



Substitute House Bill No. 6517

Public Act No. 21-168

AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE TO ANALYZE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS GOVERNING DYSLEXIA INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) (a) There is established an Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities within the Department of Education which shall be under the management of a chief. The chief shall be qualified by training and experience to perform the duties of the office, including, but not limited to, expertise in higher education, dyslexia and structured literacy. The Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities shall (1) verify the compliance of (A) educator preparation programs, as defined in section 10-146c of the general statutes, and (B) applicants for an initial, provisional or professional educator certificate pursuant to the provisions of chapter 166 of the general statutes relating to dyslexia instruction and training, including, but not limited to, the compliance verifications required pursuant to sections 2 to 4, inclusive, of this act; (2) review and recommend changes, as necessary, to the State Board of Education's process for approval of educator preparation programs related to such compliance verifications; and (3) provide guidance to and consult with the department's Talent Office related to such compliance verifications.

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(b) The chief of the Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities shall appoint such full-time staff as may be necessary for the operations of said office, which shall include, but need not be limited to, (1) staff with expertise in (A) educator preparation program accreditation analysis and approval, and (B) educator preparation program curriculum analysis related to structured literacy and dyslexia; and (2) support staff.

(c) Not later than July 1, 2022, the office shall (1) with consideration given to the recommendations set forth in appendices d and e of the final report of the task force established pursuant to special act 19-8, develop compliance measures and audit procedures to determine the compliance of educator preparation programs with the provisions of subsection (e) of section 10-145a of the general statutes, and whether such educator preparation programs include supervised practicum hours or student teaching experience and instruction in the detection and recognition of, and evidence-based structured literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia in any programs of study in the diagnosis and remediation of reading and language arts; and (2) submit such compliance measures and audit procedures, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher education and education.

(d) Not later than July 1, 2022, the office shall develop, and update as necessary, (1) with consideration given to the recommendations set forth in appendix f of the final report of the task force established pursuant to special act 19-8, structured literacy competency targets for the purpose of identifying structured literacy competencies that should be achieved by an educator based on certification level and endorsement type; (2) for the review and consideration of institutions of higher education and other providers of educator preparation programs approved by the department, a list of sample course assignments and evaluations aligned with the structured literacy competency targets

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developed by the office and the compliance measures developed pursuant to subsection (c) of this section; and (3) model dyslexia in-service training programs, for use by local and regional boards of education, aligned with the structured literacy competency targets developed by the office.

Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) (a) On and after September 1, 2022, the Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities, established pursuant to section 1 of this act, shall verify that any educator preparation program, as defined in section 10-146c of the general statutes, that submits an application for initial or continued approval to the State Board of Education (1) is complying with the requirements set forth in subsection (e) of section 10-145a of the general statutes concerning instruction in the detection and recognition of, and evidence-based structured literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia, as defined in section 10-3d of the general statutes, and (2) includes supervised practicum hours or student teaching experience and instruction in the detection and recognition of, and evidence-based structured literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia in any programs of study for remedial reading, remedial language arts, reading consultants or special education. The office shall use the compliance measures and audit procedures developed pursuant to subsection (c) of section 1 of this act to carry out the provisions of this subsection.

(b) The office may complete the compliance verification required pursuant to subsection (a) of this section by reviewing the information gathered by a national accrediting agency that accredits educator preparation programs for the Department of Education, pursuant to the provisions of special act 16-22, provided such national accrediting agency uses the compliance measures and audit procedures developed pursuant to subsection (c) of section 1 of this act.

(c) Not later than January 1, 2023, and annually thereafter, the office

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shall submit, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher education and education, a report on the compliance verification conducted pursuant to subsection (a) of this section for each educator preparation program.

(d) Not later than January 1, 2023, and annually thereafter, the office shall (1) review, and request updates of as necessary, the webinar modules and trainings developed or endorsed by the Department of Education for the purpose of aligning such webinar modules with the compliance measures developed by the office pursuant to subsection (c) of section 1 of this act; and (2) submit, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly have cognizance of matters relating to higher education and education status reports on the compliance of such webinar modules and trainings.

Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) On and after September 1, 2022, the State Board of Education shall not approve any educator preparation program until the Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities, established pursuant to section 1 of this act, completes the compliance verification required pursuant to section 2 of this act.

Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) On and after September 1, 2023, the State Board of Education shall issue an initial, provisional or professional educator certificate to an applicant who meets the requirements set forth in section 10-145b of the general statutes upon verification by the Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities, established pursuant to section 1 of this act, in consultation with the department's Talent Office and Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification, that (1) an applicant for an initial educator certificate who has graduated from an educator preparation program in the state has completed not fewer than twelve clock hours of instruction in the

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detection and recognition of, and evidence-based structured literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia, as defined in section 10-3d of the general statutes; and (2) an applicant for an initial educator certificate who seeks an endorsement for comprehensive special education or integrated early childhood and special education completes the requirements of subdivision (2) of subsection (i) of section 10-145d of the general statutes, as amended by this act.

Sec. 5. Subdivision (2) of subsection (i) of section 10-145d of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2021*):

(2) On and after July 1, [2018] 2021, any (A) certified employee applying for a comprehensive special education or integrated early childhood and special education endorsement, or (B) applicant for an initial, provisional or professional educator certificate and a comprehensive special education or integrated early childhood and special education endorsement shall have completed a program of study in the diagnosis and remediation of reading and language arts that includes supervised practicum hours or student teaching experience and instruction in the detection and recognition of, and evidence-based structured literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia, as defined in section 10-3d.

Sec. 6. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) (a) On and after January 1, 2022, the Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities shall provide guidance to institutions of higher education and other providers of educator preparation programs on how to provide verification that any supervisor of the practicum hours required pursuant to subdivisions (1) and (2) of subsection (i) of section 10-145d of the general statutes, as amended by this act, has obtained at least four of the following qualifications: (1) A satisfactory score on the reading instruction examination approved by the State Board of Education on April 1, 2009, or a comparable reading instruction examination with minimum

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standards that are equivalent to the examination approved by the State Board of Education on April 1, 2009; (2) a valid initial, provisional or professional educator certificate issued by the State Board of Education; (3) a master's degree in remedial reading or a closely related field; (4) specific and documented knowledge about structured literacy principles and practices; (5) training for practicum supervision, coaching and evaluation of a reading interventionist; or (6) at least three years of work experience in providing structured literacy interventions for students with remedial reading needs, including, but not limited to, students with dyslexia.

(b) An institution of higher education and any other provider of an educator preparation program shall give preference to those candidates for a practicum supervisor position who, in addition to meeting the qualifications specified in subdivisions (1) to (6), inclusive, of subsection (a) of this section, have experience in the design, implementation or monitoring of structured literacy interventions or previous practicum supervisor experience.

Sec. 7. Section 10-14t of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2021*):

(a) On or before [January 1, 2016] July 1, 2022, the Department of Education shall develop or approve reading assessments, with consideration given to the recommendations set forth in appendix g of the final report of the task force established pursuant to special act 19-8, for use by local and regional boards of education, in accordance with the guidance provided pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, for the school year commencing July 1, [2016] 2023, and each school year thereafter, to identify students in kindergarten to grade three, inclusive, who are below proficiency in reading, provided any reading assessments developed or approved by the department include frequent screening and progress monitoring of students. Such reading assessments shall (1) be brief, (2) be evidence-based, as defined in 20

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USC 7801(21), with proven psychometrics for validity, (3) measure [phonics] oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, rapid automatic name or letter name fluency and reading comprehension, [(2)] (4) provide opportunities for [periodic] formative [assessment] assessments at least three times, in the fall, winter and spring, during [the] each school year, [(3)] (5) produce data that is useful for informing individual and classroom instruction, including the grouping of students based on such data and the selection of instructional activities based on data of individual student response patterns during such progress monitoring, [(4)] (6) be compatible with best practices in reading instruction and research, and [(5)] (7) assist in identifying, in whole or in part, students at risk for dyslexia, as defined in section 10-3d, or other reading-related learning disabilities.

(b) On or before January 1, 2023, the department shall provide guidance to local and regional boards of education for administering the approved reading assessments, including, but not limited to, (1) specifying the appropriate grade levels for each reading assessment; (2) allowing approved reading assessments to be combined to ensure each ability specified in subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section is measured during each school year using one or more reading assessments appropriate for a student's grade level; (3) advising how each board's goals, student body characteristics and resources should inform the choice of reading assessments used by such board; (4) advising how aggregate data derived from reading assessments should guide each board's prevention and early intervention initiatives; and (5) requiring the administration of approved reading assessments in both English and a student's native language, if available, for any student being instructed in literacy in his or her native language.

[(b)] (c) Not later than February 1, [2016] 2023, the Commissioner of Education shall submit the reading assessments and guidance developed or approved under this section to the joint standing

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committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a.

(d) The Department of Education may, in partnership with a public institution of higher education, establish a data center to guide the department and local and regional boards of education in the use and effectiveness of reading assessments. Such data center may include, but need not be limited to, tracking (1) which reading assessments are used by each regional or local board of education, and (2) student information, disaggregated by categories including, but not limited to, a student's demographic background, school district, reading assessment dates and scores on reading assessments, provided such disaggregation keeps such student information personally nonidentifiable.

Sec. 8. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) On or before January 1, 2022, the Department of Education shall develop or approve a voluntary family history questionnaire to be distributed during the school year commencing July 1, 2022, and each school year thereafter, to assist in the identification, in whole or in part, of students who are at risk of reading proficiency challenges.

Sec. 9. (*Effective July 1, 2021*) Not later than January 1, 2022, and annually thereafter until the Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities, established pursuant to section 1 of this act, is fully staffed, the Department of Education shall submit, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher education and education status reports on the establishment and staffing of said office.

Sec. 10. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) Not later than January 1, 2023, and annually thereafter, the Department of Education shall submit, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes,

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to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher education and education, a report outlining (1) the outcomes of the compliance verification conducted pursuant to section 2 of this act, and (2) the reading assessments developed or approved and the related guidance provided by the department pursuant to section 7 of this act.

Approved July 12, 2021