

**Senate File 2356 - Introduced**

SENATE FILE 2356  
BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(SUCCESSOR TO SF 2235)

**A BILL FOR**

1 An Act relating to the education of students with  
2 characteristics of dyslexia and to the preparation and  
3 licensure of practitioners for such instruction, and  
4 establishing an Iowa dyslexia board.  
5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. Section 256.7, subsection 3, Code 2020, is  
2 amended to read as follows:

3 3. a. Prescribe standards and procedures for the approval  
4 of practitioner preparation programs and professional  
5 development programs offered in this state by practitioner  
6 preparation institutions located within or outside this state  
7 and by area education agencies.

8 b. Procedures provided for approval of programs shall  
9 include procedures for enforcement of the prescribed standards  
10 and, except as provided in [section 256.16, subsection 3](#), shall  
11 not include a procedure for the waiving of any of the standards  
12 prescribed.

13 c. By July 1, 2022, the board, in collaboration with the  
14 Iowa reading research center, shall adopt rules under chapter  
15 17A prescribing standards and procedures for the approval of  
16 practitioner preparation programs that are affiliated with  
17 the Iowa reading research center and that offer practitioner  
18 preparation for the advanced dyslexia specialist endorsement  
19 issued by the board of educational examiners pursuant to  
20 section 272.2, subsection 23. The department shall not approve  
21 programs that prepare practitioners for such an endorsement  
22 if the programs are not approved by the Iowa reading research  
23 center.

24 d. The board may establish by rule and collect from  
25 practitioner preparation institutions located outside this  
26 state an amount equivalent to the department's necessary  
27 travel and actual expenses incurred while engaged in the  
28 program approval process for the institution located outside  
29 this state. Amounts collected under [this subsection](#) shall be  
30 deposited in the general fund of the state.

31 Sec. 2. Section 256.9, Code 2020, is amended by adding the  
32 following new subsection:

33 NEW SUBSECTION. 60. By July 1, 2024, dedicate at least one  
34 of the department's authorized full-time equivalent positions  
35 to maintain a dyslexia consultant to provide technical guidance

1 and assistance, including but not limited to professional  
2 development, strategies, and materials, to the department, area  
3 education agencies, school districts, and accredited nonpublic  
4 schools relating to the identification of and instruction for  
5 students with characteristics of dyslexia. The consultant  
6 shall be highly trained in dyslexia and have a minimum of  
7 three years of field experience in screening, identifying, and  
8 treating dyslexia and related disorders.

9     Sec. 3. NEW SECTION. **256.32A Iowa dyslexia board.**

10     1. An Iowa dyslexia board is established to guide,  
11 facilitate, and oversee implementation of dyslexia instruction  
12 in Iowa and make recommendations for continued improvement of  
13 such instruction. The Iowa dyslexia board shall also submit  
14 recommendations as follows:

15     *a.* To the department regarding the required and preferred  
16 qualifications for a dyslexia consultant position required in  
17 accordance with section 256.9, subsection 60.

18     *b.* To the area education agencies regarding the required and  
19 preferred qualifications for dyslexia specialists required in  
20 accordance with section 273.2, subsection 11.

21     2. The Iowa dyslexia board shall consist of the following  
22 members:

23     *a.* The director of the department or the director's  
24 designee.

25     *b.* A representative of the Iowa reading research center.

26     *c.* A representative of an area education agency.

27     *d.* One school administrator.

28     *e.* One reading specialist.

29     *f.* One special education teacher.

30     *g.* An elementary core literacy teacher.

31     *h.* Two representatives of decoding dyslexia who are parents  
32 of children with dyslexia.

33     *i.* One representative of decoding dyslexia who is an  
34 individual with dyslexia.

35     *j.* One provider certified in a structured literacy reading

1 program.

2 *k.* One psychologist or speech language pathologist licensed  
3 in the state of Iowa with experience in diagnosing dyslexia.

4 *l.* A representative of an institution of higher education  
5 in Iowa with documented expertise in dyslexia and reading  
6 instruction.

7 *m.* The department dyslexia consultant if maintained by the  
8 department pursuant to section 256.9, subsection 60.

9 3. The term of membership is three years. The terms shall  
10 be staggered so that at least four of the terms end each year,  
11 but no member serving on the initial board shall serve less  
12 than one year. The governor shall determine the length of the  
13 initial terms of office.

14 4. The Iowa dyslexia board shall submit its findings and  
15 recommendations in a report to the general assembly by November  
16 15 annually.

17 5. This section is repealed July 1, 2025.

18 Sec. 4. Section 272.2, Code 2020, is amended by adding the  
19 following new subsection:

20 NEW SUBSECTION. 23. By July 1, 2021, adopt rules pursuant  
21 to chapter 17A, developed in collaboration with the Iowa  
22 reading research center, establishing an advanced dyslexia  
23 specialist endorsement. The endorsement shall require a  
24 strong understanding of structured literacy instruction; the  
25 neurobiological nature, cognitive-linguistic correlates,  
26 developmental indicators, compensatory behaviors, potential  
27 psychological factors, and co-occurring disorders of dyslexia;  
28 demonstrated skill in administering informal and formal  
29 assessments related to dyslexia; demonstrated skill in delivery  
30 of explicit, systematic literacy intervention; demonstrated  
31 skill in developing and supporting services for students  
32 with characteristics of dyslexia including those who are  
33 eligible for services under chapter 256B or section 504 of  
34 the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. §794, as  
35 amended; demonstrated skill in the design and implementation

1 of accommodations and modifications; demonstrated competence  
2 in creating a dyslexia-friendly learning environment; and  
3 demonstrated skill in the use and integration of assistive  
4 technology. This endorsement shall, at a minimum, require  
5 three years of prior teaching experience and completion of a  
6 supervised practical experience.

7 Sec. 5. Section 273.2, Code 2020, is amended by adding the  
8 following new subsection:

9 NEW SUBSECTION. 11. Subject to an appropriation by the  
10 general assembly for such purpose, the area education agency  
11 board shall, by July 1, 2024, dedicate at least one full-time  
12 equivalent position to maintain a dyslexia specialist. The  
13 area education agency board may hire such a specialist or may  
14 provide appropriate training to qualify an existing employee  
15 as a specialist on dyslexia. The specialist shall provide  
16 technical guidance and assistance, including but not limited  
17 to professional development, strategies, and materials to  
18 school districts and accredited nonpublic schools relating  
19 to identification of and instruction for students with  
20 characteristics of dyslexia. The specialist shall be highly  
21 trained in dyslexia and have a minimum of three years of field  
22 experience in screening, identifying, and treating dyslexia and  
23 related disorders. In the absence of an appropriation, each  
24 area education agency board is encouraged to employ a highly  
25 qualified dyslexia specialist.

26 Sec. 6. Section 273.3, Code 2020, is amended by adding the  
27 following new subsection:

28 NEW SUBSECTION. 25. Require, by July 1, 2024, any person  
29 employed by the area education agency who holds a license,  
30 certificate, statement of recognition, or authorization  
31 other than a coaching authorization, issued by the board of  
32 educational examiners under chapter 272, to complete the Iowa  
33 reading research center dyslexia overview module. Such persons  
34 employed after July 1, 2024, shall complete the module within  
35 one year of the employee's initial date of hire.

1     Sec. 7. Section 279.68, subsection 2, paragraph d,  
2 subparagraph (3), subparagraph division (a), Code 2020, is  
3 amended to read as follows:

4     (a) Assists students who are persistently at risk in reading  
5 to develop the skills to read at grade level. Assistance  
6 shall include but not be limited to strategies that formally  
7 address dyslexia, when appropriate. For purposes of this  
8 subparagraph division (a), "*dyslexia*" means a specific and  
9 ~~significant impairment in the development of reading, including~~  
10 ~~but not limited to phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency,~~  
11 ~~vocabulary, and comprehension, that is not solely accounted~~  
12 ~~for by intellectual disability, sensory learning disability~~  
13 ~~or impairment, or lack of appropriate instruction that is~~  
14 neurobiological in origin, is characterized by difficulties  
15 with accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling  
16 and decoding abilities, and may include difficulties that  
17 typically result from a deficit in the phonological component  
18 of language that is often unexpected in relation to other  
19 cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom  
20 instruction, as well as secondary consequences such as problems  
21 in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that  
22 can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

23     Sec. 8. NEW SECTION. 279.72 Training on dyslexia.

24     By July 1, 2024, the board of directors of a school district  
25 shall require all persons employed by the school district who  
26 hold a teaching license or endorsement for special education  
27 or prekindergarten through grade three levels issued under  
28 chapter 272, all practitioners and paraprofessionals assigned  
29 as Title I teachers and Title I paraprofessionals under the  
30 federal Every Student Succeeds Act, Pub. L. No. 114-95, and all  
31 practitioners endorsed to teach English as a second language  
32 to complete the Iowa reading research center dyslexia overview  
33 module. Such persons employed by the school district after  
34 July 1, 2024, shall complete the module within one year of the  
35 employee's initial date of hire.



1 education agencies, school districts, and accredited nonpublic  
2 schools relating to the identification of and instruction for  
3 students with characteristics of dyslexia.

4 IOWA DYSLEXIA BOARD. An Iowa dyslexia board is established  
5 to guide, facilitate, and oversee implementation of dyslexia  
6 instruction in Iowa and make recommendations for continued  
7 improvement of such instruction. The bill lists the  
8 recommendations the board is required to make to the department  
9 and area education agencies.

10 Membership on the board consists of persons representing the  
11 department, the Iowa reading research center, area education  
12 agencies, practitioners, decoding dyslexia, a structured  
13 literacy reading program, dyslexia diagnosticians, and higher  
14 education. Members serve staggered three-year terms.

15 The board shall submit its findings and recommendations in a  
16 report to the general assembly by November 15 annually. The  
17 section establishing the board is repealed July 1, 2025.

18 BOARD OF EDUCATIONAL EXAMINERS — ENDORSEMENT. By July  
19 1, 2021, the board of educational examiners must adopt  
20 rules, developed in collaboration with the Iowa reading  
21 research center, establishing an advanced dyslexia specialist  
22 endorsement. The bill identifies the skill, knowledge, and  
23 experience requirements that must be met before the endorsement  
24 may be issued to an applicant.

25 AREA EDUCATION AGENCIES — PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS. Subject  
26 to an appropriation by the general assembly for such purpose,  
27 each area education agency must, by July 1, 2024, maintain  
28 a dyslexia specialist. The specialists may be hired or an  
29 existing employee may be provided the appropriate training to  
30 qualify as a dyslexia specialist. The specialist must provide  
31 technical guidance and assistance to school districts and  
32 accredited nonpublic schools relating to identification of and  
33 instruction for students with characteristics of dyslexia. In  
34 the absence of an appropriation, each area education agency is  
35 encouraged to employ a highly qualified dyslexia specialist.

1 By July 1, 2024, any person employed by an area education  
2 agency who holds a license, certificate, authorization other  
3 than a coaching authorization, or statement of recognition  
4 issued by the board of educational examiners must complete the  
5 Iowa reading research center dyslexia overview module. Such  
6 persons employed after July 1, 2024, must complete the module  
7 within one year of the employee's initial date of hire.

8 SCHOOL DISTRICTS — K-3 STUDENT READING PROGRESSION AND  
9 TRAINING. The bill modifies the definition of "dyslexia" used  
10 for purposes of the assistance school districts must provide  
11 to students who are persistently at risk in reading to develop  
12 the skills to read at grade level. Under the bill, "dyslexia"  
13 means a specific learning disability that is neurobiological  
14 in origin, is characterized by difficulties with accurate or  
15 fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding  
16 abilities, and may include difficulties that typically result  
17 from a deficit in the phonological component of language that  
18 is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities  
19 and the provision of effective classroom instruction, as  
20 well as secondary consequences such as problems in reading  
21 comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede  
22 growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

23 By July 1, 2024, all persons employed by a school district  
24 who hold a teaching license or endorsement for special  
25 education or prekindergarten through grade three levels, all  
26 Title I teachers and Title I paraprofessionals under the  
27 federal Every Student Succeeds Act, and all practitioners  
28 endorsed to teach English as a second language, must complete  
29 the Iowa reading research center dyslexia overview module.  
30 Such persons employed by the school district after July  
31 1, 2024, shall complete the module within one year of the  
32 employee's initial date of hire.

33 The bill may include a state mandate as defined in Code  
34 section 25B.3. The bill requires that the state cost of  
35 any state mandate included in the bill be paid by a school

S.F. 2356

1 district from state school foundation aid received by the  
2 school district under Code section 257.16. The specification  
3 is deemed to constitute state compliance with any state mandate  
4 funding-related requirements of Code section 25B.2. The  
5 inclusion of this specification is intended to reinstate the  
6 requirement of political subdivisions to comply with any state  
7 mandates included in the bill.