
DIGEST

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HB 391 Original

2020 Regular Session

Marino

Abstract: Revises laws relative to dyslexia for the purposes of screening, diagnosing, and providing intervention for students.

Dyslexia generally

Present law, relative to dyslexia, provides the following:

- (1) Requires the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to adopt a program for testing students for dyslexia and related disorders and requires school boards to provide remediation for dyslexic students in accordance with the program.
- (2) Requires every child in grades K-3 to be screened at least once for dyslexia.
- (3) Requires a student to be referred for dyslexia testing upon request of a parent, student, school nurse, classroom teacher, or other school personnel.
- (4) Provides for implementation of a pilot program relative to dyslexia screening.
- (5) Provides two definitions of dyslexia for various present law purposes.

Proposed law repeals present law and provides the following relative to dyslexia:

Definitions

Proposed law defines "dyslexia" as an unexpected difficulty in reading for an individual who has the intelligence to be a much better reader, most commonly caused by a difficulty in phonological processing, which affects the ability of an individual to speak, read, and spell. Defines "phonological processing" as meaning the appreciation of the individual sounds of spoken language.

Screening

Proposed law requires a dyslexia screening program to be administered to each student by a classroom teacher in the second half of kindergarten or at any time it is requested by a teacher or a parent or guardian. Prohibits the program from being a progress monitoring tool and requires that it use a screener developed solely for dyslexia; be evidence-based with proven, published psychometric validity; and be used for the purpose of determining a student's at-risk status for

dyslexia.

Diagnosis

Proposed law, relative to diagnosis, provides the following:

- (1) Provides that if screening results indicate that a student is at risk for dyslexia, the school, in order to determine whether he has dyslexia, shall determine through history, observation, and psychometric assessment if there are unexpected difficulties in reading and associated linguistic problems at the level of phonological processing that are unrelated to the student's intelligence, age, and grade level.
- (2) Prohibits the core assessment for the diagnosis of dyslexia from being based on a single test score or specific number of characteristics and requires that it include the following:
 - (a) Tests of language, particularly phonology; reading, including real and pseudowords; reading fluency; spelling; and intellectual ability.
 - (b) An academic performance review.
 - (c) A parental interview.

Intervention

Proposed law requires that for students identified as dyslexic, intervention programs shall be evidence-based and shall provide systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension strategies; provide ample opportunities for writing, reading, and discussing literature; and be delivered with sufficient intensity and duration.

Rules

Proposed law requires BESE to promulgate rules to implement proposed law provisions in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act.

Ancillary certification for dyslexia practitioners and therapists

Present law provides for the issuance of an ancillary certificate to a teacher for service as a dyslexia practitioner or dyslexia therapist. Proposed law retains present law but recodifies it for purposes of statutory organization.

(Amends R.S. 17:392.1(D) and 2112(Section heading); Adds R.S. 17:392.11 and 392.12; Repeals R.S. 17:7(11), 24.11, 392.1(B)(2)(a) and (3), 392.2, and 2112(A)(2) and (B))