

**CHAPTER 1048**  
**EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH DYSLEXIA**  
*S.F. 2356*

**AN ACT** relating to the education of students with characteristics of dyslexia and to the preparation and licensure of practitioners for such instruction, and establishing an Iowa dyslexia board.

*Be It Enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Iowa:*

Section 1. [Section 256.7, subsection 3](#), Code 2020, is amended to read as follows:

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

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

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

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

Sec. 2. [Section 256.9](#), Code 2020, is amended by adding the following new subsection:

NEW SUBSECTION. 60. By July 1, 2024, dedicate at least one of the department's authorized full-time equivalent positions to maintain a dyslexia consultant to provide technical guidance and assistance, including but not limited to professional development, strategies, and materials, to the department, area education agencies, school districts, and accredited nonpublic schools relating to the identification of and instruction for students with characteristics of dyslexia. The consultant shall be highly trained in dyslexia and have a minimum of three years of field experience in screening, identifying, and treating dyslexia and related disorders.

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

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

a. To the department regarding the required and preferred qualifications for a dyslexia consultant position required in accordance with [section 256.9, subsection 60](#).

b. To the area education agencies regarding the required and preferred qualifications for dyslexia specialists required in accordance with [section 273.2, subsection 11](#).

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

a. The director of the department or the director's designee.

b. A representative of the Iowa reading research center.

c. A representative of an area education agency.

d. One school administrator.

e. One reading specialist.

f. One special education teacher.

g. An elementary core literacy teacher.

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

- i. One representative of decoding dyslexia who is an individual with dyslexia.
  - j. One provider certified in a structured literacy reading program.
  - k. One psychologist or speech language pathologist licensed in the state of Iowa with experience in diagnosing dyslexia.
  - l. A representative of an institution of higher education in Iowa with documented expertise in dyslexia and reading instruction.
  - m. The department dyslexia consultant if maintained by the department pursuant to [section 256.9, subsection 60](#).
3. The term of membership is three years. The terms shall be staggered so that at least four of the terms end each year, but no member serving on the initial board shall serve less than one year. The governor shall determine the length of the initial terms of office.
4. The Iowa dyslexia board shall submit its findings and recommendations in a report to the general assembly by November 15 annually.
5. [This section](#) is repealed July 1, 2025.

Sec. 4. [Section 272.2](#), Code 2020, is amended by adding the following new subsection:

**NEW SUBSECTION.** 23. By July 1, 2021, adopt rules pursuant to [chapter 17A](#), developed in collaboration with the Iowa reading research center, establishing an advanced dyslexia specialist endorsement. The endorsement shall require a strong understanding of structured literacy instruction; the neurobiological nature, cognitive-linguistic correlates, developmental indicators, compensatory behaviors, potential psychological factors, and co-occurring disorders of dyslexia; demonstrated skill in administering informal and formal assessments related to dyslexia; demonstrated skill in delivery of explicit, systematic literacy intervention; demonstrated skill in developing and supporting services for students with characteristics of dyslexia including those who are eligible for services under [chapter 256B](#) or section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. §794, as amended; demonstrated skill in the design and implementation of accommodations and modifications; demonstrated competence in creating a dyslexia-friendly learning environment; and demonstrated skill in the use and integration of assistive technology. This endorsement shall, at a minimum, require three years of prior teaching experience and completion of a supervised practical experience.

Sec. 5. [Section 273.2](#), Code 2020, is amended by adding the following new subsection:

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

Sec. 6. [Section 273.3](#), Code 2020, is amended by adding the following new subsection:

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

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

(a) Assists students who are persistently at risk in reading to develop the skills to read at grade level. Assistance shall include but not be limited to strategies that formally address dyslexia, when appropriate. For purposes of this subparagraph division (a), "dyslexia"

means a specific and significant impairment in the development of reading, including but not limited to phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, that is not solely accounted for by intellectual disability, sensory learning disability or impairment, or lack of appropriate instruction that is neurobiological in origin, is characterized by difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities, and may include difficulties that typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction, as well as secondary consequences such as problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

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

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

**Sec. 9. STATE MANDATE FUNDING SPECIFIED.** In accordance with [section 25B.2, subsection 3](#), the state cost of requiring compliance with any state mandate included in this Act shall be paid by a school district from state school foundation aid received by the school district under [section 257.16](#). This specification of the payment of the state cost shall be deemed to meet all of the state funding-related requirements of [section 25B.2, subsection 3](#), and no additional state funding shall be necessary for the full implementation of this Act by and enforcement of this Act against all affected school districts.

Approved June 17, 2020