING INSTITUTE
EDUCATION CHANGES EVERYTHING

Welcome!

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The DTI Approach to Advocacy

Knowledge Is Power. Advocacy Creates Change.

Every student with dyslexia deserves to be understood, supported, and given the opportunity to succeed. But knowing what a student needs and knowing how to advocate for those needs are two very different things.
The Dyslexia Training Institute's Dyslexia Advocate Certificate Program bridges that gap.

This comprehensive, nine-week online program equips parents, educators, and aspiring advocates with the knowledge, tools, and confidence to navigate the special education process and advocate effectively for students with dyslexia.

Led by Dr. Kelli Sandman-Hurley, an experienced special education advocate, author, and dyslexia expert, the program goes beyond simply understanding special education law. Participants learn how to apply that knowledge in real-world situations, interpret educational assessments, evaluate IEP goals and services, identify appropriate accommodations, and navigate challenging conversations with school teams.

Advocacy, Collaboration, and Dignity

Throughout the program, participants examine how communication, assumptions, conflict, and power dynamics can affect the experience of students, families, and educators. They learn how to raise difficult issues without attacking individuals, listen for the concerns beneath competing positions, reframe conflict without minimizing legitimate concerns, and bring conversations back to the student's needs and the available evidence.

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What Will You Learn?

Throughout the program, you'll explore:

- Dyslexia and Structured Literacy: Understand dyslexia, effective reading instruction, and the educational needs of students with dyslexia.
- Special Education Law: Navigate IDEA, Section 504, FAPE, evaluations, eligibility, and procedural safeguards.
- Educational Assessments: Learn to interpret assessment results, understand the data, and identify areas of educational need.
- IEPs and Accommodations: Evaluate goals, services, accommodations, and assistive technology to support student success.
- Conflict Resolution and Negotiation: Develop strategies for navigating difficult IEP meetings, communicating effectively, reframing and refocusing conflict, and working toward productive solutions.
- Dignity-Centered Advocacy: Explore how dignity can be honored—or unintentionally violated—in special education interactions and develop strategies that promote respect, inclusion, fairness, understanding, and psychological safety for students, families, and educators.
- The Science of Advocacy: Explore communication, relationship-building, negotiation, collaboration, and problem-solving skills that contribute to effective advocacy.
- Real-World Application: Apply your knowledge through case studies, discussions, and practical assignments that consider multiple perspectives around the IEP table.

Benefits, Results & Goals

Benefits of the Program

- Participants have 24/7 access to all course content for the full duration of the program, allowing them to complete coursework on a schedule that fits their needs. The course is instructor-led, ensuring that questions are answered promptly and feedback is provided in a timely manner.
- Course materials, including archived PowerPoint presentations, videos, and additional resources, can be reviewed as often as desired. This gives participants the opportunity to reflect on what they are learning before posting questions or insights on the discussion boards.
- Learning and interaction are not limited to in-class time; participants can engage with instructors and fellow learners at any point during the course.

What to Expect

- You'll have 24/7 access to all course content, so you can fit the work into your schedule.
- The course is instructor-led, which means you'll always get timely answers to your questions and helpful feedback.
- You can revisit presentations, videos, and other resources anytime you'd like, they're available throughout the course.
- There are opportunities to pause, reflect, and share your thoughts on the discussion boards when you're ready.

Who Would Benefit from the Dyslexia Advocate Certificate Program?

Our Target Audience

A variety of individuals can benefit from this certification program. Whether you are a parent, an advocate, an education professional, or simply someone committed to helping families impacted by dyslexia, the curriculum is built to meet your needs.

Optional Textbooks

Dyslexia Advocate! How to Advocate for a Child with Dyslexia within the Public Education System by Kelli-Sandman Hurley Ed.D. (Optional)

Wrightslaw: Special Education Law, 2nd Edition by Peter W.D. Wright and Pamela Darr Wright (Optional)

Program Requirements & Course Schedule

Requirements

The certificate program consists of: online coursework, midterm and a final, which is a case study assignment. It will take approximately 40-50 hours to complete the certificate.

- Participants will be expected to complete the assigned readings.
- Participants will be expected to participate in board discussions.
- Participants will be required to pass the midterm and final (case study) before being awarded a Certificate of Completion.

**The Dyslexia Training Institute has the right to withhold a certificate of completion if a participant has not completed the program in full and/or does not demonstrate a level of mastery required to complete the program.

Course Schedule

Week 1: January 25, 2027

Dyslexia Refresher, Structured Literacy, Important terms, Overview of IDEA and 504

Week 2: February 1, 2027

Role of the Advocate, Developing a Resource Binder, IEP Experience, Overview of Special Education Process and RTI

Week 3: February 8, 2027
Evaluation/Assessment Basics, Assessment Workshop, Understanding Statistics for Advocates

Week 4: February 15, 2027
Dyslexia & Writing, Qualitative Data, Observations as Part of the Assessment Process

Program Schedule (cont.)

Required Online Classes (cont.)

Week 5: February 22, 2027
Midterm, Goals and Services

Week 6: March 1, 2027
Accommodations and Modifications, Assistive Technology, Week 6 Quiz (Accommodations, AT)

Break: March 8-12, 2027

Week 7: March 15, 2027
Understanding the Dynamics of the IEP Meeting, Types of Violations and Dispute Resolution, Scenarios, Case Study, Instructions for Final Project (If This, Then What?), Week 7 Quiz (Scenarios)

Week 8: March 22, 2027
Case Study (Assessment, IEP and Meeting) (Goals, assessment)
The science of advocacy

Week 9: March 29, 2027
The Business of Advocacy, Final

Additional Program Information

Duration of Course

Online course work will take approximately nine weeks to complete. Access to the coursework is available 24 hours/day, 7 days week for the duration of the course.

No Warranties

The Instructor makes no promises or warranties with regards to a Participant's performance as a result of any training provided. No employee at the Dyslexia Training Institute is an attorney and the content of this course should not be construed as legal advice.

Attendance

Participants are required to:

- actively participate in all online courses by completing required readings and assignments on a timely basis
- actively post questions and reflections on discussion boards
- participate in live chats and webinars or watch recorded version

Grading and Tests

Each participant will be required to complete a pre-test at the beginning of the program, a mid-term and a case study at the end of the program.

Participants enrolling in Graduate Level Extension Credits through the University of San Diego will be required to meet all the requirements listed above.

Computer & Technology Requirements

Internet access

Your computer must have the ability to view PowerPoint presentations, videos, live streaming (for webinars), download PDF files and word documents.

Enrollment

Enrollment and Fees

Participants must enroll and pay a $100 non-refundable registration fee at least one week before the first day of the program or have a purchase order sent to DTI.

The first day of the certificate program is January 25, 2027.

Certification Program Fee - $950.00 ($100 registration fee + $850 program fee) –All fees must be paid in full on or before January 23, 2027 of the certification program.

Steps to Enrollment

- Visit www.dyslexiatraininginstitute.org to download the Dyslexia Advocate Certificate Program application or request it at dyslexiaspec@gmail.com
- Complete the application and submit. You can scan the application and email it to dyslexiaspec@gmail.com, fax it to 619-342-2643, or mail it to: Dyslexia Training Institute, 7424 Jackson Drive, Ste 1B San Diego, CA 92119
- Your application will be review and you will receive notification of your registration status within one week of the date we receive your application.
- Upon acceptance, registrant must pay a $100 non-refundable registration fee within seven days of acceptance or by one week before the program begins, whichever comes first. This registration fee will be credited towards the total $950.00 fee.

Refund Policy & Graduate Level Extension Credits

Refund Policy

If a participant is not able to complete the Dyslexia Advocate Certificate Program, the following is the refund policy:

Drop Date - Amount of Refund
prior to January 25, 2027 - $950
prior to February 8, 2027 - $450
On or After February 26, 2027 - No refund available

Graduate Level Extension Credits

Graduate Level Extension Credits are available through the *University of San Diego (USD)*. Registering for *Graduate Level Extension Credits* is optional and not a requirement for participating in the Dyslexia Advocate Certificate Program.

USD's fee is $79 per *Graduate Level Extension Credit*. The Dyslexia Advocate Certificate Program is three (3) credits. The fee is paid directly to USD and is not included in the fee paid to the Dyslexia Training Institute to enroll in the Dyslexia Advocate Certificate Program. Information for enrolling for *Graduate Level Extension Credits* will be available during the certificate program.

Participants enrolling in *Graduate Level Extension Credits* through the USD will be required to complete all program requirements to receive the credits.

The *Graduate Level Extension Credits* are generally used for educator's certification requirements, salary enhancement purposes and/or transferred to a degree program. However, it is the responsibility of the participant to consult with their organization requiring the credits for certifications, salary enhancement or degrees to ensure the *Graduate Level Extension Credits* issued from USD will fulfill the specified requirements.

Instructor

Kelli Sandman-Hurley, Ed.D., C-SLDI

Kelli Sandman-Hurley, Ed.D. is an author and co-founder of the Dyslexia Training Institute. She received her doctorate in literacy with a specialization in reading and dyslexia from San Diego State University and the University of San Diego. She also completed TESOL coursework. Dr. Kelli is a certified special education advocate assisting parents and children through the Individual Education Plan (IEP) and 504 Plan process. She has training in mediation and also serves as an expert witness in the area of dyslexia. Dr. Kelli is trained in Structured Word Inquiry, the Orton-Gillingham approach, Lindamood-Bell, RAVE-O and Read Naturally. Dr. Kelli is a past President of the San Diego Branch of the International Dyslexia Association. She is a dyslexia consultant working with schools to improve services offered to students with dyslexia and training teachers. She co-created and produced Dyslexia for a Day: A Simulation of Dyslexia and she is a frequent speaker at conferences. She is the author of the well-received books, *Dyslexia Advocate! How to Advocate for a Child with Dyslexia within the Public Education System*, *Dyslexia & Spelling: Making Sense of it All*, and *The Adult Side of Dyslexia*.

Contact Us

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