

Senate File 2070 - Introduced

SENATE FILE 2070

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A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to the definition of dyslexia, screening for
2 dyslexia, and professional development opportunities and
3 requirements and endorsement for instruction on reading
4 disabilities including dyslexia.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. Section 256.9, subsection 53, paragraph c,
2 subparagraph (1), subparagraph division (e), Code 2014, is
3 amended to read as follows:

4 (e) Professional development strategies and materials to
5 support teacher effectiveness in student literacy development.
6 The center shall also collaborate with area education agencies
7 to provide practitioners with professional development
8 opportunities related to reading disabilities, including but
9 not limited to dyslexia, designed to account for the various
10 manners in which different practitioners interact with, or
11 develop instructional programs for, students with reading
12 disabilities.

13 Sec. 2. Section 256B.2, subsection 1, paragraph a, Code
14 2014, is amended to read as follows:

15 a. *"Children requiring special education"* means persons under
16 twenty-one years of age, including children under five years of
17 age, who have a disability in obtaining an education because
18 of a head injury, autism, behavioral disorder, or physical,
19 mental, communication, or learning disability including but not
20 limited to dyslexia, as defined by the rules of the department
21 state board of education. Rules adopted by the state board of
22 education relating to special education shall incorporate the
23 definition of dyslexia adopted by the international dyslexia
24 association. If a child requiring special education reaches
25 the age of twenty-one during an academic year, the child may
26 elect to receive special education services until the end of
27 the academic year.

28 Sec. 3. Section 256B.7, Code 2014, is amended to read as
29 follows:

30 **256B.7 Examinations of children.**

31 1. a. The division of special education shall distribute
32 to each school district and accredited nonpublic school
33 information on screening instruments that are available to
34 identify students who possess one or more potential indicators
35 of dyslexia or another reading disability. The division

1 shall provide information screening instruments appropriate
2 for kindergarten through grade two students and screening
3 instruments that may be suitably used for older students. The
4 division shall develop and distribute to each school district
5 and accredited nonpublic school guidance on appropriate
6 intervention strategies for students diagnosed with dyslexia
7 or another reading disability.

8 b. Each school district shall, and an accredited nonpublic
9 school may, select and implement age-appropriate screening
10 instruments for the early diagnosis of dyslexia and other
11 reading disabilities. A screening shall be administered by a
12 teacher or other practitioner properly trained in the screening
13 process for dyslexia and other reading disabilities. Each
14 school district shall ensure that each student enrolled in
15 the school district who has exhibited one or more potential
16 indicators of dyslexia or another reading disability is
17 screened for dyslexia and other reading disabilities using a
18 screening instrument selected pursuant to paragraph "a" no
19 later than the student's completion of the first semester of
20 the second grade.

21 c. If a student is determined, through the screening
22 conducted pursuant to paragraph "b", to possess one or
23 more potential indicators of dyslexia or another reading
24 disability, the school district or school shall ensure that the
25 student receives a comprehensive assessment for the learning
26 disability. In the event that a diagnosis of dyslexia or
27 another reading disability is confirmed by the comprehensive
28 assessment, the student shall receive appropriate special
29 education as provided in this chapter, which shall include
30 but not be limited to appropriate evidence-based intervention
31 strategies, including intense instruction on phonemic
32 awareness, phonics and fluency, vocabulary, and reading
33 comprehension.

34 d. As used in this subsection, "potential indicators of
35 dyslexia or another reading disability" means indicators that

1 include but are not limited to difficulty in acquiring language
2 skills; inability to comprehend oral or written language;
3 difficulty in rhyming words; difficulty in naming letters,
4 recognizing letters, matching letters to sounds, or blending
5 sounds when speaking or reading words; difficulty recognizing
6 or remembering sight words; consistent transposition of number
7 sequences, letter reversals, inversions, or substitutions; and
8 trouble in replication of content.

9 2. In order to render proper instruction to each child
10 requiring special education, the school districts shall certify
11 children requiring special education for special instruction
12 in accordance with the requirements set up by the division
13 of special education and shall provide examinations for
14 children preliminary to making certification. The examinations
15 necessary for the certification of children requiring special
16 education shall be prescribed by the state division of special
17 education. Disputes concerning a child's eligibility for
18 special education shall be addressed under rules and procedures
19 adopted by the state board of education pursuant to section
20 256B.6 and consistent with the federal Individuals with
21 Disabilities Education Act of 2004, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq.

22 Sec. 4. Section 272.2, Code 2014, is amended by adding the
23 following new subsection:

24 NEW SUBSECTION. 19. Adopt rules establishing criteria, and
25 issuance and renewal requirements, for a reading disability
26 instruction endorsement. Training requirements for the
27 endorsement shall be specific to the needs of students with
28 reading disabilities. In developing the rules, the board
29 shall review knowledge and practice standards published
30 by the international dyslexia association and criteria and
31 requirements developed by other states for certification of
32 individuals who work with students with dyslexia.

33 Sec. 5. Section 273.2, Code 2014, is amended by adding the
34 following new subsection:

35 NEW SUBSECTION. 10. The area education agency board shall

1 provide to the local school districts in the area professional
2 development instruction on the screening, intervention,
3 accommodation, and use of technology for students with reading
4 disabilities including but not limited to dyslexia. School
5 districts in the area are encouraged to require that the
6 following practitioners annually complete two hours of such
7 professional development instruction: general education
8 practitioners teaching at the kindergarten through grade three
9 levels, special education teachers, basic skills teachers,
10 English as a second language teachers, reading specialists,
11 learning disabilities teacher consultants, and speech-language
12 specialists.

13 Sec. 6. STATE MANDATE FUNDING SPECIFIED. In accordance
14 with section 25B.2, subsection 3, the state cost of requiring
15 compliance with any state mandate included in this Act shall
16 be paid by a school district from state school foundation aid
17 received by the school district under section 257.16. This
18 specification of the payment of the state cost shall be deemed
19 to meet all of the state funding-related requirements of
20 section 25B.2, subsection 3, and no additional state funding
21 shall be necessary for the full implementation of this Act
22 by and enforcement of this Act against all affected school
23 districts.

24 EXPLANATION

25 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
26 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

27 This bill requires that rules relating to special education
28 adopted by the state board of education incorporate the
29 definition of dyslexia adopted by the international dyslexia
30 association, and provides for the screening of students for
31 dyslexia or other reading disabilities, for professional
32 development opportunities and requirements for instruction on
33 reading disabilities including dyslexia, and for issuance of
34 a reading disability instruction endorsement by the board of
35 educational examiners.

1 The Iowa reading research center, under the department
2 of education, is directed to collaborate with area education
3 agencies to provide practitioners with professional development
4 opportunities related to reading disabilities, including but
5 not limited to dyslexia, designed to account for the various
6 manners in which different practitioners interact with, or
7 develop instructional programs for, students with reading
8 disabilities.

9 The bill changes the definition of "children requiring
10 special education" to add that a learning disability includes
11 but is not limited to dyslexia, and makes a technical change to
12 recognize the authority of the state board of education, rather
13 than the department, to adopt rules relating to the definition.

14 The division of special education is directed to distribute
15 to each school district and accredited nonpublic school
16 information on screening instruments to identify students who
17 possess one or more potential indicators of dyslexia or another
18 reading disability. The division must also provide information
19 on screening instruments appropriate for kindergarten through
20 grade two students and screening instruments that may be
21 suitably used for older students.

22 A school district shall, and an accredited nonpublic
23 school may, select and implement age-appropriate screening
24 instruments for the early diagnosis of dyslexia and other
25 reading disabilities. The division must develop and distribute
26 to each school district and accredited nonpublic school
27 guidance on appropriate intervention strategies for such
28 students. Screening must be administered by a properly
29 trained practitioner. A student who has exhibited one or more
30 potential indicators of dyslexia or another reading disability
31 must be screened by the school district by the middle of second
32 grade.

33 If a student is determined through screening to possess one
34 or more potential indicators of dyslexia or another reading
35 disability, the school district or school shall ensure that

1 the student receives a comprehensive assessment for learning
2 disabilities. In the event that a diagnosis of dyslexia or
3 another reading disability is confirmed by the comprehensive
4 assessment, the student shall receive appropriate special
5 education as provided in Code chapter 256B, which shall
6 include but not be limited to appropriate evidence-based
7 intervention strategies, including intense instruction on
8 phonemic awareness, phonics and fluency, vocabulary, and
9 reading comprehension.

10 The bill defines "potential indicators of dyslexia or
11 another reading disability" to mean indicators that include but
12 are not limited to difficulty in acquiring language skills;
13 inability to comprehend oral or written language; difficulty
14 in rhyming words; difficulty in naming letters, recognizing
15 letters, matching letters to sounds, or blending sounds
16 when speaking or reading words; difficulty recognizing or
17 remembering sight words; consistent transposition of number
18 sequences, letter reversals, inversions, or substitutions; and
19 trouble in replication of content.

20 The bill also requires the board of educational examiners
21 to adopt rules establishing criteria, and issuance and
22 renewal requirements, for a reading disability instruction
23 endorsement. The bill specifies that training requirements
24 for the endorsement must be specific to the needs of students
25 with reading disabilities. The bill requires the board,
26 when developing the rules, to review knowledge and practice
27 standards published by the international dyslexia association
28 and criteria and requirements developed by other states for
29 certification of individuals who work with students with
30 dyslexia.

31 Area education agency boards are directed to provide to the
32 local school districts professional development instruction
33 on the screening, intervention, accommodation, and use of
34 technology for students with reading disabilities including but
35 not limited to dyslexia. School districts are encouraged to

1 require that the following practitioners annually complete two
2 hours of such professional development instruction: general
3 education practitioners teaching at the kindergarten through
4 grade three levels, special education teachers, basic skills
5 teachers, English as a second language teachers, reading
6 specialists, learning disabilities teacher consultants, and
7 speech-language specialists.

8 The bill may include a state mandate as defined in Code
9 section 25B.3. The bill requires that the state cost of
10 any state mandate included in the bill be paid by a school
11 district from state school foundation aid received by the
12 school district under Code section 257.16. The specification
13 is deemed to constitute state compliance with any state mandate
14 funding-related requirements of Code section 25B.2. The
15 inclusion of this specification is intended to reinstate the
16 requirement of political subdivisions to comply with any state
17 mandates included in the bill.